

Deputations

City of Edinburgh Council

10.00 am Thursday, 20th February, 2025

Main Council Chamber - City Chambers

Deputations

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CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

20 FEBRUARY 2025

DEPUTATION REQUESTS

Subject	Deputation
Council Budget	<p>3.1 UNISON (Verbal)</p> <p>3.2 Oaklands School Parent Council (Verbal)</p> <p>3.3 Father's and Allies for ASN reform (Written submission attached)</p> <p>3.4 Edinburgh Tenants Federation (Verbal and written submission attached)</p> <p>3.5 UNITE Edinburgh Not For Profit Branch (Verbal)</p> <p>3.6 Safe Consumption Facility Edinburgh (Verbal)</p> <p>3.7 Unite City of Edinburgh Council branch (Verbal)</p> <p>3.8 Edinburgh EIS (Verbal and written submission attached)</p> <p>3.9 LIFT@ Muirhouse Millenium Centre (Verbal)</p> <p>3.10 REPAIR (Edinburgh) Network (Verbal and written submission attached)</p> <p>3.11 Protect Edinburgh Services for Disabled Children (Verbal)</p>

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statement and should not be construed as representing the views or position of the Council. The Council accepts no responsibility for comments or views expressed by individuals or groups as part of their deputations.

A Deputation by Gary Staerck on behalf of Fathers and Allies for ASN Reform

I want to make this clear, so I am keeping it short – after all, every councillor received my email last week – they know my story but there are thousands more just like it.

Holiday Hubs are a vital resource and should not be lost or reduced and everything should be done within your power to improve on the holiday hubs provision currently provided.

Third sector charities need more support – every pound you spend on them saves approx four pounds being spent by EIJB and Council on statutory services.

- The most vulnerable people in this city are being failed by you. This is something you have the power to turn round.
- We are being pushed to crisis point and beyond.
- This is on you – nobody else.
- The relationship with ASN Families has broken down, this is your chance to Repair it.
- There is no trust left, this is a chance to gain some and make a positive step forward. Lip service is not enough.
- Stop pretending that we are not here and hoping we will go away.
- We know we are not being heard, we will keep shouting louder and we won't give up fighting. Our children can't fight for themselves, and you take advantage of that. We won't let you.

Do the right thing.

Additional funds for holiday hubs

Additional funds for third sector charities

Thank you
Gary Staerck
Co-Chair
Father and Allies for ASN Reform



EDINBURGH TENANTS
FEDERATION

EDINBURGH TENANTS FEDERATION

Edinburgh's Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations

Monday 17th February 2025

To all City of Edinburgh Council Elected Members,

Edinburgh Tenants Federation has attached the following information to support its deputation to protest against the suggested rent increase of 7% this year, as well as the proposed ongoing rises of a further 7% per year for up to 10 years in total, without further ongoing consultation with tenants.

- ETF were contacted to provide comments on the 2025 / 2026 draft rent consultation paper on Tuesday 17th September 2024, with a 3-day time scale to respond to this.
- It was highly disappointing that ETF were not contacted earlier in the process to provide sufficient time to give feedback, meet with our members and ensure that tenants had a greater input in the consultation process.
- This paper outlined that **'In February this year, councillors agreed to increase rent by 7% every year, for five years, starting in April 2024.'** ETF tenant members were not aware that this decision had been made and were concerned that this had not been communicated clearly with tenants in the 2024/25 consultation.
- The draft paper also stated CEC **'doesn't need to consult you on the rent increase this time round.'** It is ETF's understanding that consulting tenants on

Edinburgh Tenants Federation Norton Park 57 Albion Road Edinburgh EH7 5QY

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any proposals is a right for tenants as per the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, so we suggested changing the wording of this statement.

- ETF's Executive Committee put together a response letter to the consultation document which was sent to the council officers that had contacted us as well as Derek McGowan, Paul Lawrence and Cllr Jane Meagher, who was asked to share this with all councillors on the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee. If you would like to see a copy of this letter, we can share this.

- It is highly worrying for ETF and the tenants we work with that the decision has been made to increase rents by 7%, which we now believe could be over a ten-year period.

- The 2024 / 25 rent consultation that tenants responded to in 2023 offered 3 rent increase options – 4.1%, 5% and 8.4%. Most of the tenants that responded, 66%, voted for 4.1%, and many felt that the cost-of-living crisis was a concern with 34% stating they found it more difficult to pay their rent.

- It is deeply concerning that the council proceeded to make the decision to go with a 7% rent increase after seeing the outcome of this consultation.

- We consider a 70% rent increase between 2024 /25 to 2033/34 will very likely lead to:
 - Council housing becoming unaffordable for some households.
 - An increase in rent arrears.
 - More people being put into poverty.
 - A detrimental impact on people's health and wellbeing, both physical and mental.
 - Increased pressure on support services.
 - Increase in homelessness.

- It is important to note that the City of Edinburgh Council has the highest average council rents of all cities in Scotland. The average weekly rents for a 2-bedroom flat are 4% higher than the Scottish average. A 3-bedroom flat is 17.2% higher according to the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- The 2023/24 ARC data also revealed that only 52.7% of the council's homes met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, which is well below the Scottish Average of 84.4%, and shows that many tenants are living in homes that are of a poor standard. ETF hear about this reality everyday from the phone calls and discussions we have with tenants regarding delayed repairs, mould and damp and so on.

- ETF have been contacted by many of our members expressing their concern and worry about facing such a high rent increase in a time where energy bills and food are also increasing in cost.
- ETF propose that the council reconsider the decision to increase rents by 7% over this time period. The ETF Executive Committee consider a 4% rent increase as more appropriate as this is closer to what the majority of tenants had asked for and will protect more vulnerable tenants that will not be able to afford a 7% rent increase.

- ETF appreciate the council are trying to ensure there is funding available in the Housing Revenue Account to upgrade current homes and build new homes. However, we believe putting the burden of this on council tenant's

rents will likely lead to an increase in poverty and homelessness in the city, which will then put additional pressure on the council.

- ETF have reached out to council officers to discuss the consultation process as a whole and hope to work with the council going forward to improve this process and ensure that tenants have a greater involvement in decision making surrounding their rents and housing.

Regards

ETF Executive Committee

Deputation to City of Edinburgh Council from Edinburgh EIS

Thursday 20th February

Edinburgh EIS will be giving a verbal deputation to the council. The attached expands on some of the points we will be making in that deputation, and may be of use to help you understand the context in which Edinburgh's teachers are operating.

Levels of Violence:

The two power points that I am sending alongside this document summarise the findings from the 2023 Edinburgh EIS survey on violence in schools, and compares it to 2018 (the latter is important, as it clearly demonstrates that this is not simply a post-covid phenomenon). If you ask CEC officers for sight of the recent H&S dashboards, showing assaults, injuries, near misses etc, you will see both independent corroboration of our findings and confirmation that the situation continues to deteriorate.

If you go to <https://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/edinburgh-schools-facing-urgent-issues-unison-calls-for-action-following-alarming-workplace-violence-survey/> you will see similar evidence from Unison.

We recently hosted Any Education Questions, where some councillors (our thanks to them for their participation) heard from teachers and parents about the pressures facing schools now. There is a useful summary of some of what was covered here <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/edinburgh-education-how-violence-in-schools-is-seeing-teachers-scratched-bitten-and-having-bones-broken-4977236?r=2378>. As is mentioned at the bottom of the article, there was also much discussion about the fact that we are not, currently, able to properly support children with additional needs.

Clearly, any cuts to existing provision will only exacerbate this situation.

Spend to Save:

Many of you will be aware of recent discussion about the Christie report. In this article, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8edegl8n51o> says...

It had some ideas that were widely accepted, but not widely adopted, starting with a shift to investing early to save money later - in early learning, for instance, which can be linked to better results, less need for learning support in later stages and, eventually, more diversion from crime and a smarter, healthier populace.

"It is estimated that as much as 40% of all spending on public services is accounted for by interventions that could have been avoided by prioritising a preventative approach," said the Christie Report.

The PSAs in early years, and the Transition Teachers who aid pupils in making a successful transition into secondary, are excellent examples of early investment that can prevent later, greater spends.

Workload:

If you go to <https://www.eis.org.uk/teacher-workload/research> you will see independent evidence relating to teacher workload.

Sickness absence:

Papers presented at JCG showed that sickness absences in education are at worrying levels, and that stress is the main cause for long-term absence – an inevitable consequence of a system in crisis (I am unsure if those papers can be shared publicly, so am not including a link here, but I would assume councillors already have sight of the relevant data).

Impact of Poverty:

This article might be from an English school, but many Edinburgh schools are facing exactly the same issues. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr7e09471lyo>

Edinburgh Local Association: Behaviours of Concern

- Wednesday, June 21, 2023

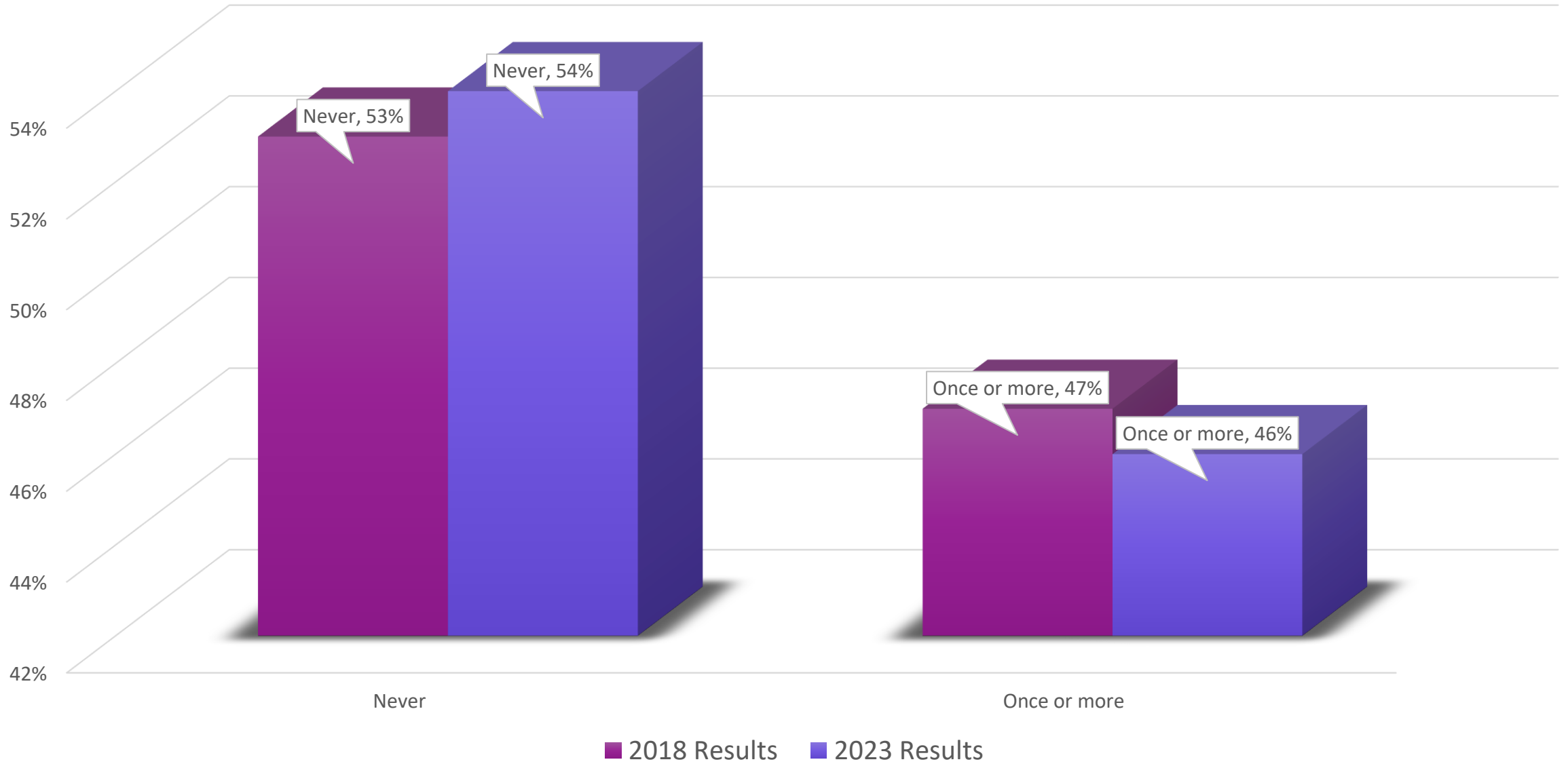
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This presentation compares data from the 2018 survey and the 2023 survey where direct comparisons in questions are available.

