

Oracy after the pandemic: what Ofsted, teachers and young people think about oracy

Analysis conducted by
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The Centre
for Education
& Youth



Who are we?

The Centre for Education and Youth is a think and action-tank that provides timely and accessible research, support and tools for policymakers, organisations and practitioners supporting young people.

Thanks

We extend our thanks to Dr Arlene Holmes-Henderson from the University of Oxford, for securing funding for this research from the Strategic Priorities Fund for Policy Engagement (Research England).

We are also grateful to [Watchsted](#) for providing us with access to their database.



With our team of former teachers, youth workers, academics and civil servants, CfEY sits at the intersection of research, policy and practice.



What do we do?

Our mission is to ensure society provides young people with the support they need to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood.

- We provide clear information and evidence that supports impact for young people
- We enable clients to make informed decisions
- We talk directly to young people and practitioners



We work with a wide range of partners including:

- Third sector organisations
- Businesses
- Government
- Universities and schools

A stylized illustration of a person with short hair, wearing a collared shirt, with three speech bubbles floating above their head. The entire image is rendered in a monochromatic teal color.

How much does Ofsted care about oracy?

Our approach

Our research questions were:

1. How much does Ofsted care about oracy?
 - a. Does how much oracy matters to Ofsted vary between phases?
 - b. Has this changed over time?
 - c. Are Ofsted's judgements on oracy reflected in a school's inspection outcomes?
2. What does Ofsted think high quality oracy is?

We conducted analysis of Ofsted reports using the search platform, [Watchsted](#).

Watchsted ran a search for us of all the reports on its database using the terms outlined (right). The subsequent dataset (n=3,379) contained information about the schools (such as URN, date of inspection, inspection result) and the inspection key findings and recommendations.

In addition to top-level analysis of the population data, two random samples of key findings (n=323) and recommendations data (n=322) were drawn and coded. The distributions of the samples were compared to top-level data in the population to ensure the samples are representative.

Where extracts in our sample contained search terms but no relevant references to oracy (for, “teachers must safeguard against verbal bullying”), these were omitted from the analysis.

Watchsted’s database contains all section 5 inspection reports, and short inspection reports (since they were introduced).

Search terms:

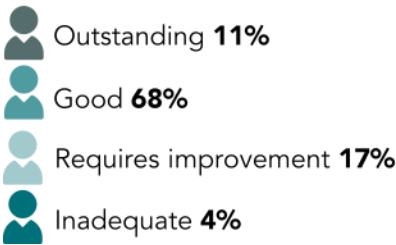
- Oracy
- Spoken language
- Spoken communication
- Speaking
- Oral language
- Verbal
- Speech and language
- Speech, language and communication

We did not include the term ‘talk’ as this term was often used outside the context of oracy.

