

Long-term impact of the pandemic on children's language, socioemotional and educational outcomes

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Activity

What would you expect the impact of the pandemic to have been on children's language, socioemotional and educational skills?

To answer, go to:

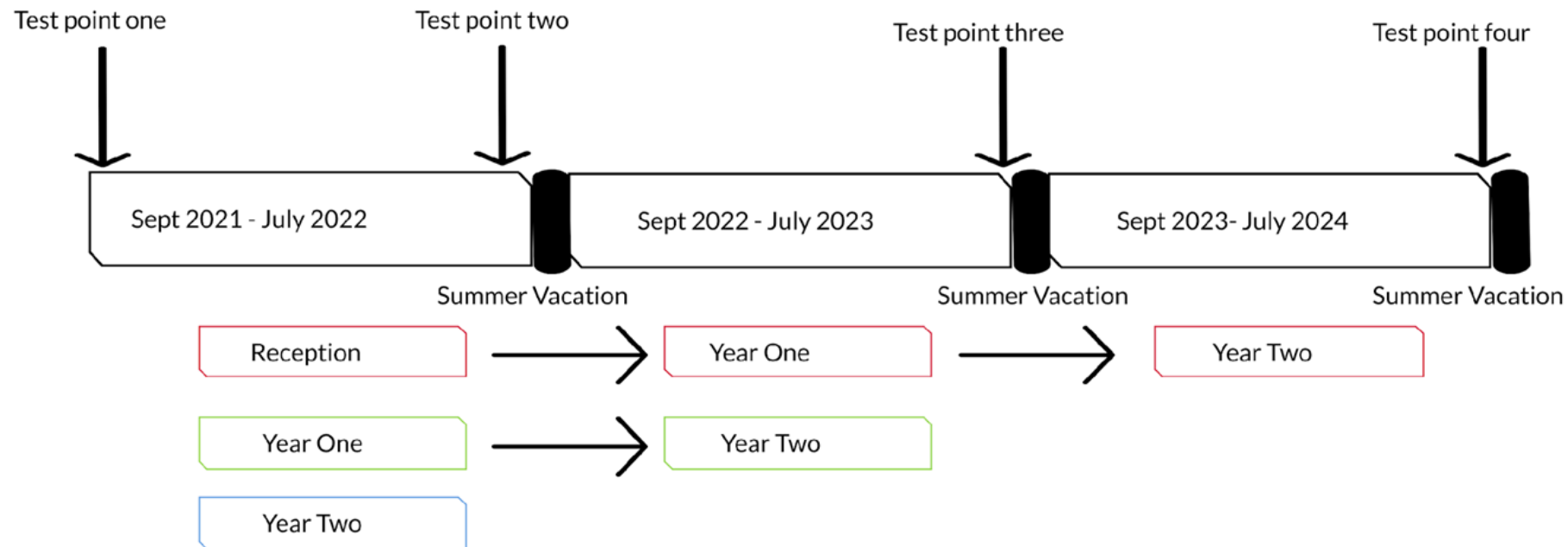
<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1koeKzT3x7YEea3zKW9DgSJ4he1aPqGj32UkarHaiF40/edit?usp=sharing>



Impact of the pandemic on children

- Significant **learning losses** compared to pre-pandemic cohorts and children **not being school-ready** (Blainey & Hannay, 2021; Rose et al., 2021; Tracey et al., 2022).
- Schools, parents/carers and practitioners have reported being **concerned regarding children's language skills** (Bakopulou, 2022; Ofsted, 2022; Tracey et al., 2022).
- Children require more support than pre-pandemic cohorts to navigate **social interactions** as well as **express and manage their emotions** (Chambers et al., 2022; Egan et al., 2021; Morgul et al., 2020; Paul et al., 2021; Sharp & Skipp, 2022; Tracey et al., 2022).
- Children from **disadvantaged backgrounds were even more behind** than the rest of their peers (Fung et al. 2023; Rose et al. 2021; Wheeler et al., 2022).

Three-year study exploring the impact of Covid-19 on children's language, educational and socioemotional skills. The project focuses on children in the early stages of schooling from Reception to Year 2 in England.



ICICLES project



Spring 2022

Spring 2023

Spring 2024



2022 data

2023 data

2024 data



Test point one

Test point two

Test point three

Test point four

Sept 2021 - July 2022

Sept 2022 - July 2023

Sept 2023- July 2024

Summer Vacation

Summer Vacation

Summer Vacation

Reception

Year One

Year Two

Year One

Year Two

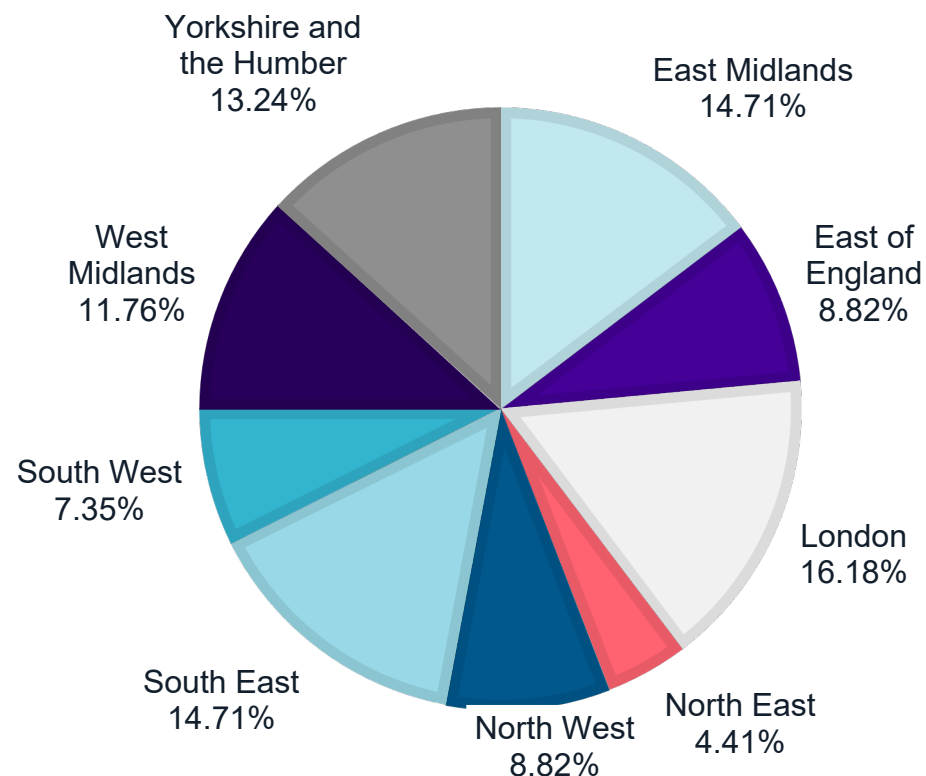
Year Two

Participants

- 68 schools in England



- 1559 children
 - 528 in Reception (in 2021)
 - 562 in Year 1 (in 2021)
 - 469 in Year 2 (in 2021)



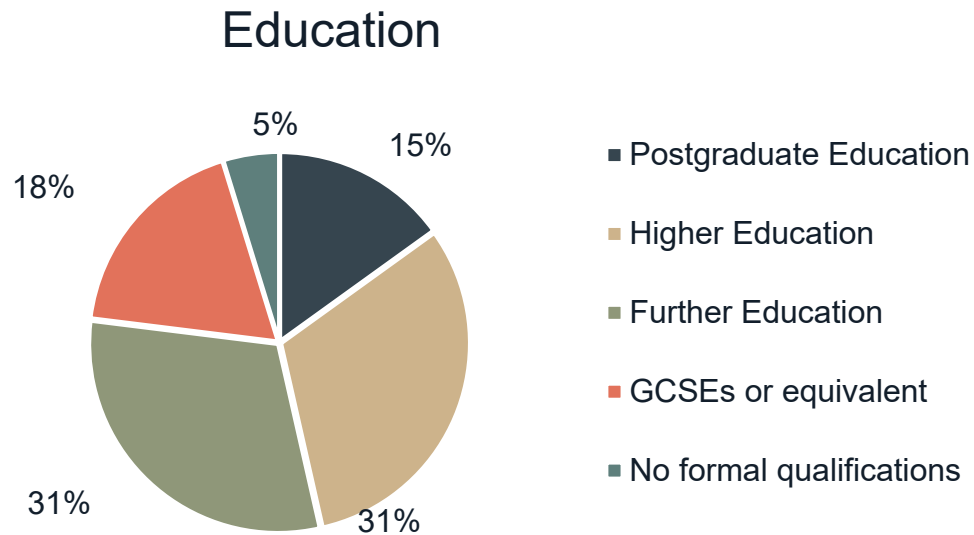
- Gender
 - Female - 47.63
 - Male - 52.37%
- English as an additional language - 14.52% (national average 20.2%)
- Free School Meals – 18.15% (national average is 23.8%)
- SEND - 13.28% (national average is 13%)

