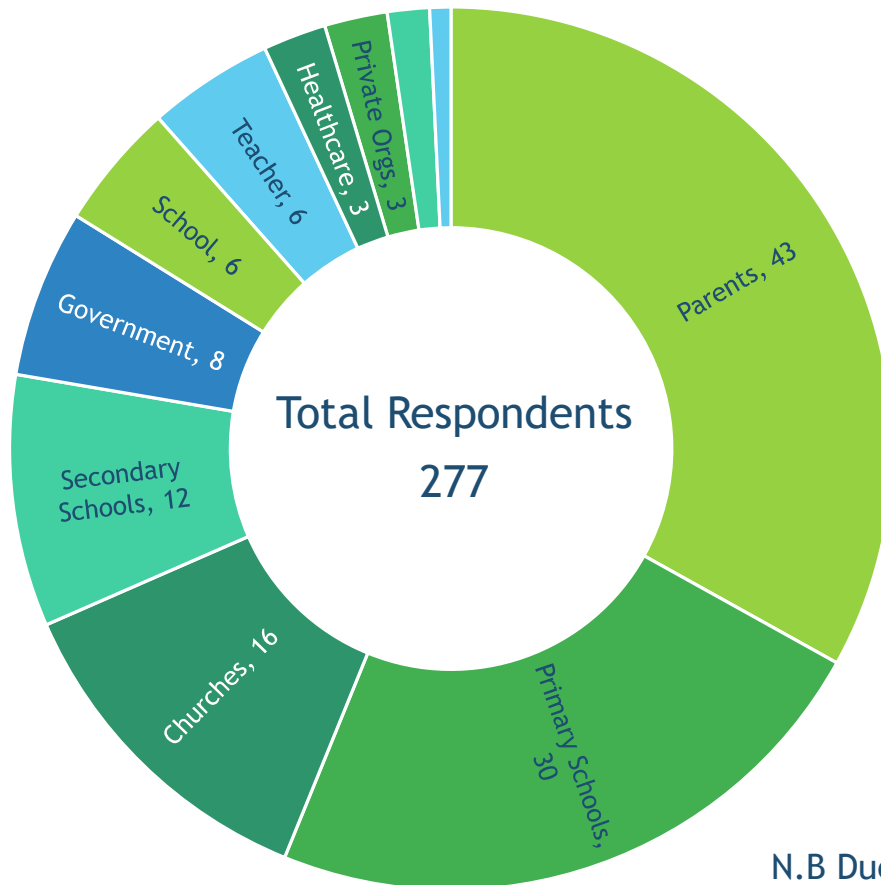


Mini-Inquiry into Relationship and Sexuality Education

The Committee for
Education

Overall Data



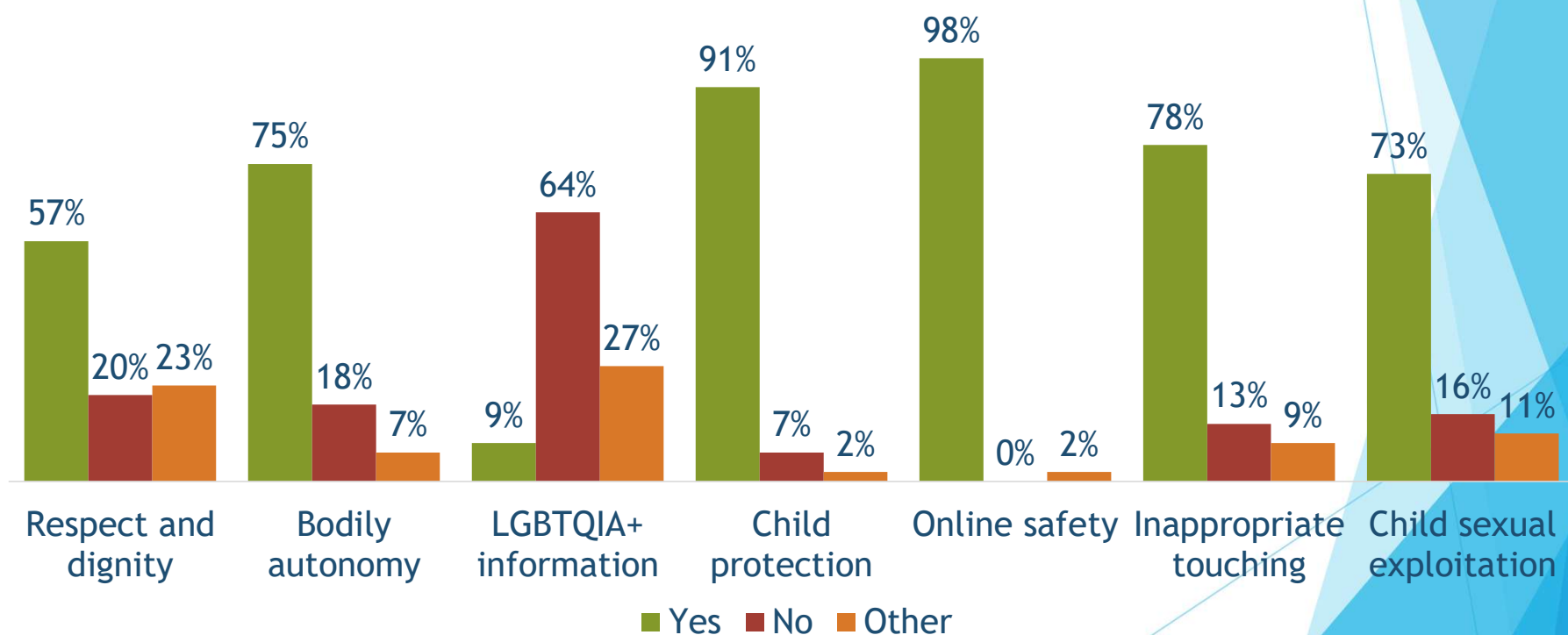
- Parents
- Primary Schools
- Churches
- Secondary Schools
- Government
- Teacher
- School
- Private Orgs
- Healthcare
- Charity
- University

N.B Due to rounding of decimal places, not all charts will sum to 100%



Curriculum Integration and Content

In your experience does PDMU in your primary school also include the below voluntary aspects of the RSE programme?



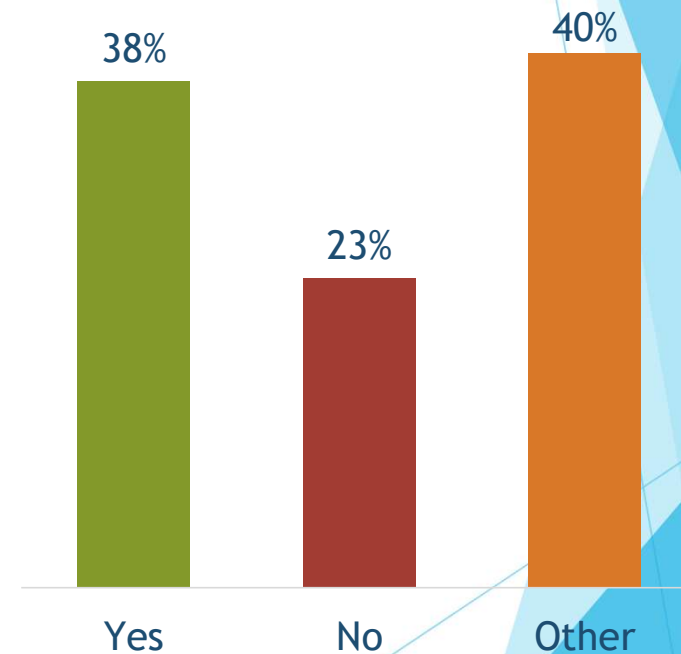
* 45 respondents answered this question.

In your experience does PDMU in your primary school also include the below voluntary aspects of the RSE programme?

- ▶ Being inclusive is a Core Value in our school and children are taught to respect others.
- ▶ We should be encouraging children to develop resilience, confidence and contentment in who they are.
- ▶ We teach that all people are worthy of respect and hold inherent dignity.
- ▶ By focusing on what we have in common with others rather than highlighting differences, children can learn vital skills and attitudes around respect.
- ▶ We should be encouraging friendship not relationship.
- ▶ The PDMU curriculum as it currently stands is sufficient for teaching children the importance of respecting all people.
- ▶ Schools must be permitted to choose what they teach.

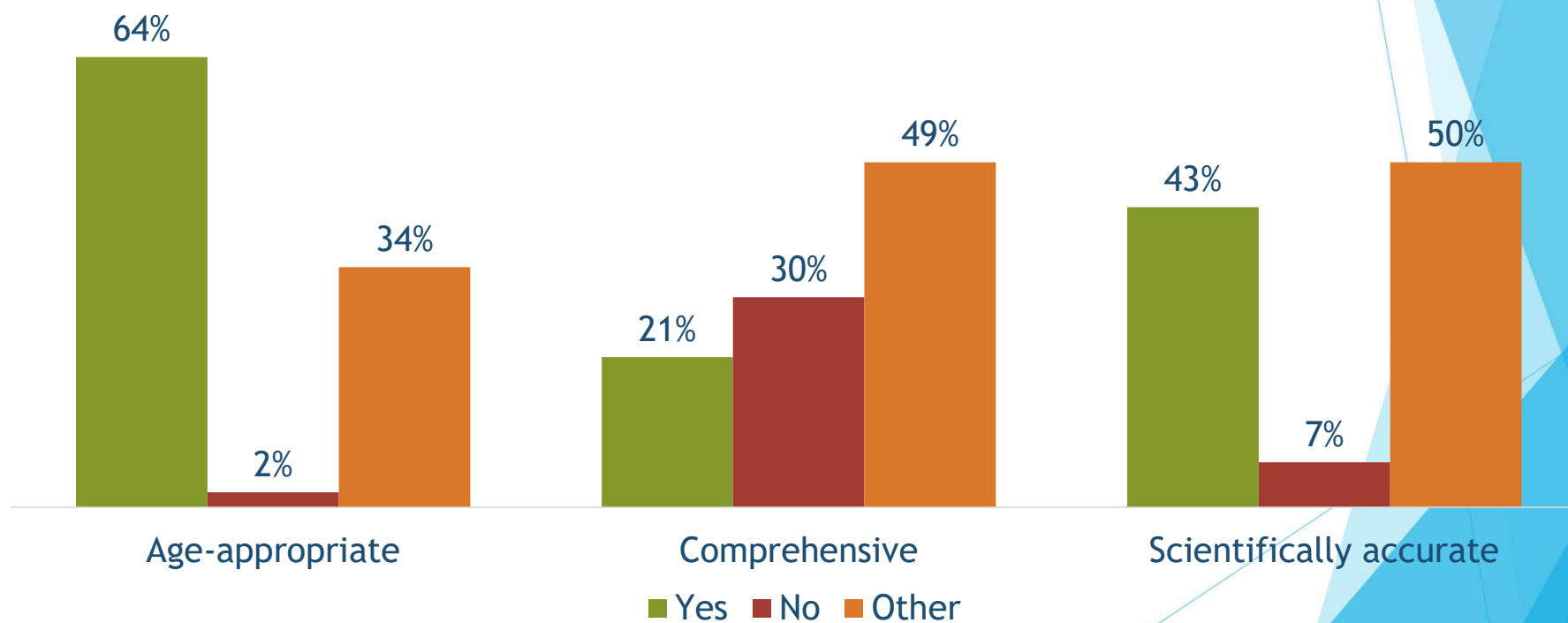
Do you feel equipped and supported to deliver these voluntary aspects of the RSE programme?

- ▶ As a school we always did our best to ensure they were touched upon in a sensitive and child appropriate way.
- ▶ I believe as a teacher we should address issues relevant to their age and what they will encounter
- ▶ It would not be appropriate to 'support' teachers to teach things that they themselves may have issue with or believe to be inappropriate or unhelpful to children.
- ▶ I wouldn't want training on matters which are duties of parents.



* 48 respondents answered this question.

Do you think these topics should be taught in a way which is...

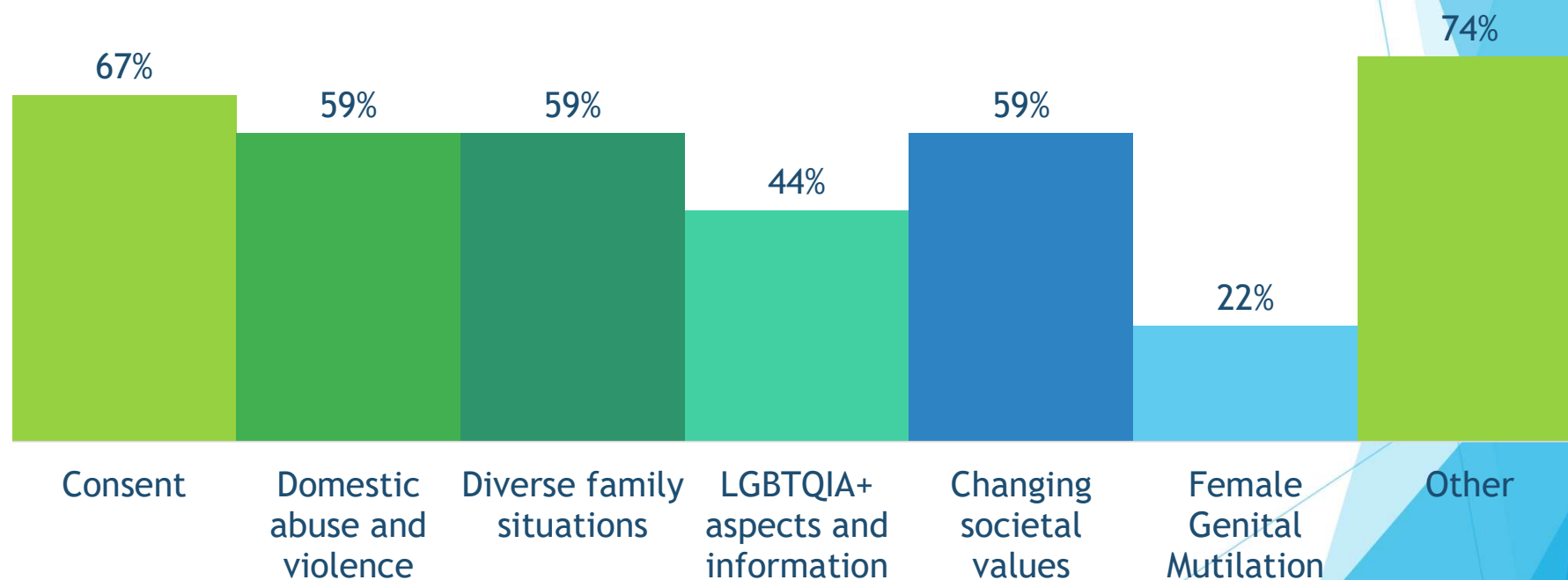


* 47 respondents answered this question.

Do you think these topics should be taught in a way which is age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate?

- ▶ The most important issue here is a discussion over what exactly is age appropriate, with people having varying opinions on this and also disagreeing over who is responsible for deciding this.
- ▶ Parents of children have a right and should be able to decide this themselves.
- ▶ I think some children may benefit from more information, but the majority are just too young.
- ▶ Primary school teachers do not feel it is their role nor feel equipped to perform this role.
- ▶ Primary school needs separate consideration and decisions on what is taught must be agreed on a school-by-school basis and amongst the school community.
- ▶ Staff must be allowed to express their opinions and if a school has a Christian ethos all things must be taught in this context.
- ▶ These issues contain scientific elements but are also societal and ethical issues which are shaped by the world view of the person presenting the information and the person being taught.

In your experience, does LLW in your post-primary school include the voluntary aspects of RSE such as...?



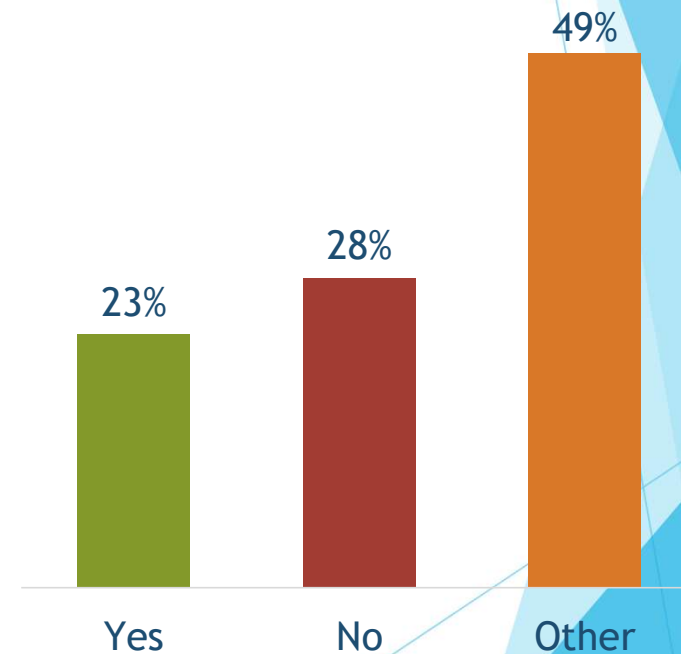
* 27 respondents answered this question.

In your experience, does LLW in your post-primary school include the voluntary aspects of RSE such as...?

- ▶ Age-appropriate aspects are taught in keeping with the school ethos which is respected and valued by the school community.
- ▶ Schools should not become political entities aiming to indoctrinate the next generation into a particular way of thinking.
- ▶ The views of the minority should not be a guide for future policy making.
- ▶ Why are changing societal values mentioned, but traditional or Christian values are not?
- ▶ There is a big difference between the secular and religious view of the body.
- ▶ My primary reason of teaching RSE is about keeping a child safe and helping them make informed choices.
- ▶ Pupils should always feel they can approach teachers about the other issues.

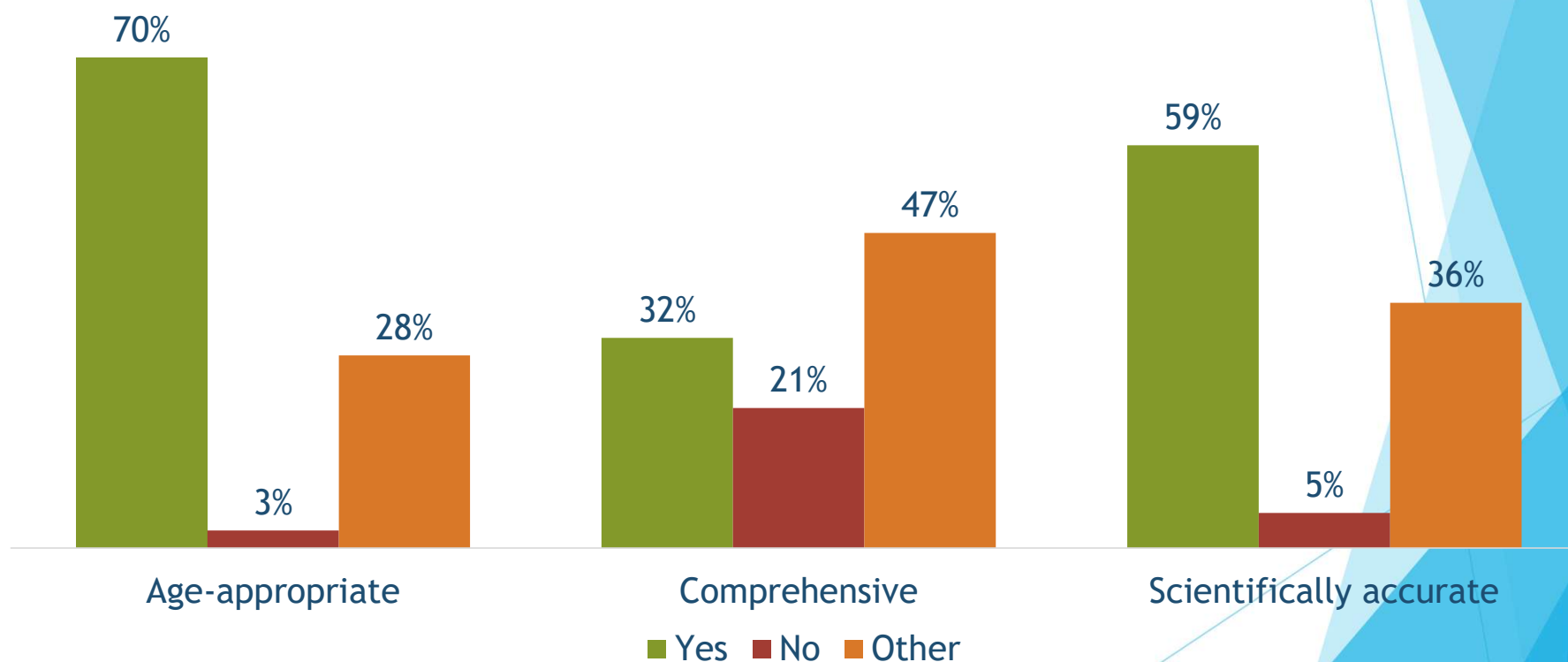
Do you feel equipped and supported to deliver these voluntary aspects of the RSE programme?