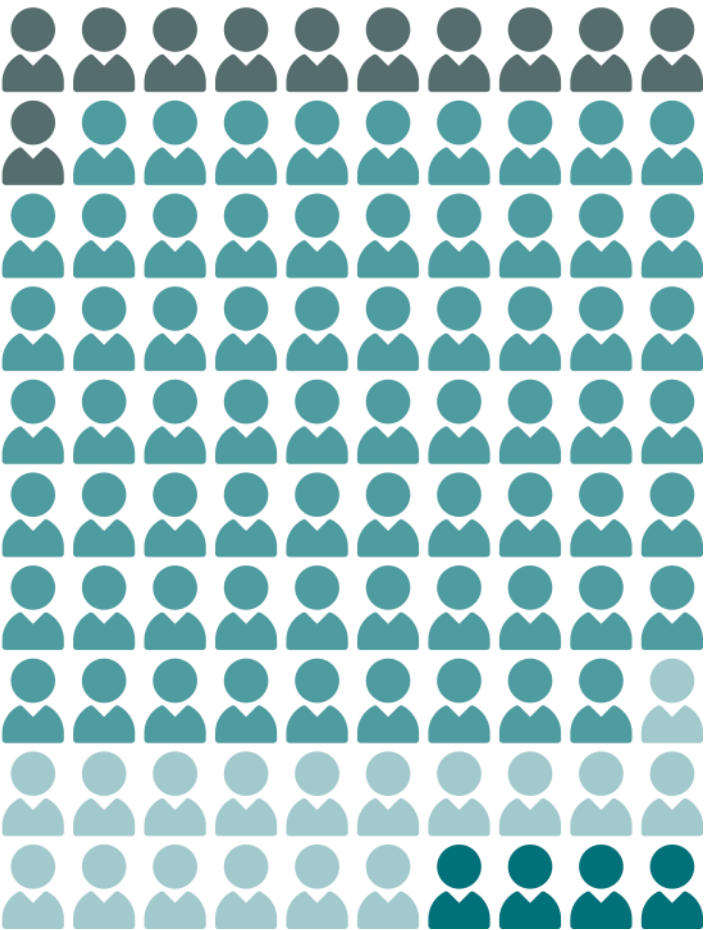
Overview of the dataset

The dataset included the following breakdown of schools, and these numbers are broadly reflective of the national make-up of schools:

Phase	Number
All-through	13
Middle-deemed secondary	12
Not applicable	307
Nursery	217
Primary	2428
Secondary	402



Inspection result (n=3379)