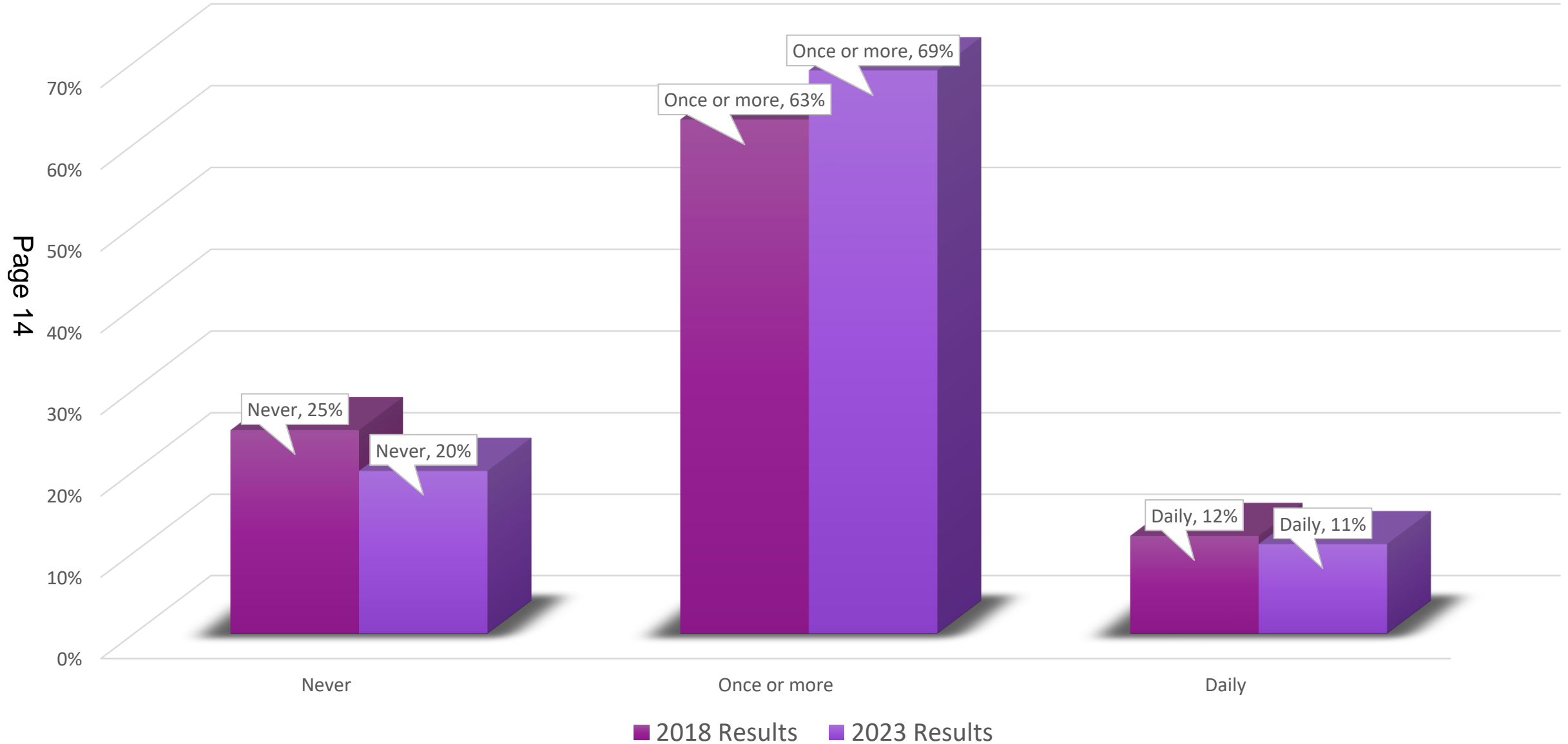
In 2018 there were 1140 responses compared with 1009 in 2023

The logo for eis, consisting of the lowercase letters 'e', 'i', and 's' in a stylized, lowercase font. The 'e' and 'i' are connected at the top, and the 's' is positioned to the right. The logo is dark blue.

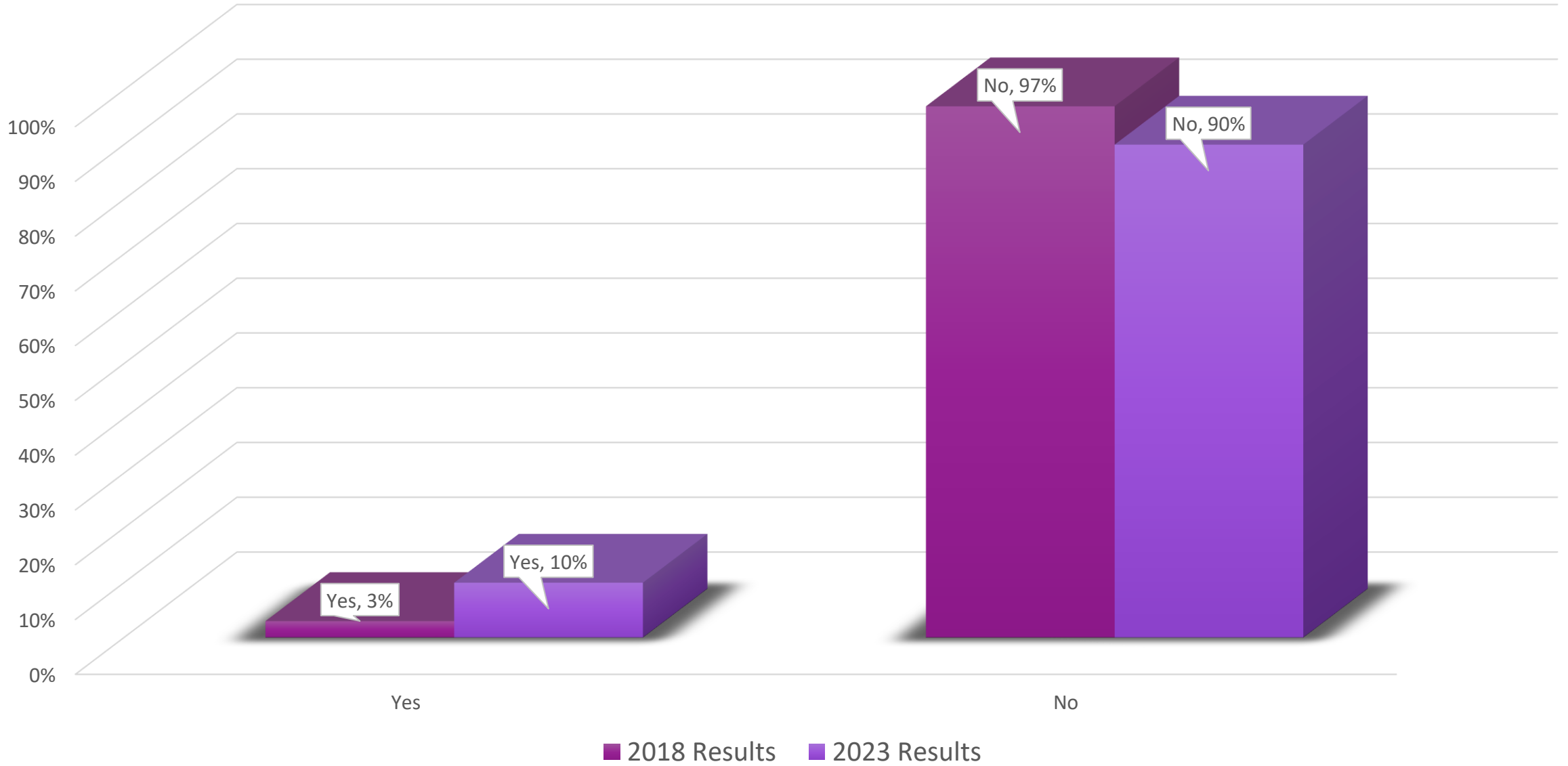
Since the start of this session, how frequently have you experienced physical abuse?



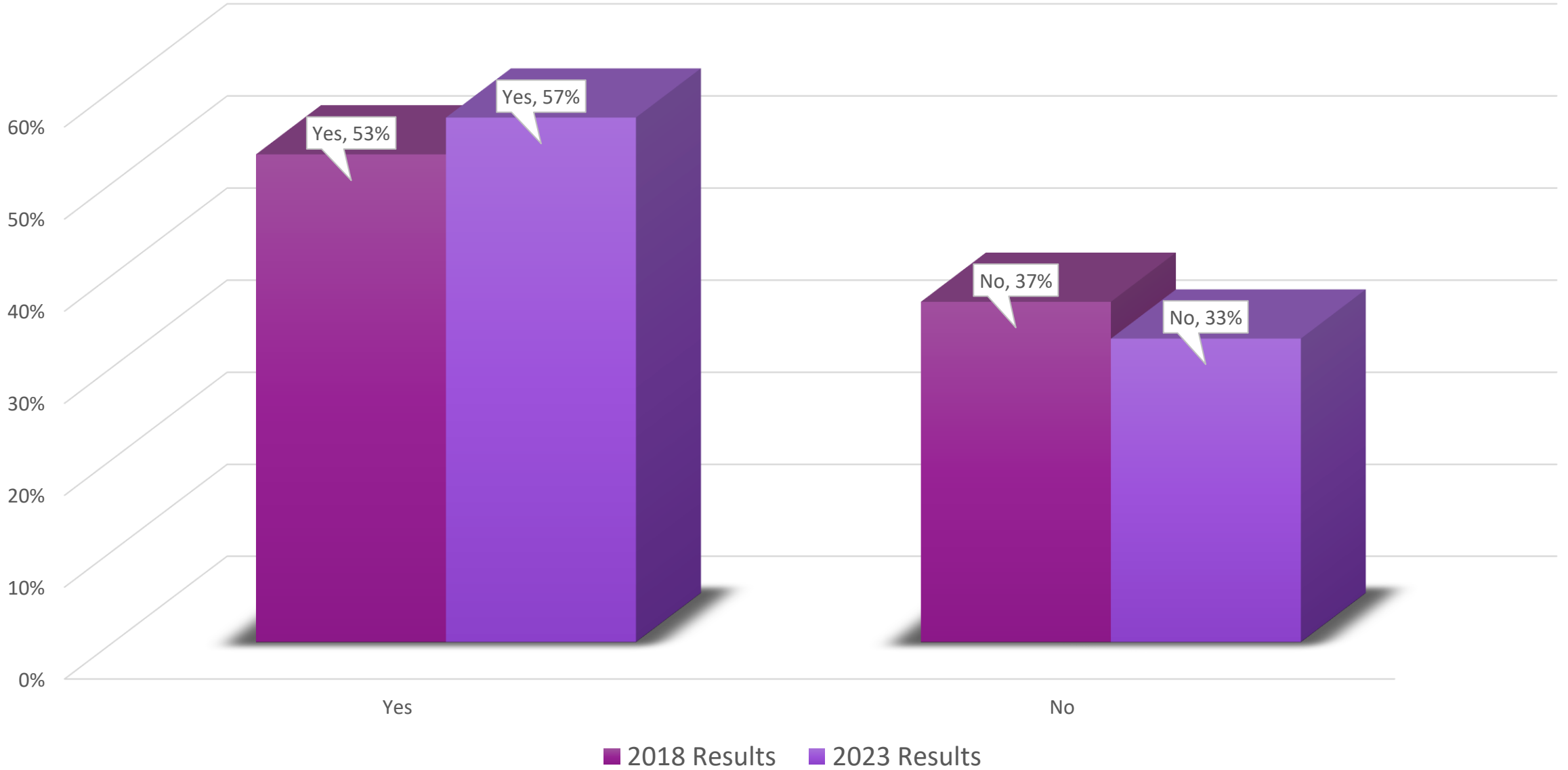
Since the start of this session, how frequently have you experienced verbal abuse?



Have you been absent from work due to physical violence or verbal abuse?

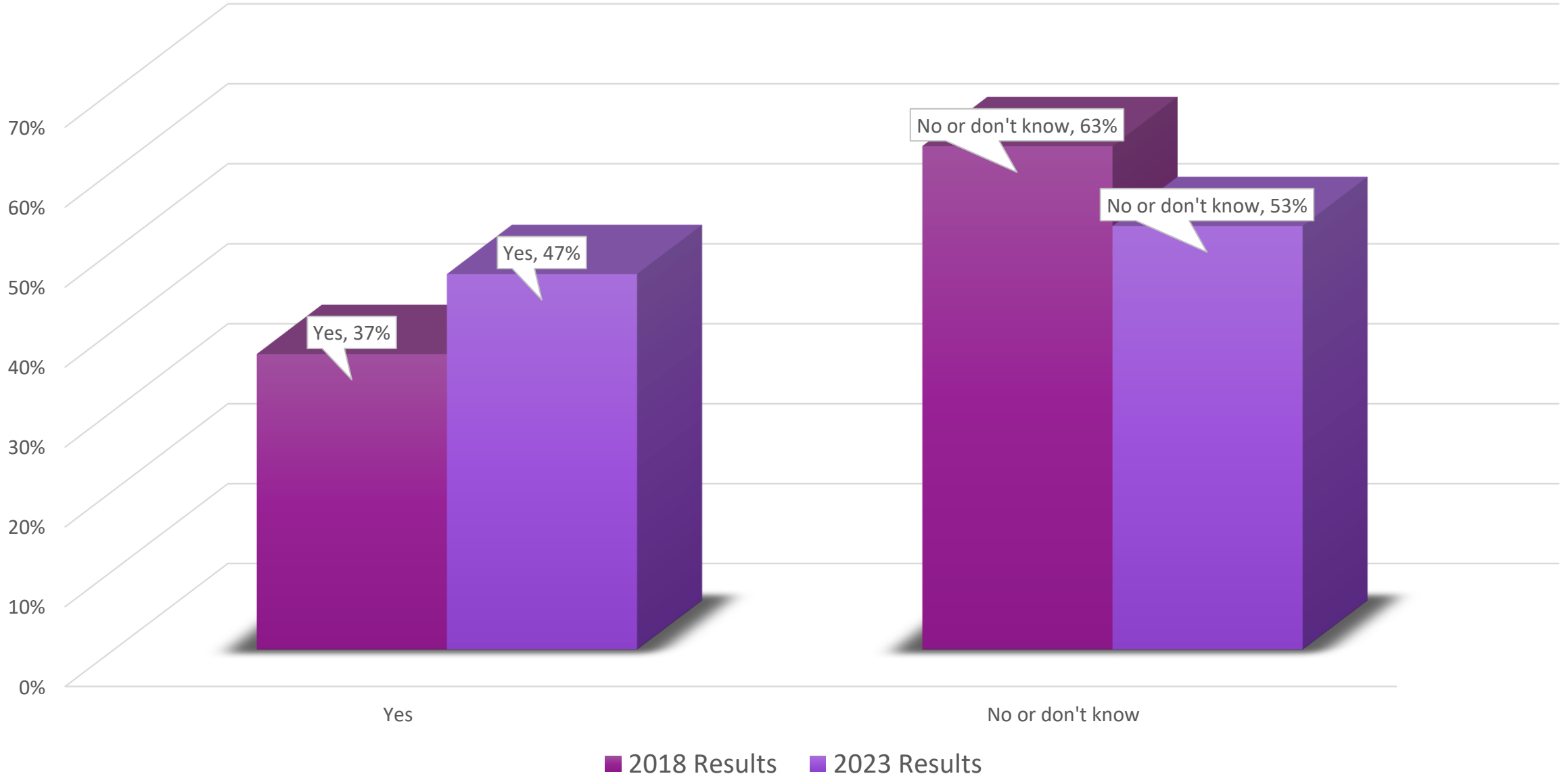


Violence, verbal abuse, threats and dysregulated behaviour are accepted as “part of the job” in my school.