- ▶ I think there must be scope for each school to decide how these topics are taught.
- ▶ I am very aware that parents are quick to react around many of the sensitive areas which leaves it to a teacher/SMT/BOGs to make very challenging decisions which often are not backed sufficiently.
- ▶ Parents should be informed and decide the appropriate time for their child to hear and receive such information.
- ▶ Parents also have a range of opinions, and this leaves teachers very exposed to follow their demands.



* 39 respondents answered this question.

Do you think Learning for Life and Work (LLW) should be taught in a way which is...?



* 27 respondents answered this question.

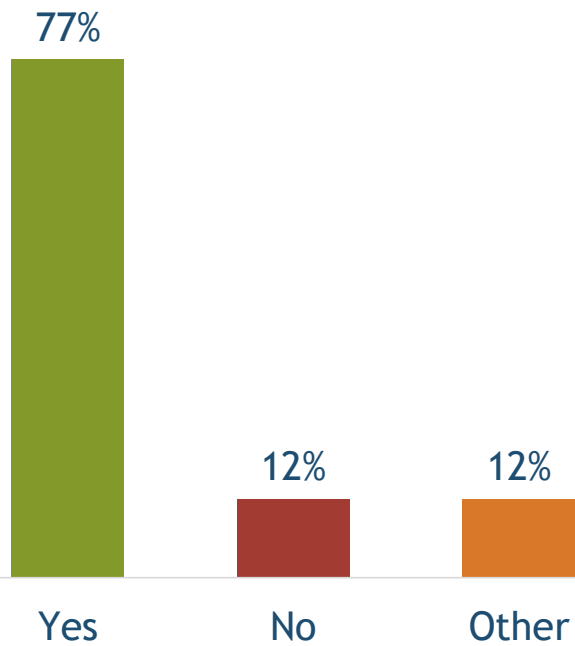
Do you think Learning for Life and Work (LLW) should be taught in a way which is...?

- ▶ By secondary school children are much more mature and can deal with the information better if delivered appropriately and sensitively with enough additional support for those who need it.
- ▶ People may not agree on what is 'age appropriate' or 'comprehensive'. Parents should have the final say on what is appropriate for their own children.
- ▶ What is meant by comprehensive - who determines the extent of comprehensive?
- ▶ I don't believe that some of the topics should be taught at all, and I believe that others must consider religious sensitivities.
- ▶ Many of these topics are more suited to conversations within the home.
- ▶ LLW should be taught as comprehensively as is suitable for the ages involved.

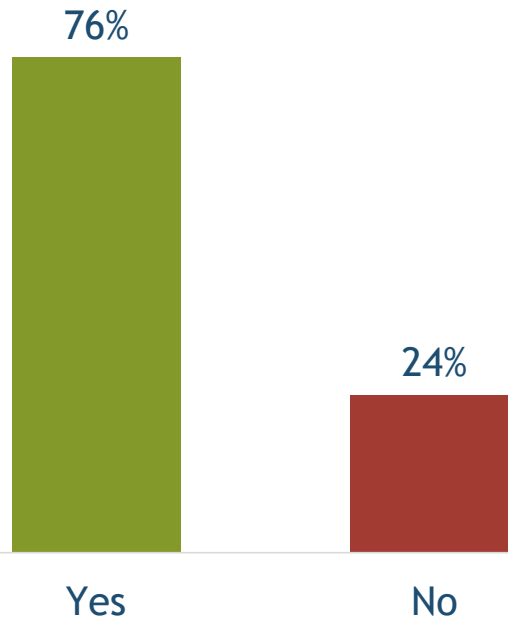


Policy Implementation and School Compliance

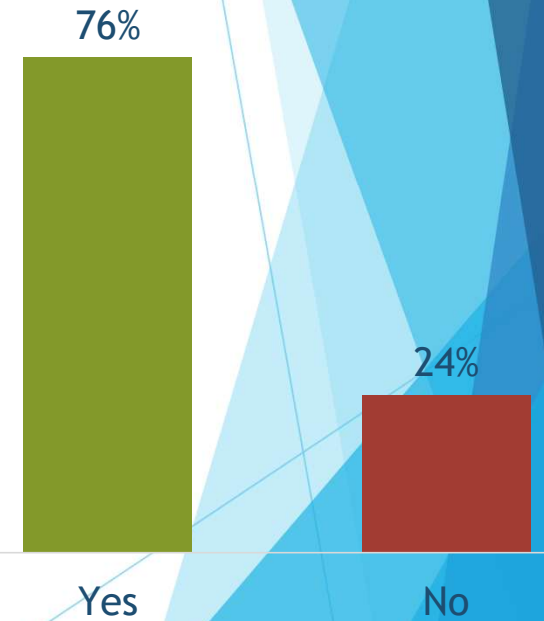
Are you aware of your school's Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) policy?



Have you read the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) policy?



Have you read the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) policy?



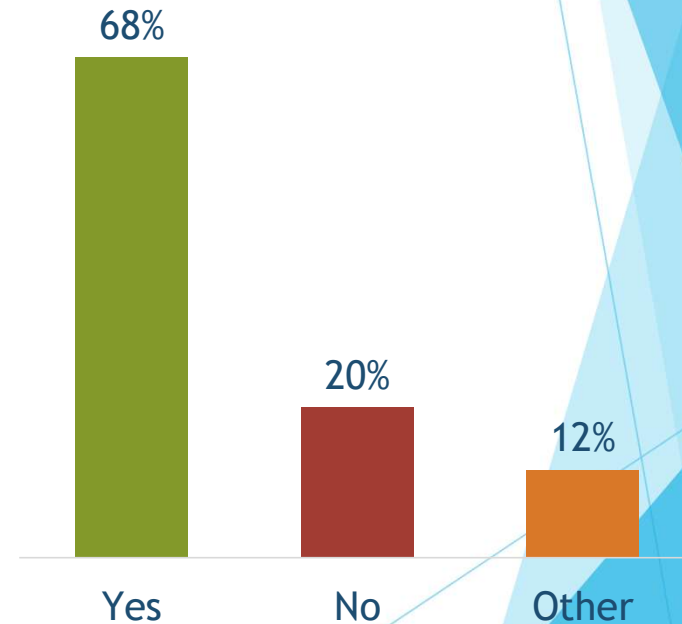
*60 respondents answered this question.

How do you feel that your ethos of your schools has influenced the development of RSE Policy?

- ▶ The ethos of a school should underpin and influence every policy in school.
- ▶ RSE cannot be delivered in the absence of a value system. There is a moral dimension to this area, and therefore it is appropriate for the school's ethos to have an influence.
- ▶ When parents choose a school with a particular ethos and staff are employed there with that ethos in place it stands to reason that the ethos will shape all policies developed.
- ▶ It is not a case of science or school ethos. Both can work together.
- ▶ The School Ethos was formed in collaboration with parents, governors, pupils and staff and the RSE policy is reflective of the school ethos.
- ▶ My school prides itself on having a very diverse range of pupils of many ethnic and religious backgrounds. We were told that parents could opt their pupils out of the lessons on religious grounds.
- ▶ I believe that the children are further along the inclusion route than politicians, schools, and parents.

Do you have any concerns about the RSE programme?

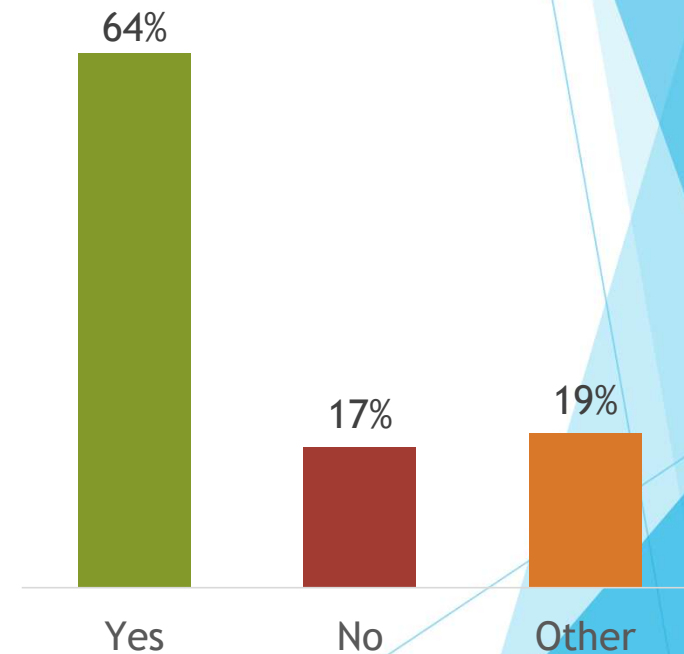
- ▶ "Support" from DE is usually overly prescriptive and ideologically motivated.
- ▶ I am currently very happy with my school's provision as it reflects both parental wishes and the school ethos.
- ▶ I'm concerned that there won't be sufficient resources to teach this in a way I am comfortable with.
- ▶ In secondary level schools, I feel it is necessary to equip young people with knowledge about contraception, consent etc.
- ▶ I am concerned that traditional family values within a Christian setting are not promoted enough.



* 59 respondents answered this question.

Would you feel comfortable voicing these concerns with school leadership?

- ▶ I feel there may be a bias against a Christian perspective.
- ▶ No concerns at this stage but if I did, I feel I could discuss these with School Leadership.
- ▶ I don't have any concerns at this stage but feel that should I have concerns in the future I would be comfortable raising these with the school leadership.
- ▶ For a staff member to raise an objection could create a difficult working environment.

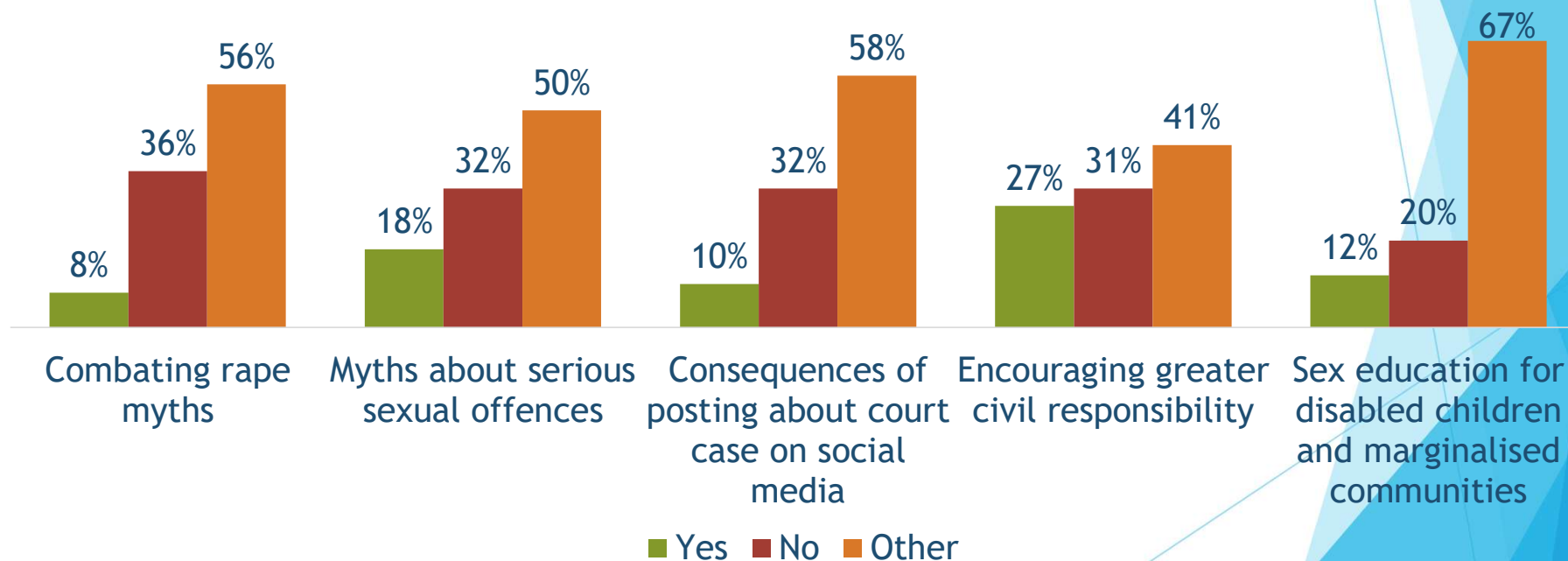


*59 respondents answered this question.

What do you feel are the positive aspects of the way in which RSE is delivered in your school?

- ▶ RSE in our school is delivered in an age appropriate manner, which respects each child.
- ▶ Parents have been given the opportunity to contribute to the RSE policy development and there have been no concerns.
- ▶ It is in line with the school's ethos and has the backing of governors, staff and parents.
- ▶ Treating others with respect, caring for others, safeguarding.
- ▶ It's done at an age appropriate level.
- ▶ Children have great knowledge of online safety.
- ▶ We believe by the time our Year 7 pupils leave primary school all pupils have a factual understanding of their uniqueness and how special they are.
- ▶ It opens the door to conversations and allows children to speak and think.
- ▶ We teach mutual respect and understanding. We teach kindness and tolerance.

Has your school amended it's RSE policy to reflect the following recommendations from Lord Justice Gillen's 2019 inquiry into Serious Sexual Offences?



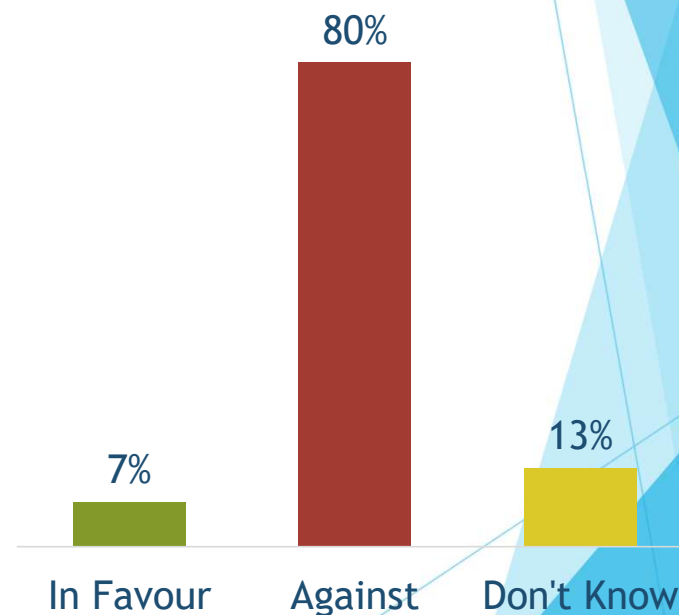
*50 respondents answered this question.

Has your school amended its RSE policy to reflect the following recommendations from Lord Justice Gillen's 2019 inquiry into Serious Sexual Offences?

- ▶ We need to protect the more innocent children and let them be children, whilst supporting and providing sufficient support and education for those who perhaps could benefit from more.
- ▶ Tolerance and love towards all is important and choosing respect is taught.
- ▶ Our SEN pupils are supported in a variety of ways to understand important learning about keeping safe.
- ▶ There are things children do not need to know or have taught. The adults responsible need to pastor our children.
- ▶ Any teaching on sexuality, gender identity and transgenderism must be rooted in science and not flawed agenda.
- ▶ We do teach the pupils to 'share' information or concerns with trusted adults and help them to feel empowered to have a voice in many aspects of daily life

Some commentators recommend the introduction of a standardised model of RSE across schools in the jurisdiction. Would you be...?

- ▶ Each school's RSE policy should be appropriate to its context, therefore schools should be able to develop their own policy, as with every other school policy.
- ▶ Unlikely that a standardised model would fit into all schools' ethos.
- ▶ A standardised model reduces the flexibility for schools and parents to shape education in a way that is suitable for their setting.
- ▶ One size does not fit all.
- ▶ With so many Newcomer children in our schools and various cultures represented, a standardised model may not consider their backgrounds and level of understanding.
- ▶ A school being told what to do and teach for RSE removes the voice of the individual school.



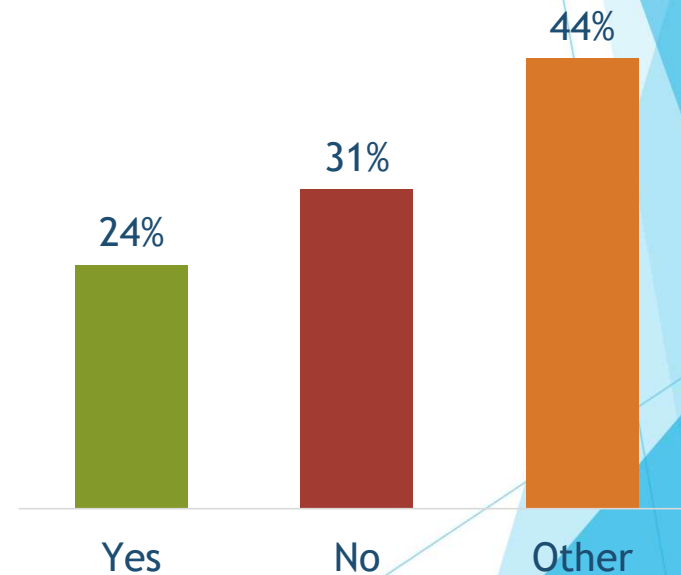
*50 respondents answered this question.

Resources and Support for RSE



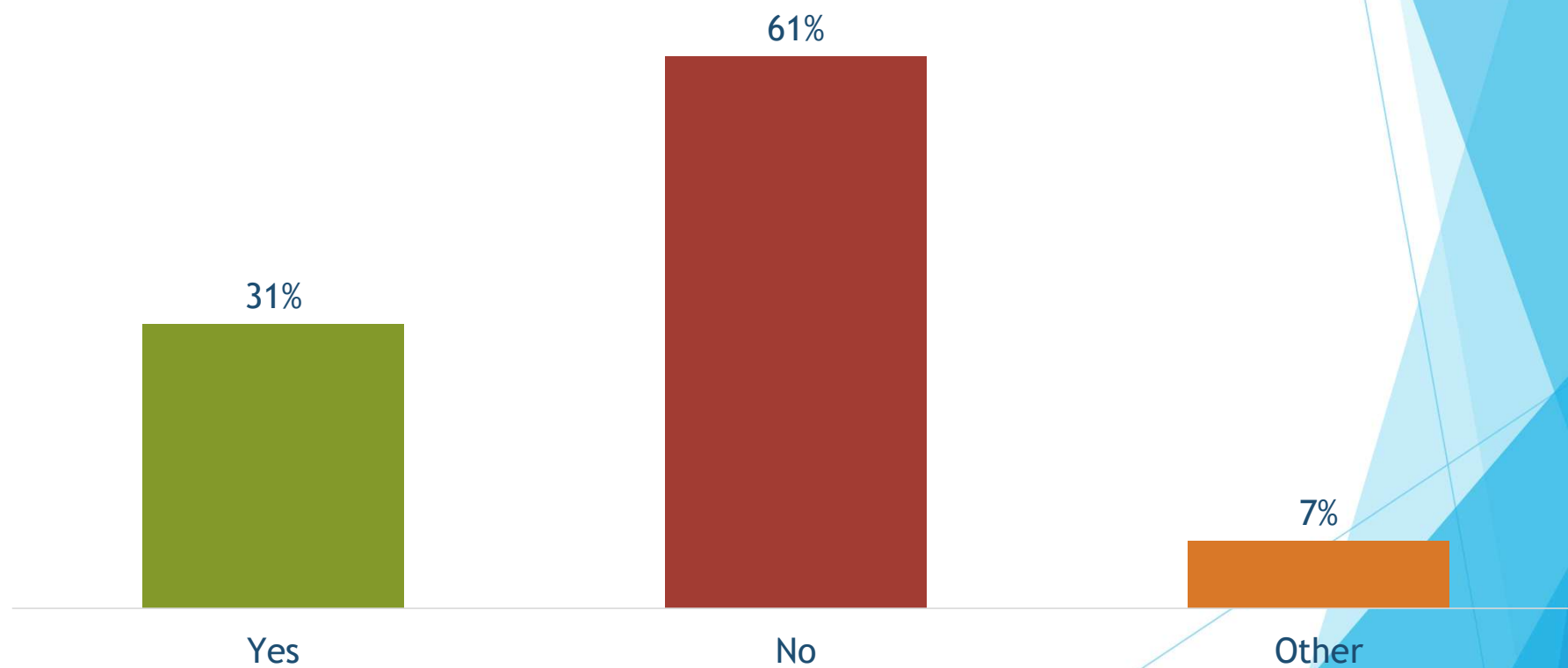
Beyond minimum content, teachers are expected to ‘provide a balance of experiences’ drawn from a list of examples prepared by CCEA.
Do you feel that you are both supported and have enough access to resources to do this?

- ▶ I am not quite sure about the balance aspect.
- ▶ Teachers prepare and work hard to organise the teaching of any subject including RSE. CCEA has prepared very good resources.
- ▶ My understanding was that it was available as an optional resource bank, which teacher could use if they wished to.
- ▶ Material coming from DE and CCEA is typically one-sided and not providing a balance of views and experiences.
- ▶ CCEA have a plethora of existing materials for teachers to use if they wish to; it should not be compulsory to use them.
- ▶ I was not aware that it was a legal requirement to use the CCEA materials.



*54 respondents answered this question.

