



**An Roinn Oideachais**  
Department of Education

# **Findings from Questionnaire issued to teachers as an element of the overall consultation process for the development of the new Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027**

Department of Education  
April 2022

In order to ensure a comprehensive review of the existing Digital Strategy for Schools and to take account of new and emerging themes from the point of view of all relevant stakeholders, a wide ranging Consultation Framework was announced on 05 April 2021\*. This framework consisted of

1. Open public call for written submissions
2. An easily accessible digital questionnaire for all teachers, principals and students
3. Focus groups on specific themes with main stakeholders (for e.g. education partners, industry, students, parents)
4. Establishment of a core Consultative Group, which included the management bodies, unions, parents' representative bodies and industry representatives. The Consultative Group met on a regular basis with other key stakeholders invited to attend depending on the themes discussed.
5. Bilateral meetings with other Departments and Agencies and the EU.

The following document sets out the responses received in relation to the teachers questionnaire, which was available on the Departments and the gov.ie website from 10 May to 18 June. The responses received formed an integral part of the overall Consultation Framework and were key to the development of the new Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027 and will also help ensure its successful implementation.

There was a total of 658 responses submitted, which is broken down as follows:,

- 175 primary teachers
- 365 post primary teachers
- 118 unspecified.

It is also worth noting that response levels varied for some of the questions.

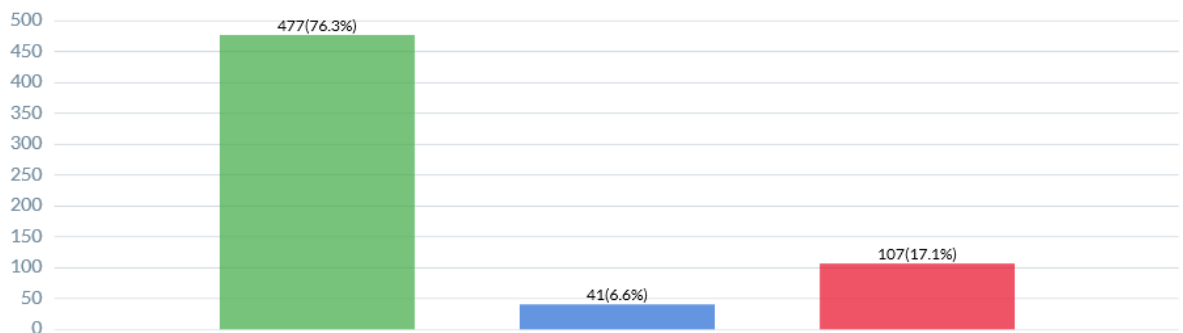
\*<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2021-press-releases/PR21-04-05.html>

## FINDINGS

Q1 The Digital Learning Framework (DLF) represents one of the key supports provided under the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020. In implementing the DLF, schools and teachers are given a structure which allows them to identify where they are on the journey towards embedding digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment, and enable them to progress in that journey. Has the DLF been implemented in your school?

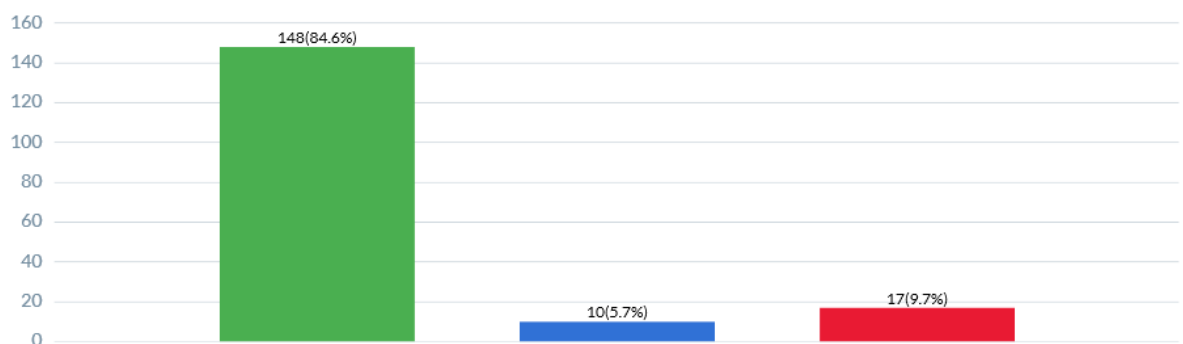
■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