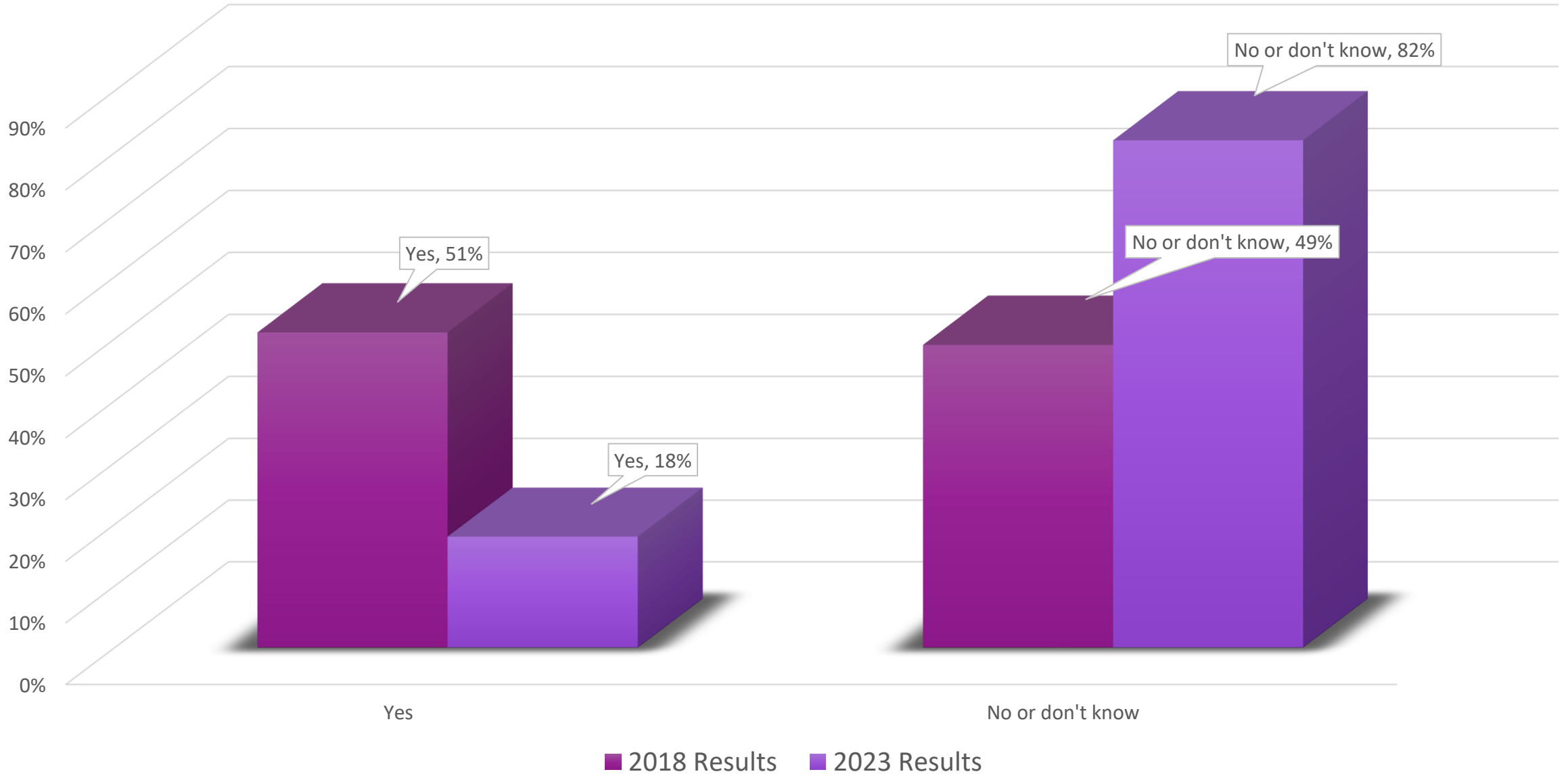


Does your school use the SHE portal to record all incidents of physical or verbal abuse?

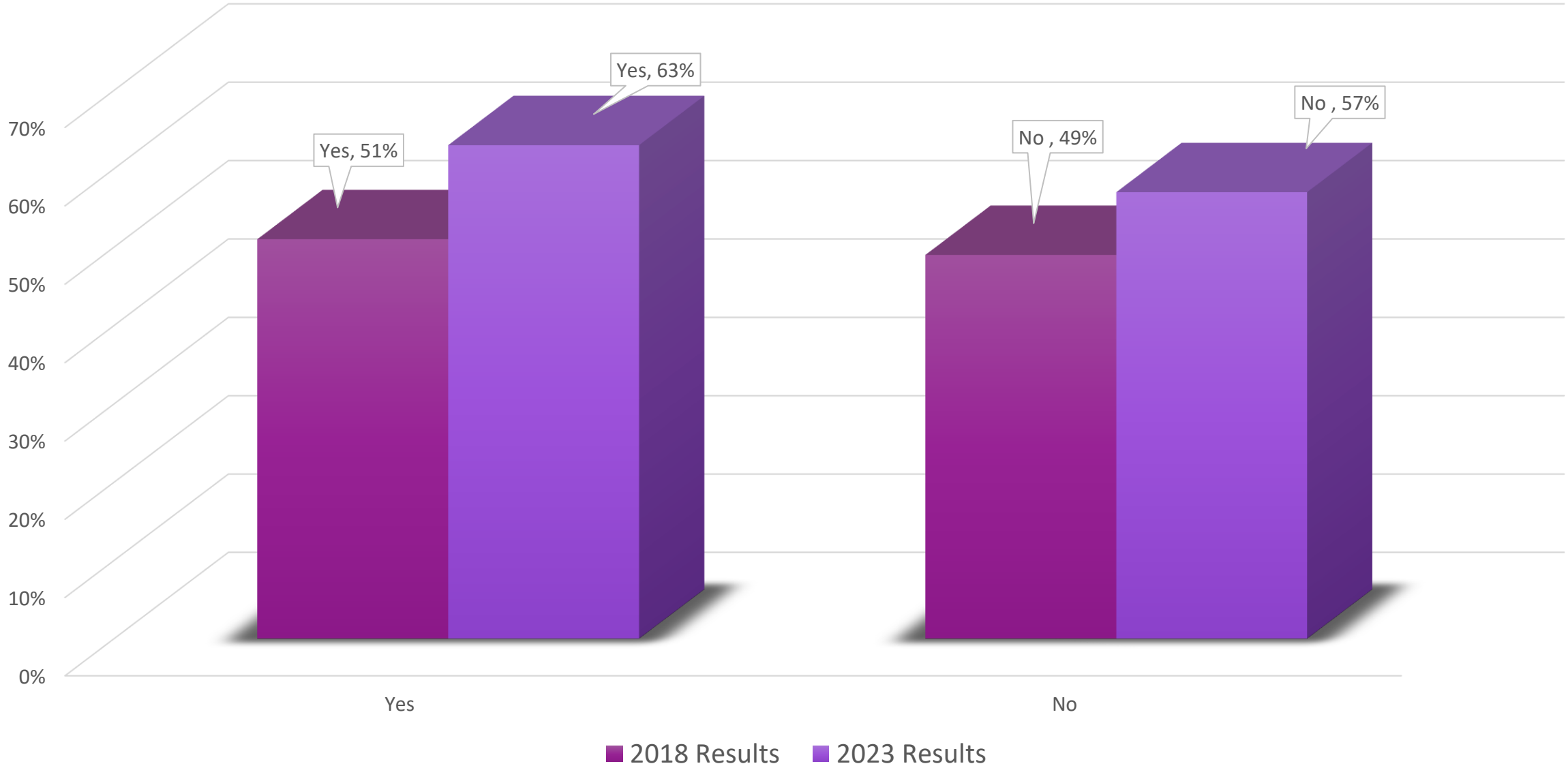
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Are you aware of the support you should be offered if you experience a violent incident?



Have you experienced mental health/stress problems as a result of violence, verbal abuse or dysregulated behaviour at school?



Edinburgh Local Association: Behaviours of Concern

Wednesday, May 17, 2023



Total Responses

1009

Date Created: Thursday, March 16, 2023

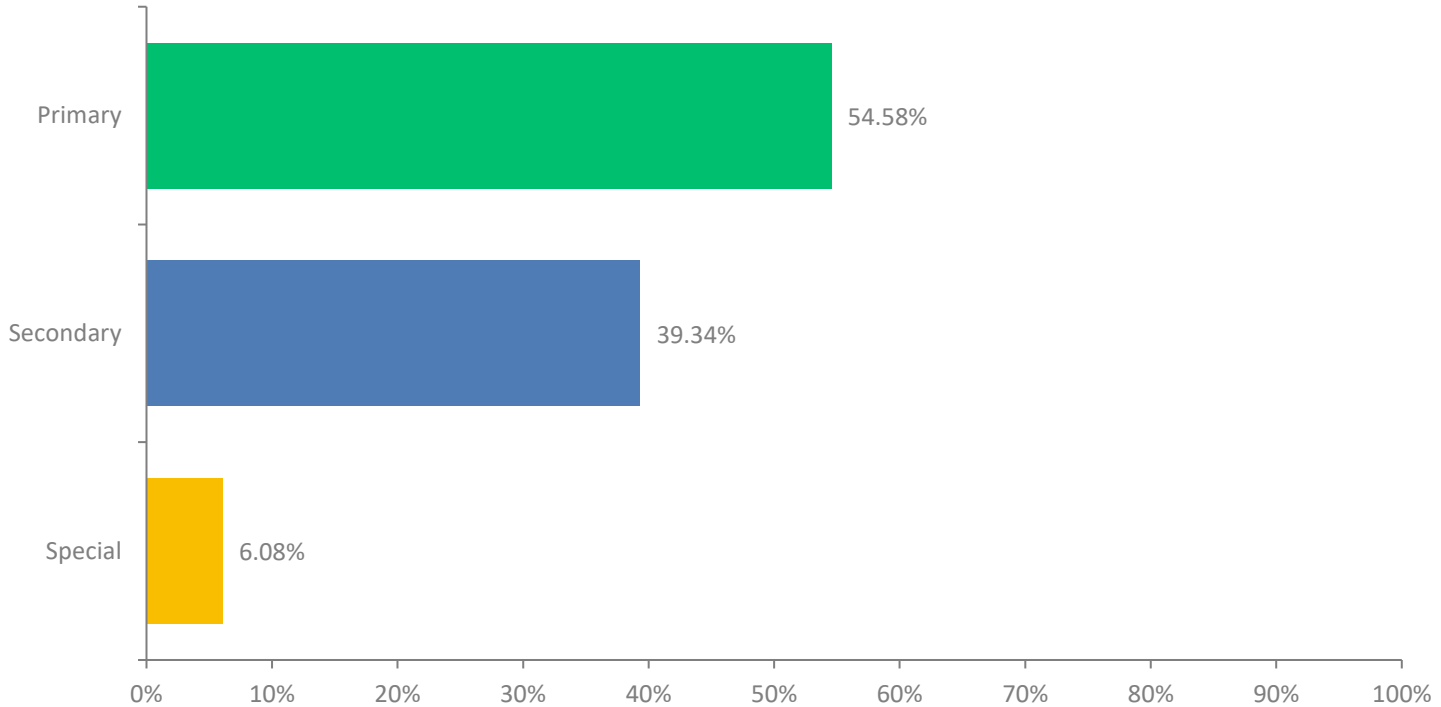
The survey was open for 3 weeks between Monday the 24th of April and Friday the 12th of May. An email link to the survey on the Survey Monkey platform was sent to all EIS members in Edinburgh. The average time for completion was 4 minutes 37 seconds.

Non of the questions were mandatory, 2 questions allowed for further comment with an option for general statements at the end of the survey.

Using the full number of registered EIS members as a baseline and a confidence level of 90% this survey returns a margin of error of 2%. The smaller the margin of error the greater the confidence you can have that the results reflect the views of the overall population. We are very confident that the experiences and views of those present in this survey are reflective of the general teaching population of Edinburgh.

Q1: Which sector are you working in?