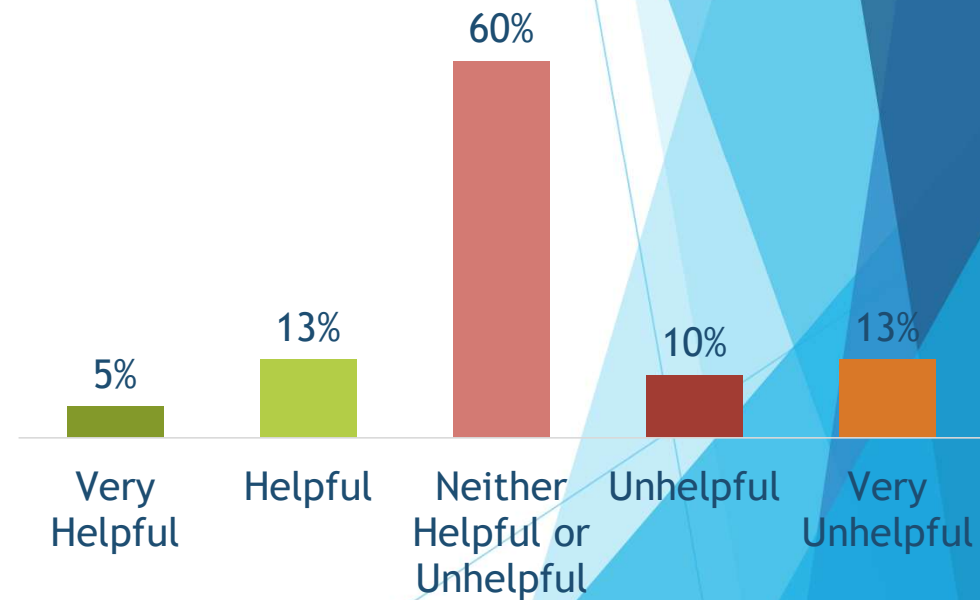
Did you avail of the CCEA RSE Hub?



*54 respondents answered this question.

How would you rate the CCEA RSE Hub?

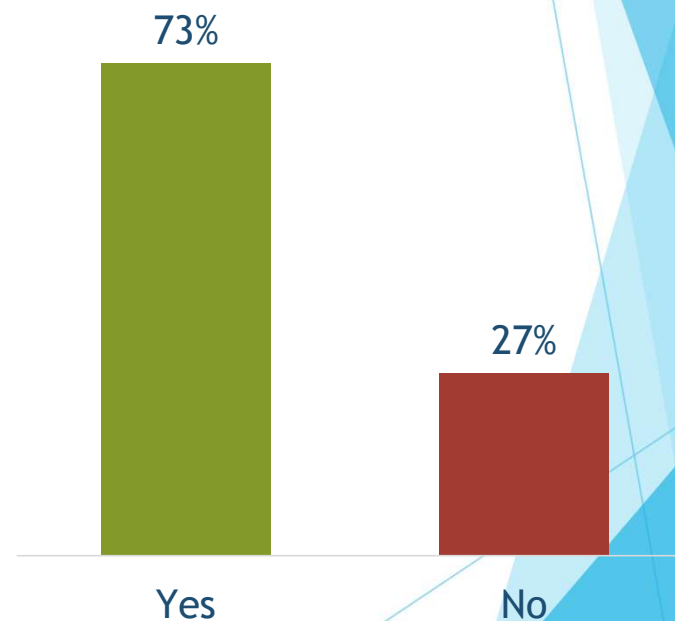
- ▶ It is written from a perspective that excludes God and is biased in terms of outlook and values.
- ▶ Some materials are helpful, but there are serious omissions including information about marriage and parenting. There is also material on gender and abortion which fails to be impartial.
- ▶ Some things are good. Some issues are not impartial like abortion and gender issues, posing a risk.
- ▶ Helpful but where is marriage and where are parents/parenting celebrated? Both are much more common and widely valued in our culture than many of the other issues discussed in the Hub's materials.
- ▶ I feel I already had all the materials I needed.



*40 respondents answered this question.

Have you used alternative materials in the teaching of RSE?

- ▶ We use the Paths programme from Barnardo's, Love for Life and an independent provider for some aspects of PDMU.
- ▶ We use PDMU PATHS to teach about healthy relationships and how to treat others.
- ▶ School created materials
- ▶ Love for Life, Made for More, Portadown Temperance Council
- ▶ Love for life & NSPCC pants programme
- ▶ Scripture Union resources and Bible Time
- ▶ Newspapers, commercial resources, internet resources e.g. health etc
- ▶ Materials from Hope North West and Love for Life.
- ▶ BBC Bitesize



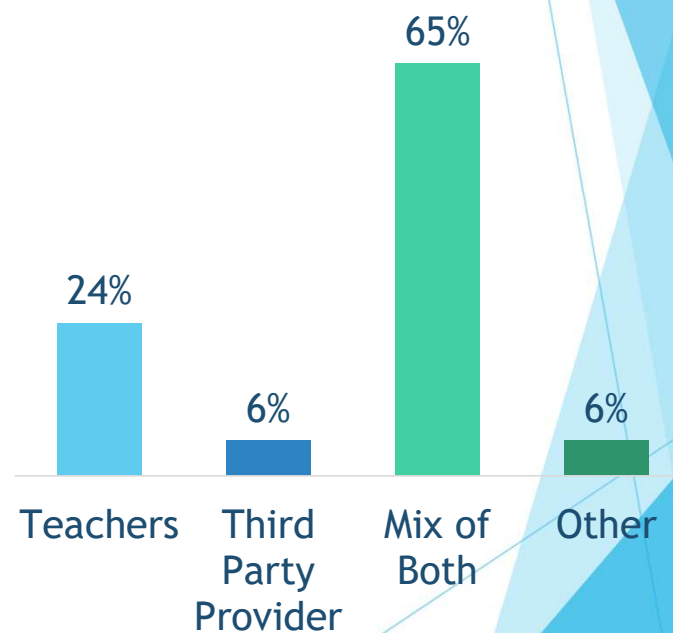
*40 respondents answered this question.

How did you access these resources?

- ▶ School
- ▶ CCMS
- ▶ RSE Co-Ordinator
- ▶ Staff training
- ▶ Personal research
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Church
- ▶ Advertising
- ▶ Professional reading
- ▶ Recommendations from other teachers
- ▶ School Intranet
- ▶ General knowledge
- ▶ YouTube

Who delivers the RSE programme in your school?

- ▶ Mainly class teachers, with Love for Life supporting Upper KS2.
- ▶ This is delivered mainly by class teachers. We also have support from Scripture Union and Love for Life.
- ▶ Love for Life cover some content for Yr8, 10 and 12.
- ▶ We have outside agencies who come in and deliver some aspects.
- ▶ Predominantly teachers. Love for Life come and talk to the older pupils.
- ▶ Love for Life, Portadown Temperance Society, PSNI, Reach, Dairy Council, NSPCC



*48 respondents answered this question.

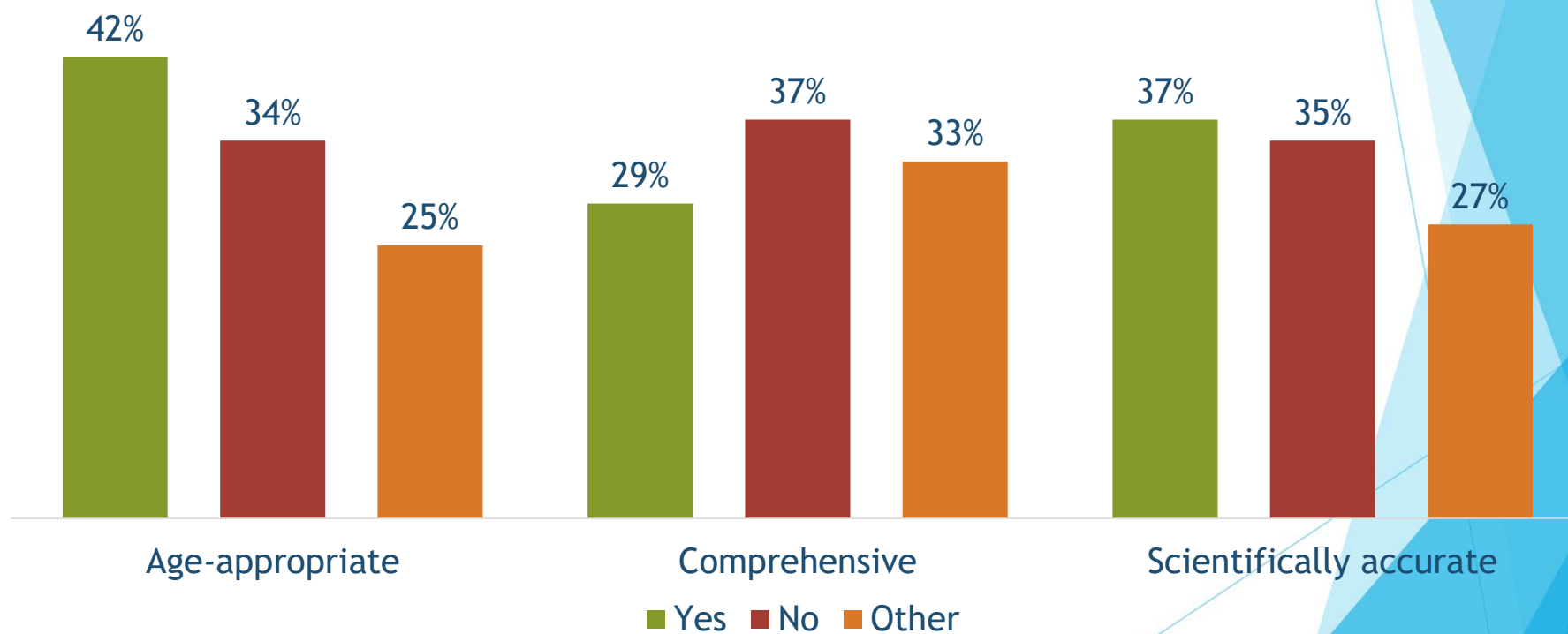
If a third-party provider delivers RSE in your school, what is your assessment of this?

- ▶ Well done. Parents are informed in advance and given an option of opting out.
- ▶ Excellent organisations which engage the students.
- ▶ Some third-party providers have clear anti-religious bias. Some have presented their (often controversial) opinions as facts and left those with different opinions feeling marginalized and excluded.
- ▶ Love for Life - a Christian organisation that comes into our school once a year to do sessions with KS2 children. Information is clearly presented, age-appropriate and covers all necessary elements that children of this age need to be aware of.
- ▶ I appreciate that my school takes responsibility and consults parents to ensure that this third-party organisation provides RSE that is age appropriate for our children.
- ▶ We choose our third-party providers carefully based on their reputation for accuracy and effective delivery, community context and alignment with the school ethos. Staff, including senior staff will sit in the presentations/ discussions to feedback to the provider and to the school management. We have found them to be good.



Teacher Training

As a teacher, do you feel adequately trained and equipped to deliver sensitive RSE content that is:



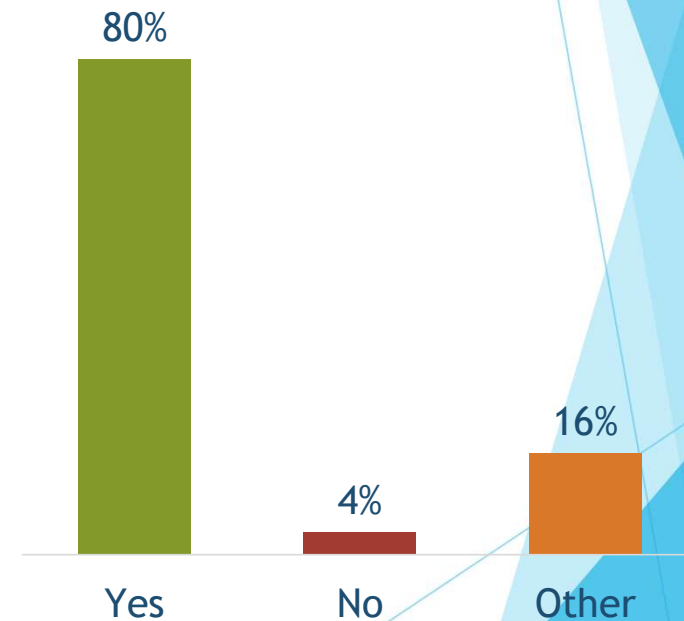
*52 respondents answered this question.

As a teacher, do you feel adequately trained and equipped to deliver sensitive RSE content that is:

- ▶ It is difficult to answer this question as the three headings are subjective.
- ▶ Shouldn't be a teacher's role. Health needs to step up.
- ▶ Parents and teachers are best placed to work out what is age appropriate. Parents know their children the best.
- ▶ As a professional teacher, delivery of RSE in a clear, factual manner is not beyond my remit, although I am not teaching this at present.
- ▶ Teachers and parents are the best judge of what is age-appropriate for the children in their care, not external organisations/government bodies.
- ▶ More training by DE is not needed as most teachers and parents already have a good understanding of what is "Age-appropriate".
- ▶ We are teaching everything within our PDMU and NSPCC lessons that we feel are needed.

Do you support the right to conscientious objection in the teaching of RSE?

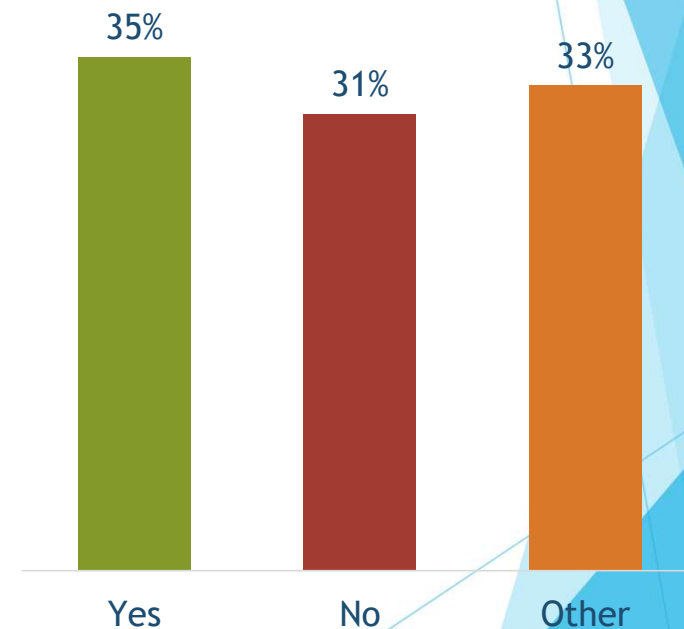
- ▶ Parents should have the right to know what is being taught and object as appropriate.
- ▶ Our voices have not been heard. I do not feel comfortable delivering this as do many of my colleagues. We are afraid to speak out; if we do, we are not listened to. Parents are not properly informed.
- ▶ If the content is balanced and genuinely age-appropriate, then no one would feel the need to object. That should be the goal.
- ▶ I believe that it is necessary to support students from all belief backgrounds and if they are going to be offended there should be an option to be excused from the class.



*55 respondents answered this question.

If you had the opportunity, would you opt out of teaching RSE?

- ▶ This would entirely depend on resources provided. If this is resourced and planned well, then yes. If it is left up to individual schools to get resources and planning, then no.
- ▶ Absolutely. It goes way beyond what children need to know at such a young age. Apart from anything else it the parents' role to decide when the appropriate time is for their child to get RSE.
- ▶ Yes, if teachers are forced to present as facts material that contradicts their own value system. No, if the material shows respect for different viewpoints and teachers are not expected to present as fact material with which they disagree or see as age-inappropriate.
- ▶ As school principal, I could not endorse or promote the teaching of material that conflicted with our schools ethos, principles and values.
- ▶ Not if I can exercise professional judgement as to what is appropriate or not for my pupils.



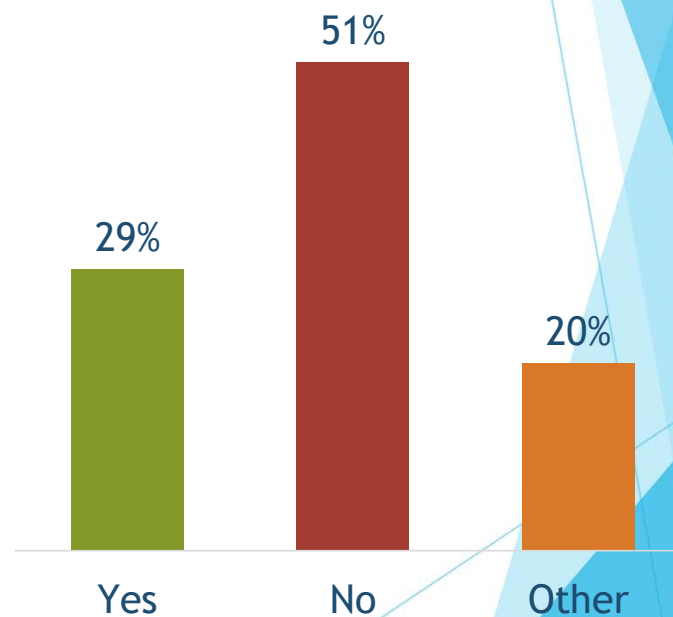
*51 respondents answered this question.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Are pupils involved in co-creating your school's approach to RSE?

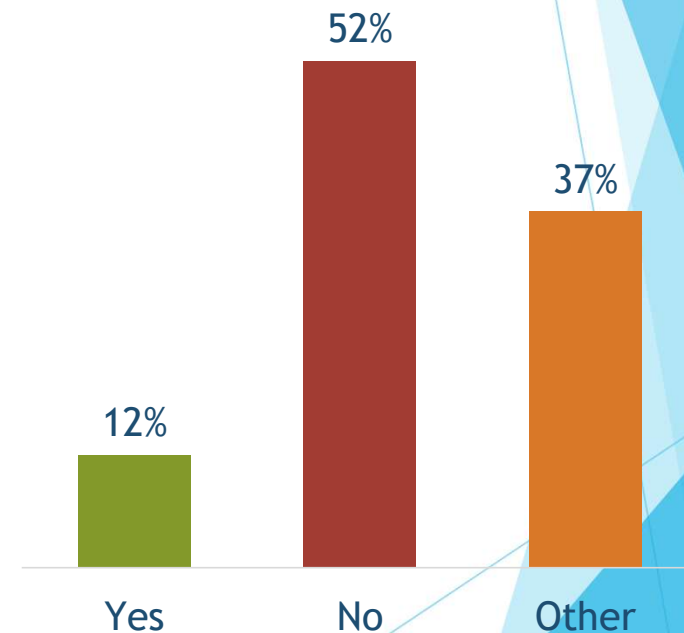
- ▶ It is not a child's role to be responsible for designing a programme of work.
- ▶ As in all areas of the curriculum, pupils can ask questions and have some say in the direction of a lesson; however, given that pupils' emotional maturity and lack of experience of sexual relationships, pupil voice cannot be treated as the deciding factor in what is taught.
- ▶ Pupils can be involved in the process of informing the curriculum in this area, but their views and opinions are not always developed enough to be filled with wisdom and discernment.
- ▶ Pupils are an important part of the approach. Their views, alongside those of parents and teachers, should be considered.
- ▶ Teachers in planning take all children's views and relevant experiences into planning.



*51 respondents answered this question.

Is ETI's monitoring and evaluation of RSE in schools helpful to you as a teacher?

- ▶ The ETI report states that RSE does not need to be more prescriptive- this is a positive. There are also other points that are positive - like menstruation being taught slightly too late.
- ▶ I sat through the ETI monitoring and can't say I learned anything but rather got concerned about what their expectations are.
- ▶ When ETI visit, they will need to take into consideration the school's ethos, core values and the community setting as this will have a bearing on the delivery of RSE.



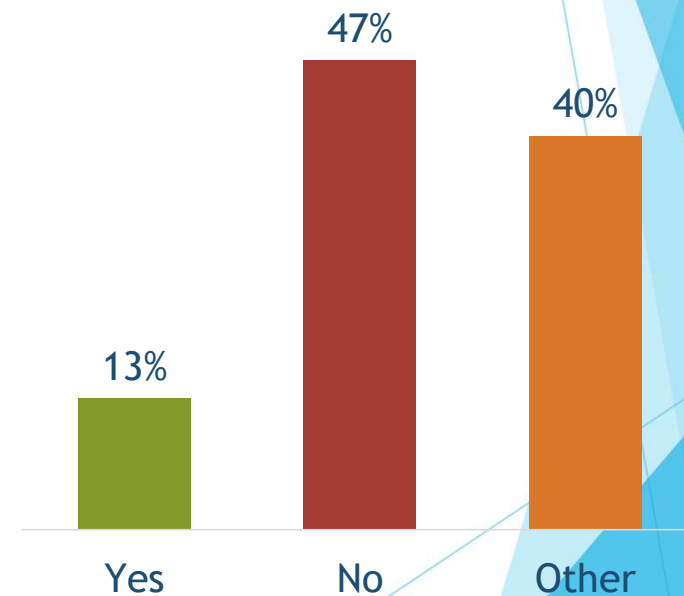
*52 respondents answered this question.

Is there anything you would suggest to improve current monitoring and evaluation?