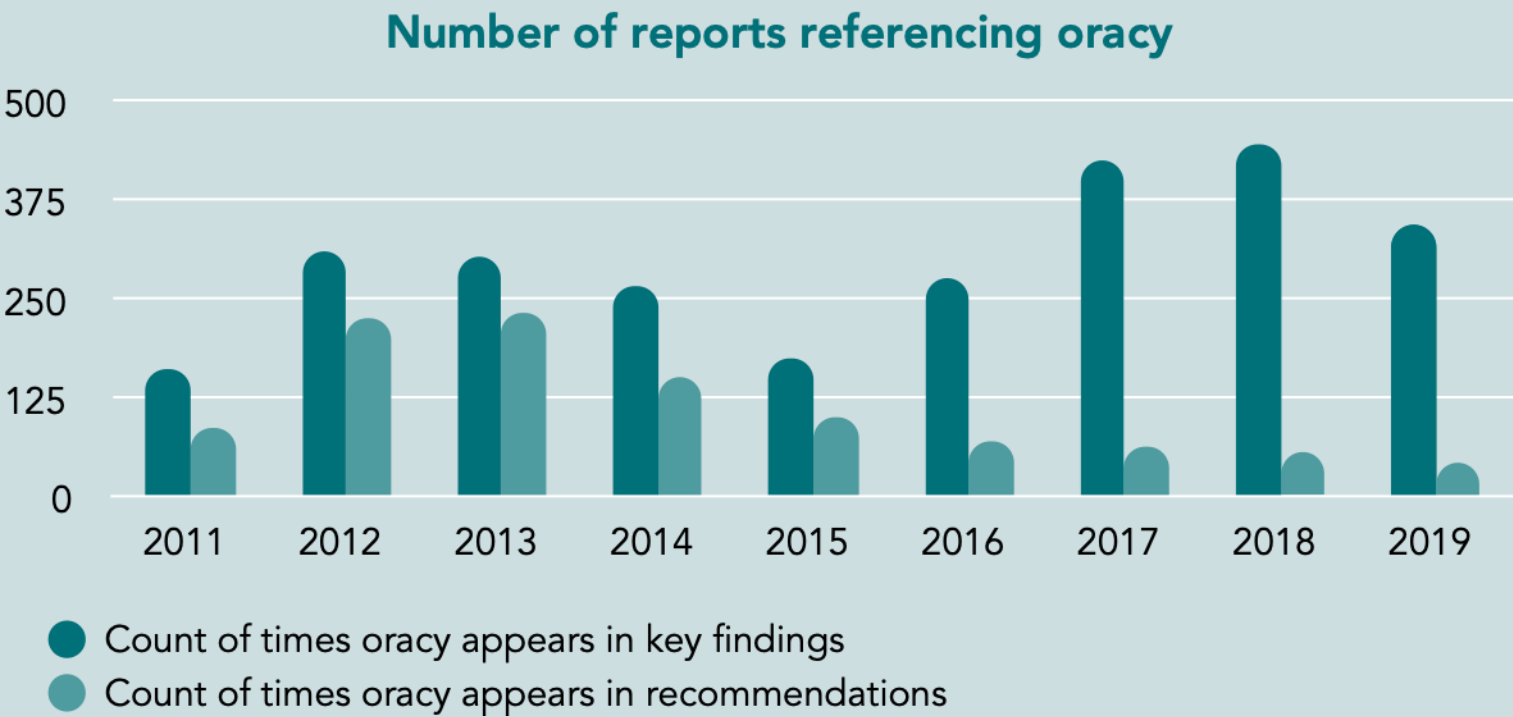


References to oracy by year #1

Over the last decade, the number of references to oracy (as defined in our search terms) in reports has fluctuated.