Answered: 1004 Skipped: 5

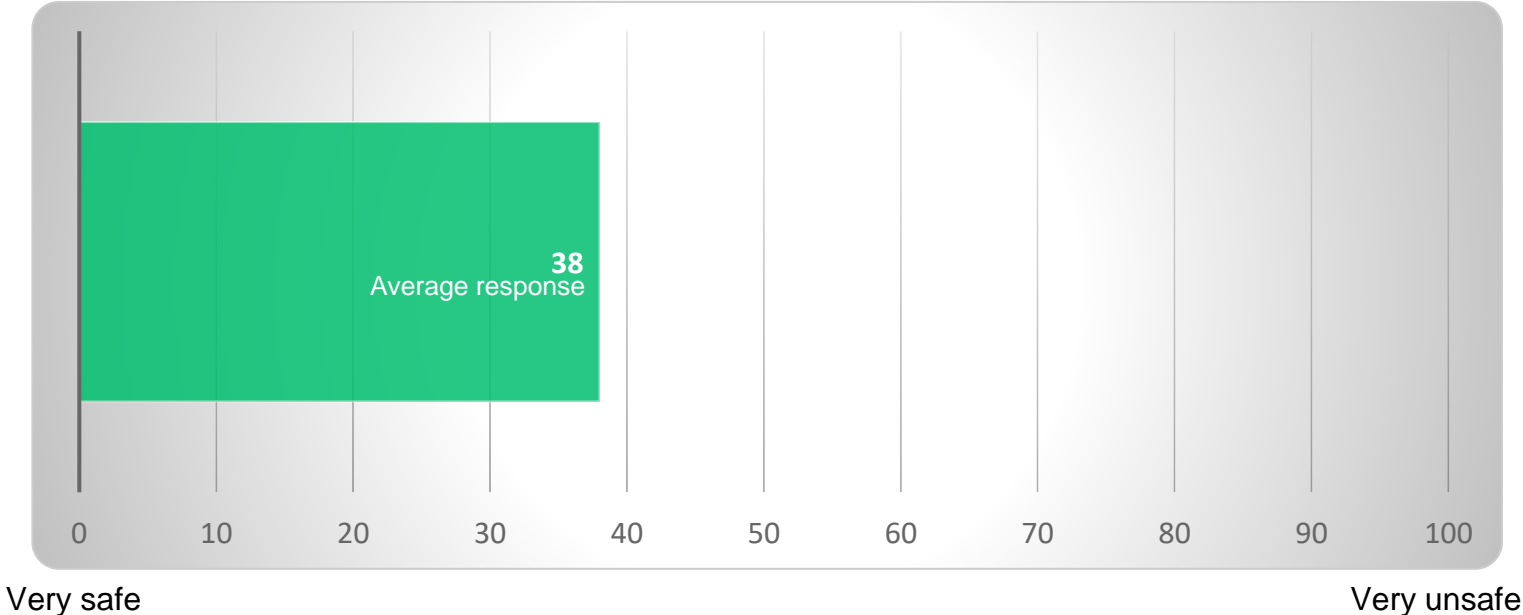


Questions 2 to 9 relate to the prevalence and effects of violence, abusive and dysregulated behaviour.

Q2: Do you generally feel safe at work?

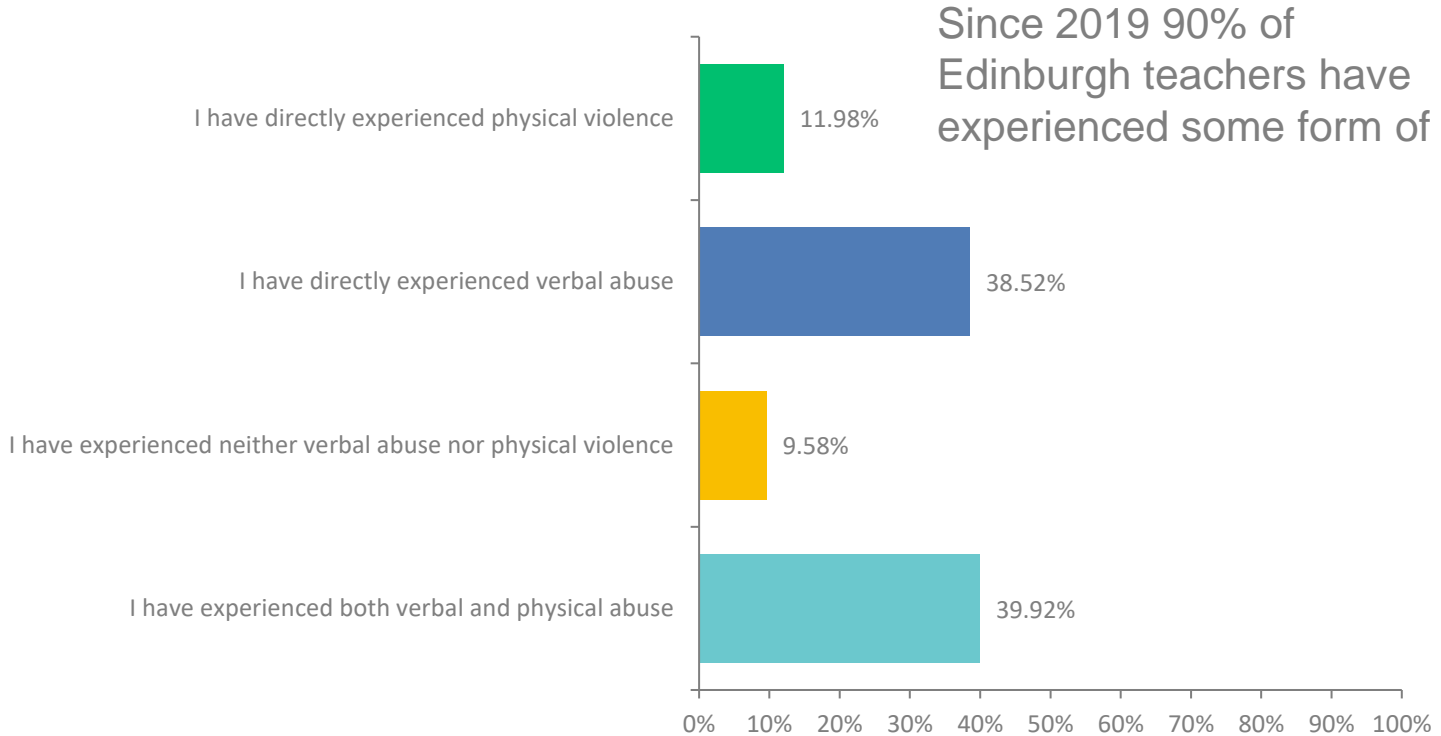
Answered: 1002 Skipped: 7

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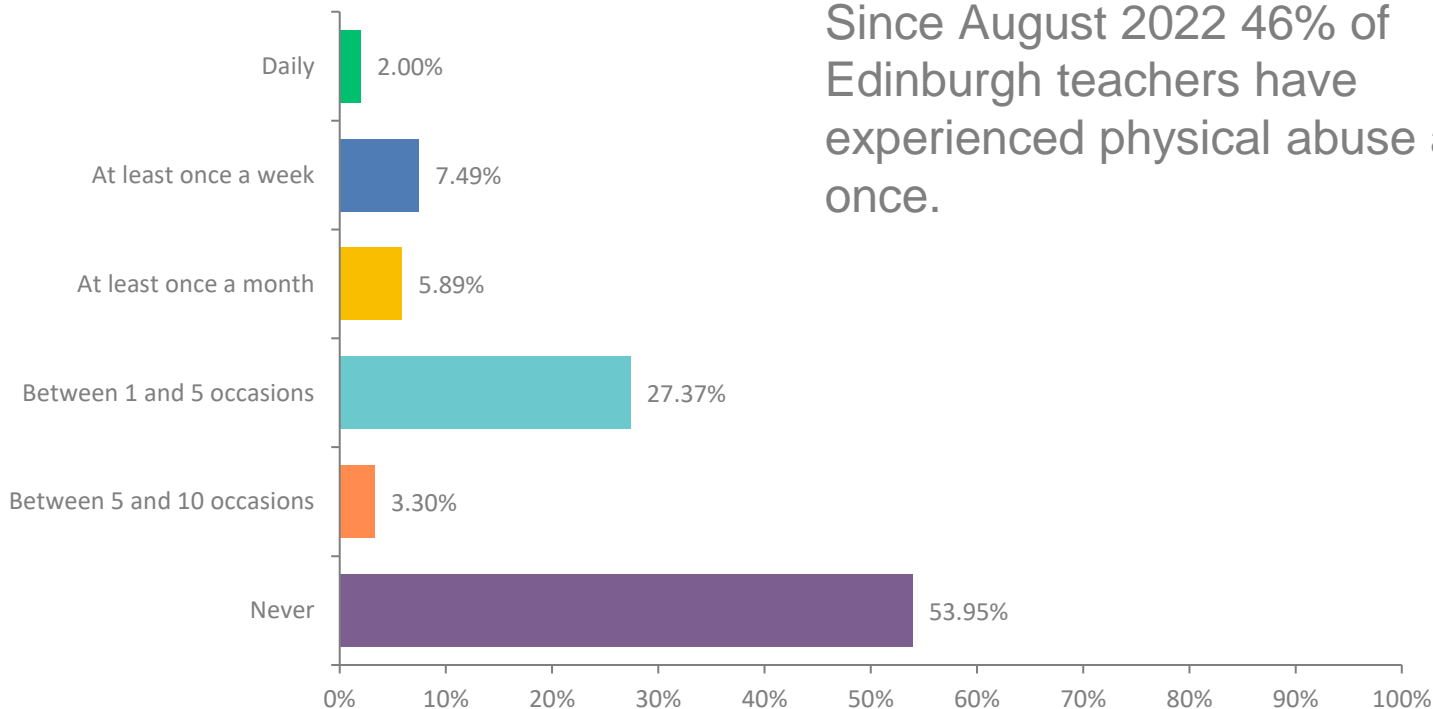
Q3: Since 2019 which of the following statements reflect your experience?

Answered: 1002 Skipped: 7



Q4: Since the start of this session (August 2022), how frequently have you experienced physical abuse?

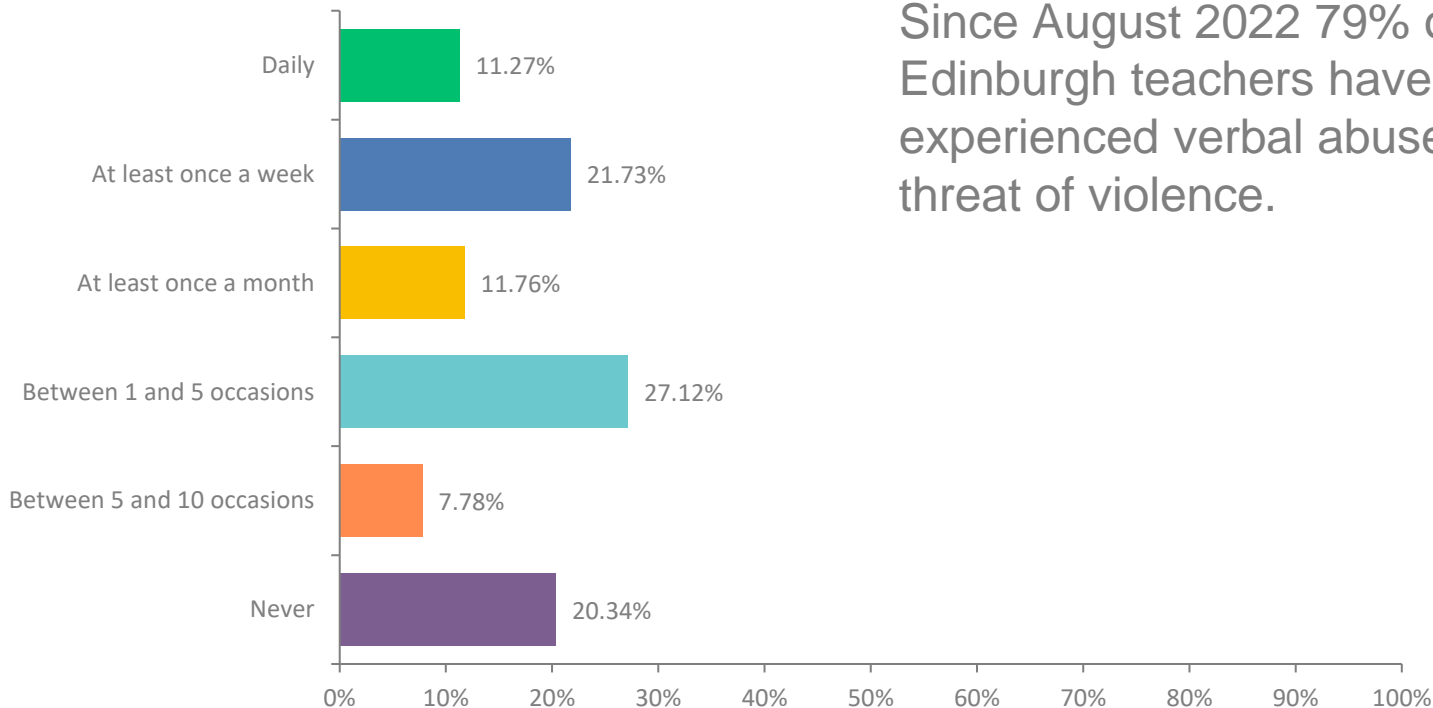
Answered: 1001 Skipped: 8



Since August 2022 46% of Edinburgh teachers have experienced physical abuse at least once.

Q5: Since the start of this session (August 2022), how frequently have you experienced verbal abuse or the threat of violence?