- ▶ Let teachers and parents use their professional and personal integrity to inform pupils in a child caring way.
- ▶ Remember to keep a faith perspective possible in all decisions.
- ▶ When evaluating RSE, be aware of the school's unique and individual setting and the community it serves.
- ▶ Allow schools to be consistent to their ethos.
- ▶ Listen to staff and how uncomfortable they feel being pressured to teach this.
- ▶ Inform all staff about what each year band is expected to deliver.
- ▶ If there was statutory content and lessons to deliver in an age appropriate way I think we would be more comfortable with ETI monitoring.

Does ETI's feedback improve your confidence in teaching RSE?

- ▶ I am not confident in ETI's impartiality on this issue. I feel they have their own agenda to push, which wishes to undermine traditional values and the Christian ethos of many schools.
- ▶ Depends on who leads and comprises the inspection team.
- ▶ ETI's role is to inspect rather than improve my confidence as a teacher.



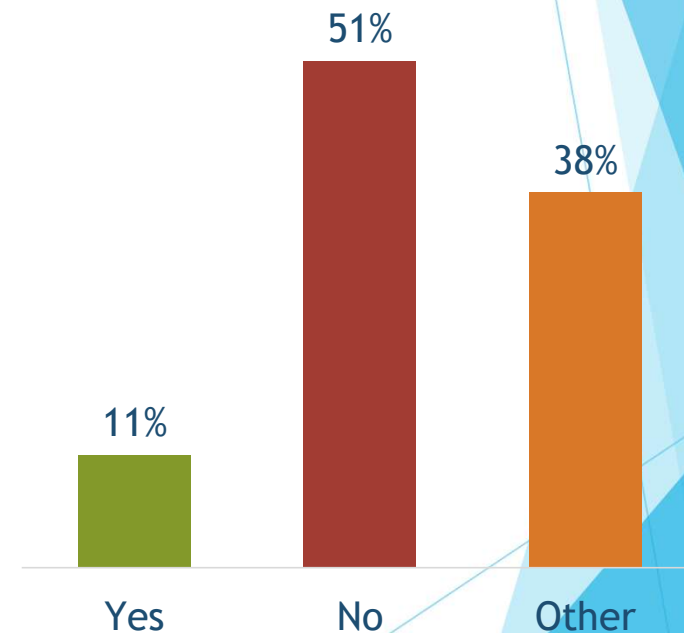
*54 respondents answered this question.



Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusivity

Has your school made any changes to how RSE is delivered based on cultural / religious objections?

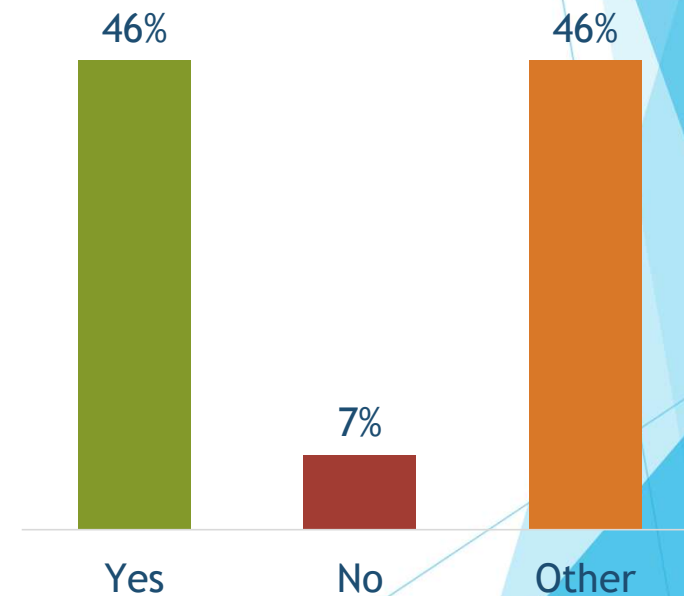
- ▶ We are always respectful of parent's views and objections.
- ▶ We found great commonality among our diverse parents about RSE.
- ▶ We have a large proportion of newcomers. There are no options given to parents.
- ▶ Due to migrants living in our area, we have had to edit our teaching.
- ▶ It has not been necessary so far.
- ▶ Not yet, currently no circumstances to need this.



*53 respondents answered this question.

Does your school teach RSE in a way that respects all genders and sexualities?

- ▶ There are only two genders.
- ▶ In primary school we shouldn't be talking about sexuality.
- ▶ There only two sexes/genders, presenting different sexualities is not appropriate at primary level.
- ▶ Biology demonstrates that there are two sexes in plant life and animal life. Including anything more than this is to adopt a political, non-scientific position - something educators should not do nor encourage others to do.
- ▶ The idea that there are various distinct sexualities is not founded on scientific evidence.
- ▶ As a co educational school it has an obligation to educate both male and female in a respectful way.
- ▶ I believe that there are only two genders so therefore the question about respecting "all genders" is confusing.
- ▶ Children come from homes with two mummies or daddies and those are taught as people's families.

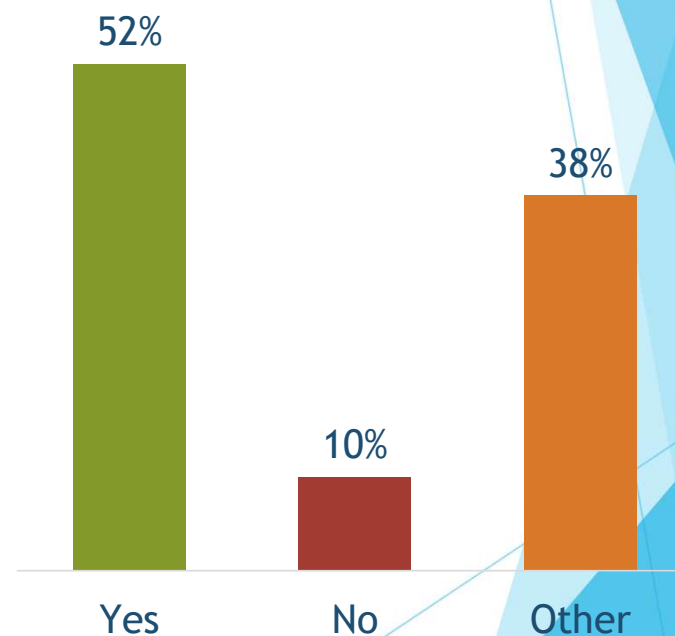


*54 respondents answered this question.

All grant-aided schools are required to maintain a Christian ethos but ideally take account of the diverse family situations within the school community and respond to changing societal values.

Is this reflected in the content and delivery of RSE in your school?

- ▶ My school has a Christian ethos and absolutely takes account of diverse family situations.
- ▶ Schools that are required to maintain a Christian ethos should be able to receive guidance and support from the Christian churches, who in many cases founded the schools.
- ▶ Schools consider the needs of their pupils and their families and support them in an appropriate manner.
- ▶ We have a few same sex parent families in school and we explain that families come in many different shapes and sizes. If there is love, that is what matters most.
- ▶ All schools continually try to meet the needs of the children and families they serve in a respectful and compassionate way. This is reflected in our RSE delivery.



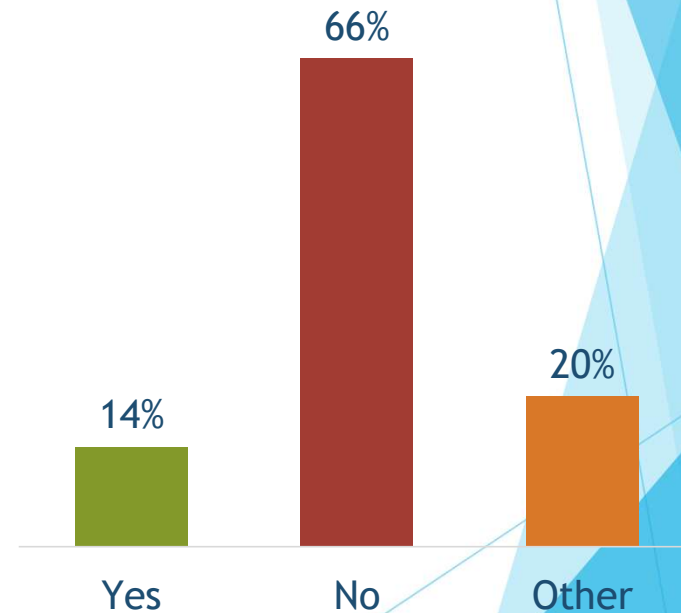
*52 respondents answered this question.



Legislative and Rights-Based Considerations and Opt-Out Provision

Do you believe there is a safeguarding risk for pupils who are withdrawn from Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)?

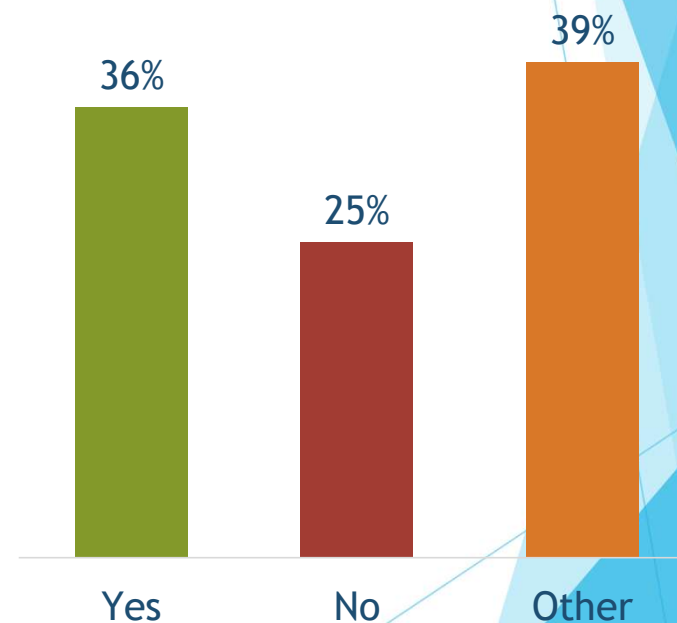
- ▶ Absolutely, knowledge and understanding of safe & healthy relationships by young people is imperative for safeguarding our young people. I would strongly scrutinise the intentions of anyone who sought to prevent this for their child.
- ▶ Parents can pick elements - such as abortion and contraception- that they wish to remove their children from.
- ▶ Opt-out would not mean opting out of all RSE.
- ▶ Yes, children need to be taught about speaking out, pants are private etc. but any more becomes too much. I believe over teaching RSE in primary school is a safeguarding issue.
- ▶ Safeguarding is a complex and multifaceted issue that is engrained in the running of day-to-day school life.



*59 respondents answered this question.

Does your school have a policy on opt-outs?

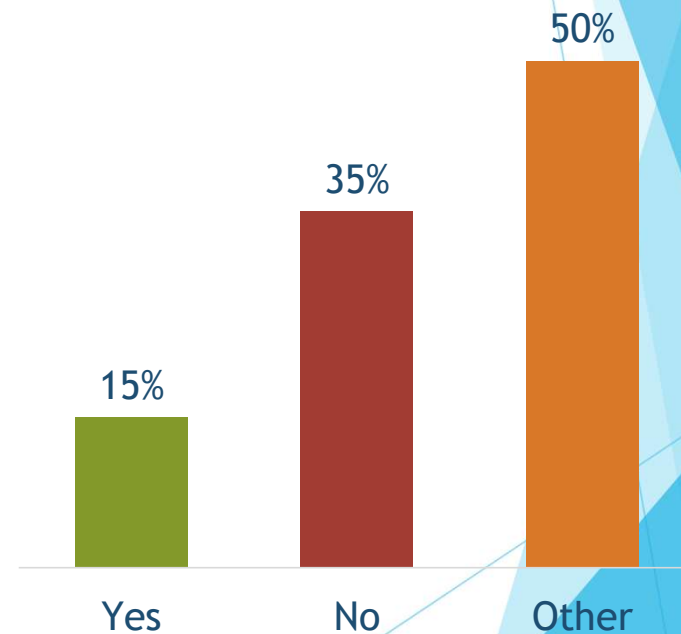
- ▶ We have some children who opt out of RE lessons and we have a policy for that.
- ▶ There is no formal policy, but parental views and permissions are sought for any sensitive areas. This is wise and respectful.
- ▶ Children do opt out of loosely Christian assembly but take part talking about their own faith.
- ▶ We work as a community and listen to the voice of all.
- ▶ There is no formal policy but at times children are withdrawn by parents from certain elements of RSE not the whole subject. Parents will provide their consent via a written permission slip.
- ▶ We work with our families to support and reach mutually agreeable outcomes in all areas of school life.



*56 respondents answered this question.

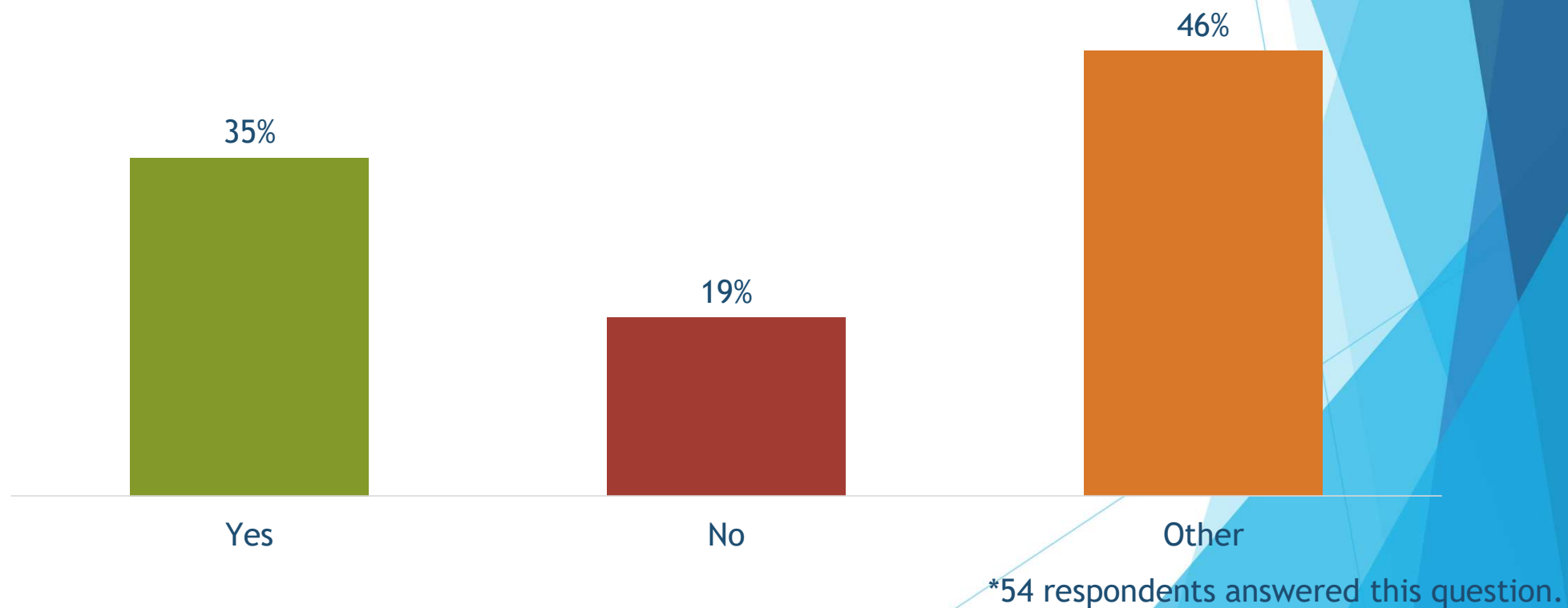
Does your school collect and monitor data on opt-outs?

- ▶ Yes - for P7 changes workshop.
- ▶ Only partial opt-out of certain aspects. Written requests would be kept.
- ▶ I am aware of Christian colleagues who would like to withdraw their children but fear that they would have to endure peer pressure and negative commentary if they do.
- ▶ It is not a school's responsibility to collect such data.... to do so is affording too much control to government. It is important to respect decisions and protect the privacy of those decisions. Parents do not send their children to school to be reported on in this way.



*54 respondents answered this question.

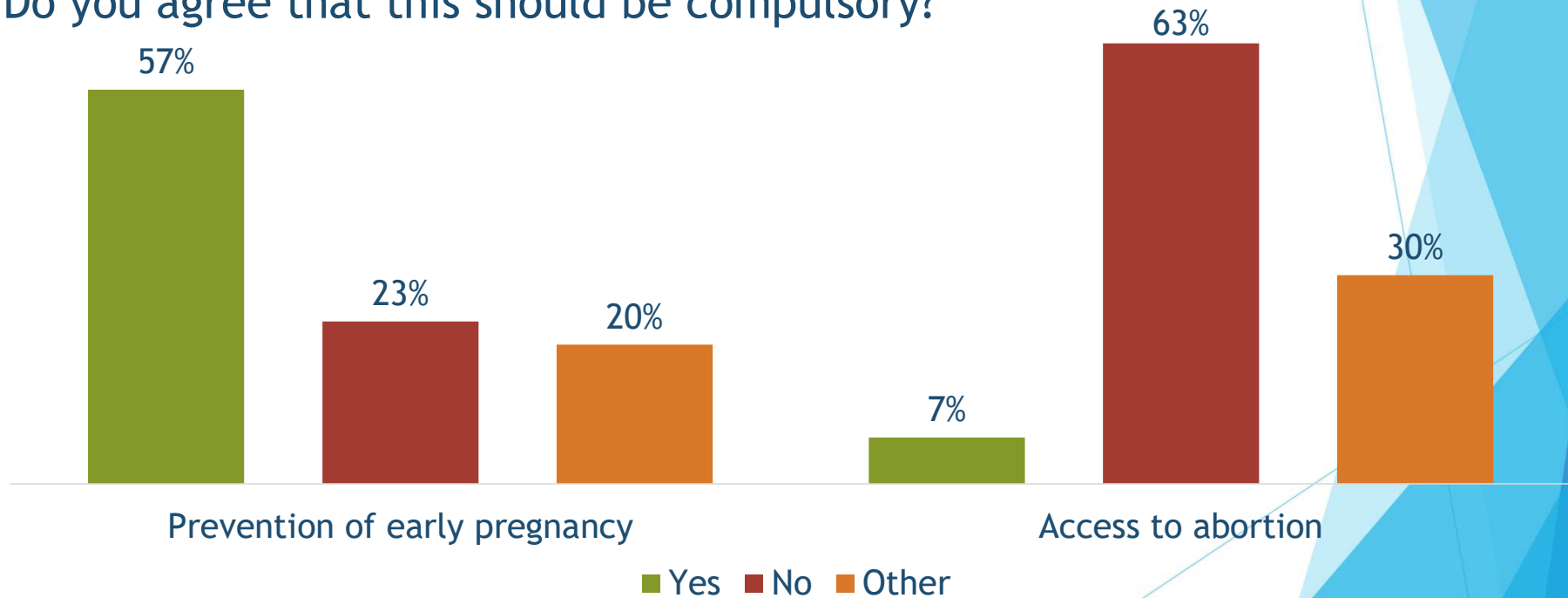
Do you / your principal always meet with the parent and the pupil to discuss logistics of opt-outs?





For Post
Primary
Teachers

The UK Government recently made compulsory in the NI curriculum scientifically accurate, age appropriate and comprehensive RSE, to include the topic of prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion at KS3 and 4. Do you agree that this should be compulsory?

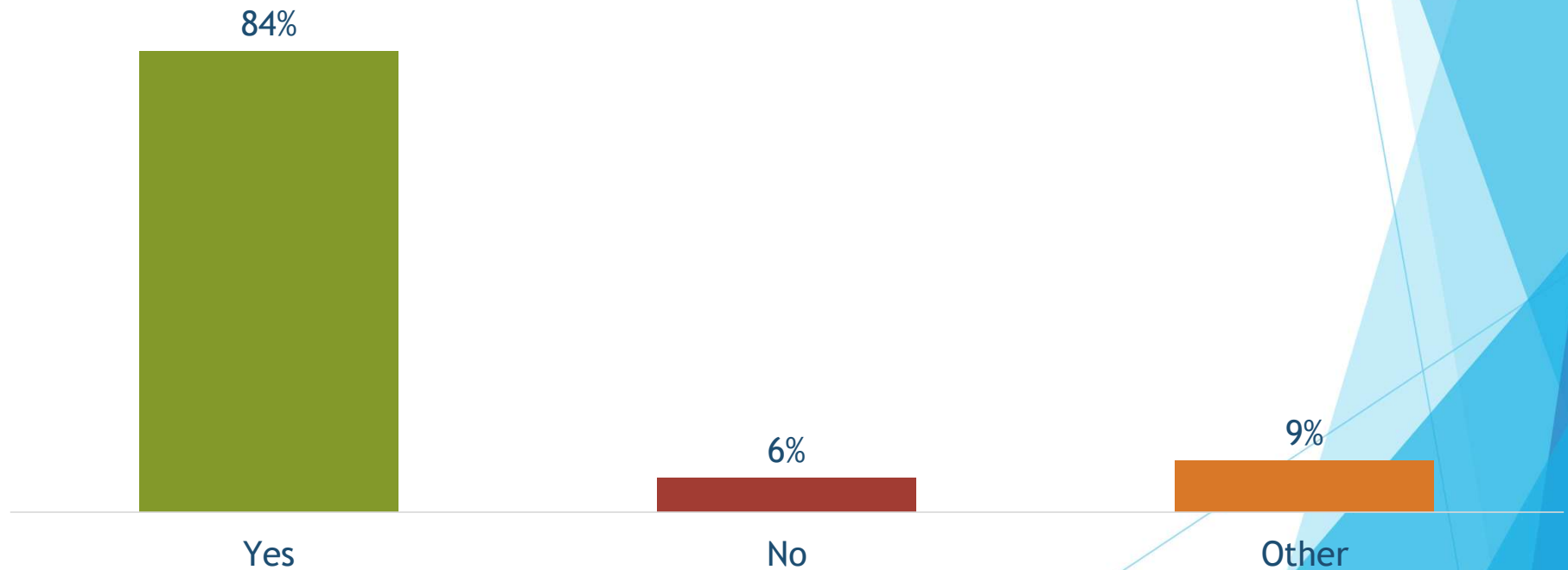


*30 respondents answered this question.