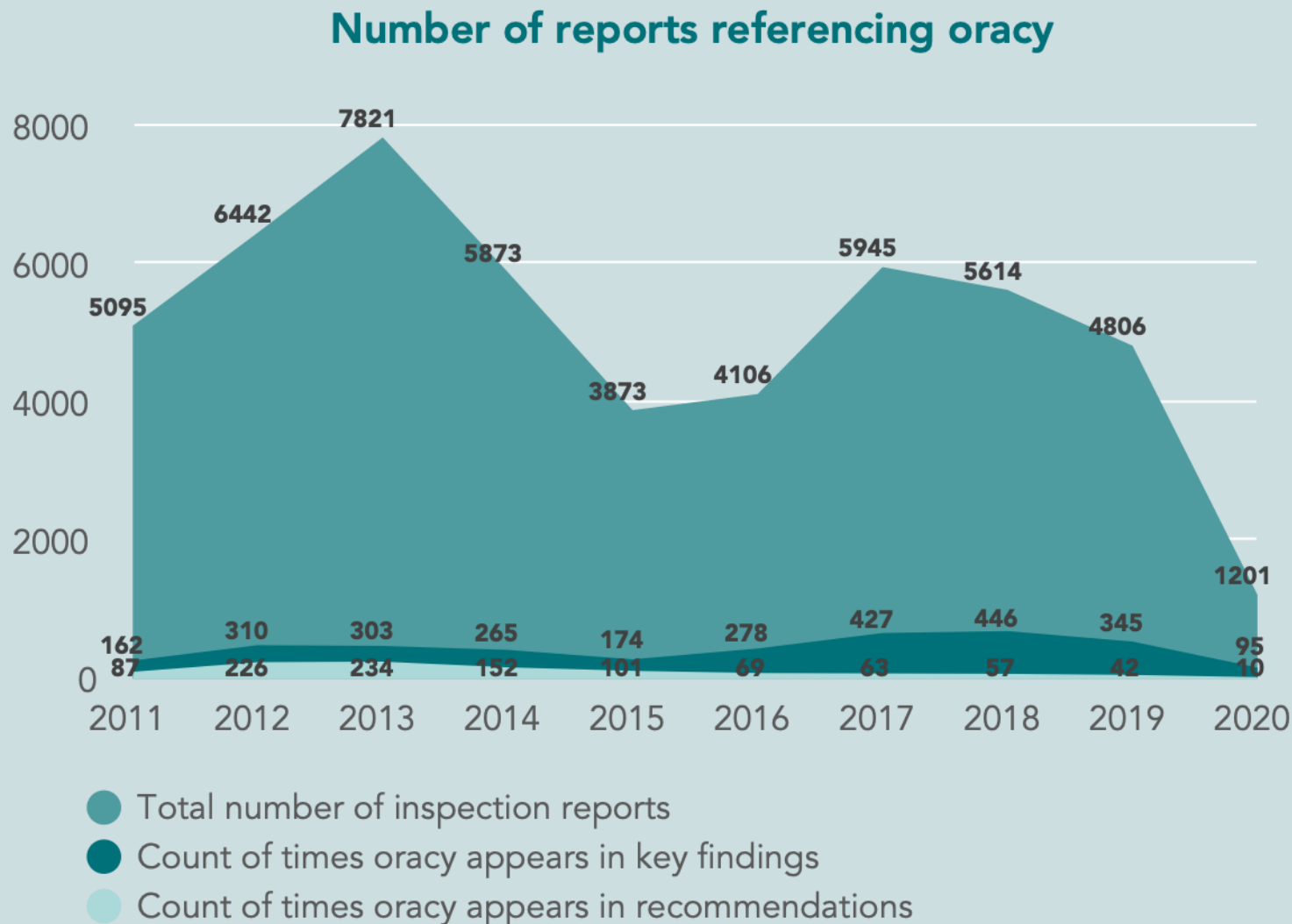
The number of references in key findings the last few years has been considerably higher than previously though the number of mentions in recommendations has been somewhat lower.