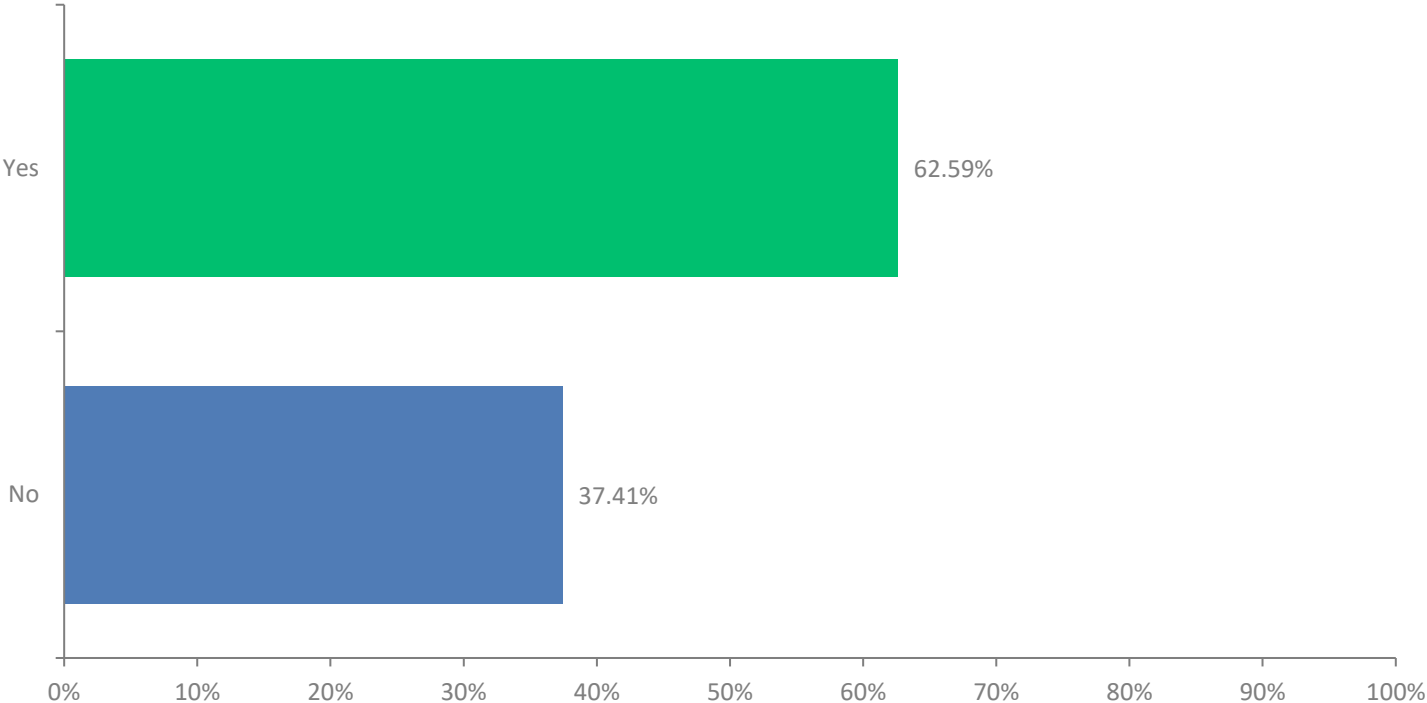
Answered: 1003 Skipped: 6



Since August 2022 79% of Edinburgh teachers have experienced verbal abuse or the threat of violence.

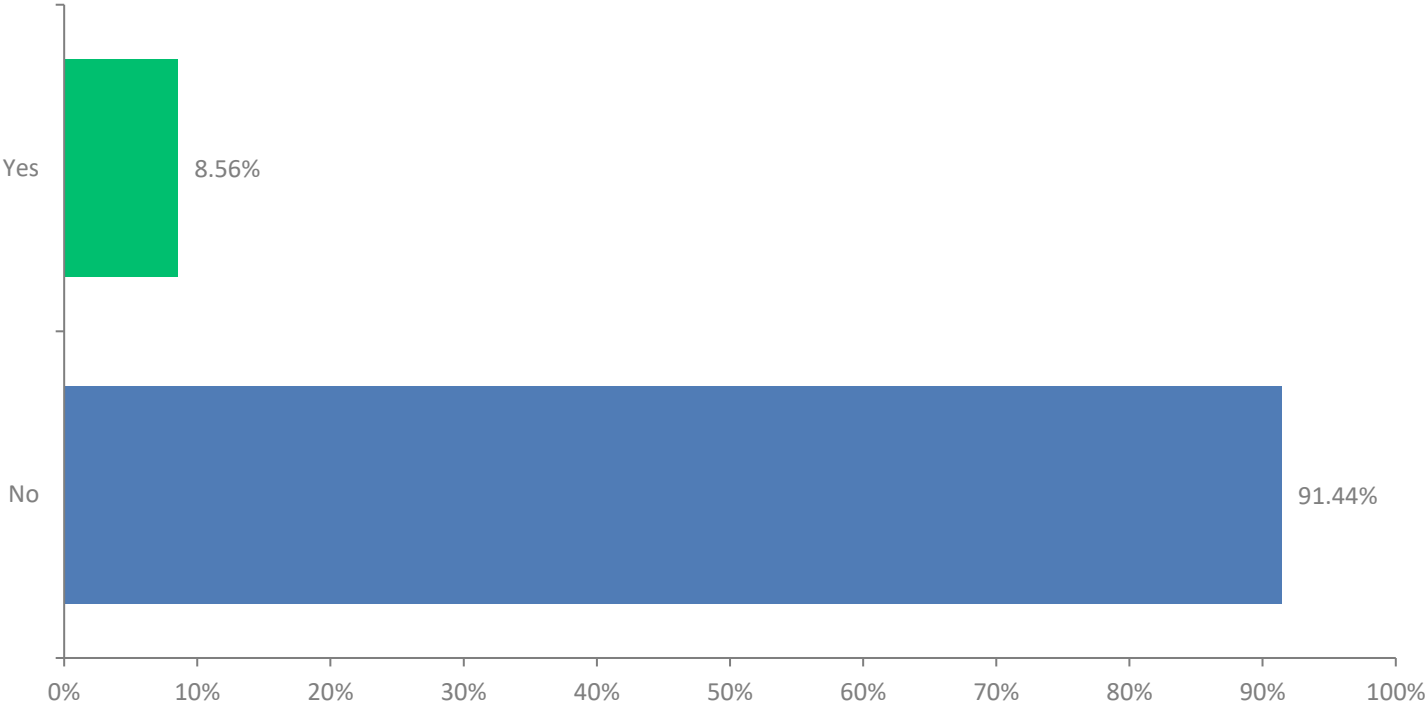
Q6: Have you experienced mental health/stress problems as a result of violence, verbal abuse or dysregulated behaviour at school?

Answered: 1005 Skipped: 4



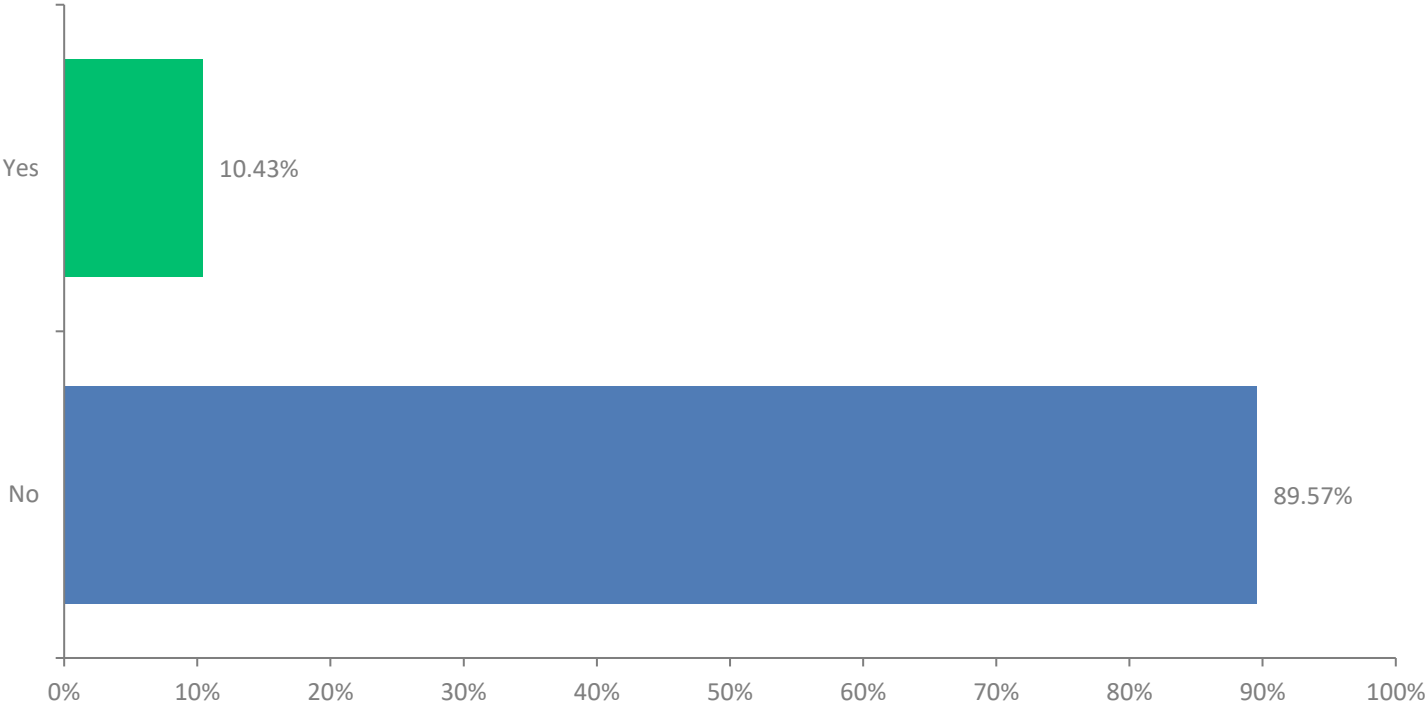
Q7: Have you required medical attention from a doctor or school first aider following a violent incident at work?

Answered: 1005 Skipped: 4



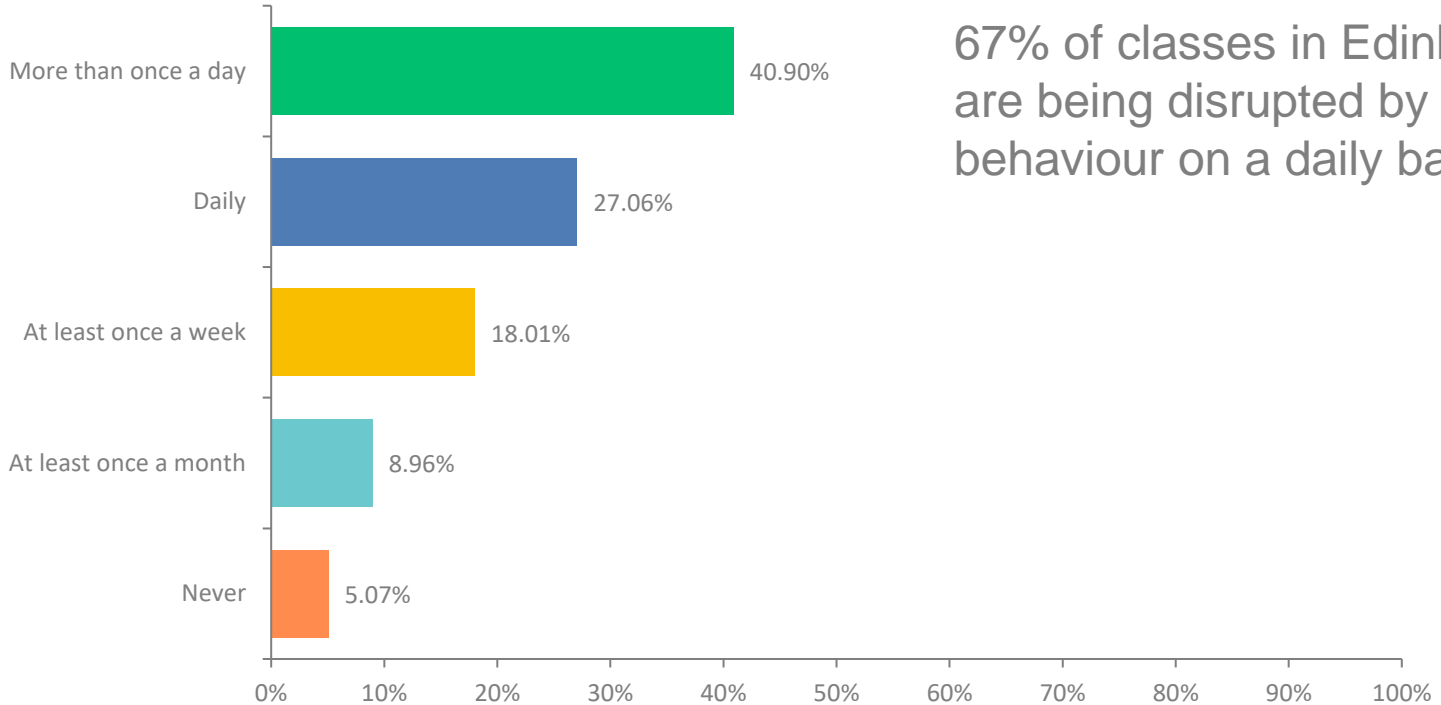
Q8: Have you been absent from work due to physical violence or verbal abuse?

Answered: 1007 Skipped: 2



Q9: How often does dysregulated behaviour interrupt your teaching and learning?