The UK Government recently made compulsory in the NI curriculum scientifically accurate, age appropriate and comprehensive RSE, to include the topic of prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion at KS3 and 4. Do you agree that this should be compulsory?

- ▶ Schools should not be compelled to direct pupils to access abortion services. If a child is pregnant that is a matter for the family to address and the police to pursue. It would be in the child's interest to keep the school informed.
- ▶ This depends on what access to abortion means.
- ▶ Why isn't abstinence included here?
- ▶ Abortion should be presented as killing an unborn child. Sensitive discussion around the instances where this is very difficult should be discussed age appropriately. e.g. in cases of rape.
- ▶ This is a morally complex topic and is more suited to conversations in the home and with older age groups only.
- ▶ I think the preventive measures should be focused on a lot more than abortion.

The Department provided for parents to withdraw their child from this “compulsory” component. Do you agree that there should be a right to withdraw from this specific component?



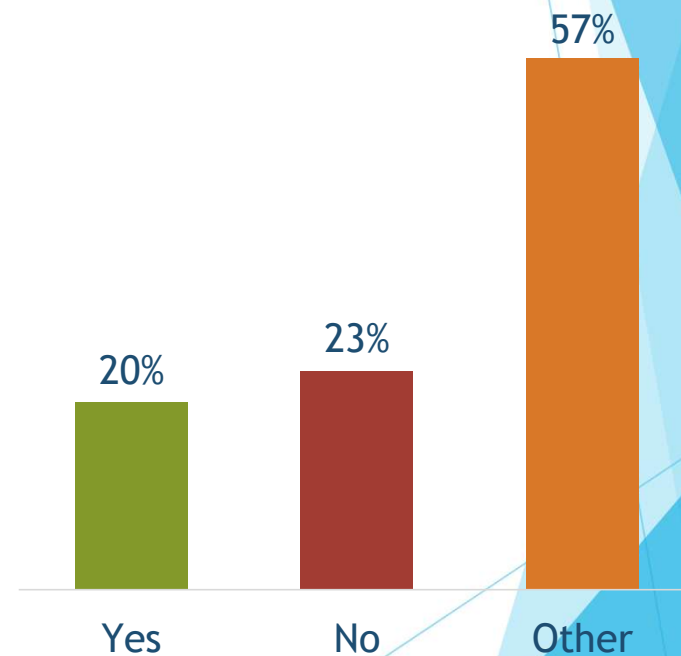
*32 respondents answered this question.

The Department provided for parents to withdraw their child from this “compulsory” component. Do you agree that there should be a right to withdraw from this specific component?

- ▶ Yes, respect of the parent.
- ▶ The parental right to withdraw acts as a disincentive for the promotion of radical approaches.
- ▶ Parents are the chief educators of their children; they delegate that right to schools. Schools should not be acting in contradiction to parents' beliefs and wishes. Parents should always have the right to withdraw their children if they are unhappy.
- ▶ That depends on the reason for opting out and the way the material is delivered.
- ▶ Parents have a responsibility to discuss these issues with their children.
- ▶ Pupils will inevitably hear from their peers, and the information may not be accurately conveyed

Do you feel adequately supported and equipped to deliver this material?

- ▶ The phrases "scientifically accurate" and "age-appropriate" are open to many interpretations.
- ▶ Abortion is the ending of the life of an unborn baby and this subject cannot be approached in the absence of a moral discussion.
- ▶ I don't believe teachers should be being asked to teach this
- ▶ I am not trained for this and not had an opportunity to train for this.
- ▶ We feel equipped to discuss issues in a respectful way, and in line with our school ethos.
- ▶ Goes against Christian beliefs.



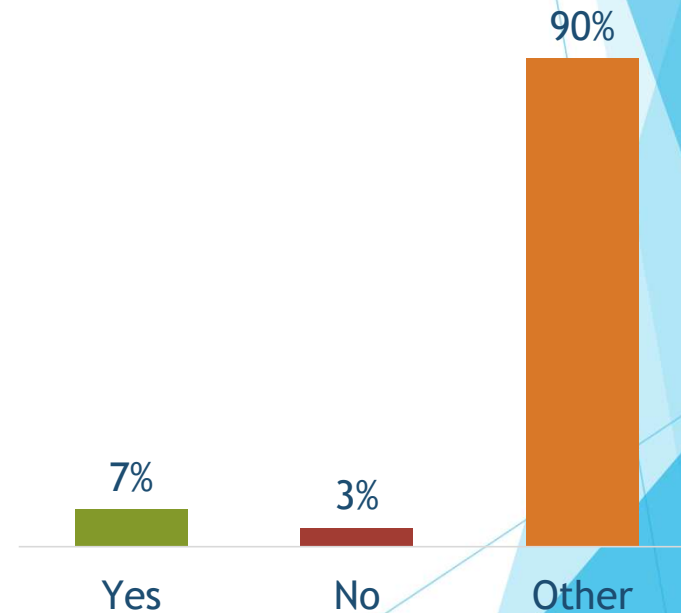
*30 respondents answered this question.

What would you need to equip you to deliver this material?

- ▶ Open courses within directed time, taught in a way that is respectful to a faith centred viewpoint.
- ▶ Training, lessons, videos, pupil booklets.
- ▶ A different delivery method.
- ▶ I don't want to be equipped as I am against it.

Are there new resources on the CCEA RSE hub to help you deliver this component of the curriculum?

- ▶ I've never had reason to check for materials.
- ▶ The CCEA RSE hub contains scientifically inaccurate material.
- ▶ I am teaching 9 classes up to A Level and GCSE and RSE is an added burden that I don't have time to prepare or think about.



*30 respondents answered this question.

Please
comment on
the type and
effectiveness
of these
resources

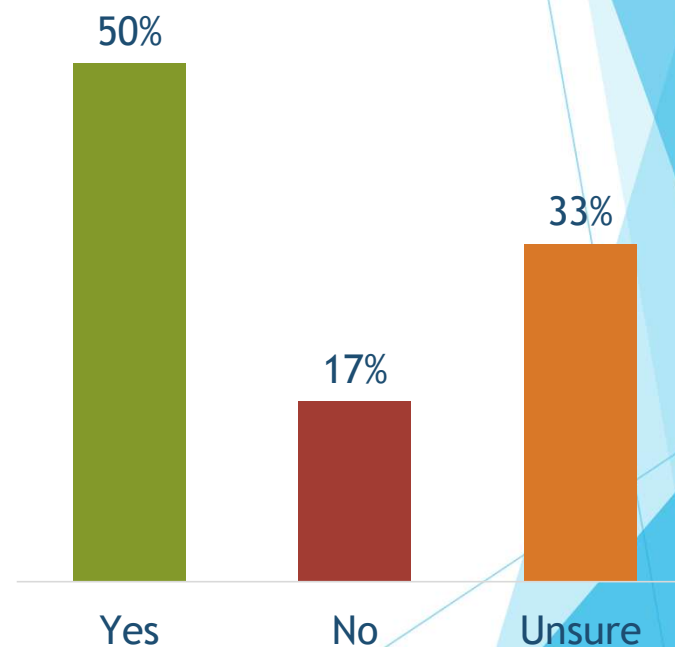
- ▶ CCEA has put in a lot of work to the resources, and they are helpful to support the delivery of RSE.
- ▶ There is no requirement to teach anything about marriage between a man and a woman which is and has been the building block of society for millennia. There is no justification for this. There is a lot of evidence showing the benefits of marriage for both the couple & wider society e.g. more likely to stay together, less likely to be in poverty etc Pupils need to explore these facts. Most pupils will become parents, so this is a crucial area for consideration.

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent blue geometric shapes, primarily triangles and trapezoids, in various shades of blue. These shapes are layered to create a sense of depth and movement, with some appearing to recede into the background while others are more prominent. The overall effect is a modern, abstract design that complements the text.

Consent and Violence Against Women and Girls

Does your school include education on consent in its Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) teaching?

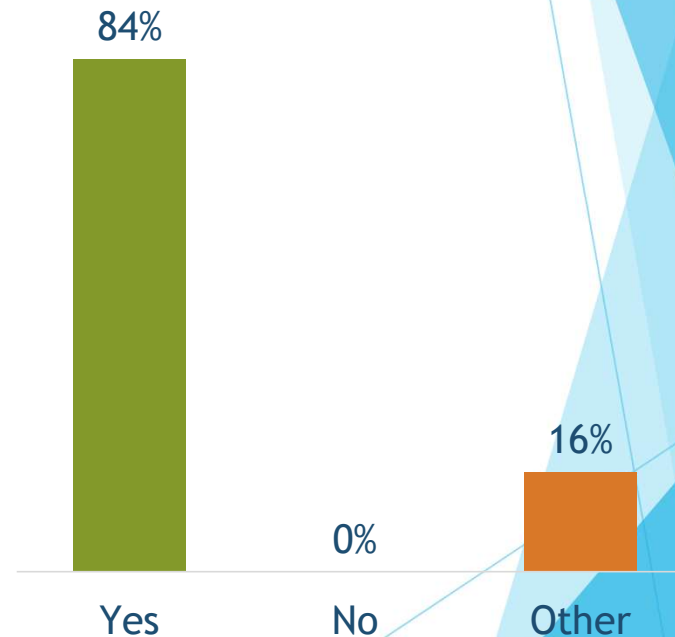
- ▶ Our safeguarding teaching -Pants are Private, Woman's Aid project -Social Guardians. These are used.
- ▶ We use the NSPCC Pantosaurus programme.
- ▶ Only respect for all and discussion around non-violence and non-coercive behaviours touched upon very generally.
- ▶ This is not shared with all staff.
- ▶ We used the NSPCC programme - age appropriately of course.
- ▶ Not appropriate to primary.
- ▶ In a very simple and age-appropriate way, yes.



*46 respondents answered this question.

Do you believe consent education is an important element of RSE? If so, why?

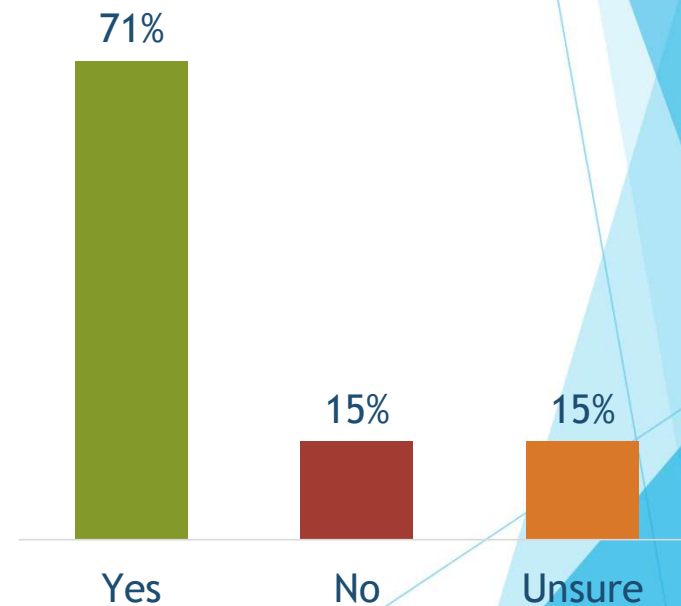
- ▶ In secondary level or NSPPC aims it well and just touches on it for primary school children.
- ▶ Of course. It is the basis of bodily integrity, respect and healthy relationships.
- ▶ The issue of consent is much broader than in just RSE. It should be reflected in many areas of the curriculum. It is more about attitude and respect, which should be taught and practiced in every class.
- ▶ If it is appropriately framed. Consent is necessary, but the idea that "as long as you give consent, everything is fine" is not a positive one. For minors at school, the benefits of abstinence should be promoted.
- ▶ Children should be taught from an early age that no one has the right to touch them inappropriately. This empowers them throughout their life.



*49 respondents answered this question.

Would you be concerned if consent education was not part of RSE?

- ▶ It is important across the curriculum.
- ▶ Benefits of abstinence should also be mentioned.
- ▶ What should be taught is the importance of sex best belonging in the marriage relationship and that sex is an intimate and precious act that should not be done lightly or casually.
- ▶ Cannot imagine a situation where consent would not be included as part of RSE - it is vital!



*48 respondents answered this question.

What role do you believe consent education can play in ending violence against women and girls?

- ▶ Small, I don't think it is the solution to that issue.
- ▶ By understanding the circumstances where consent cannot or has not been clearly given, we can all understand better how to show respect and avoid offences. Domestic abuse would need to be linked to this discussion also for a comprehensive educational piece.
- ▶ While it is important, it will not solely end violence against women and girls - an effective criminal justice is also needed in this regard.
- ▶ The influence of home and family is crucial and can undo what is taught in school.
- ▶ Boys and girls should be taught to treat others as they would like to be treated.
- ▶ Consent is only one aspect of this issue and will simply not be the only factor to end violence against women and girls. It would be negligent to do so.
- ▶ Important to help all pupils feel they have a right to say 'no'
- ▶ I think a lot of young people have been influenced negatively by pornography and online influencers, it is crucial to teach them about consent. There is a huge amount of misogyny in secondary schools with young men - it must be addressed.

As an educator, is there any other teaching approach you would wish to include in the curriculum to prevent sexual assault and violence, particularly against women and girls?

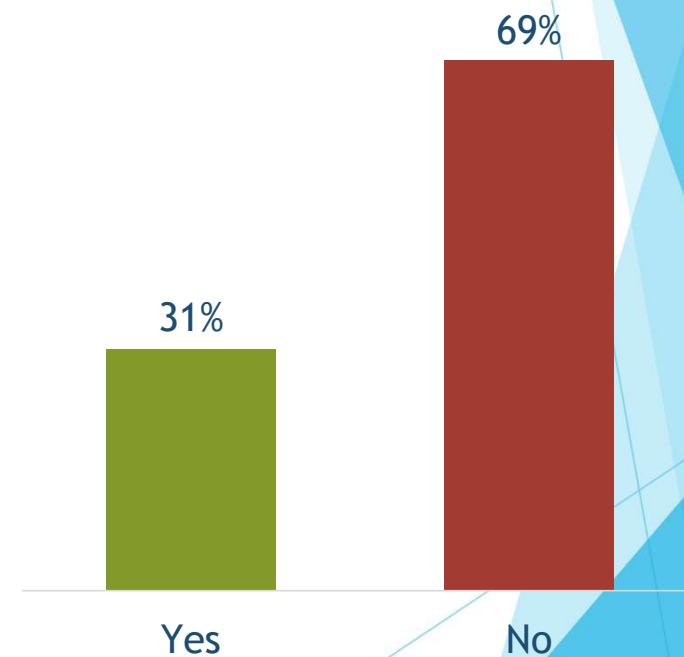
- ▶ Education should help equip young people for life, but it is much more than giving them knowledge. It is about influencing their attitudes to each other and to the wider society.
- ▶ Dangers of porn and gaming and how that alters our minds over time to think something is normal. How at the start it might be mild but after a while we think nothing of more violent approaches.
- ▶ Character Education....not about identifying individual characteristics but thinking much deeper about individual character and virtues such as treating some one honourably, integrity, compassion etc.
- ▶ Teaching on how to critically address online information and influencers e.g. Andrew Tate
- ▶ Men's attitude to women, power, money, modesty, language, cultures, role of mothers, role of fathers to mention a few.
- ▶ How we treat each other can be highlighted by schools, but the role modelling seen at home is the secret of respect for women and girls. One conversation with a group of teenage boys shows you that the respect they have comes from parenting and the lack of respect and objectification of females is learned at home and on the internet.
- ▶ Girls to be given information on what to do if a relationship becomes abusive.



Reform

Do you think there is a need for reform of RSE here?

- ▶ I think already the RSE course is being used to push radical unscientific and ideologically driven ideas and does not sufficiently reflect the views and ethos of teachers, parents and pupils.
- ▶ A faith-based approach is needed to be present as part of all aspects of the RSE curriculum.
- ▶ Children need to know the benefits of a healthy marriage as they themselves will decide on it in the future.
- ▶ There is always room for improvement and for curriculum areas to be updated and revised. However, I think recent suggestions have gone too far.
- ▶ RSE should prepare pupils for life, they should be taught the value of marriage and family life. The content of RSE should be up to the school to decide in the context of its ethos and in consultation with parents, staff, pupils and governors as laid down by current Department of Education guidelines.



*48 respondents answered this question.

Reform Ideas

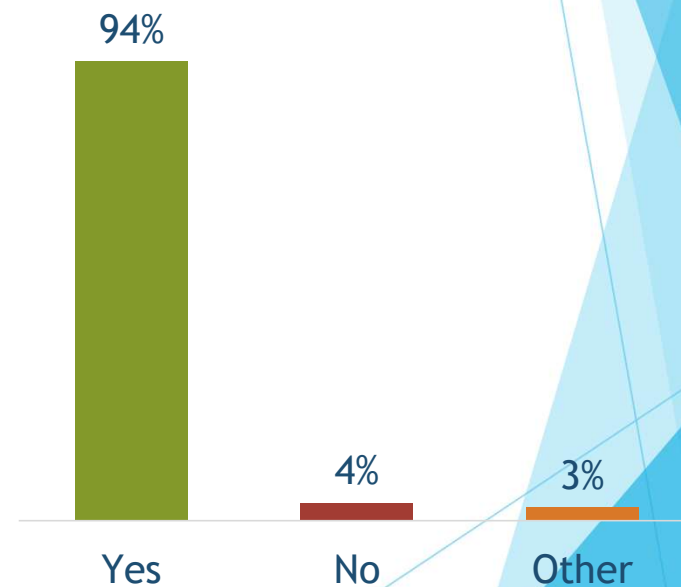
- ▶ Increased training for dedicated specialist staff
- ▶ Cessation of untrained and unsuitable staff used to teach RSE
- ▶ Update of RSE mandatory content to reflect digital risks and contexts
- ▶ Requirement for LGBTQIA+ inclusive language and content
- ▶ Strong focus on & commitment to ending violence against women and girls
- ▶ Explicit coverage of relevant skills and attitudes as per UNESCO guidance
- ▶ Safeguarding focus made central to curriculum
- ▶ Withdrawal prohibited (unless an alternative option is available e.g., where a student has experienced sexual trauma and wishes individual coverage on consent or domestic abuse etc. rather than whole class environment)
- ▶ Separation of religious doctrines from RSE. Religious links to the content can be taught as well as (rather than instead of) mandatory content.
- ▶ Focus on informed choice and movement towards independence, especially as young people approach adulthood.
- ▶ Focus on online risks and building in safeguarding by design for those most at risk e.g., SEN, females, students with disabilities, care experienced, newcomers etc.



Curriculum Integration and Content

Do you know what is meant by the term Relationship and Sexuality Education?

- ▶ The presentation to students of the facts, without opinion, about the range of sexual relationship types in our society and how sexuality usually develops in male and female children.
- ▶ This aims to educate children from a young age not just on sexual reproduction but also on a diverse range of relationships including sexual and intimate relationships.
- ▶ It is an attempt to take into consideration all possible relationships that are currently being promoted and the education of the sexuality of those relationships and advise emotionally & physically.
- ▶ Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) refers to a programme designed to teach individuals about relationships, emotional wellbeing, and human sexuality. It covers a range of topics, including understanding one's body, sexual health, emotional connections, consent, respect in relationships, and decision-making.
- ▶ RSE aims to provide age-appropriate, comprehensive knowledge to help individuals develop healthy relationships and make informed choices about their personal and social lives. It also addresses cultural, ethical, and societal aspects of relationships and sexuality.



*218 respondents answered this question.