All\*

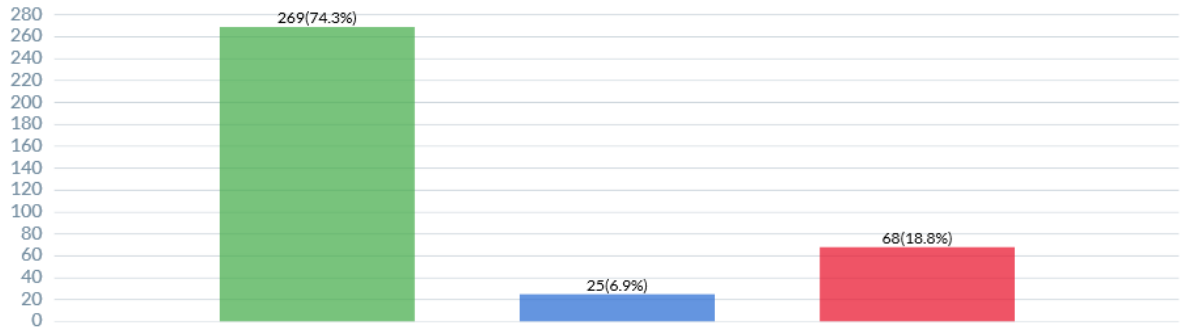


\* 625 responses

Primary



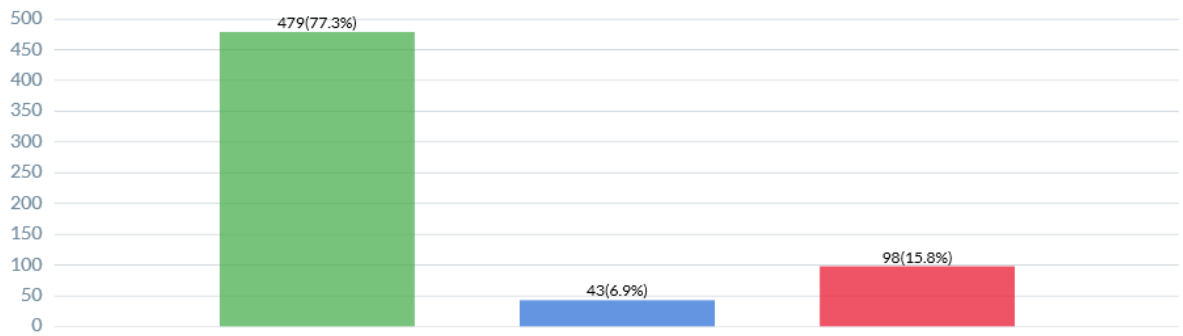
## Post Primary



## Q2 Is there a Digital Learning Plan in your school?

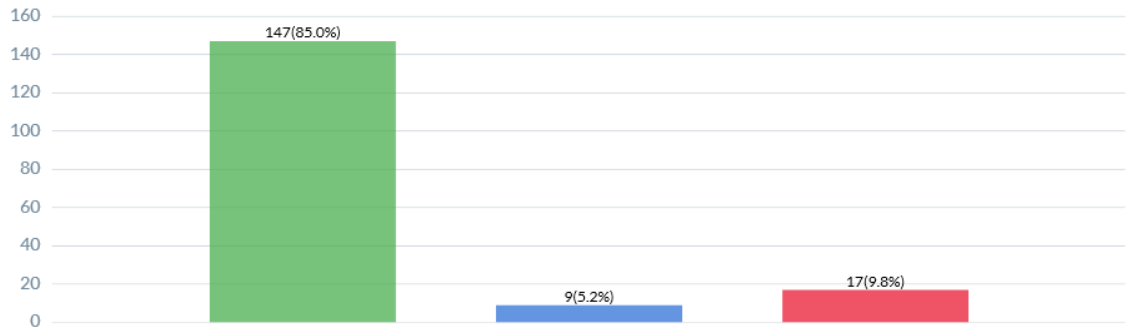
■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

## All

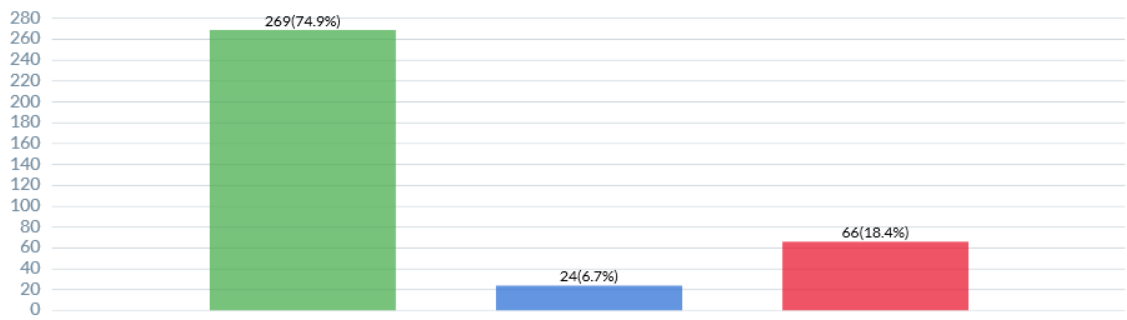


\* 620 responses

## Primary



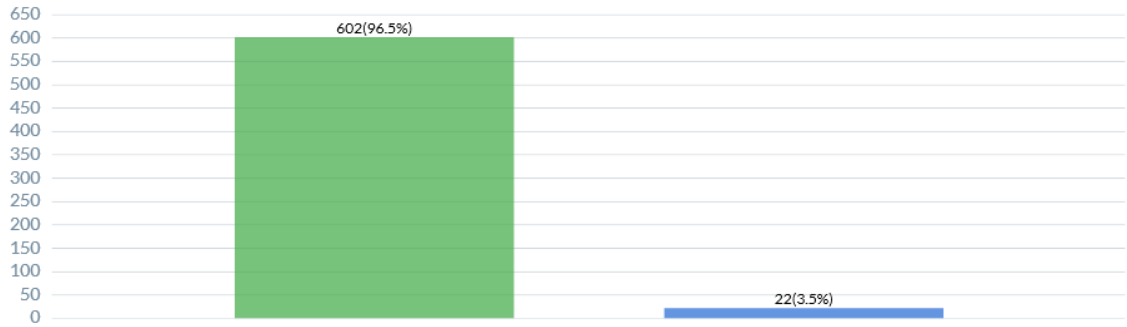
## Post Primary



Q3 Digital technology is an important part of teaching and learning and assessment in your teaching practice:

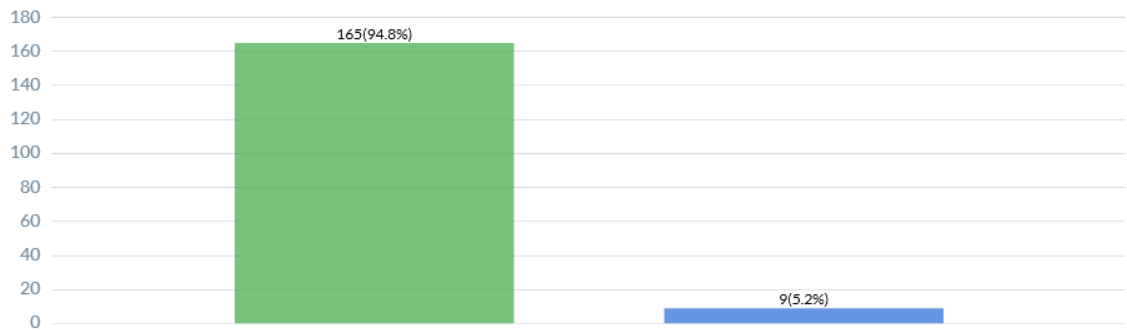
■ Agree ■ Disagree

All\*

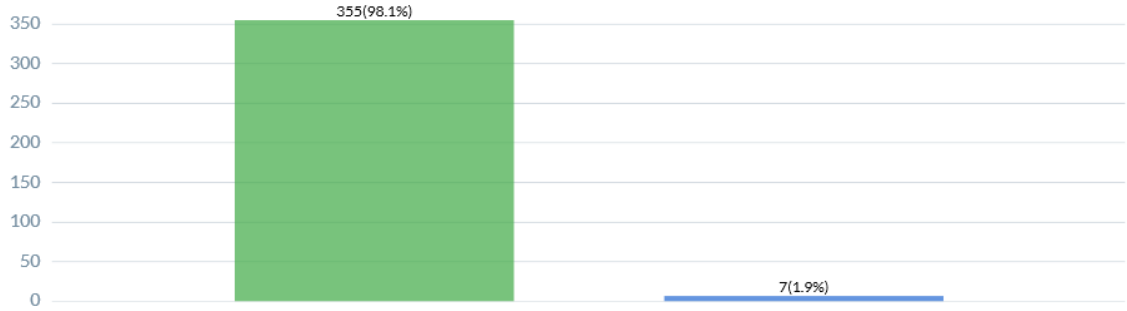


\* 624 responses

Primary

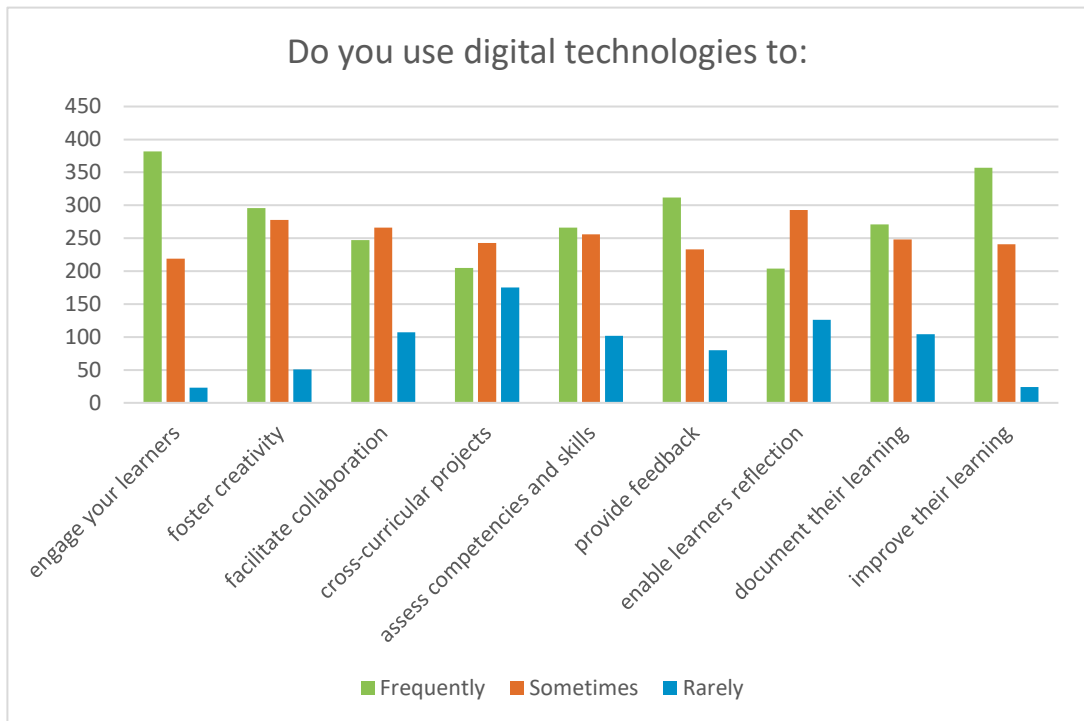


### Post Primary



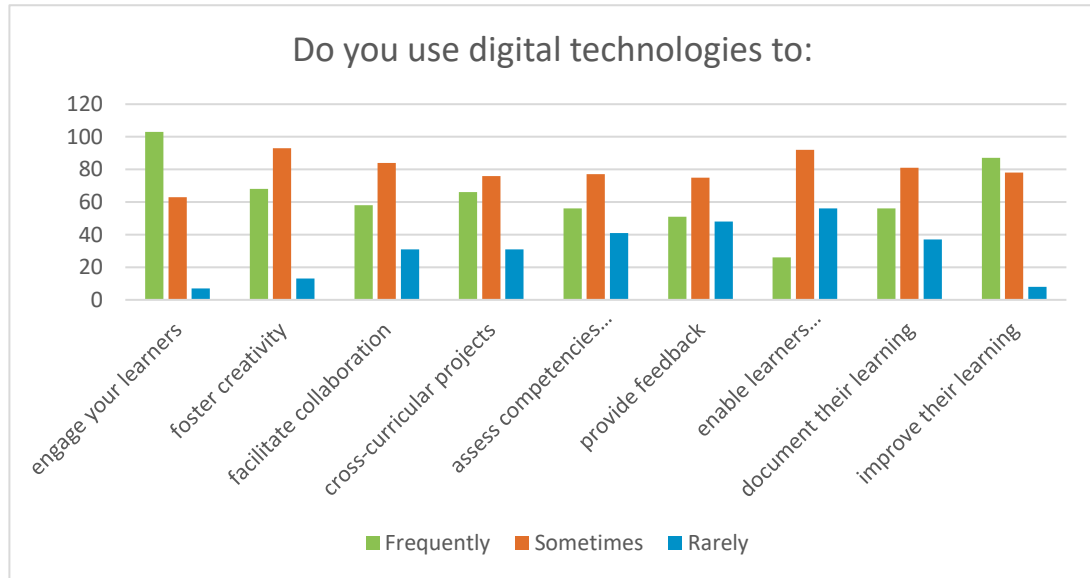
Q4 In your teaching practice, do you use digital technologies:

All\*

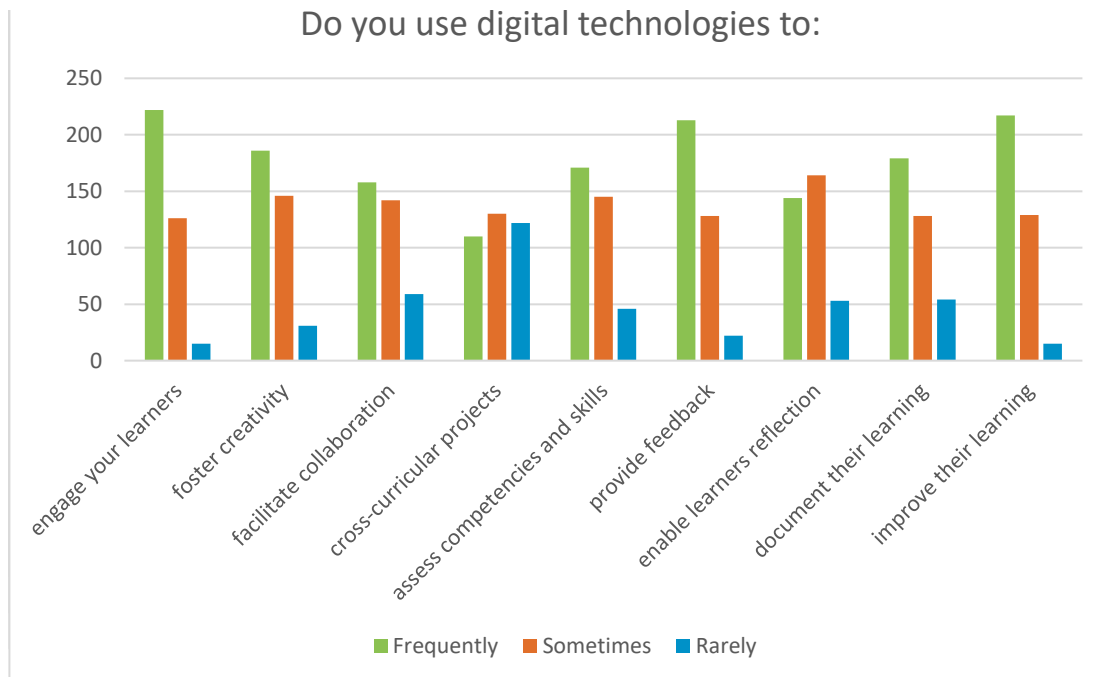


\*625 Responses

### Primary

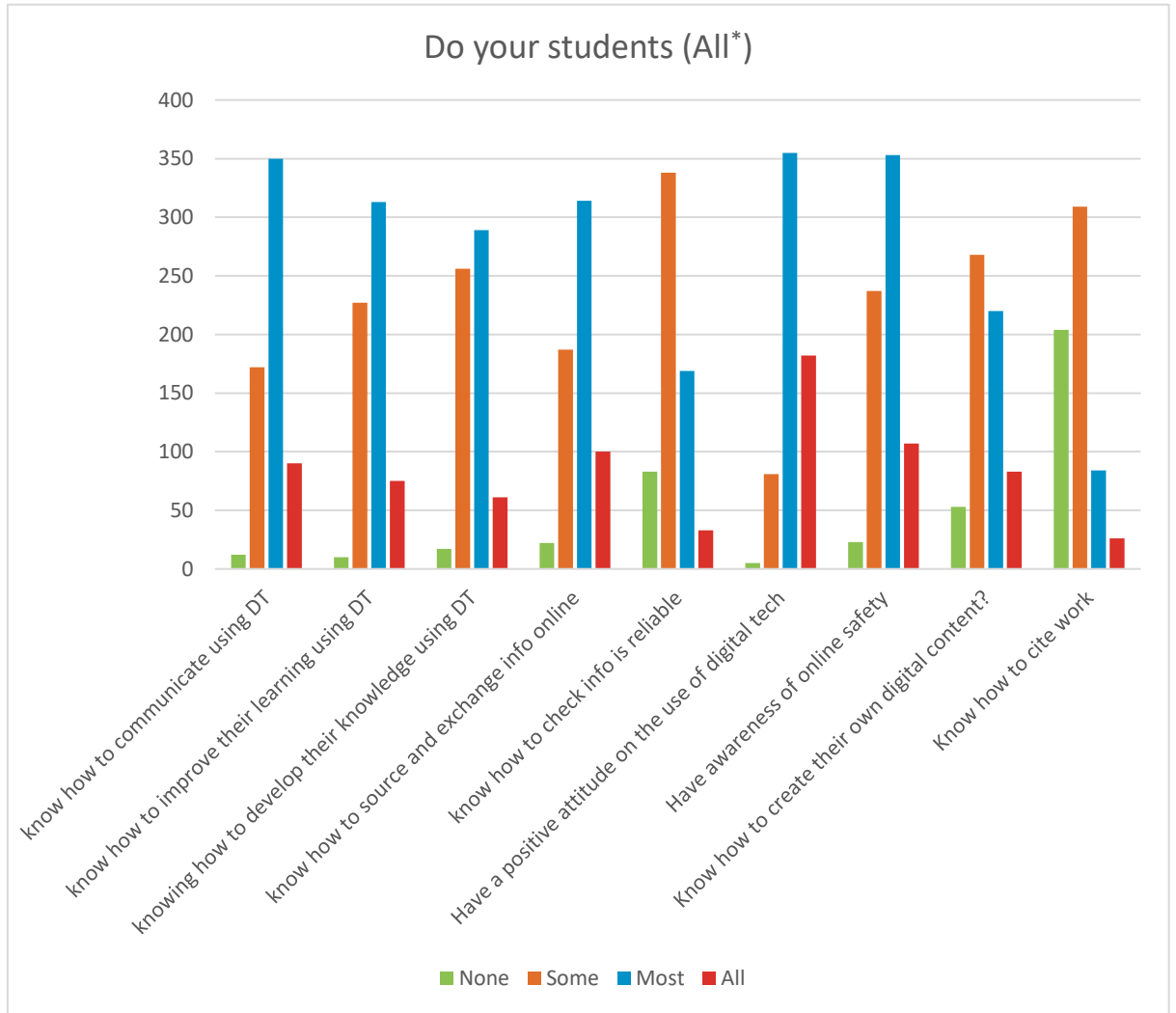


### Post Primary

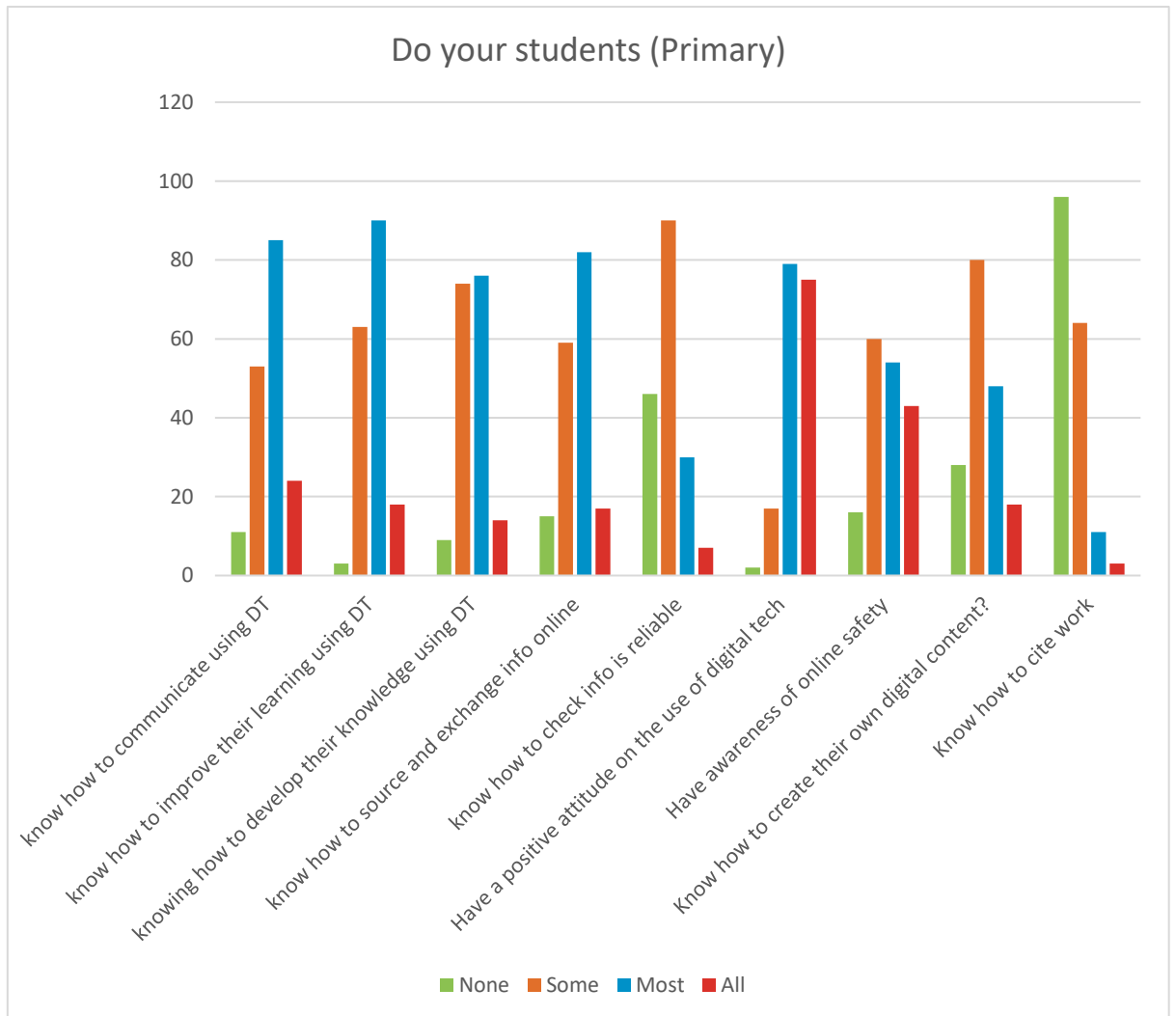


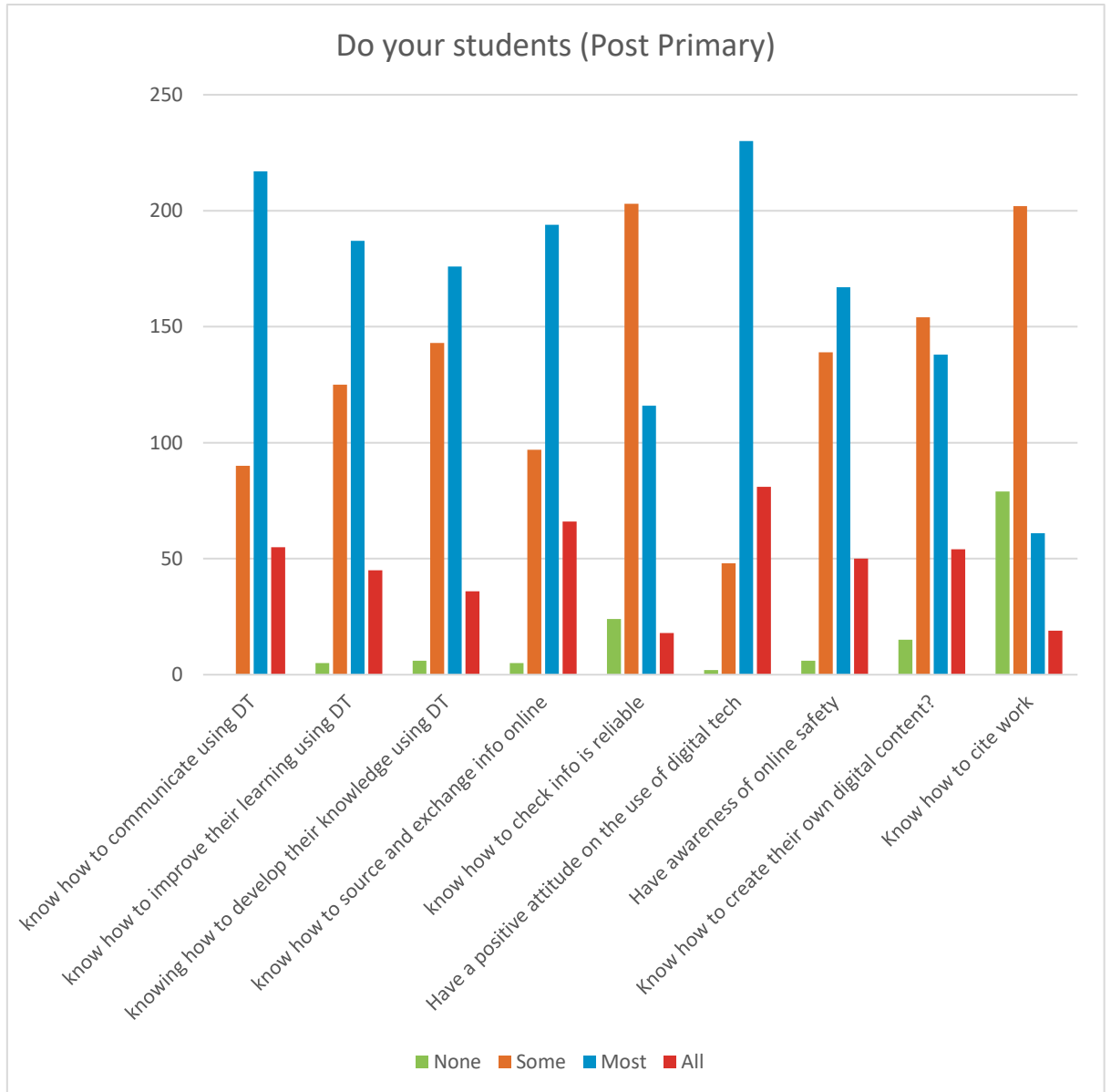


Q5 Do your students:



\*626 Responses





Q6 What type of engagement have you had with digital technology in Teacher Professional Learning (TPL)/Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in the last 2 years? What if any barriers or obstacles have you encountered?

Most respondents had engagement with CPD from PDST, JCT, NCSE, their local education centre or ETB. There was also a lot of peer to peer learning and self-directed learning in the form of webinars and training from organisations such as,