Answered: 1005 Skipped: 4

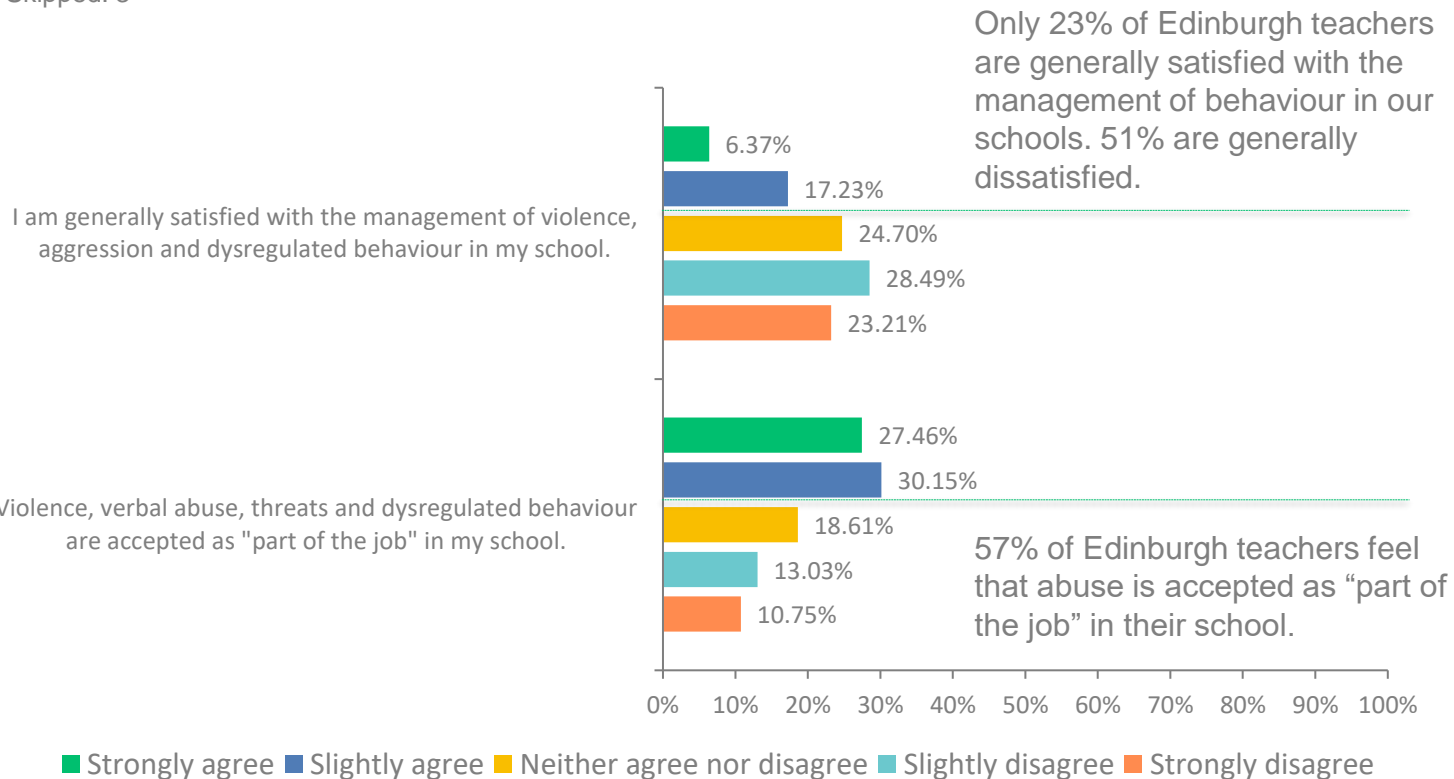


67% of classes in Edinburgh are being disrupted by behaviour on a daily basis.

Questions 10 to 20 relate to the reporting and management of incidents and behaviours.

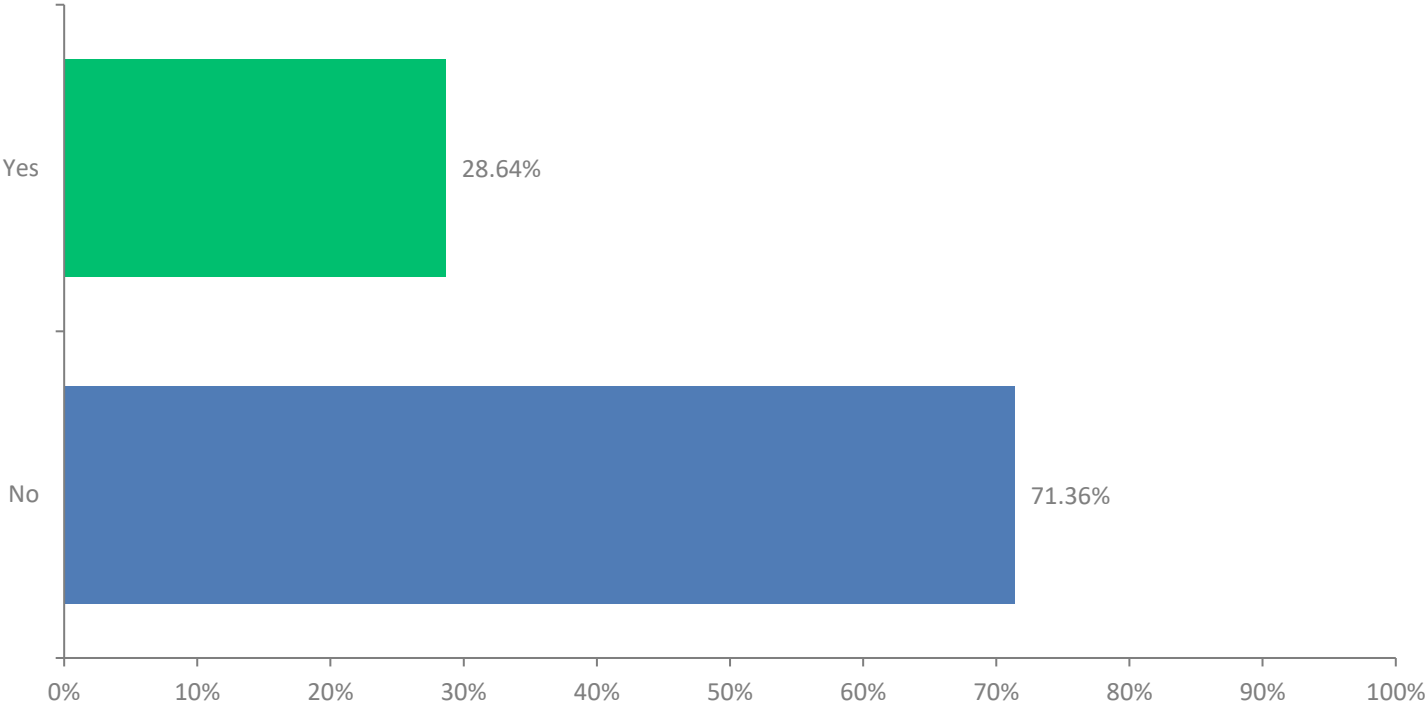
Q10: To what extent would you agree with the following statements?

Answered: 1006 Skipped: 3



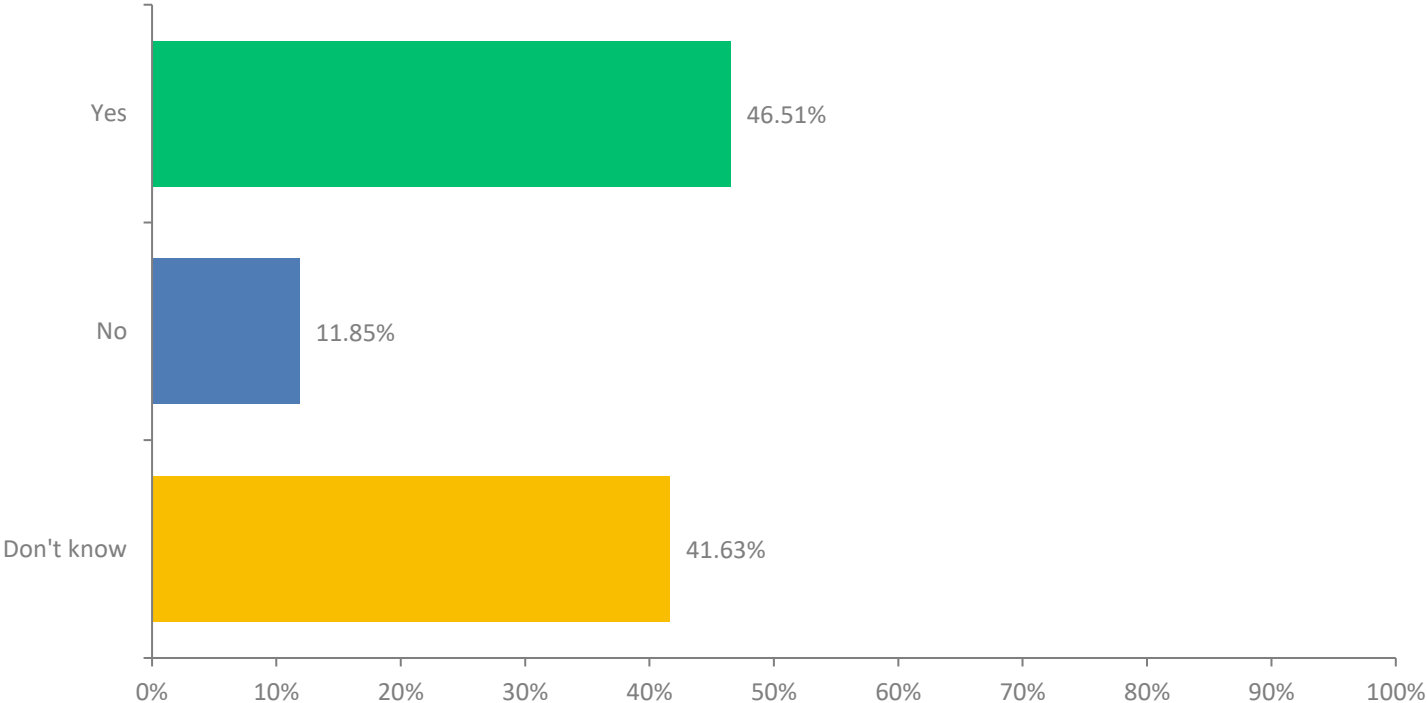
Q11: I am aware of the council's violence at work policy, and have been shown/attended a presentation from CEC on Behaviours of Concern.

Answered: 1002 Skipped: 7



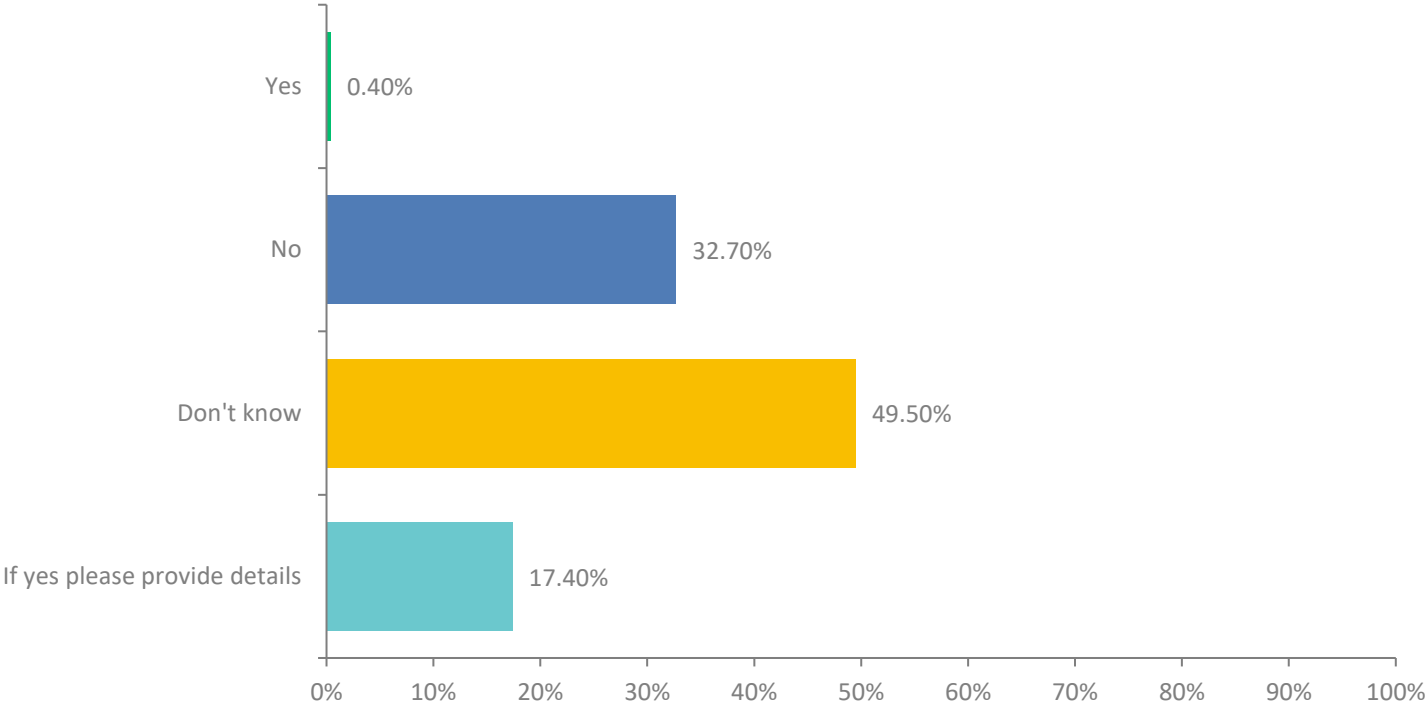
Q12: Does your school use the SHE portal to record all incidents of physical or verbal abuse?

Answered: 1004 Skipped: 5



Q13: Are you aware of any barriers in your school for completing incidents on the SHE portal?

Answered: 1006 Skipped: 3



Q13: Are you aware of any barriers in your school for completing incidents on the SHE portal? If yes please provide details.

175 responses

“The previous school I taught at, ***** **** it was discouraged to write it here and management would deal with it instead, which of course they didn’t.”

“It's lengthy, unclear, and difficult to access.”

“Management have to be present when completing it, management have said directly to some staff they should not use the SHE portal after some incidents where they were not actually hurt.”

Q13: Are you aware of any barriers in your school for completing incidents on the SHE portal? If yes please provide details.

175 responses

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“Not so much completing the form but the usefulness of the completed form. It has no effective search function & cannot be used by a school to review & monitor their own data. Or, this is not known to me which feels just as significant.”

“My impression is that it is a judgement call made by management as to whether it merits recording on she portal.”