Parent/carer questionnaire

Parent/carers characteristics

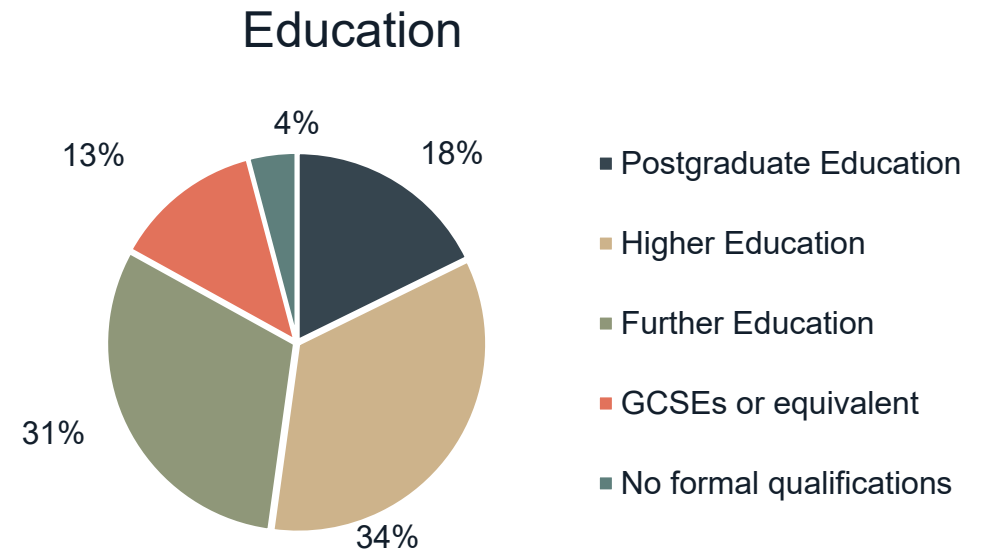
2021/2022

- 90.9% Mother
- 7.9% Father
- 1.2% Other relationship

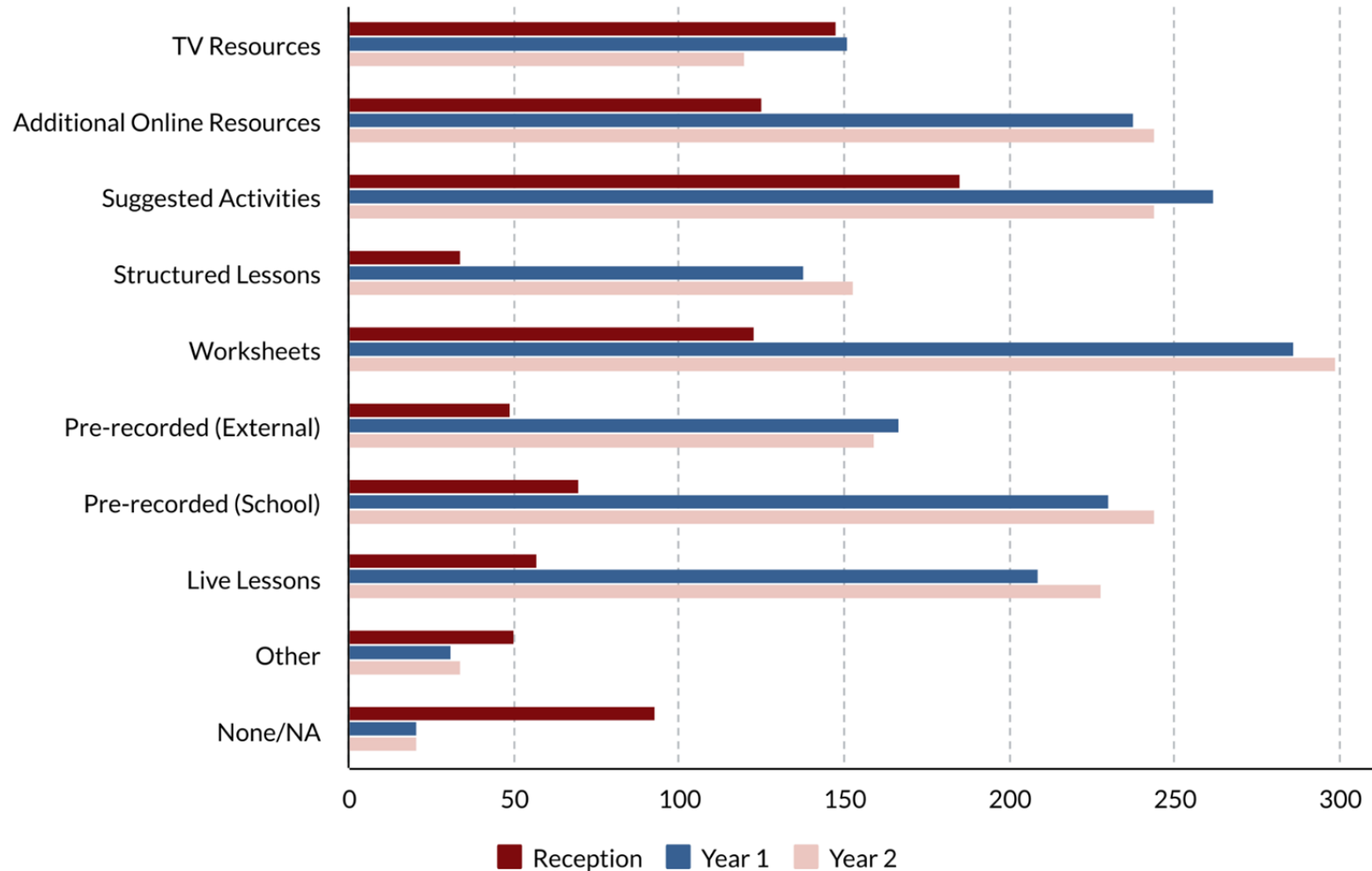


2022/2023

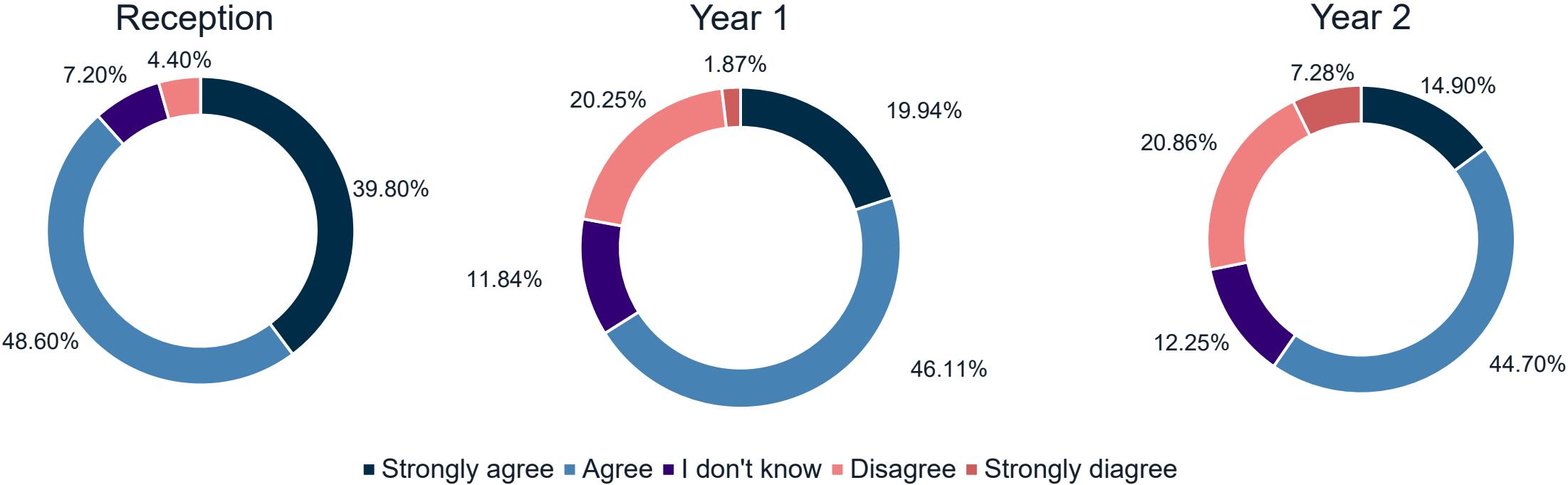
- 92.5% Mother
- 6.8 % Father
- 0.7% Other relationship



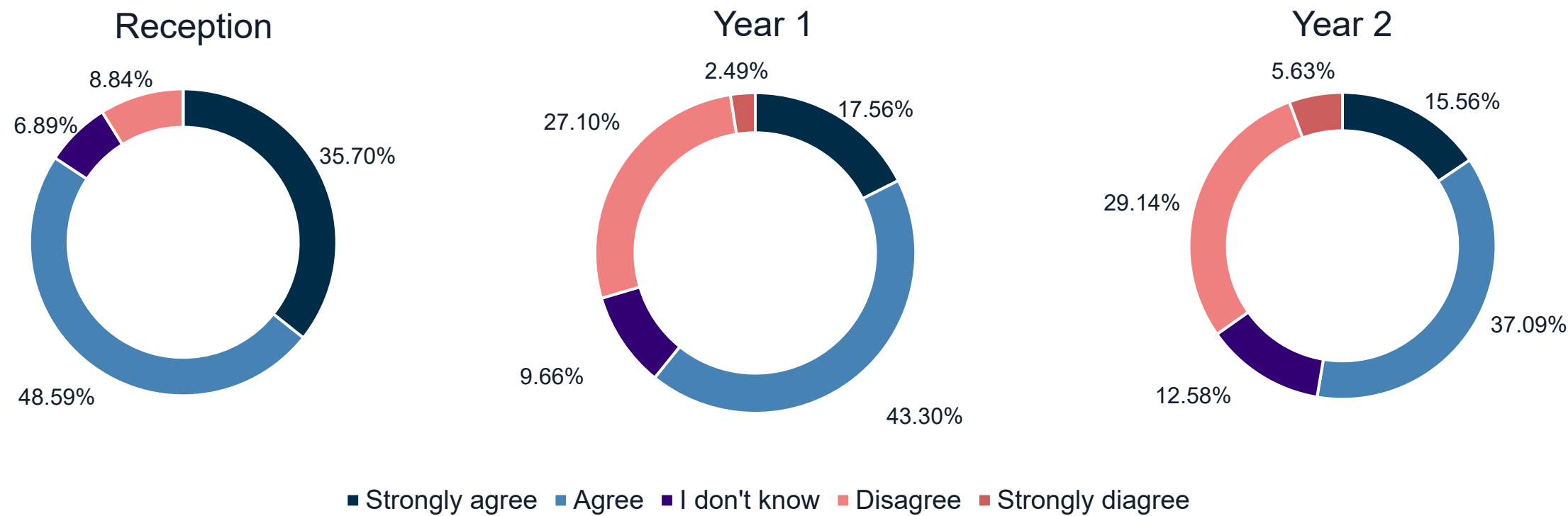
Did you help your child with any of these activities?



I enjoyed helping my child



I felt confident helping my child



“The school were fantastic in their early response to providing support at home for home learning. They also **provided more live social opportunities** for them to see their classmates online with show & tell and online story sessions.”

“It is impossible to home school 2 children with differing needs and WFH at the same time. Both of my children **became very stressed** by this style of learning as did I as a parent. “

“We hired a tutor during the second lockdown”

“I was WFH so my child had very little support with remote learning “

“Older siblings assisted as I was working 60hrs a week from home myself”

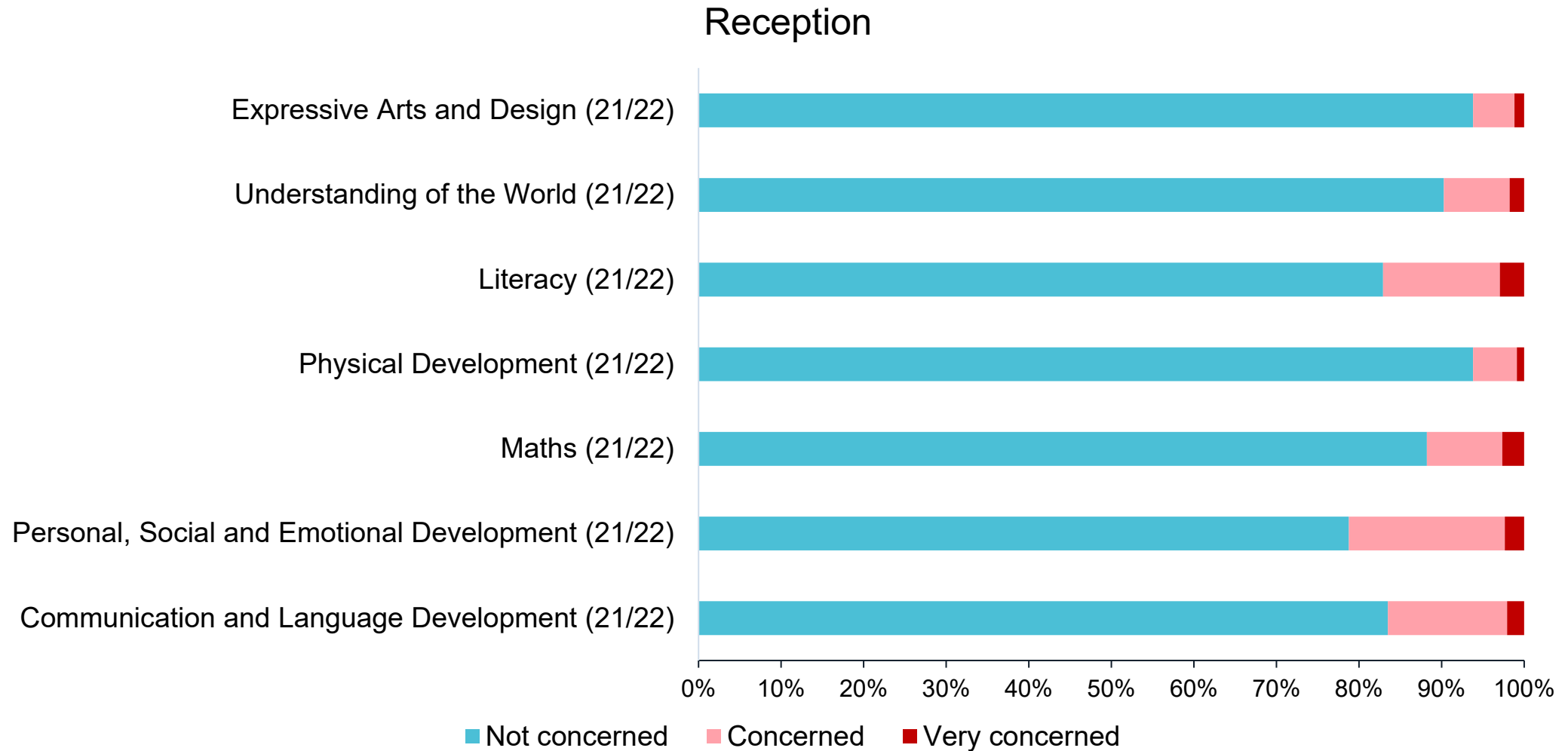
“A structured lesson plan was helpful if you only have one child. There was too much emphasis on online learning which I felt was inappropriate for several reasons.”