The sample of schools inspected during 2020 was much smaller due to the pandemic and so this data is not included in the graph below.



References to oracy by year #2

When taken in the context of all school inspections taking place each year, it is striking how little oracy features. Oracy is mentioned in only a small minority of Ofsted's inspection reports.

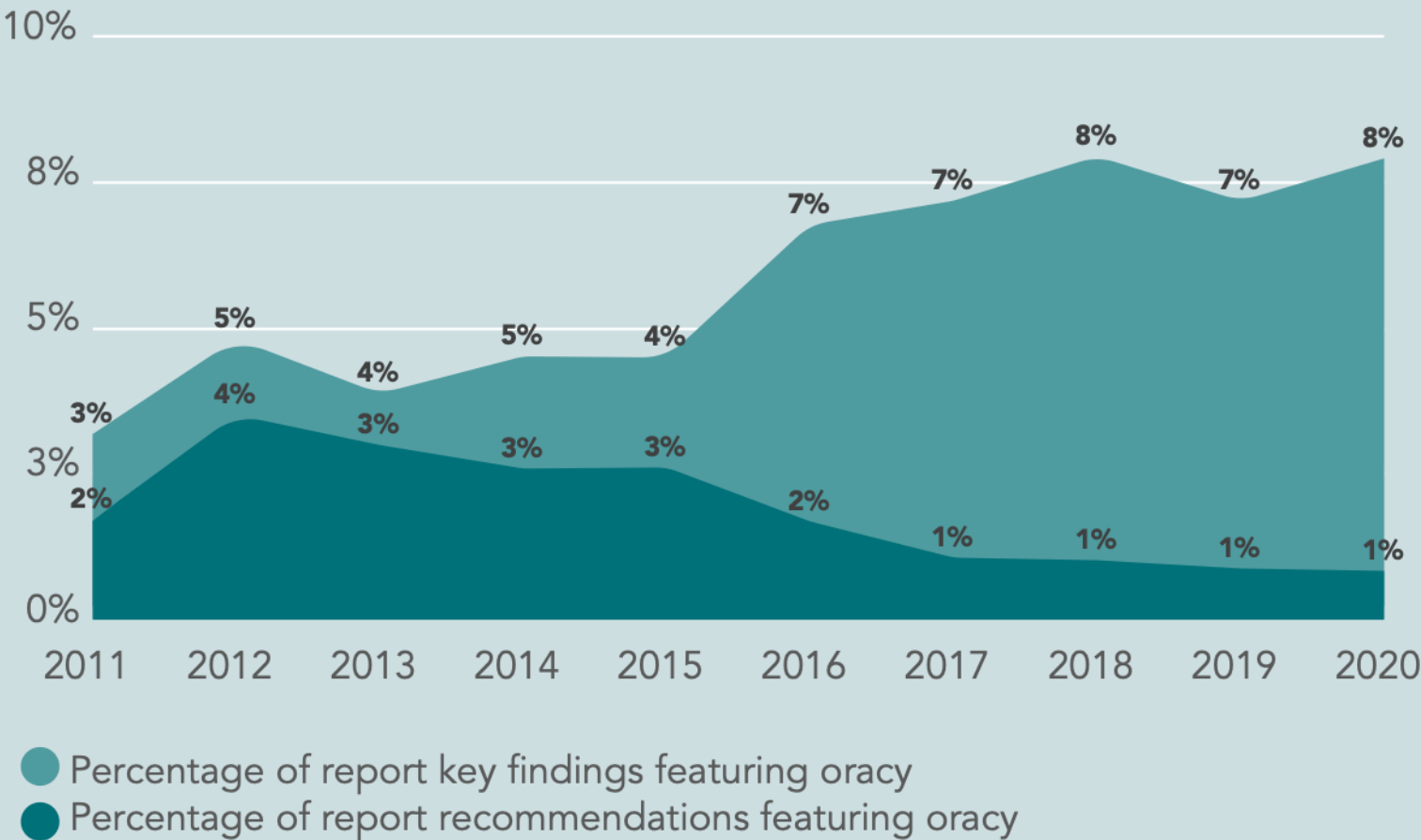


References to oracy by year #3

When taken in the context of all school inspections taking place each year, it is striking how little oracy features. Oracy is mentioned in only a small minority of Ofsted's inspection reports.



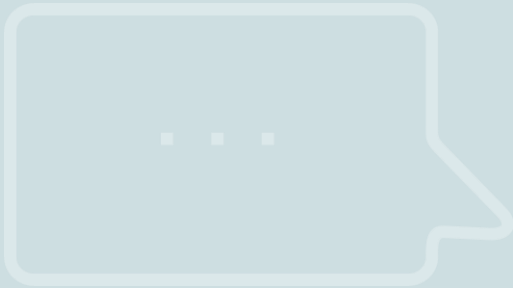
Proportion of reports referencing oracy



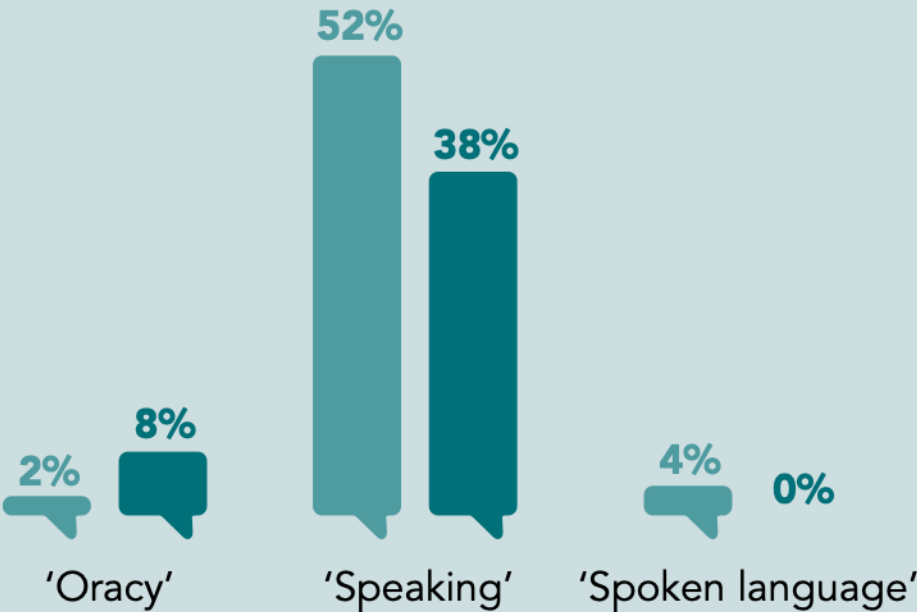
Trends in specific terminology for oracy in inspection report key findings, by phase