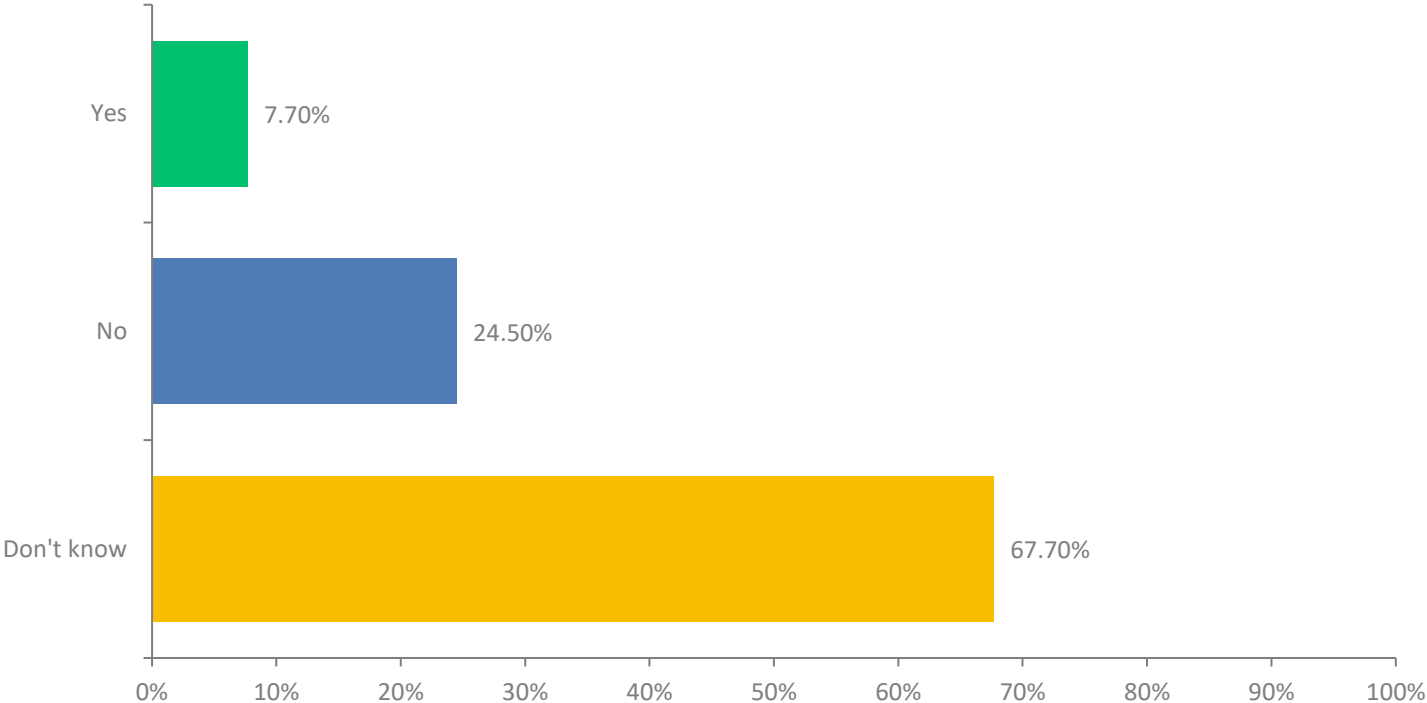
Q13: Are you aware of any barriers in your school for completing incidents on the SHE portal? If yes please provide details.

175 responses

Staff are scared to tell HT what has happened as they feel unsupported when they do or blamed for what has happened. So many incidents of staff being sworn at and insulted that there is not enough time to complete the SHE portal for all incidents. Often impossible to get hold of a member of SLT to get the SHE portal completed (especially for support staff who finish at the end of the pupil school day) Staff do not see the point of completing the SHE portal, they see it as another bit of paperwork that has no impact on anything.

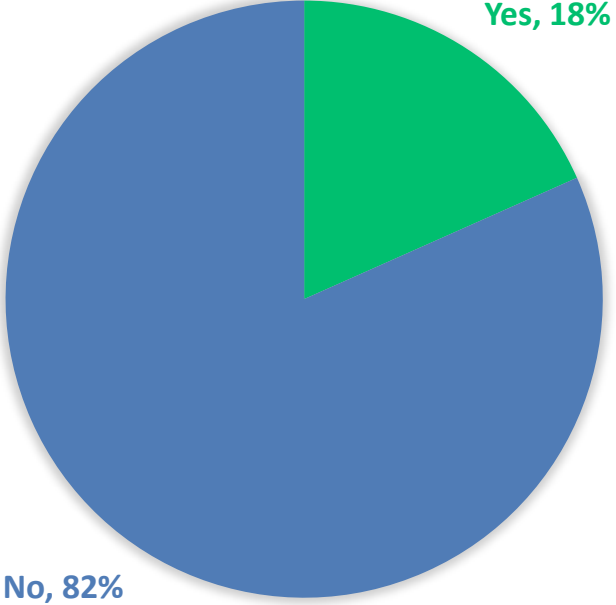
Q14: Have you or your Head Teacher had any response, feedback or support as a result of an entry on the SHE portal?

Answered: 999 Skipped: 10



Q15: Are you aware of the support you should be offered if you experience a violent incident?

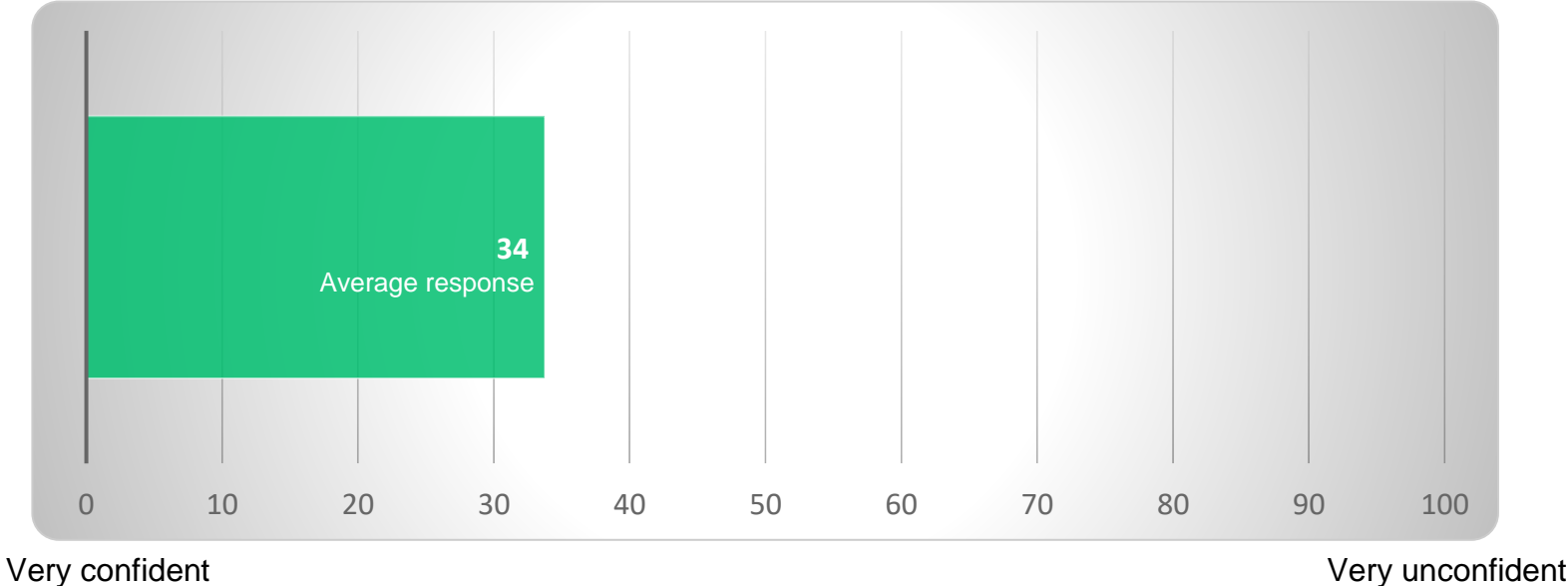
Answered: 1003 Skipped: 6



Q16: Are you confident that you know to whom you should report incidents?

Answered: 957 Skipped: 52

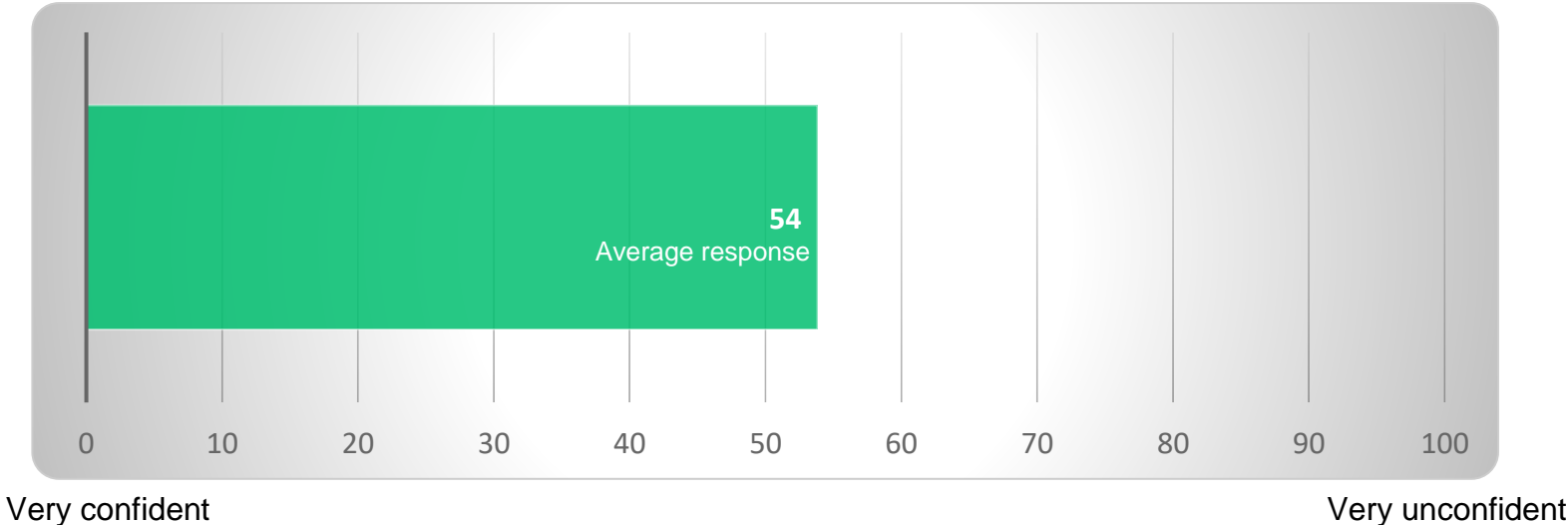
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Q17: Are you confident that if you report an incident that it will be taken seriously and dealt with in an appropriate fashion?

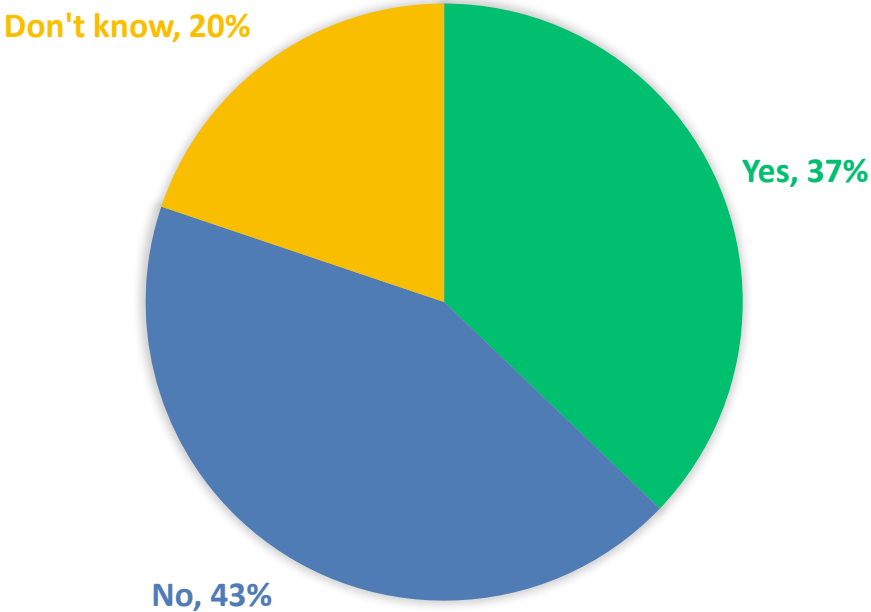
Answered: 972 Skipped: 37

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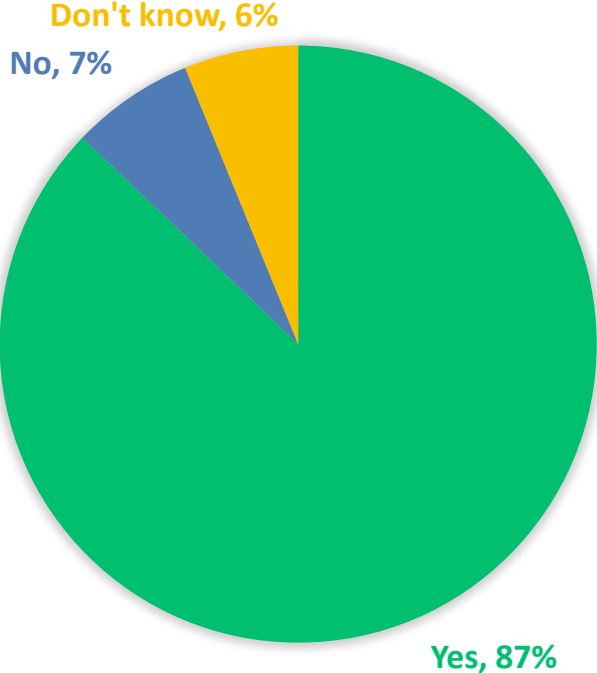
Q18: Does your school have a clear policy on managing dysregulated behaviour that is available to and understood by all staff?