“Our son would get bored very quickly with online learning [...] We often gave up and went for a walk in the woods instead.

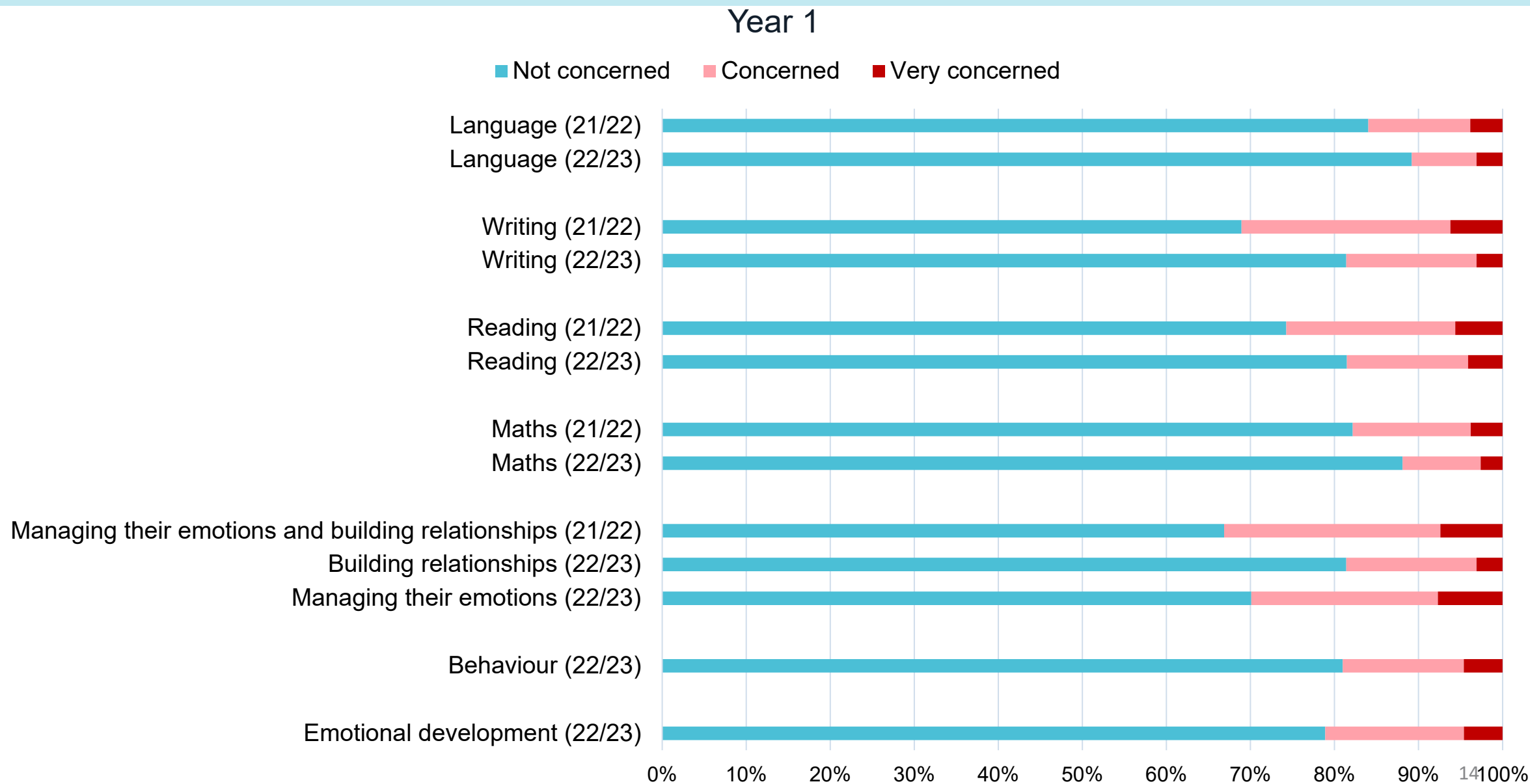
“We were unable to due to my mental health”

“We also did our own activities to support learning and where we could took everyday activities **and turned them in to opportunities to learn”**