Where key findings from inspections reference oracy or an associated term:

- The term ‘oracy’ appears in 1.5% of primary school and 7.5% of secondary school key findings
- The most used term is ‘speaking’, which appeared in over half (52%) of primary school key findings, and 38% of secondary school findings
- ‘Spoken language’ appears in a small proportion of key findings. Our search only returned one secondary school with this term in its key findings, and the term is used in under 4% of the primary key findings in our dataset



Terms used when reporting findings relating to oracy

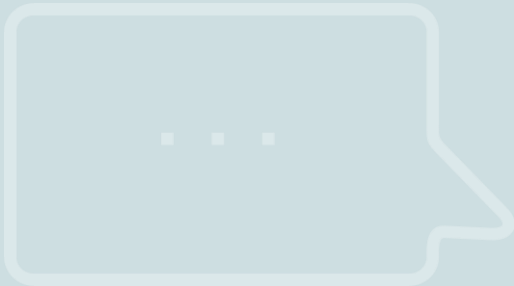


- Proportion of oracy-related key findings using specific term (primary)
- Proportion of oracy-related key findings using specific term (secondary)

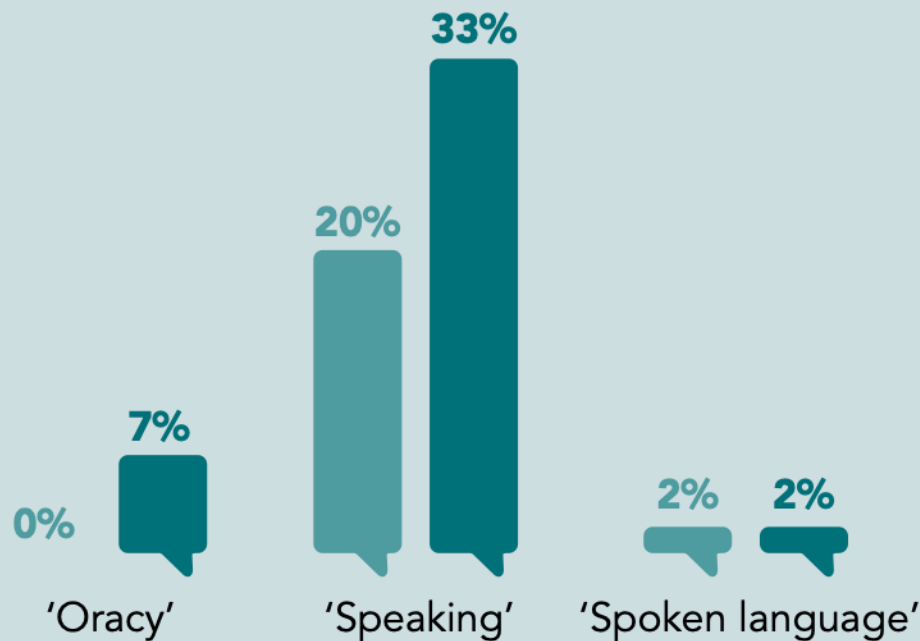
Trends in specific terminology for oracy in inspection report recommendations, by phase

Where report recommendations refer to oracy or an associated term:

- The term ‘oracy’ appears in less than 1% of primary school report recommendations in our dataset, and nearly 7% of secondary recommendations
- The most used term in school report recommendations is ‘speaking’
- ‘Spoken language’ barely features in Ofsted’s report recommendations. Where oracy appears at all, ‘spoken language’ is used 1.6% of primary and 2.2% secondary reports