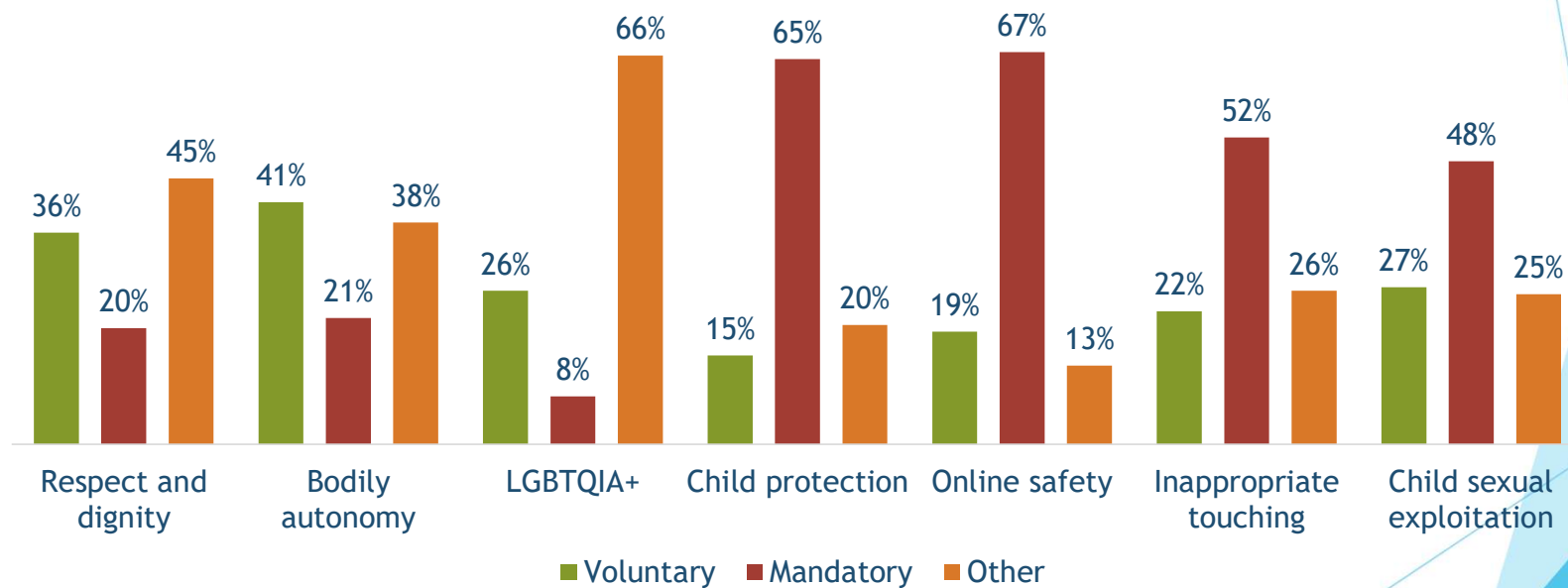
In your experience, how is the content taught aligned to the ethos of your school?

- ▶ In my experience, the content taught is factual and in line with its integrated status, the ethos is inclusivity and diversity.
- ▶ Taught in a very rigid manner that neglects discussion of non-orthodox topics within the subject. An emphasis on abstinence and religious guilt around sex does not teach young people what to do in situations where sex may be on the table, but our school is one of a very conservative Protestant nature, so it does align with their ethos.
- ▶ Our schools are hijacked by the religious right in society. Their views override the views of all other parents and pupils across the country and this is far from fair.
- ▶ The school my daughters go to teach a curriculum that is Christian in ethos and does not meet the needs of young people.
- ▶ I am glad the school my child attends follows the NSPCC guidance. Their proactive approach to RSE is part of why I chose this school for my child.
- ▶ Taught with a bias and without enough information, usually with fear and morality at the core
- ▶ Aligns with the ethos of respect, equality, responsibility, integrity. They are progressive, inclusive and person centred as well.
- ▶ So the question is not whether RSE will be shaped by an ethos, but what ethos it will be shaped by.

Primary School

The background features a complex geometric design on the right side. It consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent triangles and polygons in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to a deep, dark navy blue. These shapes are layered to create a sense of depth and movement. The left side of the image is a plain white background, which provides a high-contrast space for the text.

Do you think these topics should be voluntary or mandatory?

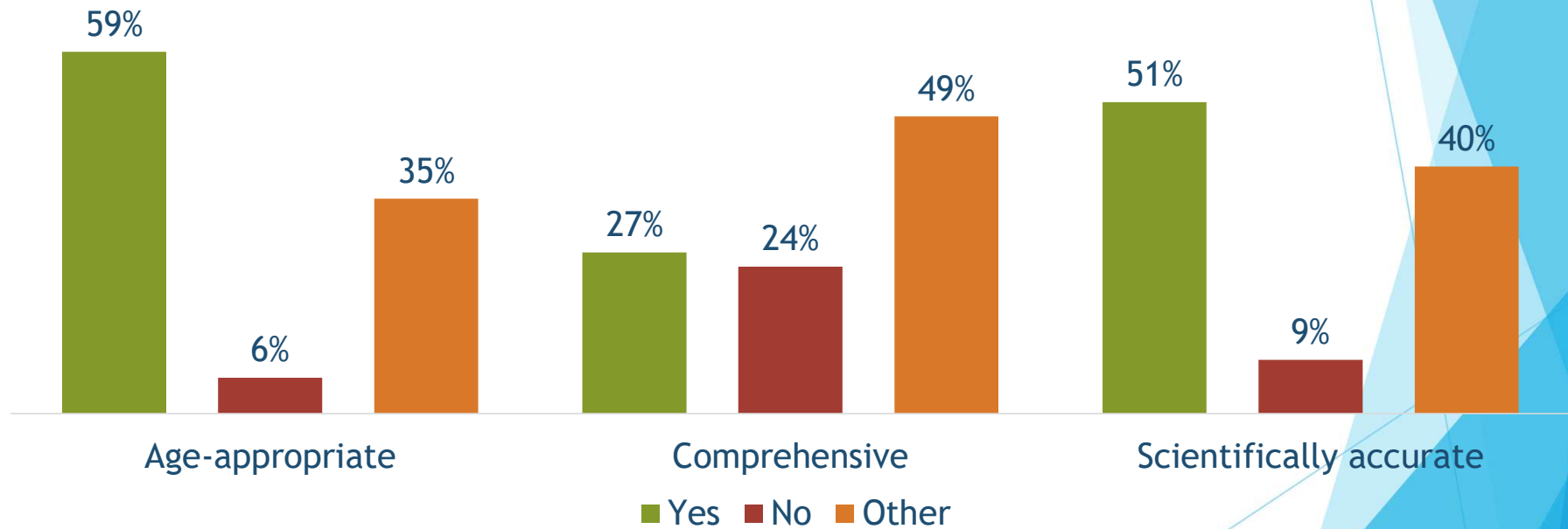


*173 respondents answered this question.

Do you think these topics should be voluntary or mandatory?

- ▶ I strongly feel that parents should be able to opt out of LGBTIA+ aspects of RSE.
- ▶ These are all essential topics for children, and should be delivered to all children in an age-appropriate way. To deprive them of information in any of these areas is to put them at greater risk of harm.
- ▶ This is the responsibility of the parents to teach. We know our children best and how to approach these conversations so there is no anxiety around these subjects. One size does not fit all in these scenarios.
- ▶ We are in danger of turning into a Nanny State in taking away decision making from local board of governors and forcing the current politically correct views on our children.
- ▶ Aspects of respect for everyone are important, but respect for children's safety and own reality of what they know.
- ▶ Children should be taught to respect everyone, irrespective of who they are. They do not need to be taught about specific groups as it draws more attention to them which could lead to more division & conflict.
- ▶ As in all areas of school life children should be taught to respect others, regardless of differences, either real or perceived. They also should be taught how to protect themselves and others from harm.
- ▶ On a professional level I have dealt with numerous cases of abuse where children have not been given RSE in any capacity. Had this been given it could have enabled some of these children to speak to a trusted adult.

Do you think these topics should be taught in a way which is age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate?



*171 respondents answered this question.

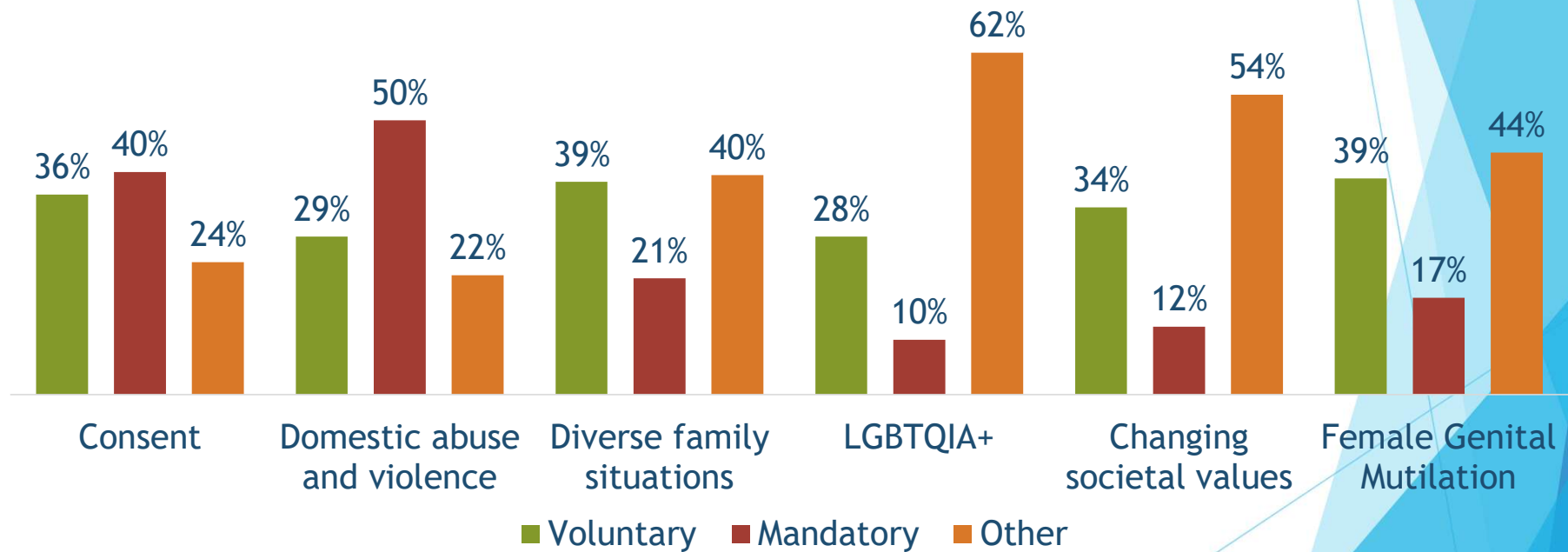
Do you think these topics should be taught in a way which is age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate?

- ▶ Everything in Primary School should be taught bearing in mind the age of the children. However, when teaching in an age-appropriate way & in accordance with a school's ethos, that may mean that it can not be comprehensive.
- ▶ This is purely subjective as what is "age" appropriate for one child might not be for another. How can a teacher tailor that for our kids in a class of 30. Totally inappropriate to ask teachers to do this and removing our parental rights to what we want taught to our children.
- ▶ Compassion, manners, and communication is what is needed taught at primary level.
- ▶ Who decides who or what is age appropriate? What is "comprehensive"?
- ▶ A balanced view, fully respecting the wishes of parents and the ethos of the school should be followed.
- ▶ All teaching, including its content and style, should be age appropriate and should meet the needs of the children it reaches.
- ▶ Parents will know their children best and are thus best placed to explain these topics to their children when they know it is appropriate and to a level of detail that is appropriate.

Secondary School



Do you think these topics should be voluntary or mandatory?

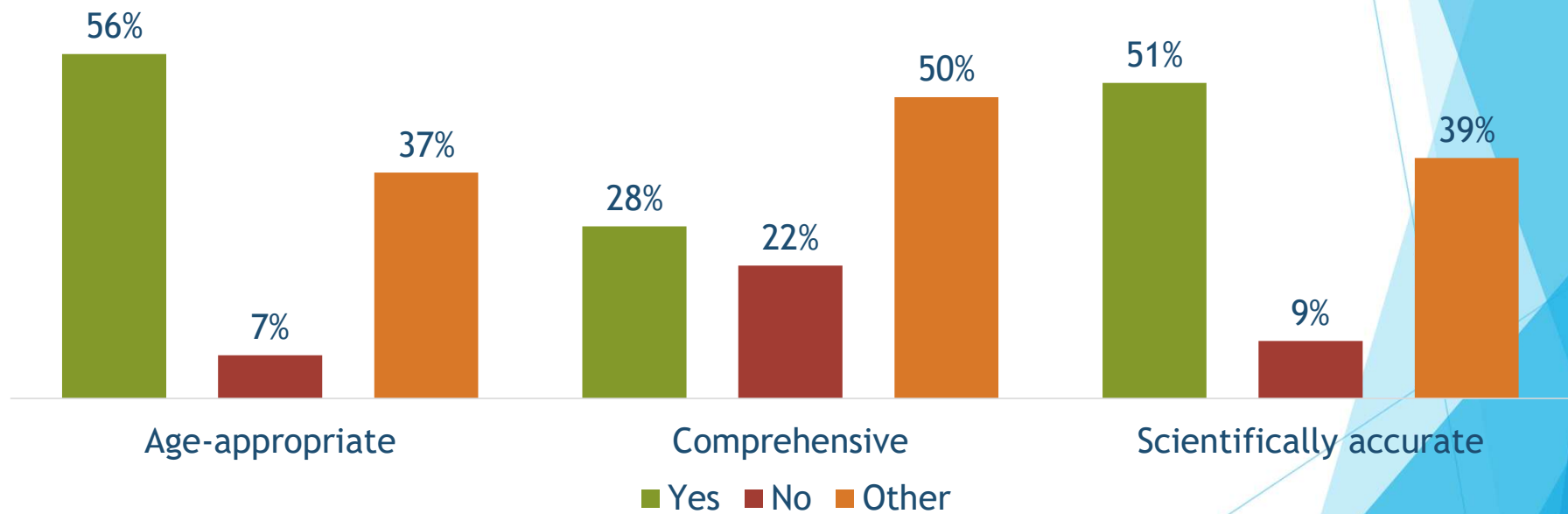


*171 respondents answered this question.

Do you think these topics should be voluntary or mandatory?

- ▶ Child safety and social issues yes but not sexually explicit.
- ▶ Female genital mutilation doesn't need to be addressed unless it is a concern for the community of the school.
- ▶ I believe the topics should not be ignored as every child & situation is individual & should be respected but that it should be up to the school governing body & parents to decide on the explicit nature & range of content.
- ▶ The issue at stake in these questions is who sets the agenda for what is taught, to whom, and in what way.
- ▶ The important values that need to be taught are respect for self and others. This will include keeping oneself safe.
- ▶ Again, as long as these are delivered in an age-appropriate manner, they should be compulsory. Domestic abuse/violence and FGM in particular should be dealt with sensitively as they have the potential to be very frightening to younger children.
- ▶ The Education Authority should be more involved in making sure that schools inform parents about what is being taught and that schools are actually teaching what they are supposed to. This goes for all subjects not just RSE.
- ▶ Children must be taught to respect others regardless of their backgrounds which should not become a main focus of education.

Do you think these topics should be taught in a way which is age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate?



*170 respondents answered this question.

Do you think these topics should be taught in a way which is age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate?

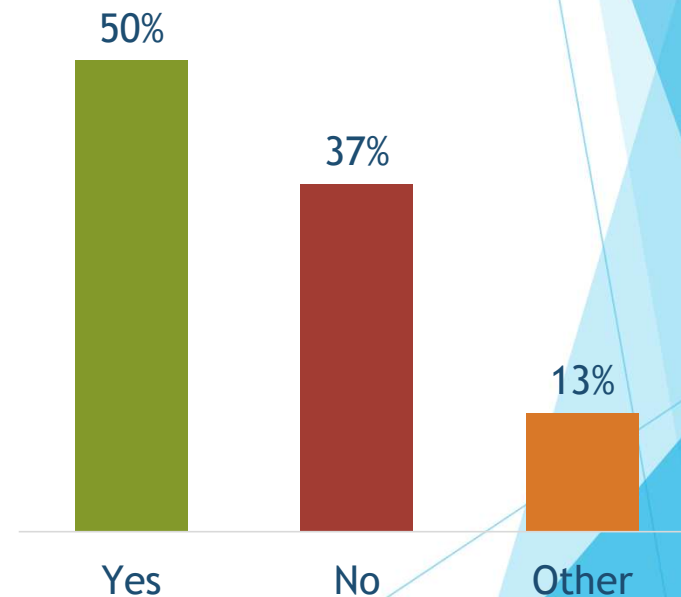
- ▶ Who defines what is age-appropriate?
- ▶ Age appropriateness depends on the individual child, this is subjective.
- ▶ Children mature at different ages so age appropriate doesn't cover all children of the same age & this needs to be taken into consideration.
- ▶ Children need to be taught that abuse is wrong from a very young age & obviously children that is being abused within the home setting won't be taught at home that this is illegal or how to report so from a very young age children need to learn this in order to report abuse quicker.
- ▶ Empowerment, self respect, self discipline and self defence need taught.
- ▶ "Age-Appropriate" and "Comprehensive" should not be seen as mutually exclusive, it is possible to teach about all these things in both an age-appropriate and comprehensive way.
- ▶ And not with a religious or cultural bias. And by teachers who care and are properly trained and capable.
- ▶ In matters that are morality based one cannot specify scientific accuracy and age appropriateness.



Policy Implementation and School Compliance

Are you aware of your school's RSE policy?

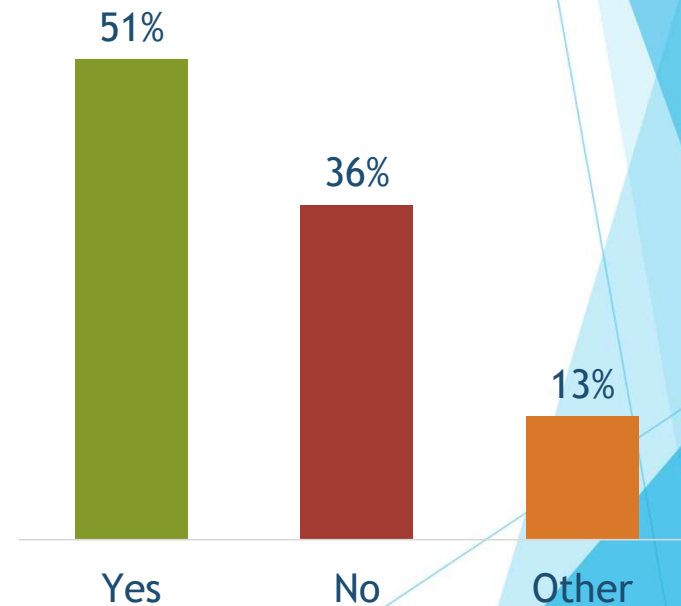
- ▶ I have read my updated school RSE policy & am happy with it.
- ▶ It is appropriately very limited.
- ▶ I am not aware of what my child is being taught in RSE because the school won't elaborate!
- ▶ I have just been informed that Love for Life will be delivering content on this next term. We have not had a policy shared with us. I very strongly disagree that religious organisations should deliver this content.
- ▶ This information is not published by the school.
- ▶ My school has no clear policies. They also don't publish everything or make everything available to parents or anyone else. My school answers no questions willingly and often tries to hide what they are doing (which is always less than they are supposed to). I do not trust my school to deliver any kind of teaching effectively and RSE is just another subject where they fail and don't care that they fail.



*213 respondents answered this question.

Have you read the RSE policy?

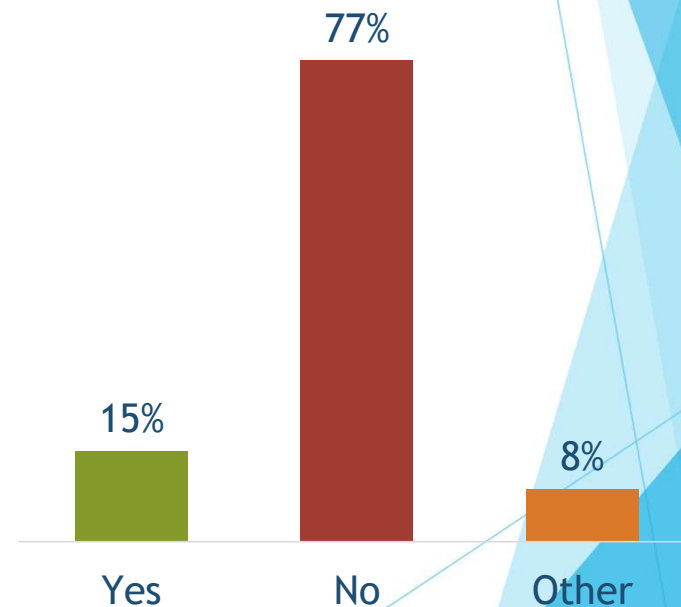
- ▶ Age appropriate is different for each family I would not let my children watch some films rated 13 as I deem some of the content inappropriate whereas some other families might be happy with the content.
- ▶ I don't believe this is appropriate to be discussed outside of the home environment. There is no discussion on the moral questions.
- ▶ My children's school does not appear to have an RSE policy.
- ▶ As parents we believe the School's current policy is accurate, well balanced, respectful and age appropriate. Delivered within the school ethos adds to, rather than taking away from, the quality of delivery.
- ▶ They don't have one on their website, but I have looked at the RSE section of the CCEA hub.



*213 respondents answered this question.

Were you consulted in the development of the RSE policy?