- Camara Ireland
- Wriggle
- G-Suite
- MS Teams
- Zoom
- Seesaw

Reported barriers were in the form of:

- Insufficient broadband
- Lack of resources for both mainstream and special educational needs (SEN)
- Lack of time
- Access to devices
- GDPR concerns

A small number (<5%) reported no engagement with TPL/CPD.

Q7 Are there areas of TPL/CPD on the use of digital technologies for teaching, learning and assessment training that should be focused on for the future?

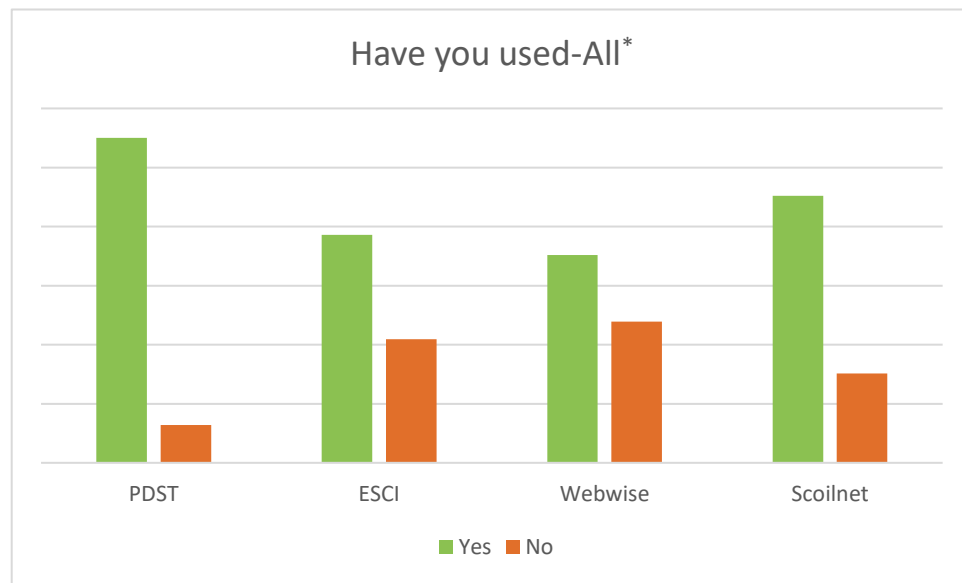
A focus on assessment came through strongly in the responses as well as requests for further CPD on a range of topics including:

- Basic IT skills
- Creation of digital content
- Integration of digital technology in the curriculum
- Whole school CPD in ICT
- Specific SEN focused CPD
- Assistive technology
- Online safety
- How to credit/assess accuracy of online information

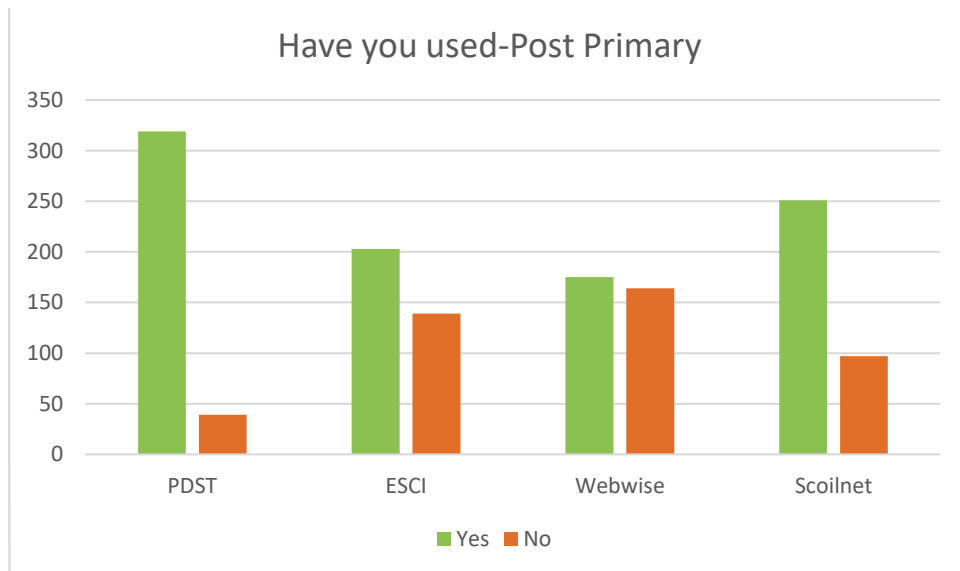
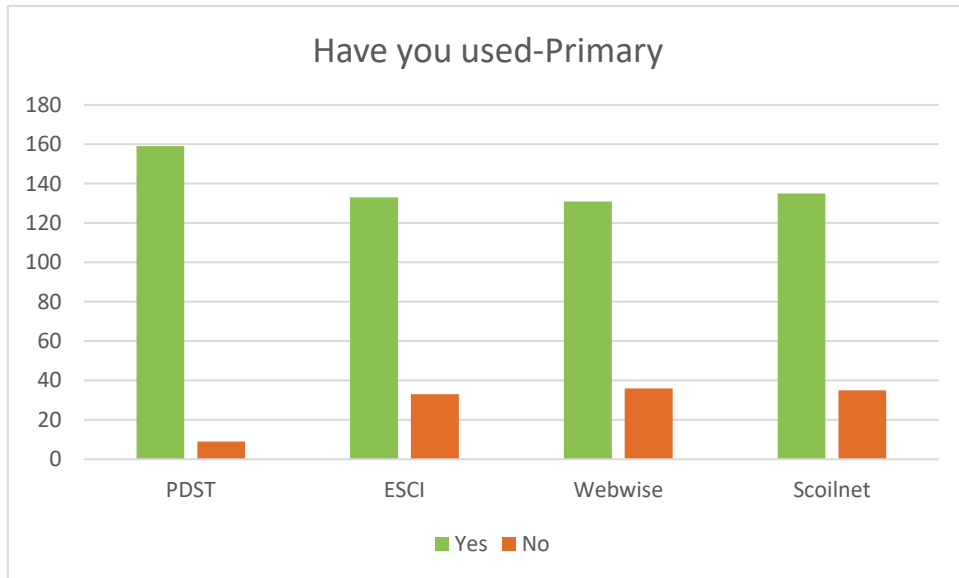
It was also felt there should be a digital competency framework for teachers to ensure a minimum standard and that students should get training in basic IT skills also.

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Q8 Have you used any of the digital supports/resources listed below?



\*623 Responses



Q9 Are there other supports not listed that you use regularly? If so, which ones?

Teachers reported that they engaged with a variety of other supports such as:

- Apple education
- Computers in Education Society Ireland (CESI)
- Camara Ireland
- An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)
- Etwinning European Schoolnet academy
- Google education
- Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT)
- Kahn academy
- Kahoot
- Microsoft education
- Middletown Centre for Autism
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Peer to peer training
- Seesaw
- Social media- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Youtube
- State Examinations Commission
- Studyclix
- Wriggle

Q10 Do you feel the supports listed above meets your needs. If not, why not?

Most felt the supports offered met their needs with approximately 69% saying they met their needs either fully or mostly. Out of the 31% who felt they did not meet their needs it was mainly because they felt there was a lack of SEN specific supports, difficulty finding resources through Irish or that the supports offered were at the wrong level, being either too basic or too advanced. The primary/post primary breakdown was similar, at post primary 66% found they met their needs and 34% didn't. For primary teachers 72% felt the supports met their needs while 28% felt they didn't.

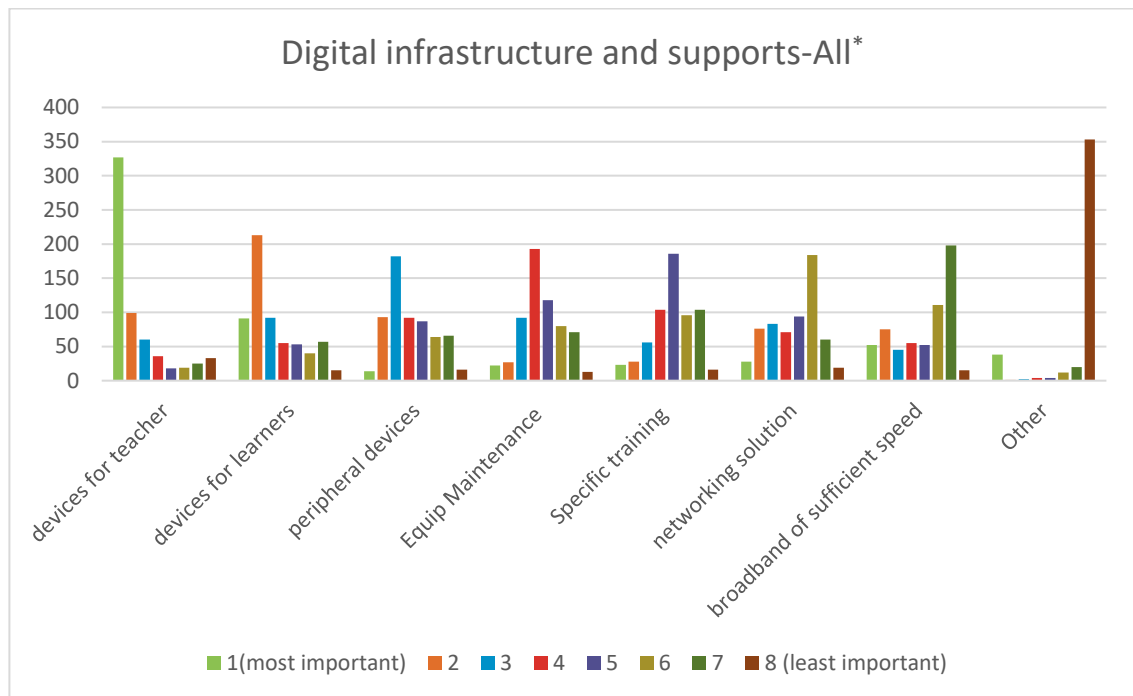
Q11 Do you share resources you have created with colleagues? If so, how?