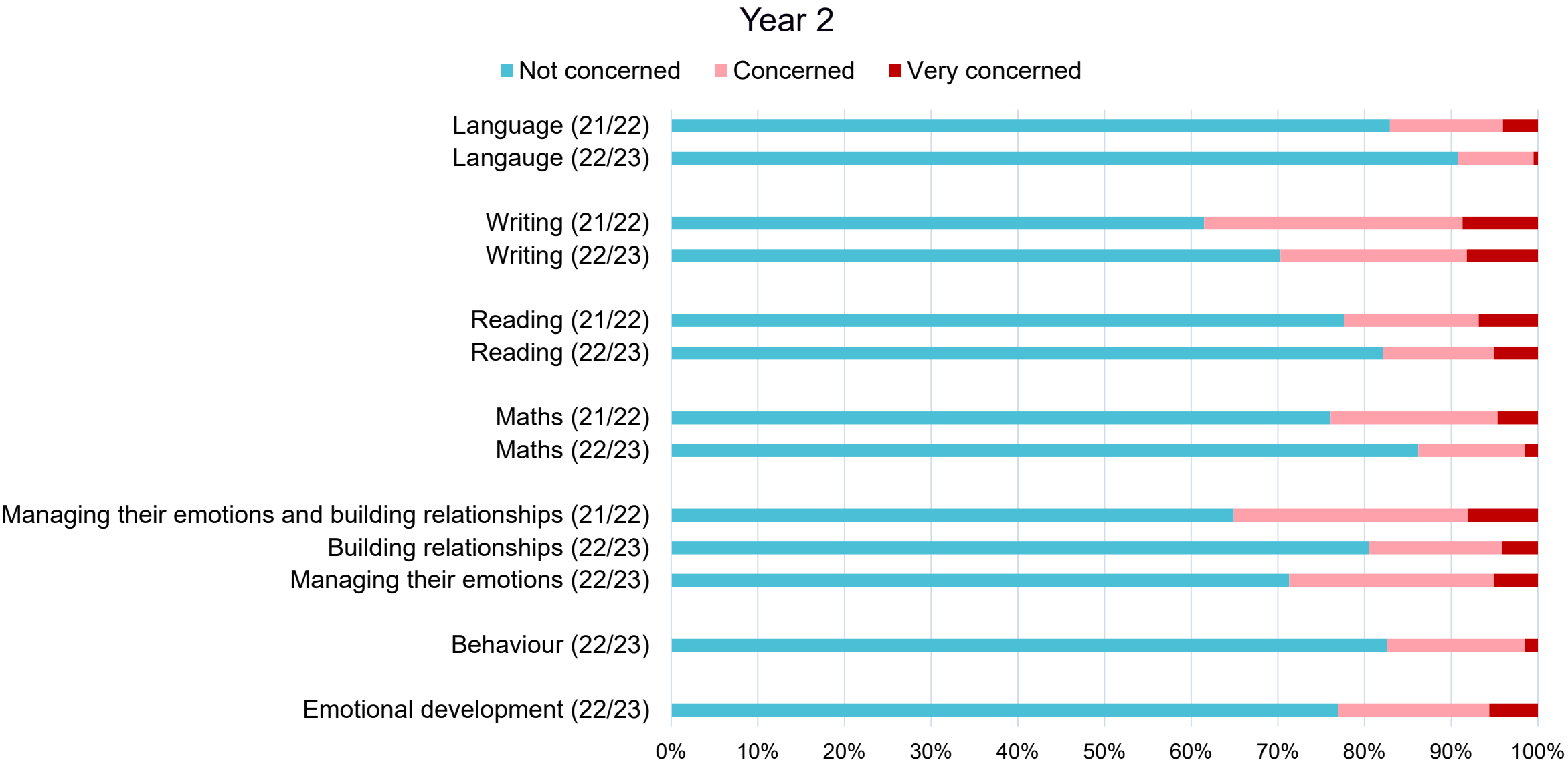
Concerns – Reception



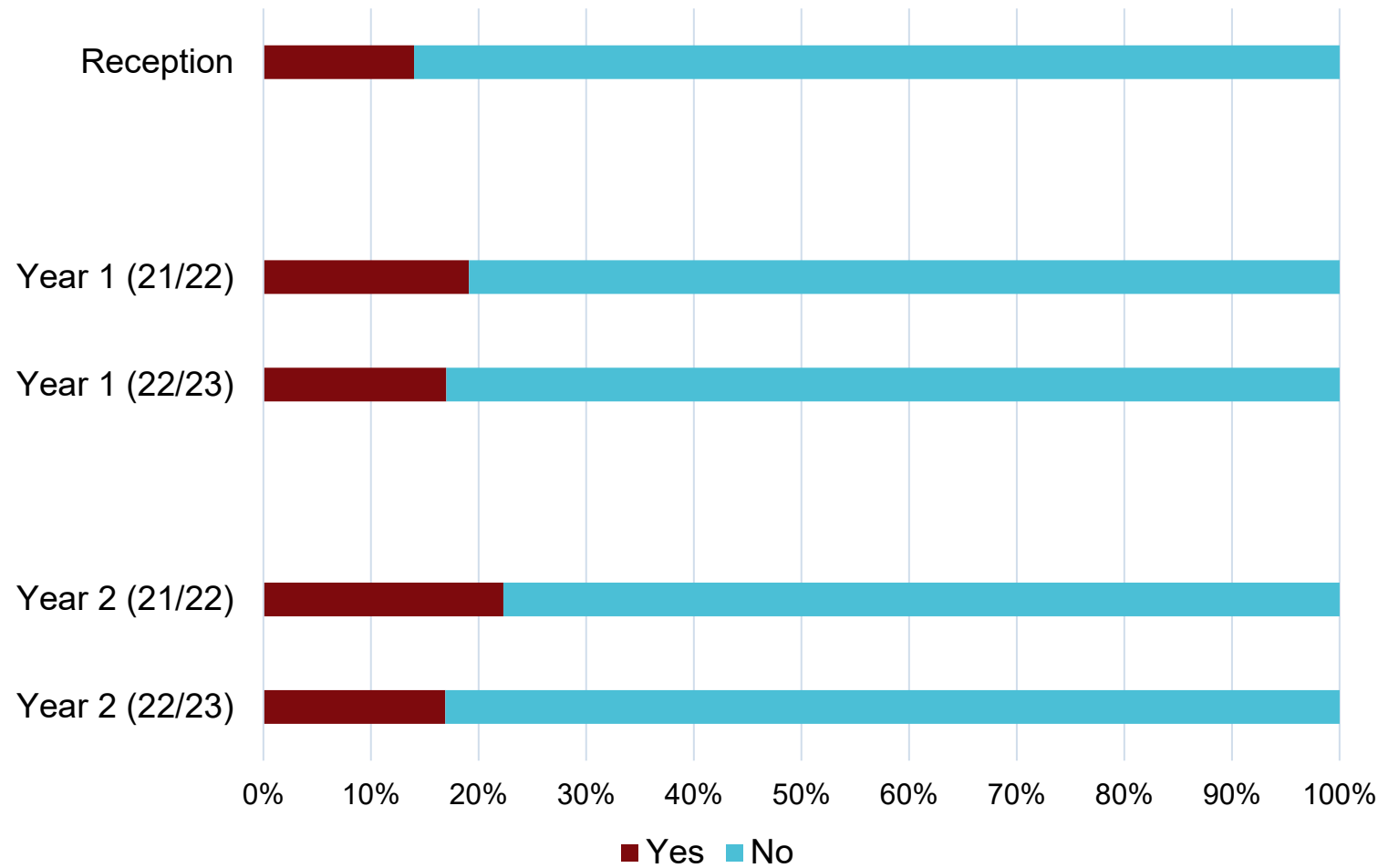
Concerns – Year 1



Concerns – Year 2



Concerns – Coping with school



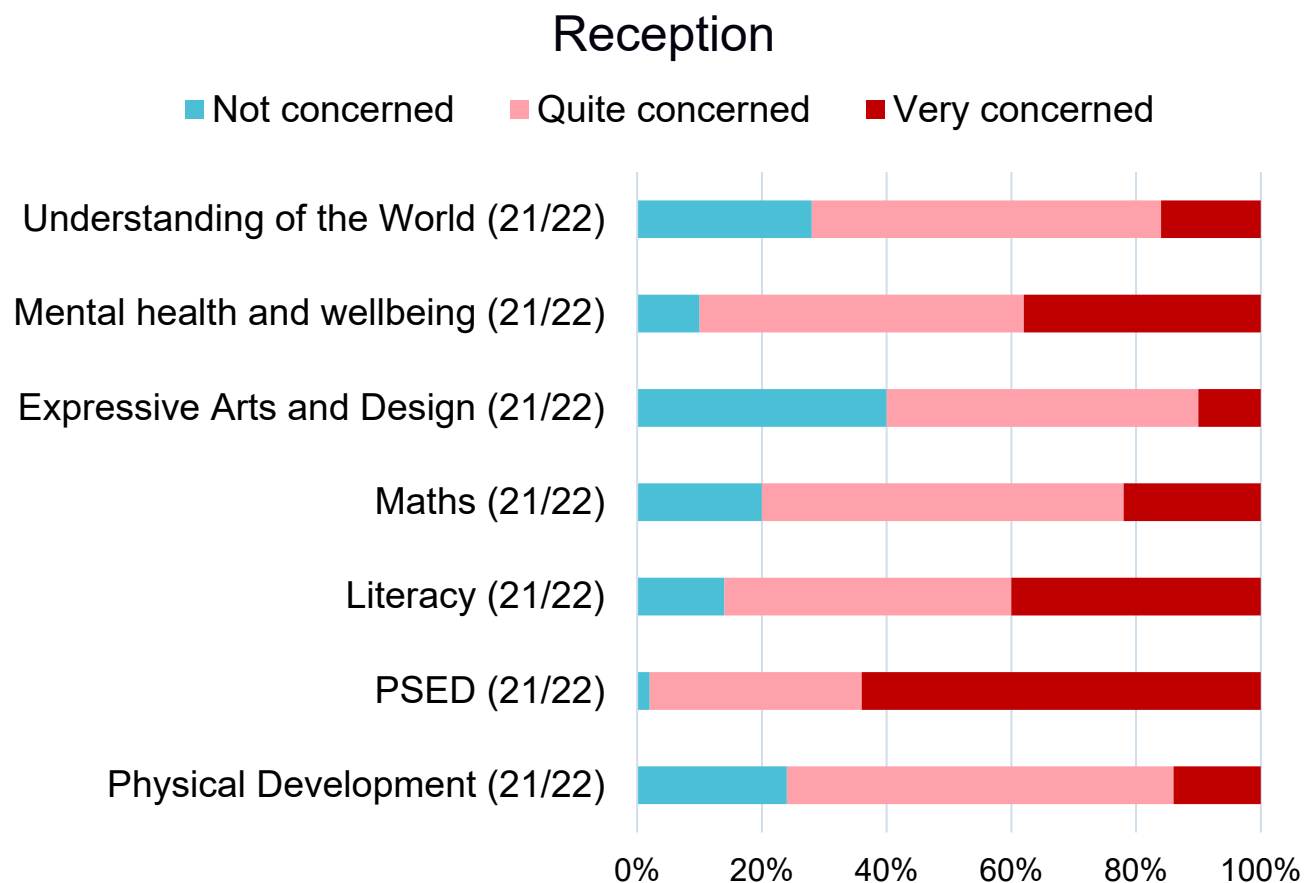
Interim summary

- During lockdown, parents/carers mainly helped children with worksheets and suggested activities by the school.
- Most parents/carers enjoy helping their children and feel confident doing so.
- The percentage of parents/carers who did not enjoy helping their children and did not feel confident doing so increased across year groups.
- The main areas of concern in 2021/2022 for children in Reception were literacy, personal development and communication and language.
- The main areas of concern for children in KS1 were writing, managing their emotions and building relationships in both academic years, however, the percentage of concerned parents/cares decreased in 2022/2023.