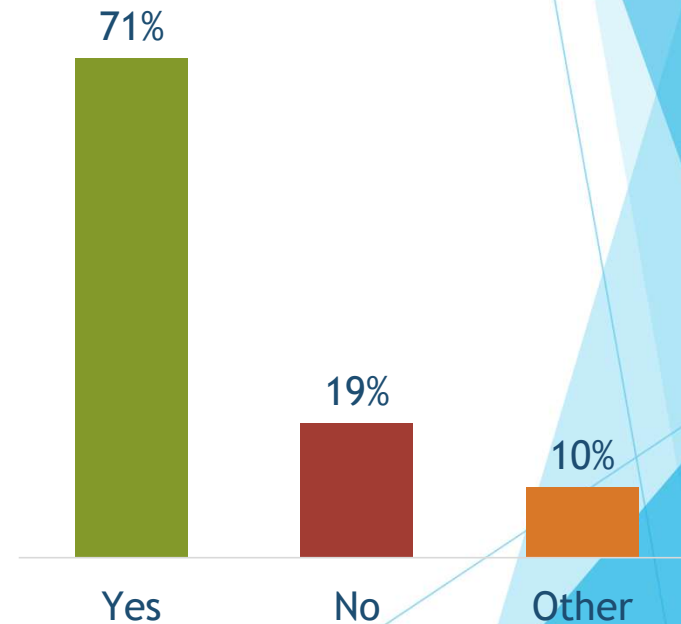
- ▶ That is for the staff, principal and board of governors to draw up. It could have had parental consultation before my child started school.
- ▶ Each parent is invited to proofread and suggest any appropriate changes to the policy before it is accepted by the Board of Governors.
- ▶ It was published and we were given a chance to read it and comment if we thought anything was amiss.
- ▶ I was consulted recently but have not seen the new policy.
- ▶ Through online forms and surveys from the EA or Department of Education or another survey company. The individual school has done no consultation. They don't consult on anything.



*213 respondents answered this question.

Do you have any concerns about this programme?

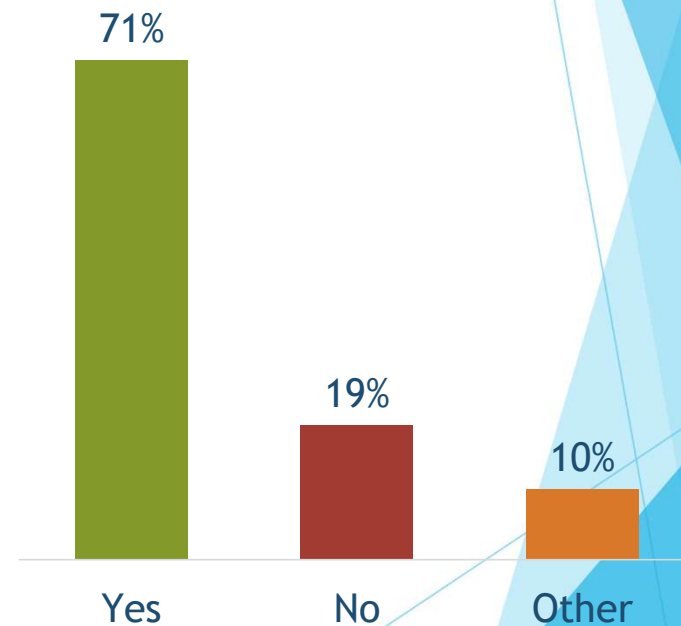
- ▶ Yes, I have lots of concerns. There is content that I do not want my children to be learning.
- ▶ Parents, not the schools, should have a right to decide the extent and content of sexual education given to their children.
- ▶ If the school is allowed to teach RSE according to our policy, I have no concerns about its teaching or about the children & the information being given to them.
- ▶ Parents need to be given a detailed overview of content being taught.
- ▶ Parents may not feel able to approach their schools about RSE.
- ▶ I am very thankful for the clear framework of the ethos of our school and the excellent communication we receive from them, so trust them to provide appropriate information to parents and pupils



*210 respondents answered this question.

Do you have any concerns about this programme?

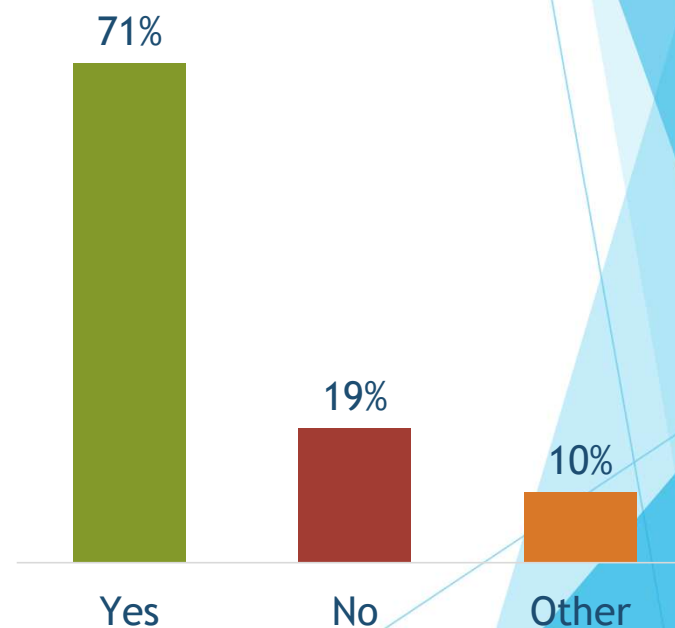
- ▶ Children need to learn the basics & nothing else.
- ▶ It can be unclear what students are being taught and whether that aligns with family beliefs and values.
- ▶ Given the lack of transparency around this policy, the failure to meet other statutory requirements designed to protect the rights of non-Christian parents and the disproportionate representation of Christian ministers on the board of governors of an "integrated" school, I am concerned that RSE would not be delivered in a comprehensive or science-based way.
- ▶ I am very glad to see a comprehensive and fact-based approach to RSE and glad that - on the surface - the churches have not managed to interfere in this in the way they take complete control of religious studies.



*210 respondents answered this question.

Would you feel comfortable voicing these concerns with school leadership?

- ▶ Principal is very approachable.
- ▶ If I felt it was too much for my child to comprehend I would have no problem voicing my concerns. Parents need a level of control on what their child is learning.
- ▶ I would have no hesitation to go to discuss with the school my point of view.
- ▶ I already have done so.
- ▶ I support the school's current provision, but will actively oppose any adverse changes.
- ▶ The dominance of conservative Christian voices within my school leadership would make this a difficult conversation to have.
- ▶ I feel it may create tension in my good day to day working relationship with school.



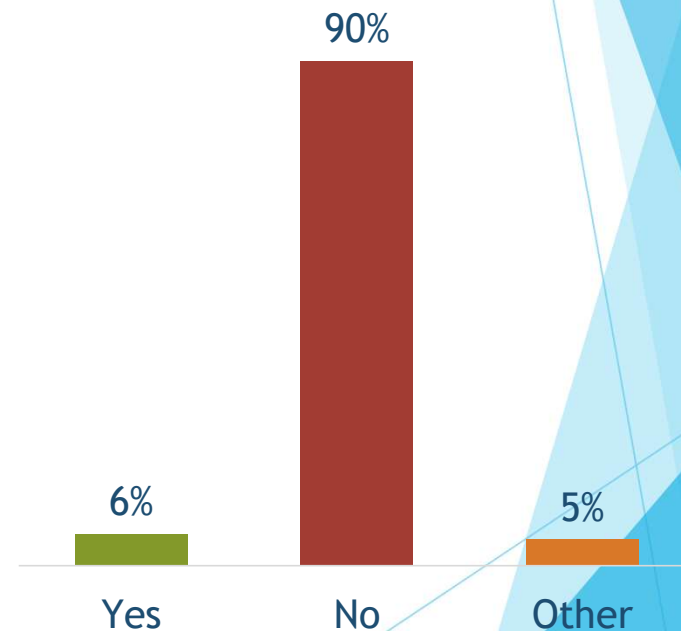
*210 respondents answered this question.

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Resources and Support for RSE

Have you ever used the materials on the CCEA hub to discuss RSE with your child?

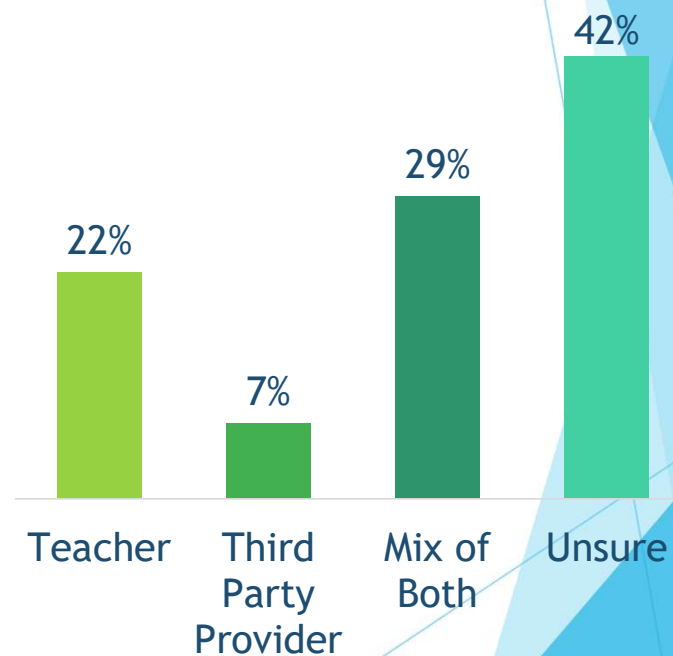
- ▶ I prefer to take a fact based approach to RSE topics with my children.
- ▶ I can have an open and honest conversation with my children and my grandchildren without anyone's help.
- ▶ I will inform my child in my own manner of which I know will be comfortable to my child in their own surroundings and in private.
- ▶ This would not be a source I'd naturally think of as I'd prefer to seek out a resource that was not tied to a Christian ethos as schools largely are.
- ▶ I don't need the Council to tell me how to inform my children.
- ▶ Not yet but it is a great resource. This will come in very useful in as my child approaches their teens.



*210 respondents answered this question.

Which of the following delivers the RSE programme in your school?

- ▶ Mainly in the classroom but with specialist speakers or workshops at times.
- ▶ Third parties should not be allowed in schools as they are under no obligation to show their teaching materials.
- ▶ Love for Life. Again, I strongly disagree that this organisation should be allowed to deliver content on RSE. It is wholly inappropriate to allow organisations with links to Evangelical Christianity, which has a particularly strong conservative stance on many of the relevant issues, to deliver content to young people.
- ▶ If I had a choice, the teacher whom my child is most familiar with and no other.



*210 respondents answered this question.

If a third-party provider is used in your school, what is your assessment of this?

- ▶ Entirely inappropriate. There are many organisations forcing their own agendas into such lessons regardless of parental consent or wishes (often with as little consultation as possible).
- ▶ I'm content. They are trained and have the experience to convey the information accurately and deal with questions appropriately.
- ▶ Had the “puberty talk” from a third-party - positive experience generally with this. It was in-depth and less ‘awkward’ than a regular teacher.
- ▶ I would be less comfortable with a third-party provider as I think it’s important to have someone who my child has a relationship with to discuss these things, particularly as questions might come later down the line.
- ▶ It is welcome that the school uses the expertise of external providers where appropriate, provided the provider is fully aware of the school's RSE policy, an agreed programme is followed, and teachers are present and therefore know what has been covered.
- ▶ Third party was used in primary school and I was very uncomfortable with the ethos of the delivery partner in relation to women’s rights issues.

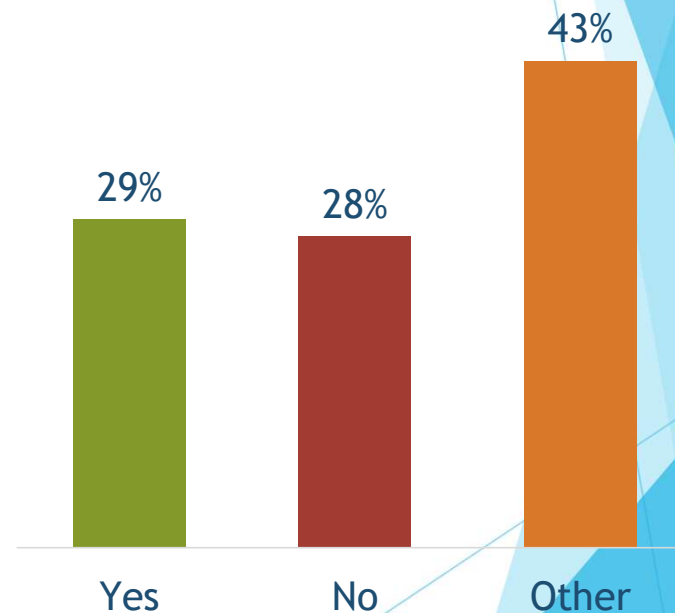


Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusivity

All grant-aided schools are required to maintain a Christian ethos but ideally take account of the diverse family situations within the school community and respond to changing societal values.

Is this reflected in the content and delivery of RSE in your school?

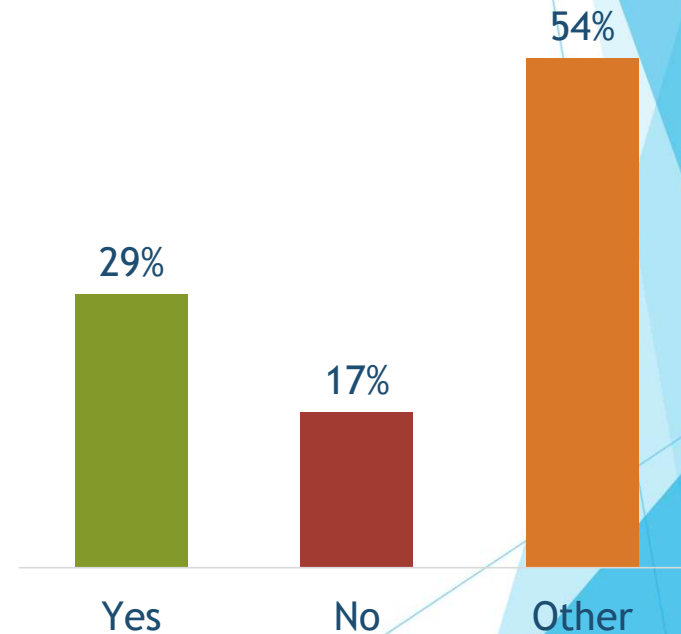
- ▶ No discussion of same-sex relationships or non-nuclear family dynamics within RSE.
- ▶ No, in fact our school's revised policy actively uses anti-choice (pro life) rhetoric, and completely ignores LGBTQ + families, and even goes so far as to have in the policy aims: "to prepare children for marriage" - Primary school children!?!?
- ▶ Content on LGBT is inadequate. Research on different types of families for example excluded LGBT families as the term 'same sex' and LGBT was blocked on school IT security settings.
- ▶ There is a strong Christian ethos in the school, but it seeks to accommodate and include all the children under its embrace. It fosters a warm, inclusive and welcoming environment, and the RSE that's taught is age appropriate and sensitive.



*199 respondents answered this question.

Does your school teach RSE in a way that respects all genders and sexualities?

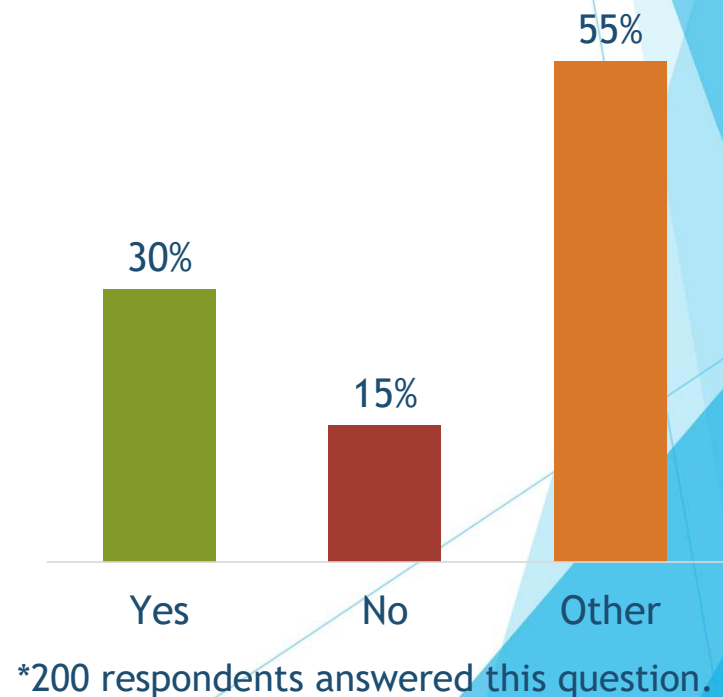
- ▶ My children's school teaches that everyone should be respectful to all people because we are all made in God's image and we are all precious and special.
- ▶ My child has been brought up to respect everyone...children should be taught of the family unit and encouraged in that way.
- ▶ While I recognise that some have an attraction to the same sex this is not the same as teaching there are many genders, which is certainly confusing for children and may even be a safeguarding issue.
- ▶ If Love for Life are delivering it then I assume they will be teaching that the only choice for gay children is abstinence, depriving them of the right to a sex life and therefore disrespecting their sexuality.
- ▶ Promotion of other genders which are non-scientific can be harmful to children.



*199 respondents answered this question.

Does your school teach RSE in a way that respects newcomer cultures?

- ▶ The schools in this area have long been respectful of people of all creeds and kinds, sexuality, religion and everything in between.
- ▶ Taught in a very western-centric, heteronormative manner.
- ▶ It appears at times that there's more of an effort to respect newcomers.
- ▶ This is a poorly worded question that suggests that newcomer cultures should be promoted even if not agreed with.
- ▶ My child's class has a mix of children from different cultures and I feel they are included and respected.
- ▶ We shouldn't have to respect other cultures.
- ▶ Children don't need to learn about newcomer cultures, they need to know about their own .

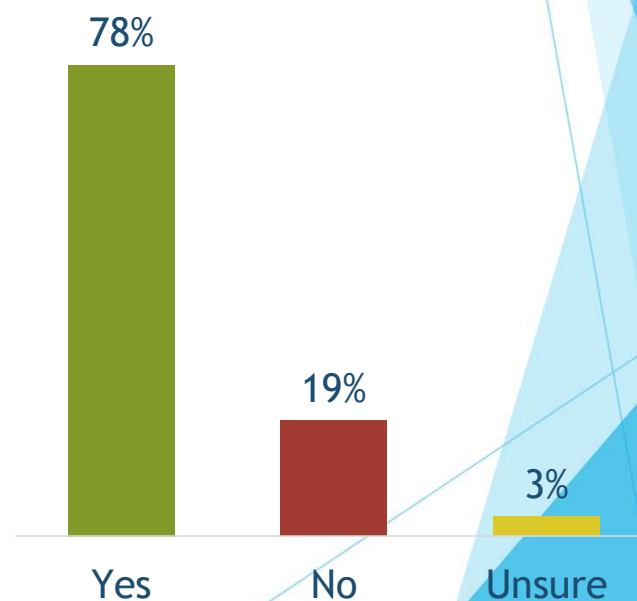


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Legislative and Rights-Based Considerations and Opt-Out Provision

Do you believe that parents should be able to opt out of their children being taught RSE in schools?

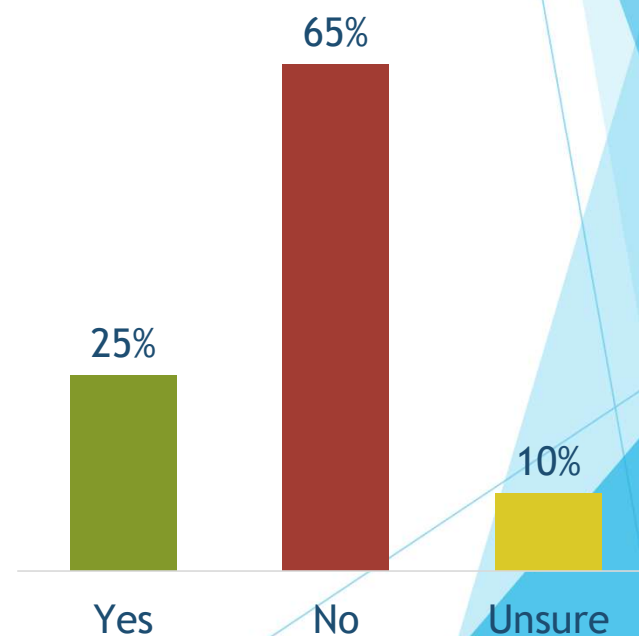
- ▶ Parents should have the right to remove their child from elements of RSE which they are not in agreement with.
- ▶ Sometimes it can be too much too soon.
- ▶ Generally, parents are happy with schools teaching basic sex education & an overview of religion in RSE.
- ▶ Parents may only opt out their children from the Sex education part of RSE not the relationship part of RSE.
- ▶ I believe that parents should have to opt in, not opt out.
- ▶ State-funded schools should not allow opt-outs.
- ▶ I feel it's important that all children are taught about and understand these topics so that they know how to interact with each other in a healthy and respectable way and understand the diversity of the world in which we live.



*215 respondents answered this question.

Do you believe there is a safeguarding risk for pupils who are withdrawn from RSE?