Almost all respondents reported sharing resources, <1% didn't. There was a broad variety of methods used, such as:

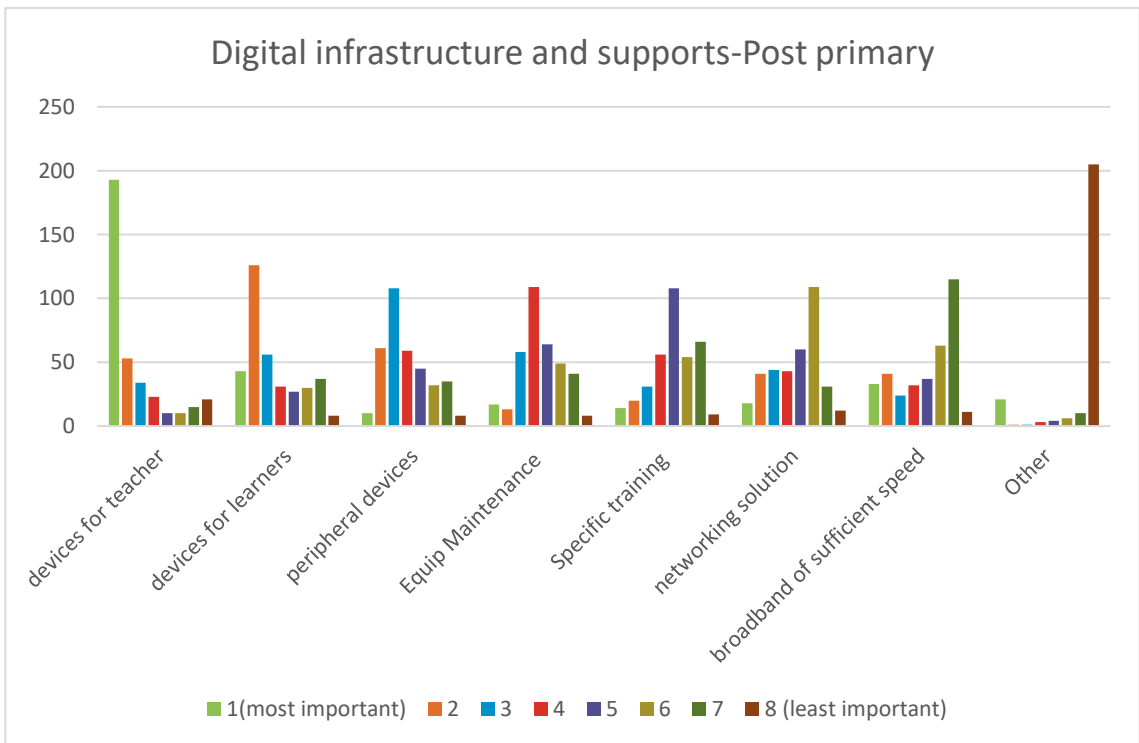
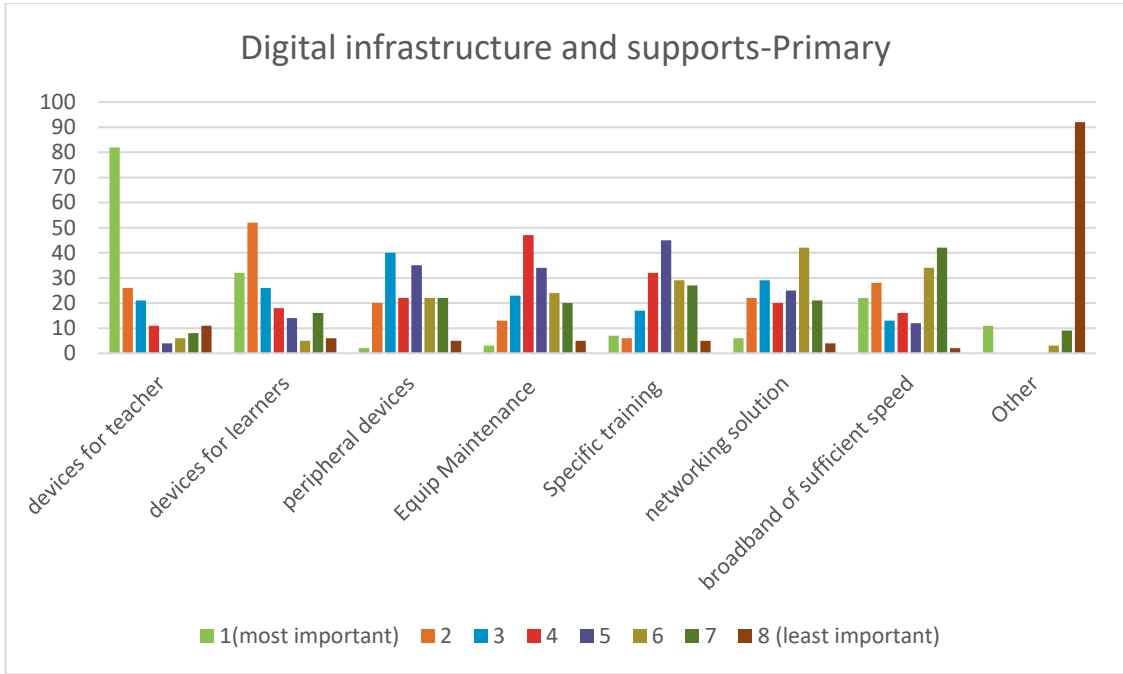
- Microsoft teams
- Onenote
- Sharepoint
- Their school server
- Google drive
- Onedrive
- Whatsapp
- Zoom
- Twitter
- Email
- Dropbox
- Youtube



Q12 The requirement for digital infrastructure and related support for schools to enable the embedding of the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning and assessment has been identified as a key requirement under the existing Digital Strategy, and this will be further addressed through the next Digital Strategy. To inform this development, the below information is sought: Please rank the following digital infrastructure and related supports in order of importance from 1-8 (with 1 most important and 8 least important) to enable the embedding of the use of digital technologies in teaching learning and assessment in your teaching practice:



\*618 Responses



Q13 If you answered "Other", please outline below

In the main the respondents selected other for the following reasons:

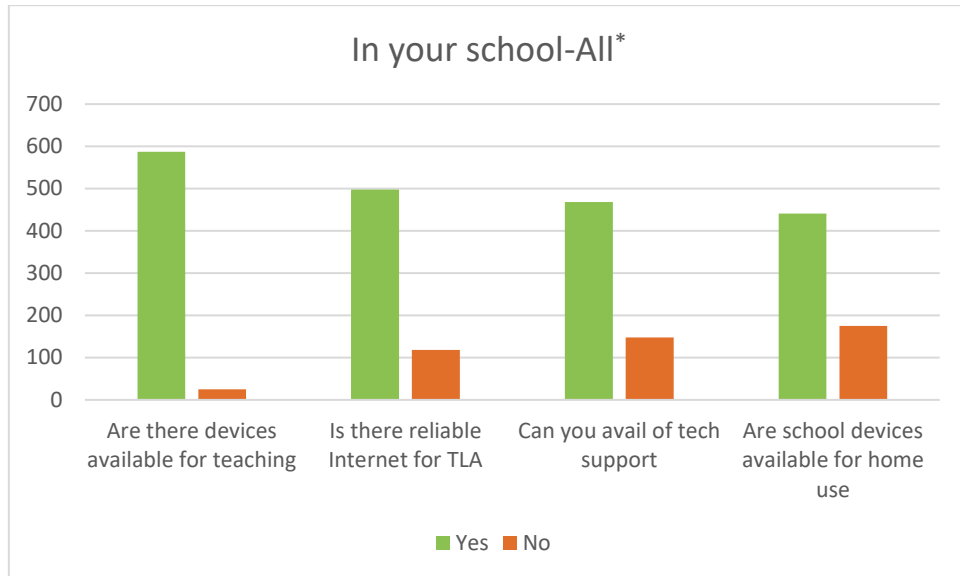
- They felt it impossible to rank the choices that all were equally important
- The creation of a post of responsibility for a digital lead teacher
- More funding for infrastructure, equipment and devices
- Dedicated technical support
- More targeted training in digital technology
- Better broadband

Q14 What additional technical support would enable you to further embed the use of digital technologies in your teaching practice?

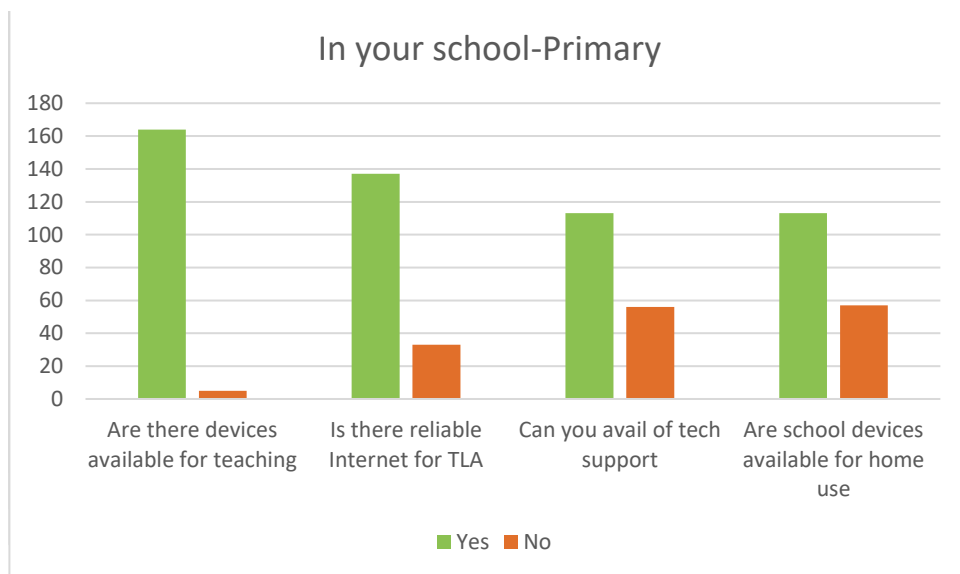
The main response was the provision of dedicated technical support through either an IT technician allocated between schools or a Q&A forum/hotline. Other points raised were:

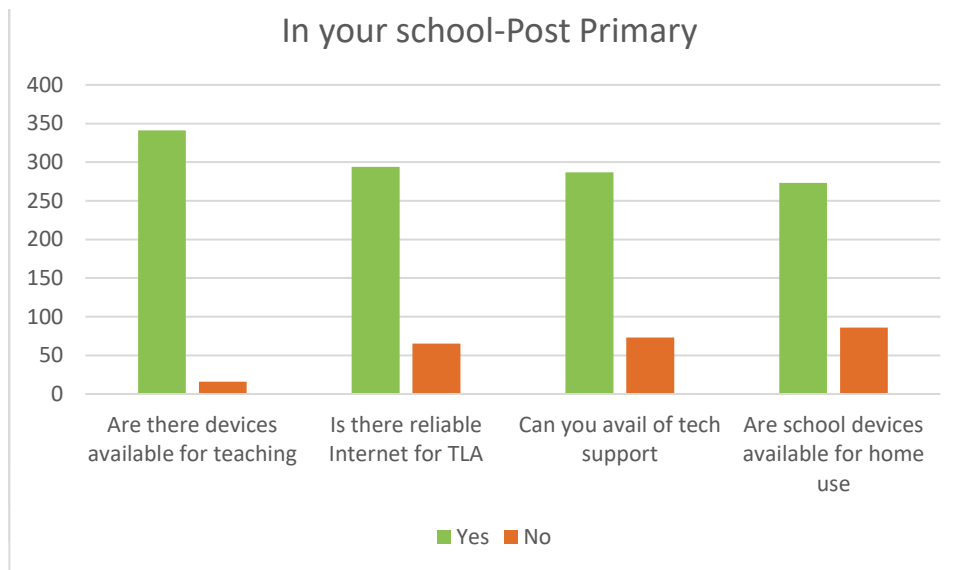
- Better broadband
- More funding for devices and maintenance
- More CPD
- Time for in school training rather than out of hours, additional time allocated for embedding technology in lessons and for the teachers to learn to be proficient in the technology

Q15 In your school:



\*617 Responses





Q16 What have you as a teacher learnt from the experience of remote teaching with digital technologies during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Respondents reported that their IT and communication skills were much improved, although many cited a steep learning curve initially. There was concern over the poor quality of broadband in rural areas, which impacted the effectiveness of remote teaching and that a gap was opening up between students with reliable internet access and poor internet access. A lack of appropriate devices for some students was also noted.

Engagement with remote learning among pupils varied with weaker students disengaging while better students coped well in the main. Overall while most respondents indicated positives such as improved skills and familiarity with various learning platform, the take away was very much that it is no substitute for in person classroom teaching.

Q17 What are the key areas a new digital strategy for schools should focus on to assist you to continue to embed the use of digital technology throughout teaching, learning and assessment?

The key areas that arose in the responses were:

- CPD- from basic IT skills to coding, subject specific on embedding digital technologies, regularly provided and during school time
- Funding for devices, infrastructure, maintenance and technical support
- Faster broadband

- Assessment
- Procurement advice
- More SEN focus
- Simplified frameworks and guidelines