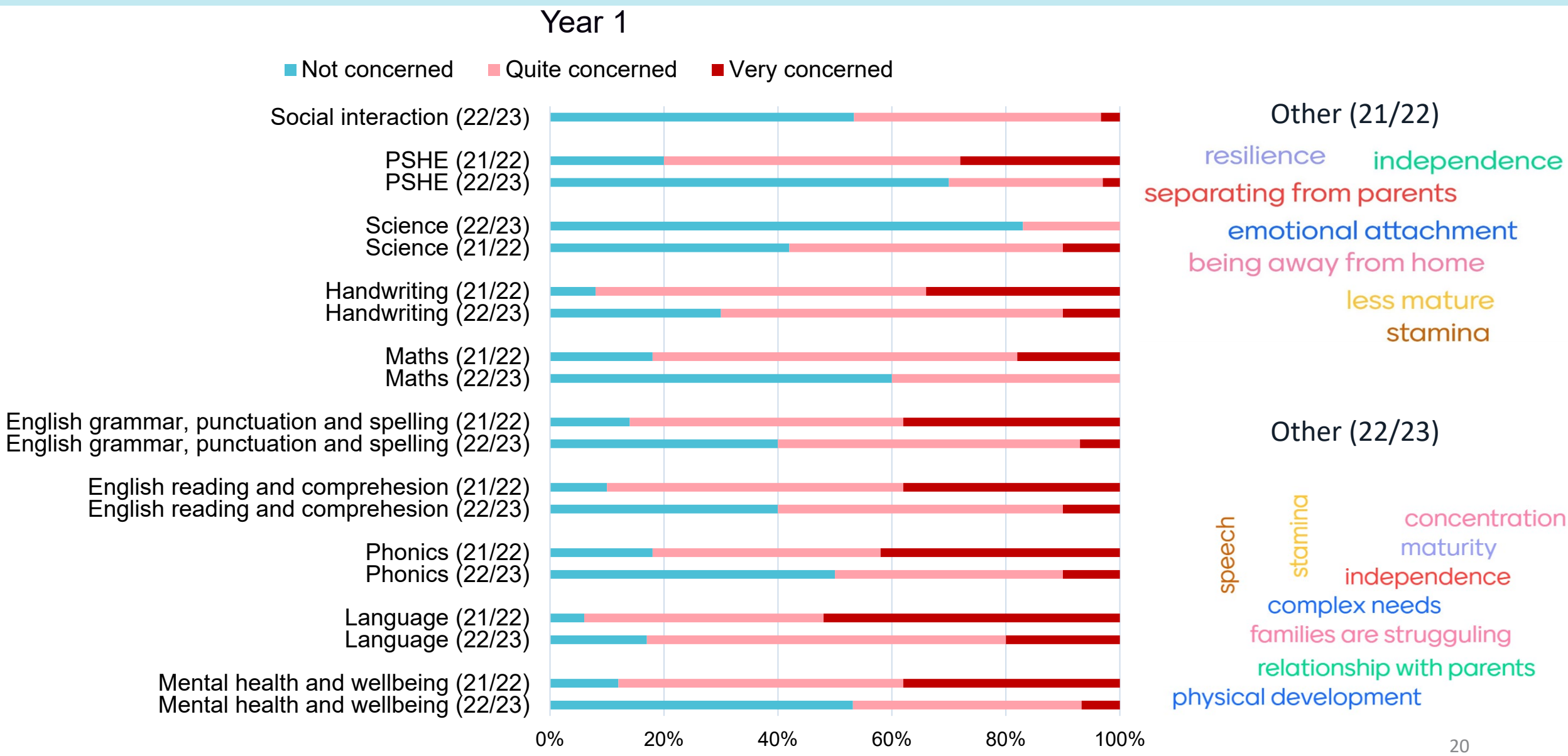
School questionnaires and interviews

Concerns - Reception

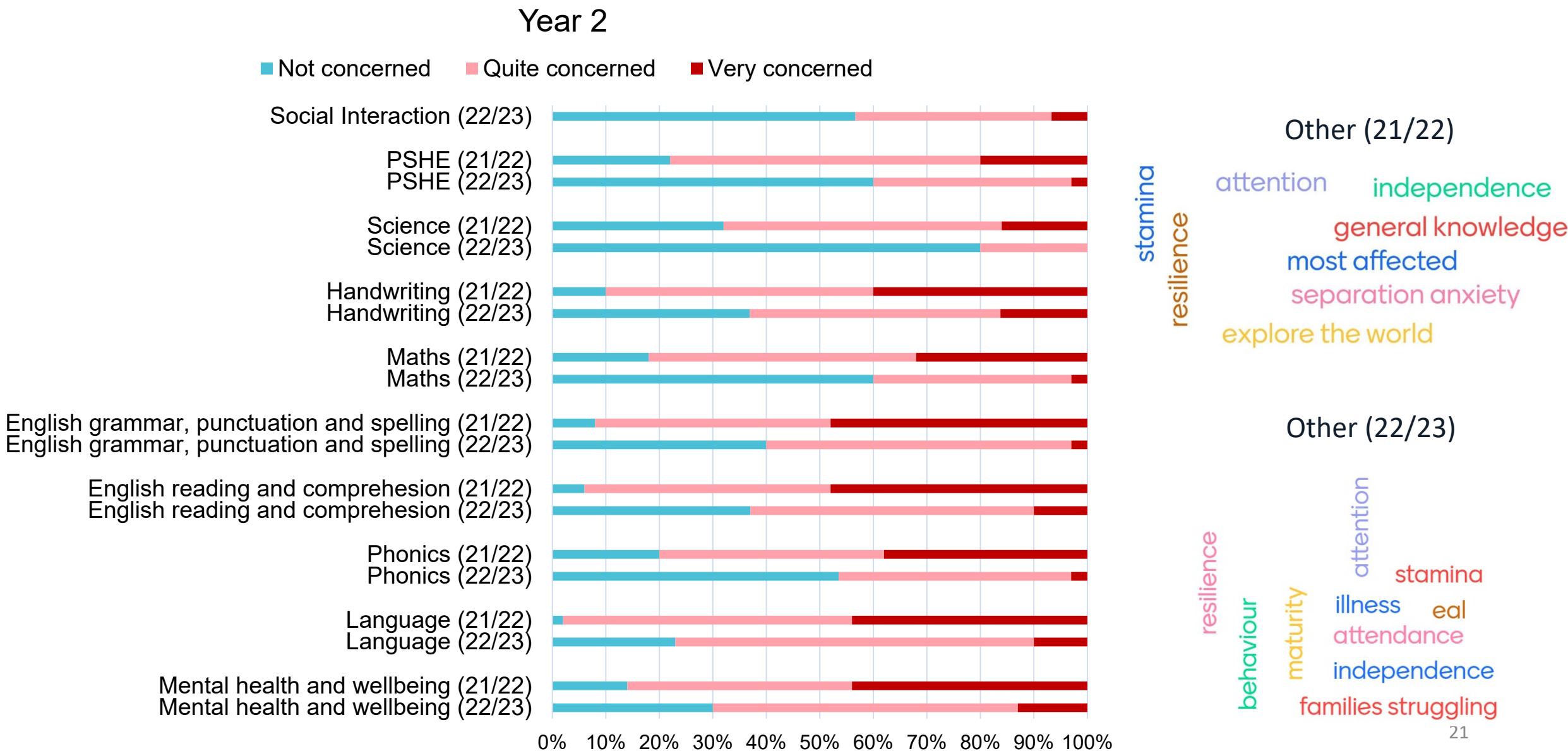


developmental milestones
imagination routines
personal hygiene independence
attention resilience
speech and language
play
listening
anxiety

Concerns – Year 1



Concerns – Year 2



Interviews (21/22)

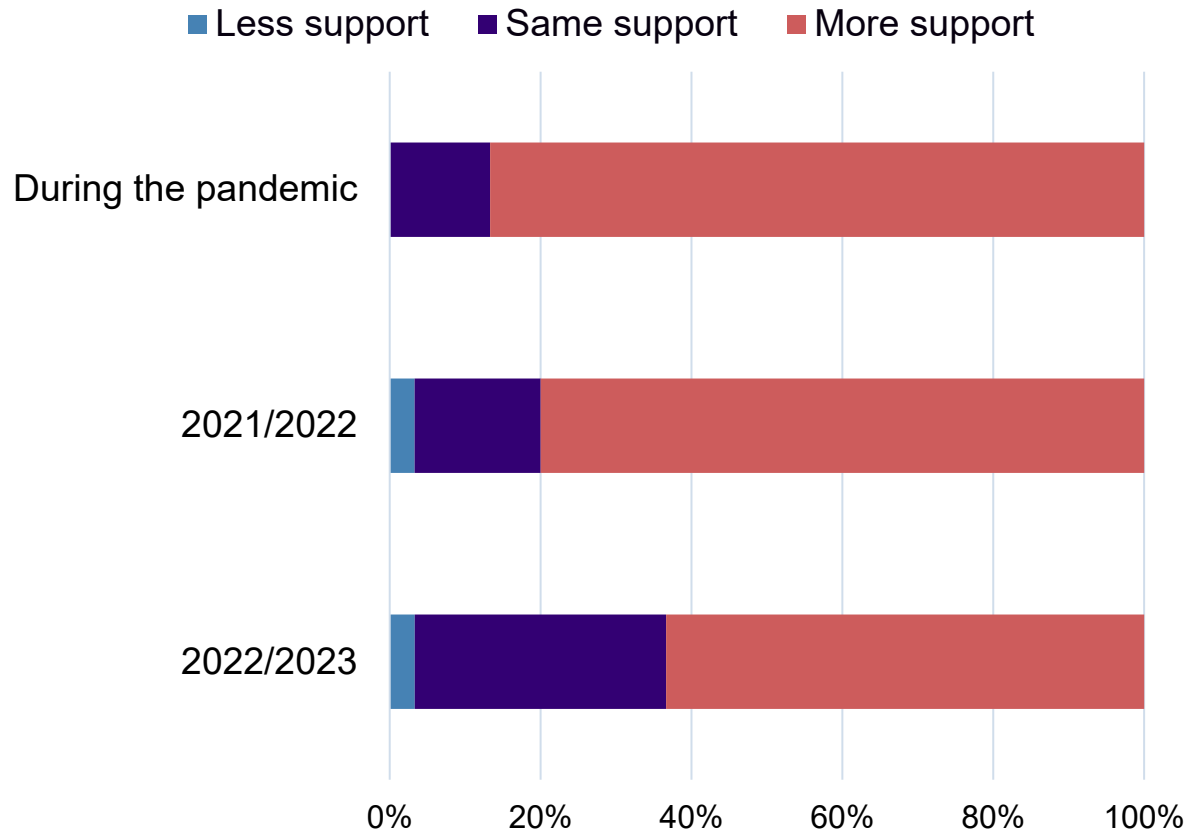
Concerns about the children

- Language, socioemotional skills and writing skills.
- Concerns about attention, motivation, focus and stamina.
- Everyday life skills and learning.
- Addressing gaps from previous years.
- Range of needs in one group.
- Impact on more deprived children, EAL and children with additional needs.

Concerns about schools/staff

- Increase in workload and scope of responsibilities.
- How teachers were viewed during school disruptions.
- Mental health concerns.
- Staff absences and impact on staff.
- Staff morale.
- Supply teachers or recruitment for new posts.
- Pressure to “catch up”.
- Stress and anxiety.
- Burnout.

How much support do families required?



During the pandemic:

Education, access to food, financial support, behaviour, mental health, social care, home learning, technology, wellbeing checks.

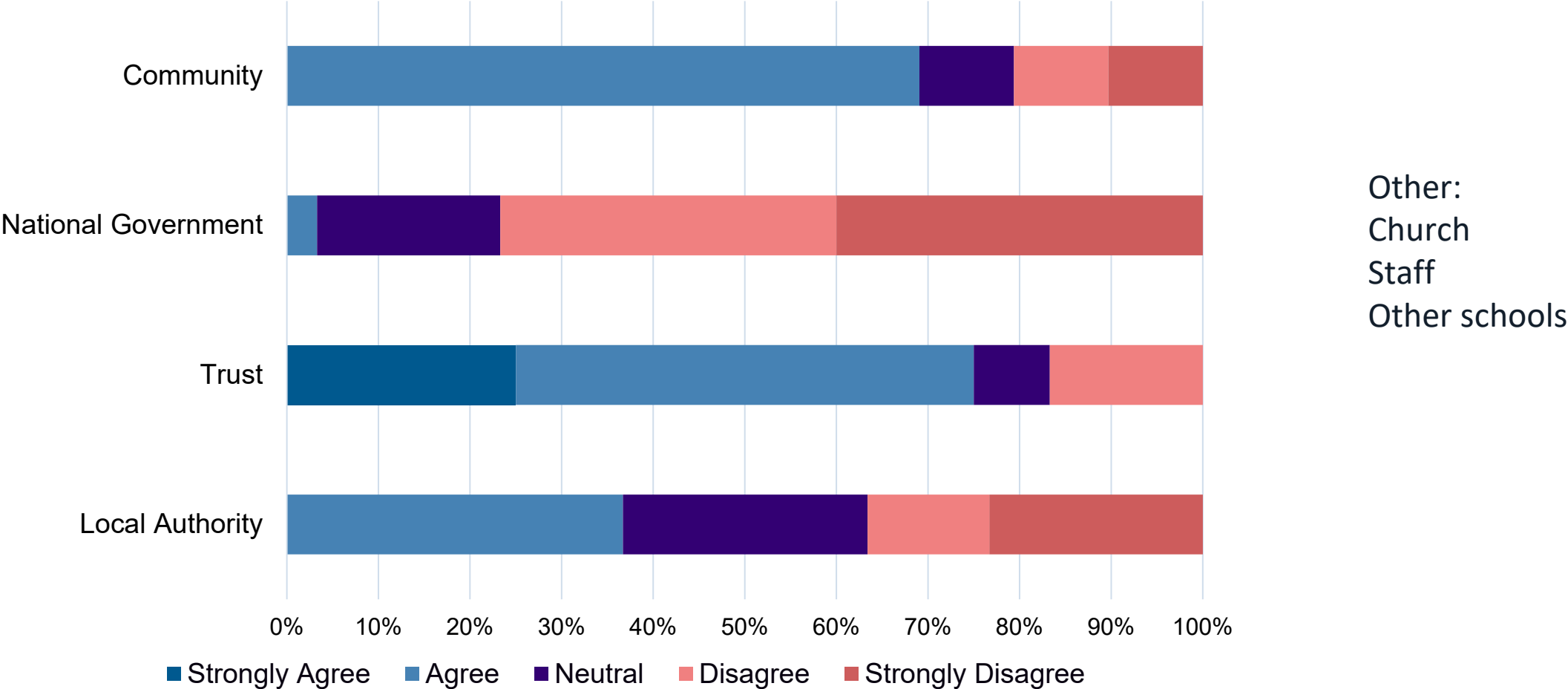
2021/2022:

Catch up, food banks, behaviour, mental health, emotional support, financial support, engagement and home learning, parent worries.

2022/2023:

Food banks, access to Early Help, academic support, emotional and behaviour support, cost of living crisis support, parent mental health, behaviours at home, financial support.

Do you feel supported by the following? (2022/2023)



Additional support still needed (2022/2023)

- More support for SEND children and families in their homes.
- More funding/properly funded services and support “catch up” programmes.
- Funding to support mental health.
- More/better relationships with educational psychologists, SLTs, or other specialized services.
- Reducing their workload by transferring responsibilities elsewhere, for example, visiting absent children to ensure their well-being.
- Increasing funding and resources for schools and autonomy to implement what is best for children and staff depending on their needs.
- An increase in funding would also enable them to provide more targeted support for staff members.
- Reducing the external pressures used to check that children catch up and balancing these with school improvement support.