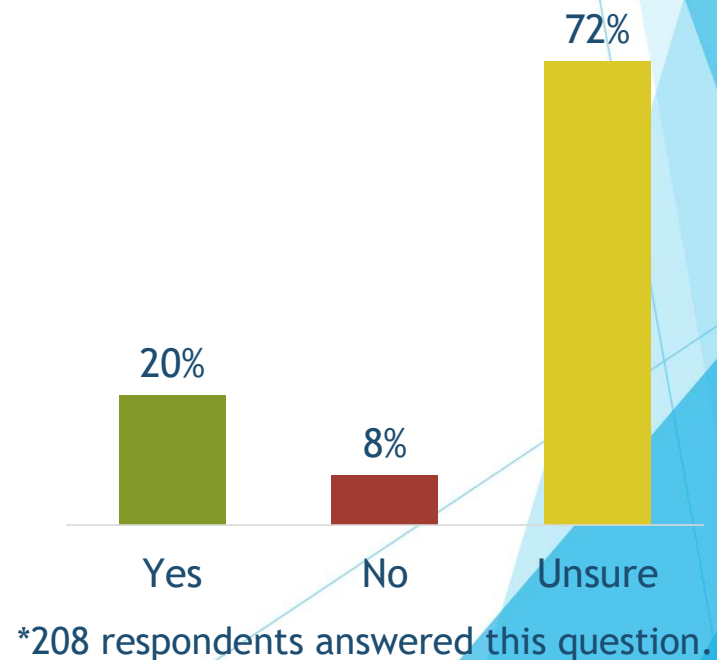
- ▶ I don't think so as parents are usually the best people to communicate appropriate topics considered within RSE at an appropriate time and stage for the child.
- ▶ As evidenced by the increase in reports of child abuse and domestic violence, I feel that the ability to withdraw children from evidence-based lessons is potentially a risk.
- ▶ Teachers can act on a case by case basis if they are concerned about a child's potential for abuse.
- ▶ Opt-out as I understand is for particular topics not RSE in total.
- ▶ There could well be children at risk by being pulled from these classes - if they are in homes where sexual abuse is going on then they will perhaps not know about the support and help they can get.



*211 respondents answered this question.

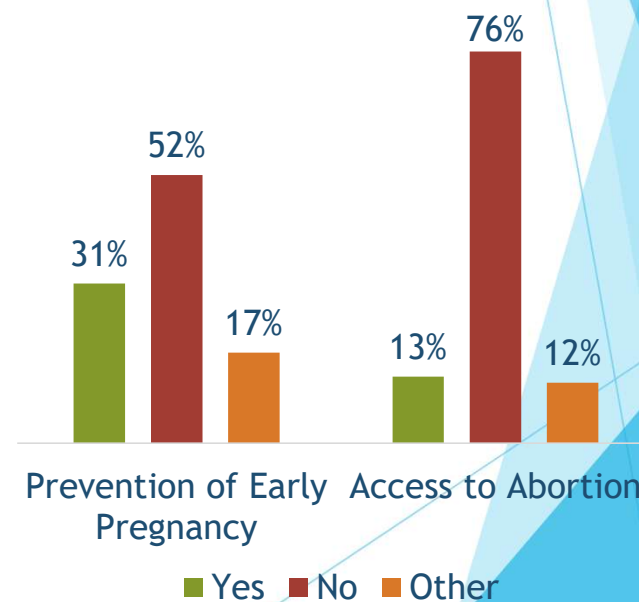
Does your school have a policy on opt-outs?

- ▶ A safe & supervised alternative is provided.
- ▶ They don't have a policy for opting out of religious education either - even though it is a legal requirement, so why would they bother making a policy for RSE? They know there are no consequences and it will never be checked.
- ▶ I have opted out on one session in the past and this was accommodated without issue.
- ▶ I have stated my children and grandchildren are to be excluded in any classes that doesn't reflect our family ethos.
- ▶ Regardless of school policy, it is a parent's prerogative.
- ▶ To my knowledge the school has not shared any RSE policy, teaching or opt-outs with me.



The UK Government subsequently made compulsory in the NI curriculum scientifically accurate, age appropriate and comprehensive Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) including prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion. Do you agree that this should be compulsory?

- ▶ Abortion is a very serious decision and shouldn't be made light of in education. If prevention of early pregnancy worked then there would be no need for Abortion.
- ▶ I believe that children should be informed about contraception & told that abortion is now available in NI. I do not believe that it should be promoted & taught in such a way that minimises the decision to enter a sexual relationship.
- ▶ The emphasis should be on the prevention of pregnancy. Abortion should not be taught as being an easy solution to unplanned pregnancy.
- ▶ The access to abortion shouldn't be taught at all.
- ▶ These matters should be dealt with on a needs must basis by pastoral staff and parents

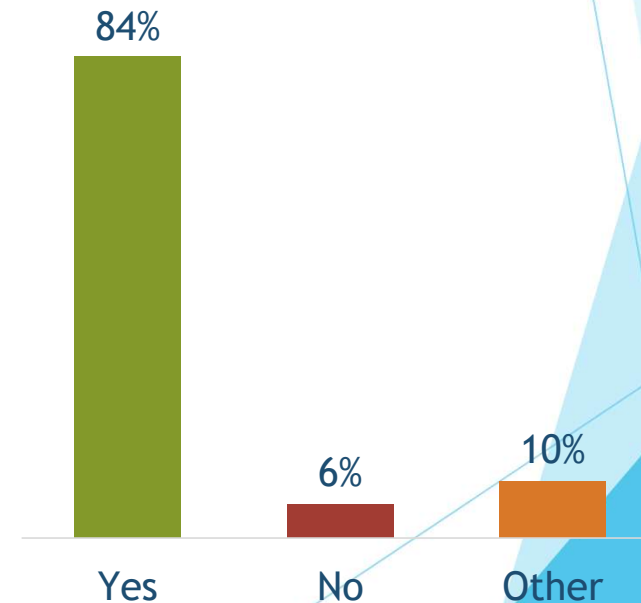


*172 respondents answered this question.

The Department provided for parents to withdraw their child from this “compulsory” component.

Do you agree that there should be a right to withdraw from this specific component?

- ▶ No. Is there a right to withdraw for other areas of the curriculum?
- ▶ Yes absolutely.
- ▶ There should be a right to withdraw for any component.
- ▶ No. It is of utmost importance that children are given comprehensive RSE in school to keep them safe.
- ▶ This withdrawal is where abuse and abusers hide.
- ▶ No. I feel that all children should receive RSE to enable them to make the right decisions and to know who to ask for help.
- ▶ No. Children have a right to education about their bodies and their lives. Parents may raise their children however their wish, and the child may well choose to follow their parents’ beliefs. But they should be given all the information first.



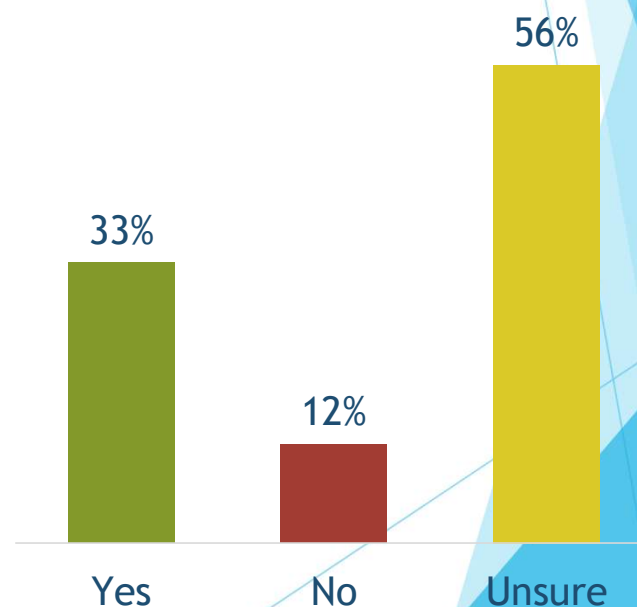
*172 respondents answered this question.

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent blue geometric shapes, primarily triangles and trapezoids, in various shades of blue. These shapes are layered to create a sense of depth and movement, with some appearing to recede into the background while others are more prominent in the foreground. The overall effect is a modern, abstract design that complements the text.

Consent and Violence Against Women and Girls

Does your school include education on consent in its RSE teaching?

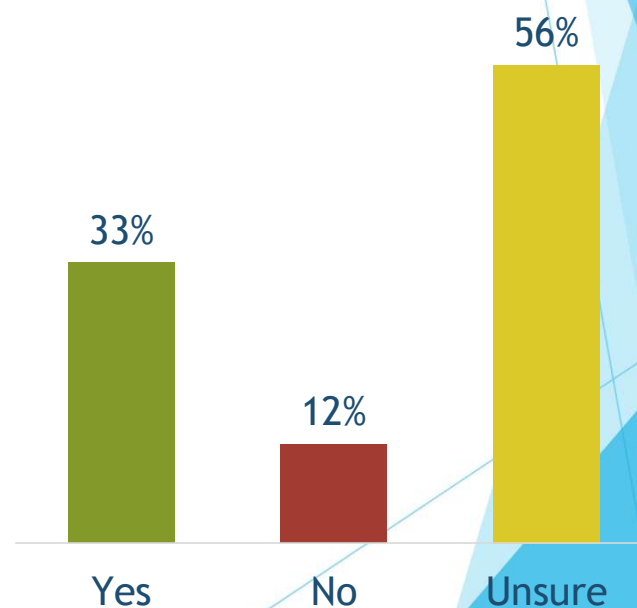
- ▶ There should be an emphasis on not having sex.
- ▶ This is an important subject that is the responsibility of the parent.
- ▶ A school age pupil should not be engaging in any "activity" which requires such "consent."
- ▶ It is so over covered that I feel it is making sexual activity an even bigger issue for our late teens. As if because it is so talked about they are made to feel everyone is having sex, you should be too, which is completely counter productive.
- ▶ Children of high school age, yes, they should be taught about consent when it comes to sexual health and safety.
- ▶ My children are in lower primary school but have learned about inappropriate touch and to say stop or tell someone who touches them inappropriately.



*208 respondents answered this question.

Do you believe consent education is an important element of RSE? If so, why?

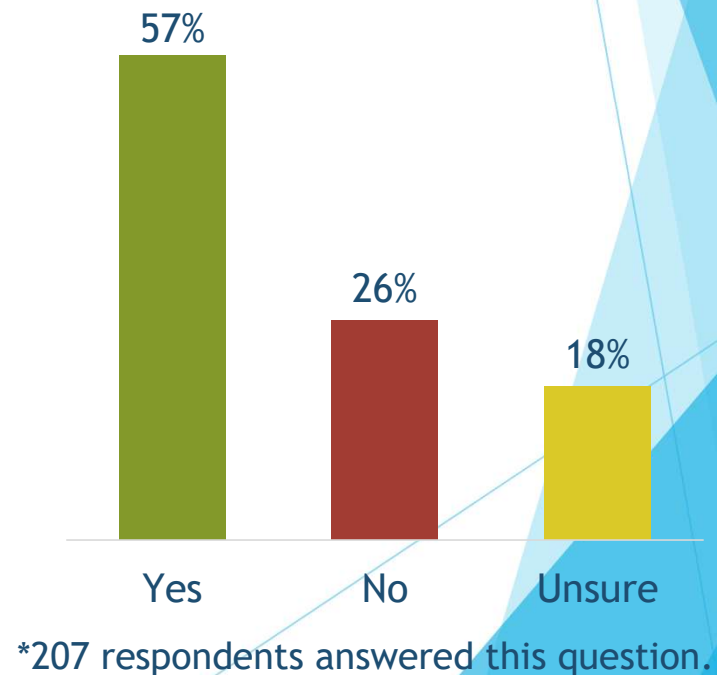
- ▶ As RSE is about healthy, safe and respectful relationships therefore consent is paramount to this.
- ▶ A child cannot consent to an adult. It's important for a child to learn that adults don't always have their best interests at heart.
- ▶ If both partners are aware of what consent is and what it means in a relationship it will lead to a reduction in sexual violence and sexual assault reports to police. They will be respectful of each other and know when the other wants to stop, at any time.
- ▶ Teaching school children from a young age about boundaries and consent from a young age is incredibly important to protecting them from harm
- ▶ By targeting the problem proactively, through ongoing education, and always in an age-appropriate way we can be radically minimising a problem that affects a large proportion of the population.



*206 respondents answered this question.

Would you be concerned if consent education was not part of RSE?

- ▶ Parents and other close family members are able to educate their children on moral choices and don't need the state to do this necessarily.
- ▶ A minimum of info re violence against women and girls is important to ensure that standards of respect are upheld and endangered individuals know how to find help.
- ▶ I would hope very much that consent would be implied in anything being taught to children.
- ▶ It's all inappropriate.
- ▶ No-one should ever be forced to engage in any "activity" which requires such "consent" so it could be included in content taught to 18-year-old school pupils.



What role do you believe consent education can play in ending violence against women and girls?

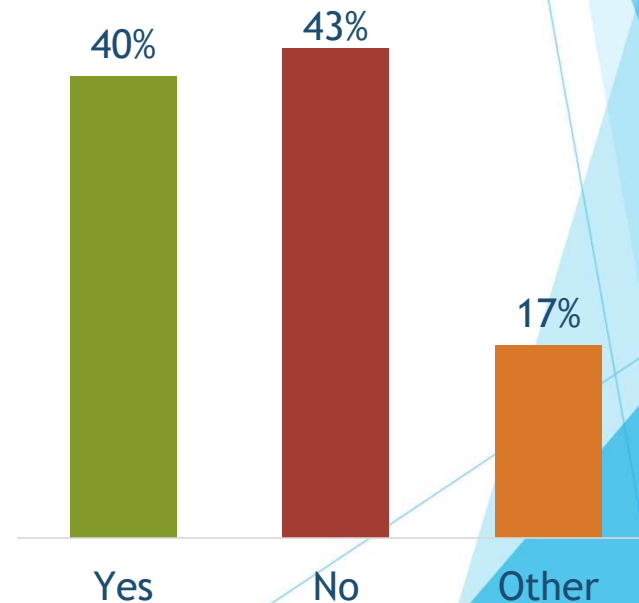
- ▶ This is not appropriate to be taught in schools to our children.
- ▶ A school should be capable of instructing children on the do's and do not's of basic living in a society.
- ▶ It's important to understand that sexual violence is not just men against women, and this needs to be emphasised so that young boys know what to do, and that it's not something they should be ashamed of or quiet about if they are harmed this way.
- ▶ Men who harm girls and women know it's wrong but do it anyway.
- ▶ The earlier the education begins around positive relationships then the more chance you will have on cutting down on violence on women/girls.
- ▶ I work in criminal justice...teaching about consent, respect and tackling the myths spread by misogyny is something which must be done on a societal level, and this needs to be done from a very early age.
- ▶ It doesn't play a role at all. Empowerment, self control, self respect and family support teach more.
- ▶ If boys are taught from a young age about what consent is, how to treat others with respect, what is and isn't appropriate, then they are more likely to grow into men that still hold these good values.

The background features a complex geometric design. On the right side, there is a solid dark blue rectangular area. To its left, several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in various shades of blue and white create a layered, abstract effect. These shapes include triangles and polygons that intersect, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall composition is clean and modern.

Reform

Do you think there is a need for reform of RSE?

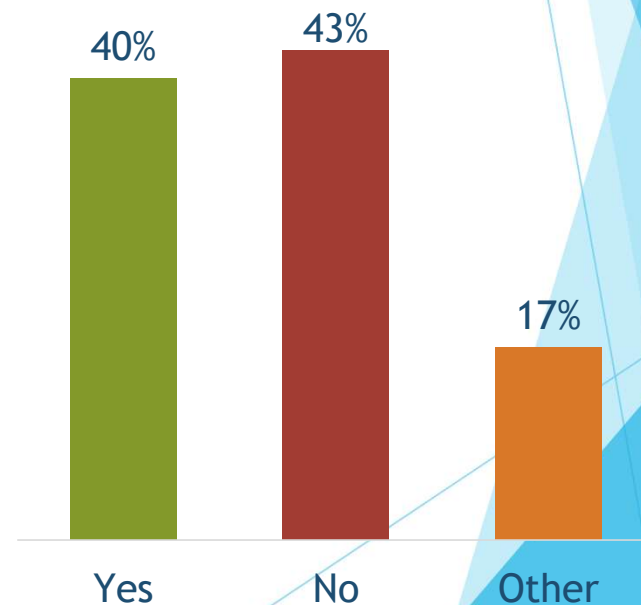
- ▶ RSE should be taught by teachers with the appropriate level of training, using scientific, facts-based information and external providers should be removed from all delivery.
- ▶ The basics do need to be taught in all schools, as not all children will get that at home...schools should have the right to teach 'the additional views' according to their ethos, whilst maintaining respect & kindness for anybody who has a differing view.
- ▶ Primary aged children need to know essentials such as body parts, early puberty and keeping safe - nothing else.
- ▶ Marriage has always been the primary sexual relationship in Northern Ireland as it is in most cultures across the world, and throughout history. The benefits of a loving and trusting relationship and the benefits it brings would be very helpful.
- ▶ Most pupils will become parents and practical help around these topics from those who have successfully navigated it could be very beneficial and was something I would have benefitted from.



*208 respondents answered this question.

Do you think there is a need for reform of RSE?

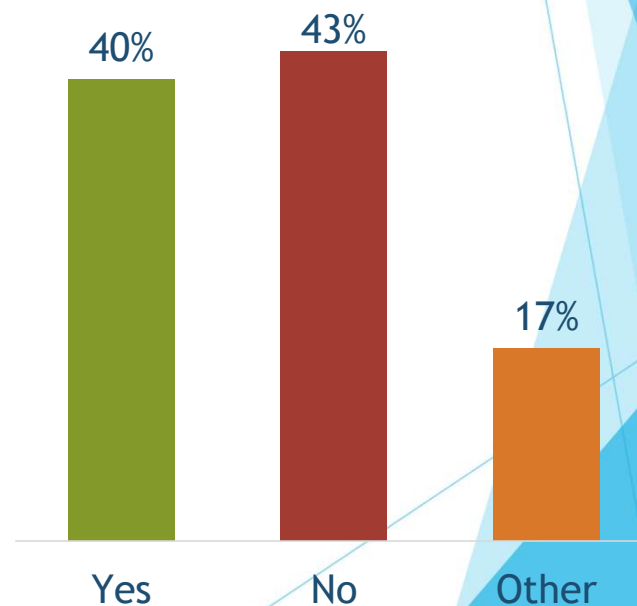
- ▶ There should be more emphasis on marriage and the benefits it brings long term both to families and society in general.
- ▶ I think the measures imposed by the government were draconian, unhelpful and need to be reversed. I have no trust in the people drafting up policy on this. Better sex education around prevention would be helpful - anything else would worsen matters.
- ▶ All influences by WHO needs to be removed from our schools' teachings. Otherwise, home schooling is the only option to ensure children safety. Third party's and outside agencies need to be removed too.
- ▶ I think a UK wide strategy is appropriate - NI should not get any special exceptions.



*208 respondents answered this question.

Do you think there is a need for reform of RSE?

- ▶ Society really needs to change and it starts with young people. It feels like things are worse for women and girls now - particularly with the rate of Femicide in Northern Ireland.
- ▶ I call for unbiased consent education, and I call for any parental right to withdraw their children from RSE to be removed, and for the Department of Education (DE) to scrap the provision that allows schools to deliver RSE in alignment with the ethos of the school.
- ▶ As with all areas of life there needs to be reflection and change that brings about positive and healthy individuals, family units and communities.
- ▶ Clear delineation between what is appropriate to teach children in school and what should be mainly taught by parents at home is needed.



*208 respondents answered this question.

Please share your ideas with us.

“More comprehensive RSE that is mindful of non-nuclear family dynamics, non-heteronormative experiences of sex and relationships, comprehensive education around abortion that respects both pro-life and pro-choice students, and recognition that even under a Christian ethos, not everyone will follow a Christian ideology.”

“The way forward with primary school children is to either do sessions with parents beforehand so they can hear the language used and what they are going to be taught. Or allow parents to sit in on these lessons. As for Key Stage 3 & 4, I feel this is information just like careers, LLW, Science.”

“Specially trained delivery, no religious involvement, compulsory content, consent and VAWG central (social responsibility), content for SEN required, LGBT content, primary school delivery from P1 onwards, education strategy linked to ending VAWG and child safeguarding.”

“Age-appropriate, inclusive, fact based RSE should be mandatory for all children and young people with teachers and youth leaders trained and given the support and materials to teach it.”

Please share your ideas with us.

“I think reform of the implementation of the statutory requirements of RSE and non- statutory guidance is required to provide consistency of delivery. I also think teachers require regular and consistent teacher development opportunities to ensure confidence, competence and currency in delivering effective RSE. Initial teacher education also needs to be much more effective in preparing student teachers to meet the demands of RSE in an ever changing landscape.”

“I think parents should be asked to contribute their ideas to the school. Maybe more awareness of RSE should be brought to the forefront so that parents can make informed decisions instead of it being quickly and quietly rushed through.”

“All children need access to age-appropriate information to ensure the safety and well-being of all young people. Multi agency working between Schools, Social Services and health professionals is required through interactive workshops to ensure all children are receiving the correct information and know who to ask for help.”

“Age-appropriate, inclusive, fact based RSE should be mandatory for all children and young people with teachers and youth leaders trained and given the support and materials to teach it.”

“Such education, in its content and delivery, must be factual, scientifically and legislatively correct and must be offered, not compulsory, by schools - i.e. It must be delivered in clear cooperation from parents in a case by case basis (student by student). Schools must deliver education in many topics but sexual education should be the role of parents.”