Answered: 1004 Skipped: 5



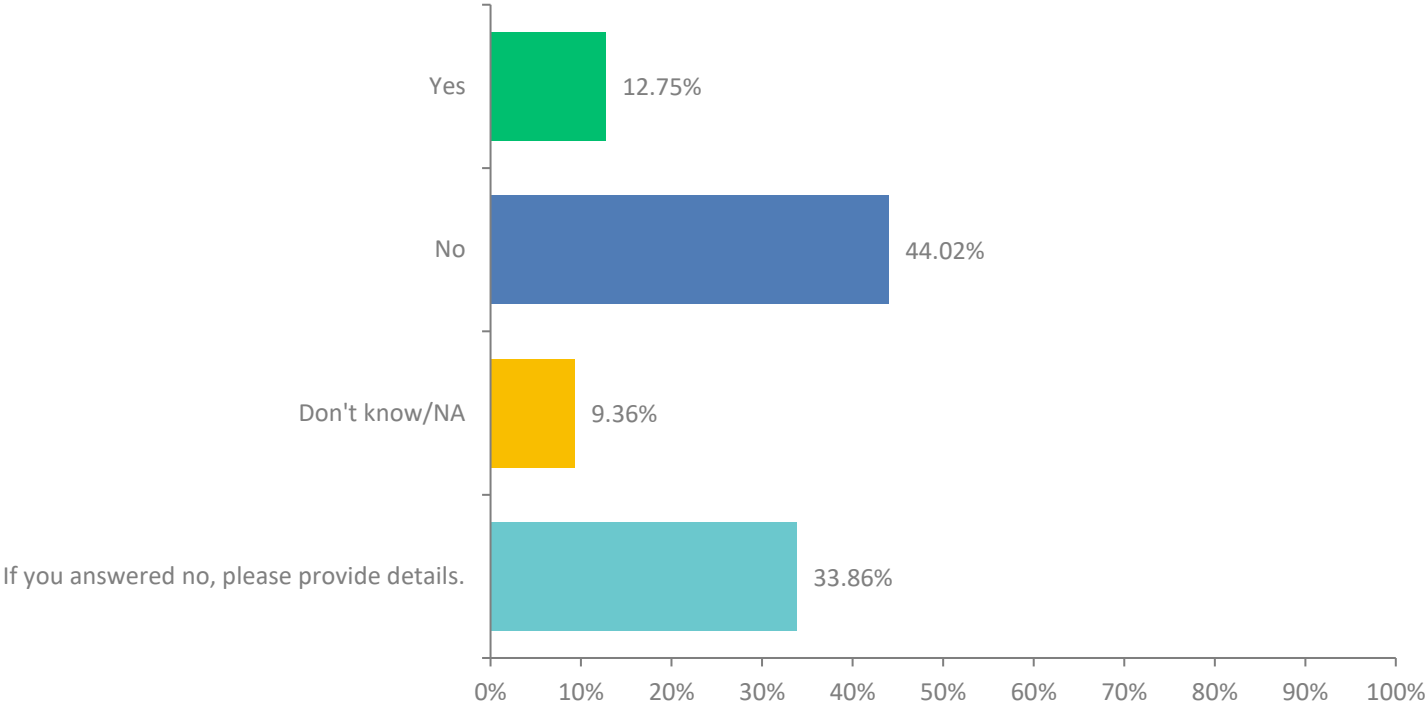
Q19: Does your school use a restorative approach to behaviour?

Answered: 1004 Skipped: 5



Q20: Do you feel that you have the time, space and resources to have successful restorative conversations?

Answered: 1004 Skipped: 5



Q20: Do you feel that you have the time, space and resources to have successful restorative conversations? If you answered no, please provide details.

340 responses

“It is impossible because of lack of staffing.”

“Never enough time for these.”

“Only outside the classroom door while pupils are working.”

“No time at all and so they never happen.”

Q20: Do you feel that you have the time, space and resources to have successful restorative conversations? If you answered no, please provide details.

340 responses

“Difficult to get students back for these conversations, often takes a long time, uses my own break and lunch times.”

“With only 6 non contact periods per week to plan lessons and deal with admin, there is no time to deal with referrals and restorative conversations meaning I often use my own time outside of the contractual 35 hours a week to ensure my job is done properly.”

Q20: Do you feel that you have the time, space and resources to have successful restorative conversations? If you answered no, please provide details.

340 responses

“I feel that some of the restorative conversations are not successful. Especially when there are recurring incidents with the same pupil. It feels like a tick box exercise. There is no time given to these. It's a quick conversation outside of the classroom while you are meant to be teaching. There have been cases when there has been no restorative conversations at all.”

“Sincere and detailed responses require far more time and input than is available.”

Q20: Do you feel that you have the time, space and resources to have successful restorative conversations? If you answered no, please provide details.

340 responses

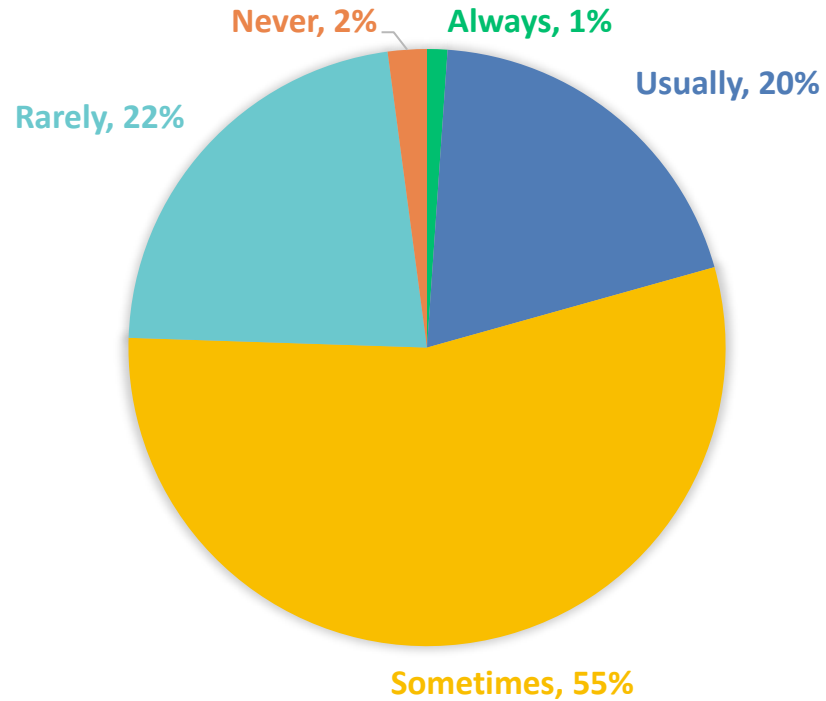
“Too many other demands on staff during school day. Lack of private spaces. Pupils often too immature to understand, cooperate with or benefit from restorative conversations.”

“Nobody is having these conversations to support the teacher.”

“No time when you have a whole class to teach. The children tend to learn what the “right thing to say” is and then they repeat the behaviours.”

Q21: If a child is temporarily removed from your class to help them regulate their behaviour are they then (with support) able to regulate their behaviour?

Answered: 997 Skipped: 12



Q22: Please feel free to provide us with any thoughts or comments regarding your experiences of violence, abuse, behaviours of concern and dysregulated behaviour in your school.

Answered: 407 Skipped: 602

“Teachers, I feel we are expected to just get on with being subjected to verbal and physical abuse/threats. This year alone I have been called every name under the sun, have had objects thrown at me, have had threats of damaging my car and my child (who attends a nearby nursery). I am so close to leaving teaching because I don't know where else you would ever be treated this way in your workplace ... Teaching is all I ever wanted to do and it is tragic that this is the problem so many of us are facing.

“Schools are becoming places of trauma for pupils and staff.”

"It concerns me that in schools violent language and behaviours are just seen as 'Part of the job' and if you complain about being called a 'fucking bitch' etc. then you are not being understanding of the child and the problem is yours. What about the impact on you as a person?

Q22: Please feel free to provide us with any thoughts or comments regarding your experiences of violence, abuse, behaviours of concern and dysregulated behaviour in your school.

“Violently hit in the face, with a rock on another occasion, a water bottle on another. Bit hard in the arm which left bruising. A period of extreme homophobic abuse during which I was physically pushed and called a poof (and lots worse) over a period of 4 hours while no members of management were available to support as they were interviewing. Behaviour isn't taken as seriously as it should be because some Heads see it as an admission of their poor management of the school.”

“Children themselves advise that if they are naughty or 'bad', they get access to more rewards and treats, including time out of class. Children who are well behaved describe feeling overlooked or left out. As an experienced practitioner, SLT's response to violence, abuse, behaviours of concern and dysregulated behaviour does not always appear to be consistent or equitable.”

“I have been slapped, barged with an elbow in my stomach, told to fuck off and been told it's been recorded but then nothing follows.”

Q22: Please feel free to provide us with any thoughts or comments regarding your experiences of violence, abuse, behaviours of concern and dysregulated behaviour in your school.

"I have frequently felt overwhelmed by the dysregulated behaviours of pupils in the class and the effect it has on the rest of the class. Pupils should not feel intimidated or have their learning affected by other pupils on a daily basis. Violence by ASN pupils towards other pupils seems to be tolerated or seen as less serious. I have comforted six other members of staff this year who have been in tears during the school day over behaviour issues and know that there have been staff members off with stress related absences. My own health is being affected from working constantly on high alert. Although I've not had any absences, I have had to seek medical advice regarding my health."

"Inclusion would be wonderful if we were actually given the adequate support to facilitate this, not just inclusion-all children in and no support to meet learner needs, expect to be abused and assaulted daily but do not exclude and just accept it."

"I feel there are no longer consequences for violent/ abusive behaviour. Pupils are removed from class and sat playing on their phone/ iPad until they can go to next class/ go home. What does this teach them?"

Q22: Please feel free to provide us with any thoughts or comments regarding your experiences of violence, abuse, behaviours of concern and dysregulated behaviour in your school.

“As a senior manager in a secondary I have a particular perspective and, I dare say, insight into this issue. I am confident that my colleagues, promoted and main grade, care deeply about the education and welfare of our students. I am also confident that they are skilled in differentiation and de-escalation strategies. However, there is a limit to what we can expect teachers to contend with as they deliver lessons to large classes. That limit is being breached as the line between 'presumption to mainstream' and 'insistence on mainstream' is blurred.”

“I am completing this as an HT of a primary school. My job is becoming untenable as the level of dysregulation overtakes the ability to lead learning and teaching priorities. We do everything asked of us from policy and advice from agencies yet levels of behaviours of concern do not reduce.”

Q22: Please feel free to provide us with any thoughts or comments regarding your experiences of violence, abuse, behaviours of concern and dysregulated behaviour in your school.

“Behaviour has been utterly appalling this session, to the extent I’m seriously considering leaving after almost twenty years teaching. I still love teaching, but far too much time now is spent managing behaviour that, until a few years ago, would have been exceptional rather than the norm. This is not helped by the general attitude from ST that ‘all behaviour is communication’. One DHT frequently questions staff about their class differentiation rather than help deal with behaviour. CEC have cut resources and support to the bone, and I find the idea that a few inset training sessions mean we can deal with the level of behaviour we see now nothing less than galling.”

“The amount of classes needing to evacuate on a daily basis is huge. This is not only having a huge impact on attainment, something we as teachers are already working extremely hard to level for our children living in poverty, but more importantly I believe it is effecting the health and well-being of children and adults within the school community.”

We write to urge you to fund the Holiday Hubs service sustainably and at a level commensurate with their importance and the scale of the need they meet. Given the attrition of the service in recent years and the intense pressure on places, this means a substantial increase in the budget for the provision itself.

The City of Edinburgh's Holiday Hubs are a vital service for disabled children and young people who cannot access other holiday childcare and activities. Without them, these children and young people risk being stuck at home all holidays, unable to engage in play and leisure activities alongside their peers. This puts more families at risk of being pushed out of work or cutting their hours and thus falling into poverty. It also increases the potential need for social work intervention as families have no respite from intense caring responsibilities during what is often a particularly dysregulated time for children, at home without any routine or opportunities to play. In these ways, the support Holiday Hubs provide is taking pressure off other, statutory services.

However, this essential provision has been eroded. The maximum number of weeks per child has been reduced from six to four; and while Holiday Hubs ran for full days Monday to Friday as recently as 2018, they are now offered for four days per "week", six hours per day. Whilst we understand that local authorities are struggling and we welcome the extra £100k for essential staff to manage the service, maintaining the current level of funding for the Hubs themselves is not a neutral position: it represents a substantial reduction in the provision available to each family compared with even a few years ago. Moreover, the provision has shrunk even further in practice: according to the officer in charge, the FY2024 funding was only enough for an average of two weeks for each applicant. This is simply not enough to support disabled children and young people and their families given the 13 weeks of school holidays a year.

The result of this shortage is a push to exclude some of the children and young people who currently use the service. Understandably but very sadly, it has pitted parents against each other in a scramble for places. This is exactly what happened in the Council-convened working groups in which many parents participated in good faith: we made various concrete suggestions for increasing funding and improving efficiency, but were repeatedly told that we could only work within the current budget (without being shown any detailed breakdown), with the emphasis being on setting eligibility criteria for the Holiday Hubs. However, this ignores the reality that families who apply for Holiday Hubs do so because they have no other options. Most parents would prefer to use mainstream childcare or holiday clubs that are usually more flexible, offer longer hours, and are located closer to home.

This is a political choice: do we want to live in a city where disabled children and young people are excluded from the only holiday provision they are able to attend? Or do we want to ensure that all our children and young people are included? That is why we ask all political parties to increase funding for Holiday Hubs in this year's budget to a level where the provision becomes genuinely sustainable for the children and young people across the city who rely on it.

Thank you.

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