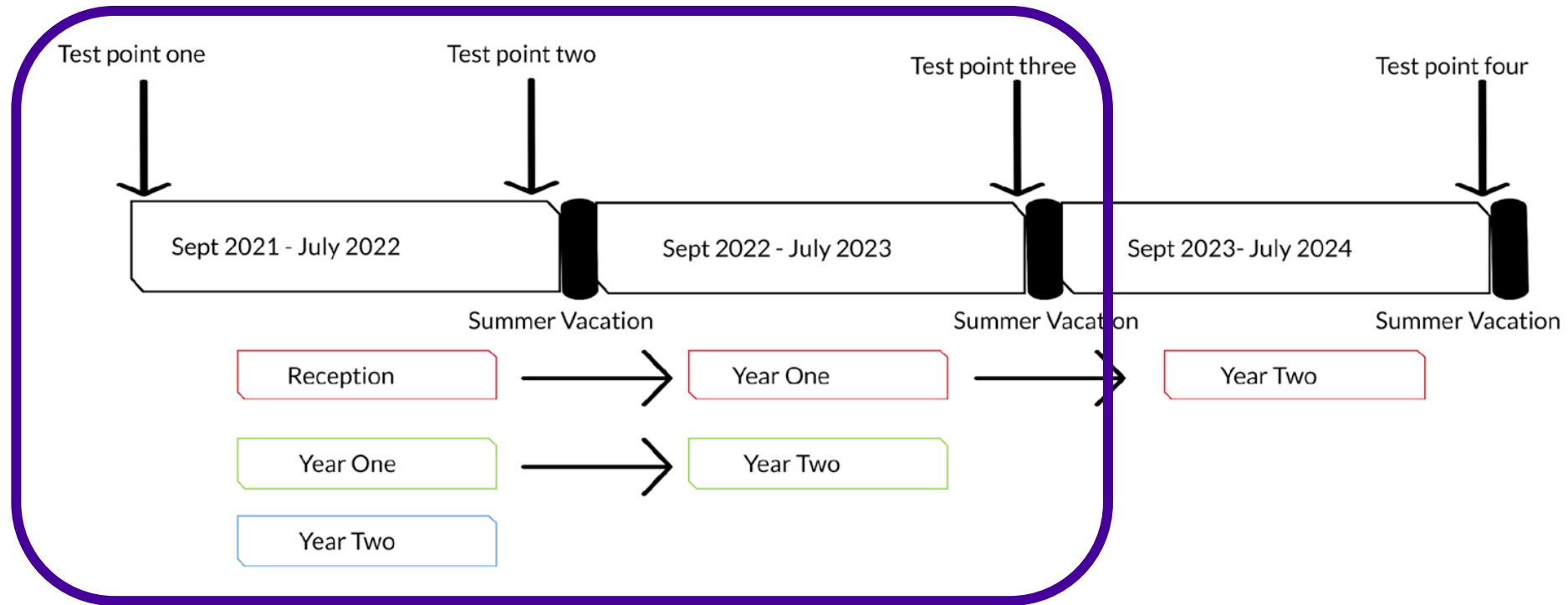
Interim summary

- More concerns are present compared to parents/carers.
- In Reception, the main concerns were about PSED and mental health and wellbeing.
- In KS1 handwriting and language were the main concerns in both academic years, but the percentage of concern decreased.
- Staff members have also been significantly impacted personally and professionally.
- More support is still required for children, families, staff members and schools.



Language Skills

(Language Screen)



Language Screen

Standardised measure that focuses on four specific areas:

- Expressive vocabulary
- Receptive vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Sentence repetition



Definitely needs support



May benefit from support



Not a cause of concern

Language Screen

Spring 2022 (TP1)



91.3%

4.9%

3.8%

Summer 2022 (TP2)



94.1%

3.9%

2.0%

Summer 2023 (TP3)



95.3%

3.4%

1.3%

Spring 2022 TP1 – Language Screen

Reception



84.4%
9.0%
6.6%

Year 1



93.8%
4.3%
1.9%

Year 2



95.8%
2.8%
1.4%

Summer 2022 TP2 – Language Screen

Reception



92.0%
3.8%
4.2%

Year 1



94.3%
4.4%
1.3%

Year 2



96.1%
3.5%
0.4%

Summer 2023 TP3 – Language Screen

Year 1



95.0%
3.7%
1.3%

Year 2



95.6%
3.0%
1.4%

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (LS)?



Children

- Age
- Gender
- EAL
- FSM
- SEND
- Ethnicity
- Score at TP1-Spring 2022



Parent/carer

- Home Learning Environment
- Parental Well Being
- Occupation
- Education



School

- % FSM
- % EAL
- % SEND

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (LS)?



Children

- Age ***
- Gender ***
- EAL **
- FSM
- SEND ***
- Ethnicity **
- Score at TP1-Spring 2022 ***



Parent/carer

- Home Learning Environment
- Parental Well Being
- Occupation
- Education



School

- % FSM
- % EAL
- % SEND ***

** = $p < 0.01$

*** = $p < 0.05$

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (LS)?

Higher scores = better language skills

SEND. Children without SEND are scoring higher than children with SEND

Ethnicity. Children from other ethnicities are scoring higher than children from Black ethnic backgrounds

EAL status. Non EAL children have higher scores than EAL children

Gender. Boys are scoring higher than girls

Scores. Higher scores in Spring 2022 are related to higher scores in Summer 2022

% SEND. Children in schools with higher % of children with SEND are scoring higher

Age. Older children are scoring higher than younger children

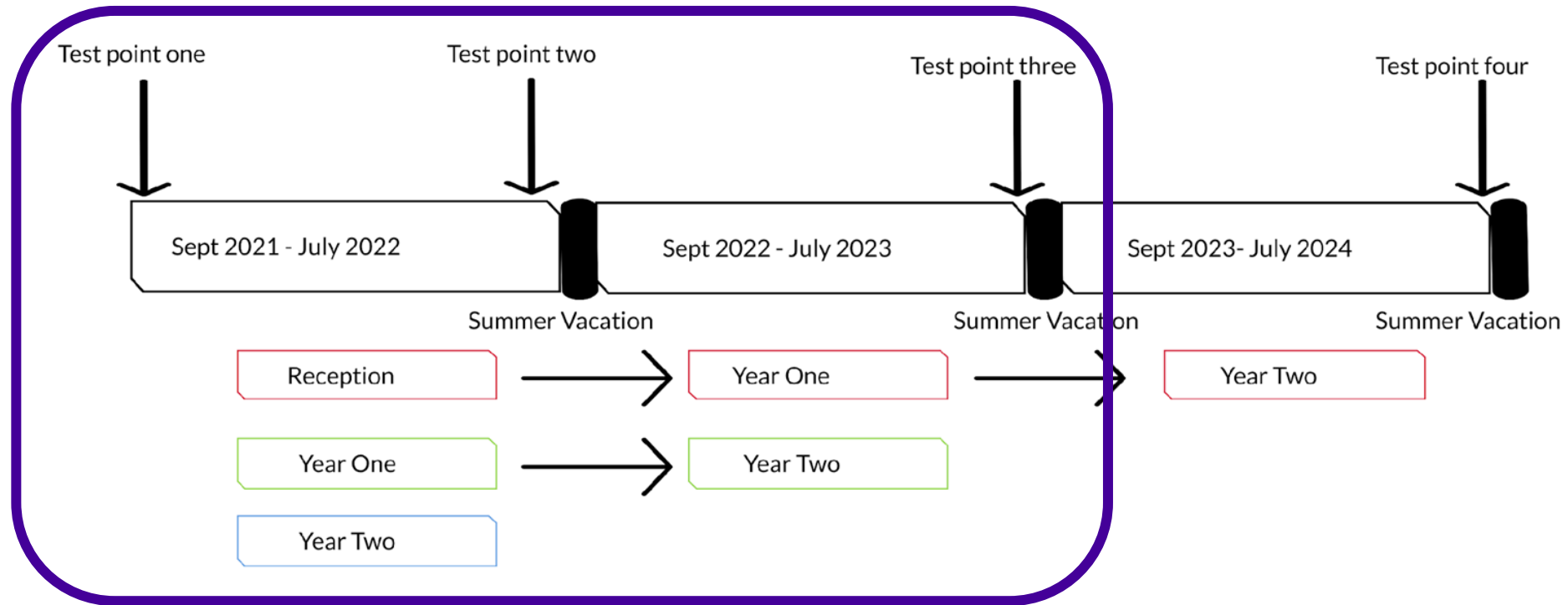
Interim summary

- Most participants are scoring within the expected range with some children showing some difficulties.
- Results differ from what schools, teachers and other reports/news have shared.
- Factors associated with language skills at the end of Summer 2022 mainly related to children's individual characteristics
 - SEND, ethnicity, EAL status, gender, scores in Spring 2022, age and %SEND in the school.



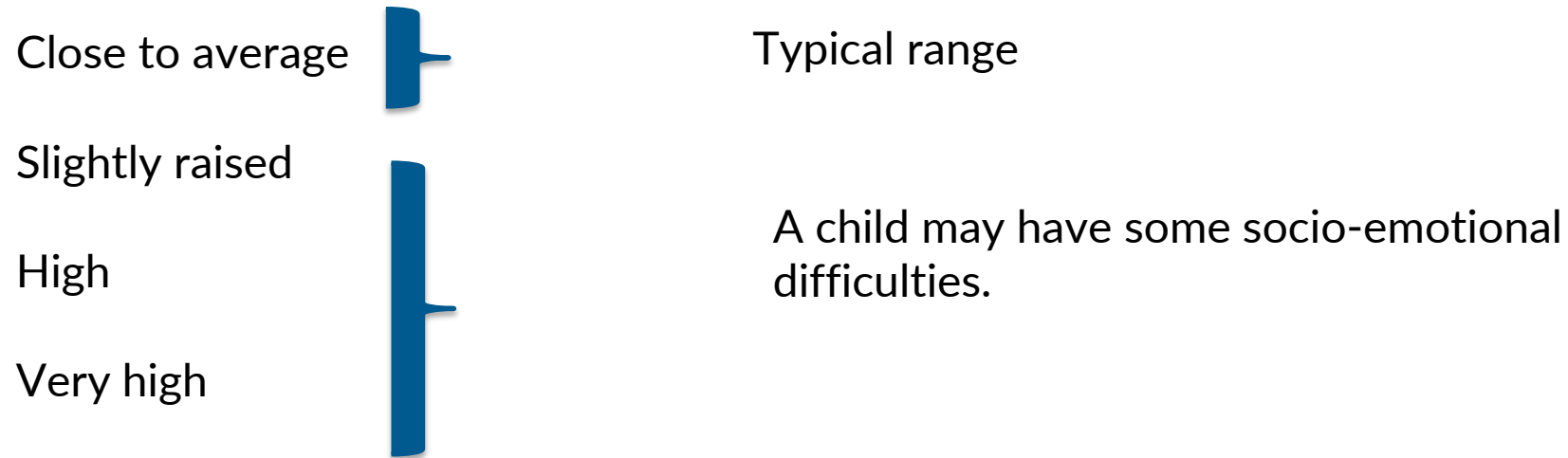
Socioemotional Skills

(Strengths and Difficulties
Questionnaire)



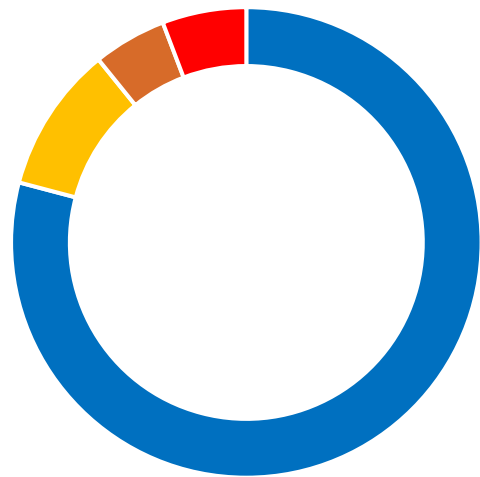
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a measure used to assess socio-emotional well-being.
Scores are categorised as:



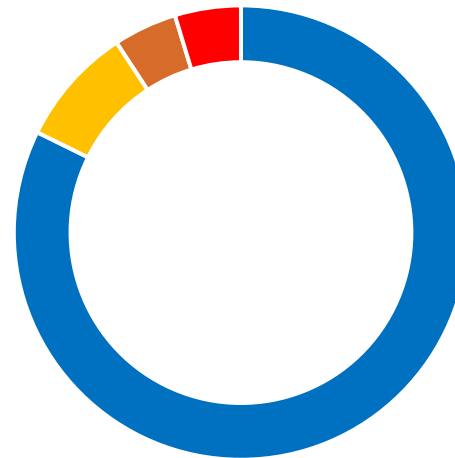
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

Spring 2022
 $M = 7.04$ ($SD = 6.17$)



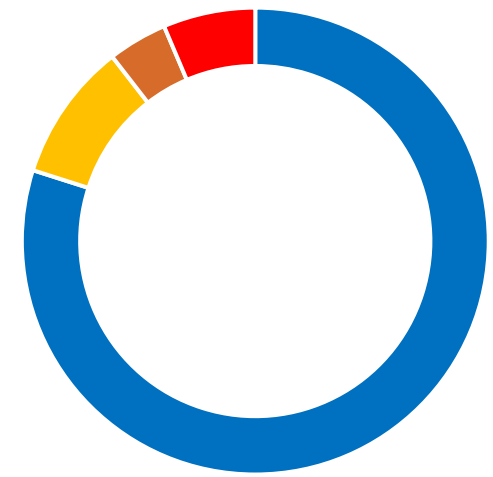
■ 79.1% ■ 5.1%
■ 10.0% ■ 5.8%

Summer 2022
 $M = 6.40$ ($SD = 5.87$)



■ 82.3% ■ 4.5%
■ 8.5% ■ 4.7%

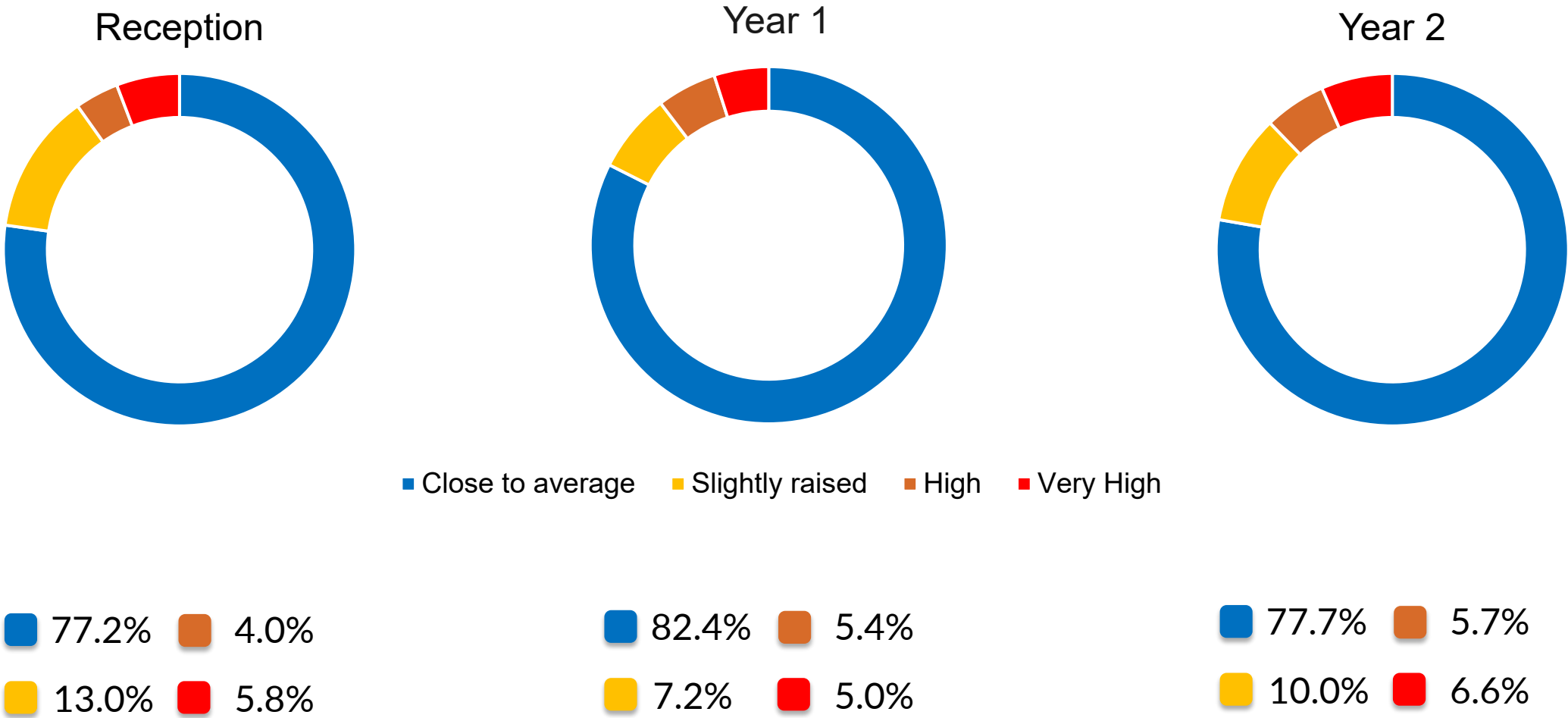
Summer 2023
 $M = 6.61$ ($SD = 6.14$)



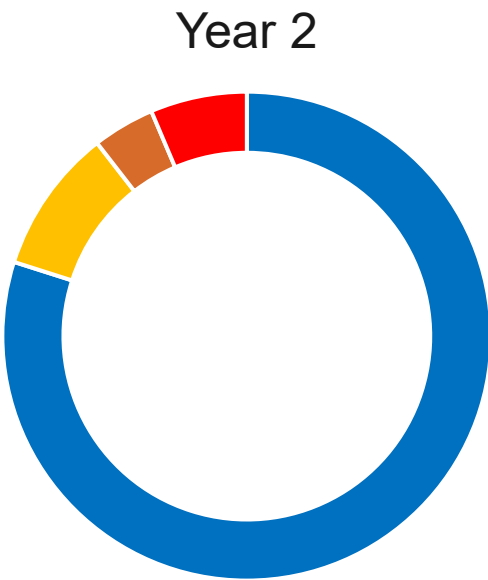
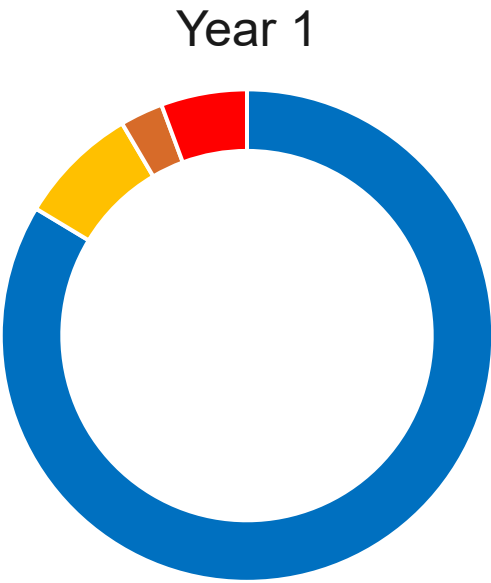
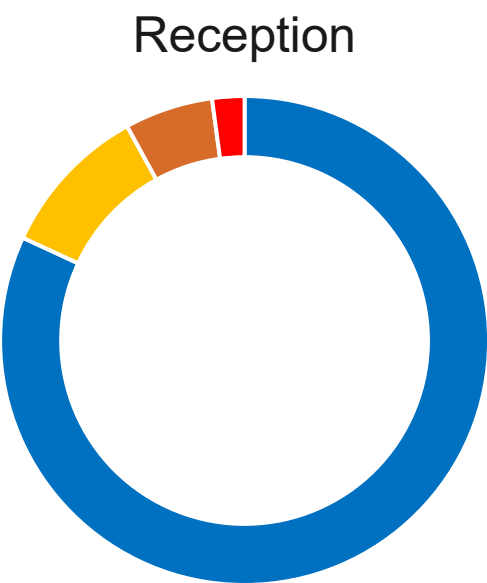
■ 79.9% ■ 4.1%
■ 9.6% ■ 6.4%

Norms
 $M = 6.7$ ($SD = 5.9$)

Spring 2022 TP1 – SDQ



Summer 2022 TP2 – SDQ



■ Close to average ■ Slightly raised ■ High ■ Very High

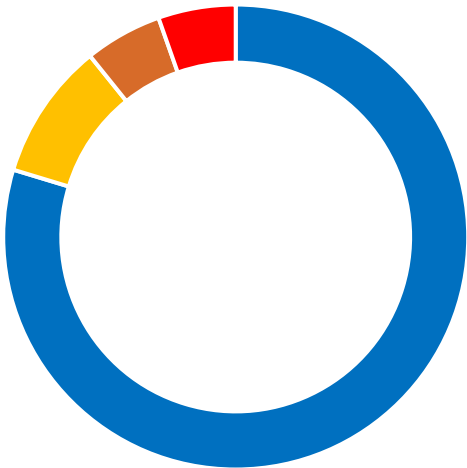
■ 81.9% ■ 5.9%
■ 10.1% ■ 2.1%

■ 83.6% ■ 2.8%
■ 7.9% ■ 5.6%

■ 79.9% ■ 4.1%
■ 9.6% ■ 6.4%

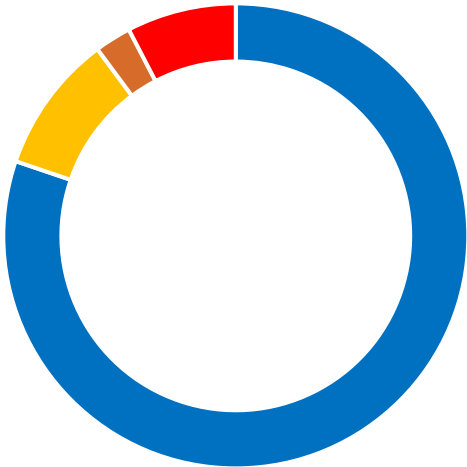
Summer 2023 TP – SDQ

Year 1



■ 79.7% ■ 5.4%
■ 9.5% ■ 5.4%

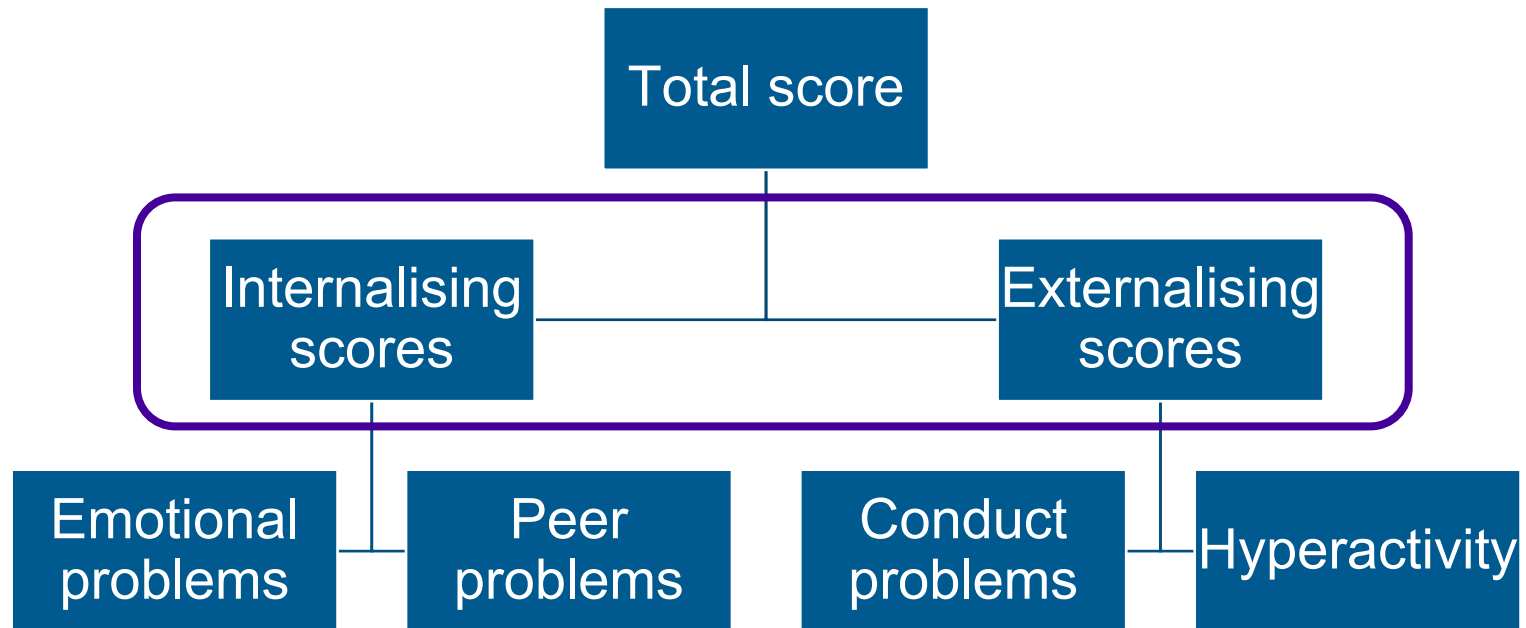
Year 2



■ 80.2% ■ 2.5%
■ 9.6% ■ 7.6%

- Close to average
- Slightly raised
- High
- Very High

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire



Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (SDQ - internalising)?



Children

- Age
- Gender
- EAL
- FSM
- SEND
- Ethnicity
- Score at TP1-Spring 2022
- Language score at TP1-Spring 2022



Parent/carer

- Home Learning Environment
- Parental Well Being
- Occupation
- Education



School

- % FSM
- % EAL
- % SEND

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (SDQ - internalising)?



Children

- Age ***
- Gender ***
- EAL
- FSM
- SEND **
- Ethnicity ***
- Score at TP1-Spring 2022 **
- Language score at TP1-Spring 2022



Parent/carer

- Home Learning Environment
- Parental Well Being ***
- Occupation ***
- Education



School

- % FSM **
- % EAL
- % SEND

** = $p < 0.01$

*** = $p < 0.05$

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (SDQ - internalising)?

Higher scores = more socioemotional difficulties

SEND. Children with SEND are scoring higher than children without SEND

Ethnicity. Children from Black ethnic backgrounds are scoring higher

Occupation. Children with parents/carers with an occupation other than caring/services are scoring higher than children with parents/carers with no occupation

Scores. Higher scores in Spring 2022 are related to higher scores in Summer 2022

Gender. Girls are scoring higher than boys

Parental Wellbeing. Children with parents/carers with lower wellbeing have higher scores

% FSM. Children in schools with higher % of FSM are scoring higher

Age. Older children are scoring higher than younger children

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (SDQ - externalising)?



Children

- Age
- Gender
- EAL
- FSM
- SEND
- Ethnicity
- Score at TP1-Spring 2022
- Language score at TP1-Spring 2022



Parent/carer

- Home Learning Environment
- Parental Well Being
- Occupation
- Education



School

- % FSM
- % EAL
- % SEND

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (SDQ - externalising)?



Children

- Age
- Gender
- EAL
- FSM
- SEND ***
- Ethnicity ***
- Score at TP1-Spring 2022 **
- Language score at TP1-Spring 2022



Parent/carer

- Home Learning Environment
- Parental Well Being
- Occupation ***
- Education



School

- % FSM ***
- % EAL
- % SEND

** = $p < 0.01$

*** = $p < 0.05$

Which factors are related to children's scores in Summer 2022 (SDQ - externalising)?

Higher scores = more socioemotional difficulties

Ethnicity.

Children from Black ethnic backgrounds scoring higher than children from other ethnicities.

SEND. Children with SEND are scoring higher than children without SEND

Occupation. Children with parents/carers with an occupation other than caring/services are scoring higher than children with parents/carers with no occupation

Scores.

Higher scores in Spring 2022 are related to higher scores in Summer 2022

% FSM.

Children in schools with higher % of FSM are scoring higher

Interim summary

- Most participants are scoring within the expected range with some children showing some difficulties.
- Results differ from what schools, teachers and other reports/news have shared.
- Children's individual characteristics and environment are playing a significant role on socioemotional skills
- SEND status, ethnicity, parental occupation are the main factors for both subscales.



Educational experience
(NPD data)

EYFSP national data from 2017 (pre pandemic) vs 2022 (post pandemic)

Odds of achieving a good level of development (GLD) **reduced by around 18% in 2022 versus 2017.**

Odds for boys were almost 50% *lower* than for girls prior to the pandemic. This difference was slightly smaller in 2022; **girls seemed to be more adversely affected by the pandemic.**

Children who were eligible for **free school meals** had odds that were **39% lower in 2017 and 41% lower in 2022.**

For each 1% increase in attendance during Reception the odds of achieving GLD were 7% larger. This was after controlling for known special needs but may still have reflected poorer health.

Prior to the pandemic receiving the 2-year-old nursery offer was associated with *reduced* odds of achieving a GLD because eligibility is targeted to children with greater needs.

But in 2022, there was a protective effect from receiving the 2-year-old offer. Recipient children's odds of achieving GLD were only 2% lower than other children, instead of 16% lower in 2017.

EYFSP national data from 2017 (pre pandemic) vs 2022 (post pandemic)

Before the pandemic, the effect of the 3-year-old nursery offer depended on how many hours were received. Children receiving 15 free hours had odds of GLD that were 9% *lower* than children who didn't take up any free nursery.

But those receiving 30 free hours of nursery (whose parents worked full-time) had odds of GLD that were 5% *greater* than children with no free nursery.

In 2022, this inequality increased. Children receiving the 15-hour offer had odds of GLD 12% *lower* than those with no free nursery and those receiving the 30-hour offer had odds 8% *higher* than those with no free nursery.

Children who attended a nursery with **2 or more graduate staff** had *increased* odds of GLD by **9% in 2017, and this advantage was larger in 2022, at 13%.**

Children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) had *lower* odds of achieving GLD. However, 30 free hours of nursery at age 3 was even more beneficial for children who speak EAL.

Their disadvantage in achieving GLD was *reduced* by receiving the 30 free hours from -35% to -15% in 2017, and from -29% to -8% in 2022.

Interim summary

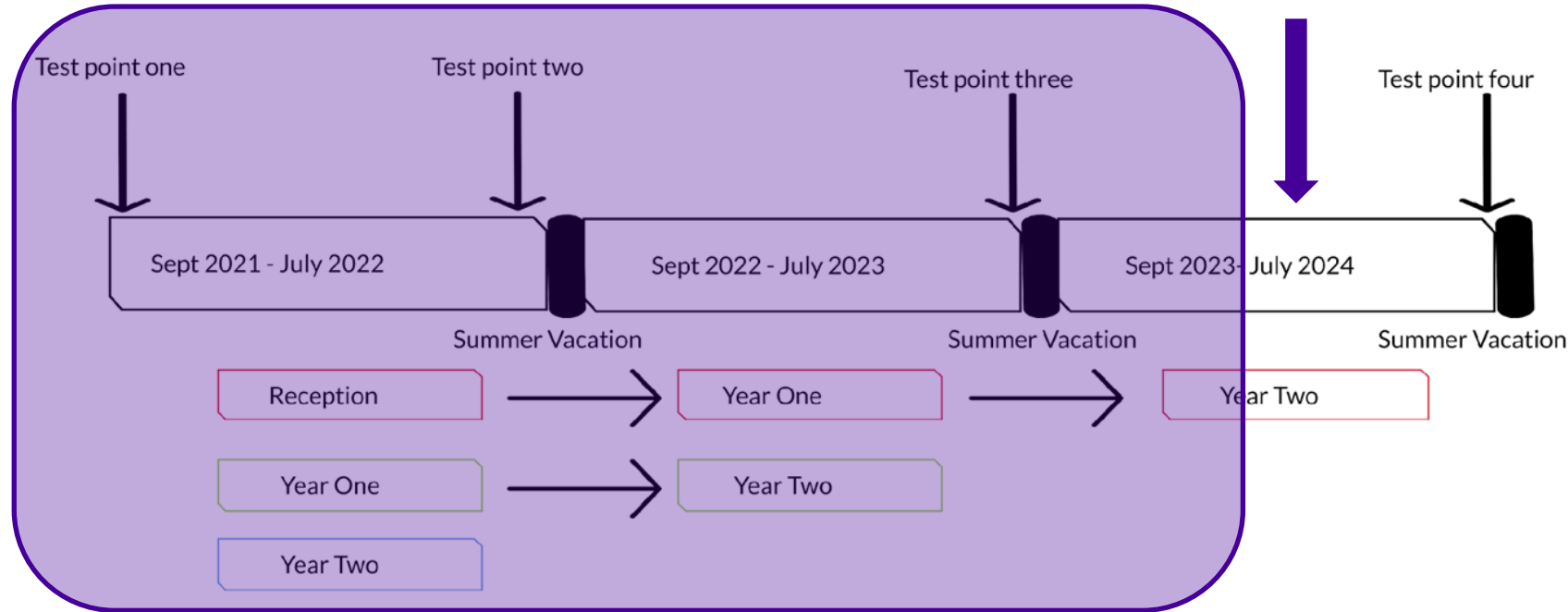
- Odds of achieving GLD reduced in 2022 compared to pre pandemic.
- Girls seem to be more adversely affected than boys.
- Differences between nursery attendance, staff characteristics, EAL status and free school meal.
- Increase in attendance during Reception increased the odds of GLD.



General conclusions and Next steps

- Variability on the experience of pandemic and school lockdowns for parents/carers.
- Most parents/carers were not concerned. When concerns were present, they were mainly regarding literacy, communication and language, personal development and socioemotional development.
- Schools were more concerned mainly about PSED, mental health and wellbeing, handwriting and language.
- Concerns have decreased for parents and schools.
- Staff members have also been significantly impacted personally and professionally.
- Most children are scoring within the expected range in a language and a socioemotional assessment. Results differ from what schools, teachers and other reports/news have shared
- Some children are struggling more than others (e.g . SEND, ethnicity, gender, EAL, parental occupation)
- The odds of achieving a GLD reduced in 2022 versus 2017 with some differences depending on children's characteristics, staff's characteristics and nursery attendance.

Next steps



- Educational outcomes of children participating in the ICICLES project – Phonics Screening and KS1 SATs
- Factors impacting children's outcomes in the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic year.
- Parent/carer, school and children data collected in the 2023/2024 academic year.
- School's and staff's experience in the 2023/2024 academic year.

Thank you



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