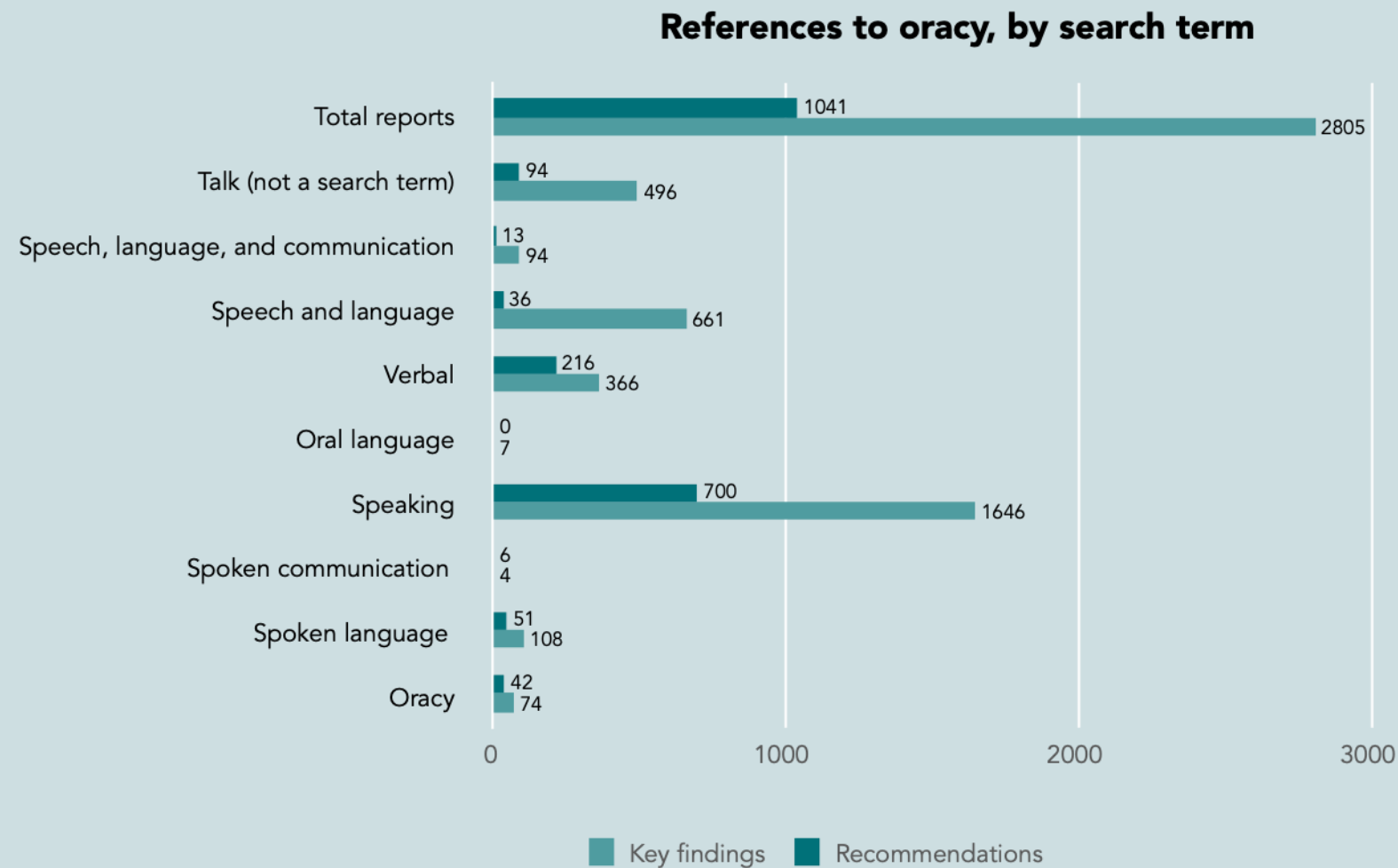
Proportion of primary and secondary school report recommendations containing terms



- Proportion of oracy-related recommendations using specific term (primary)
- Proportion of oracy-related recommendations using specific term (secondary)

How does Ofsted refer to oracy?

Where Ofsted refers to oracy in its reports, this is most commonly in terms of ‘speaking’, both in key findings and recommendations. The next most common related term is ‘speech and language’.



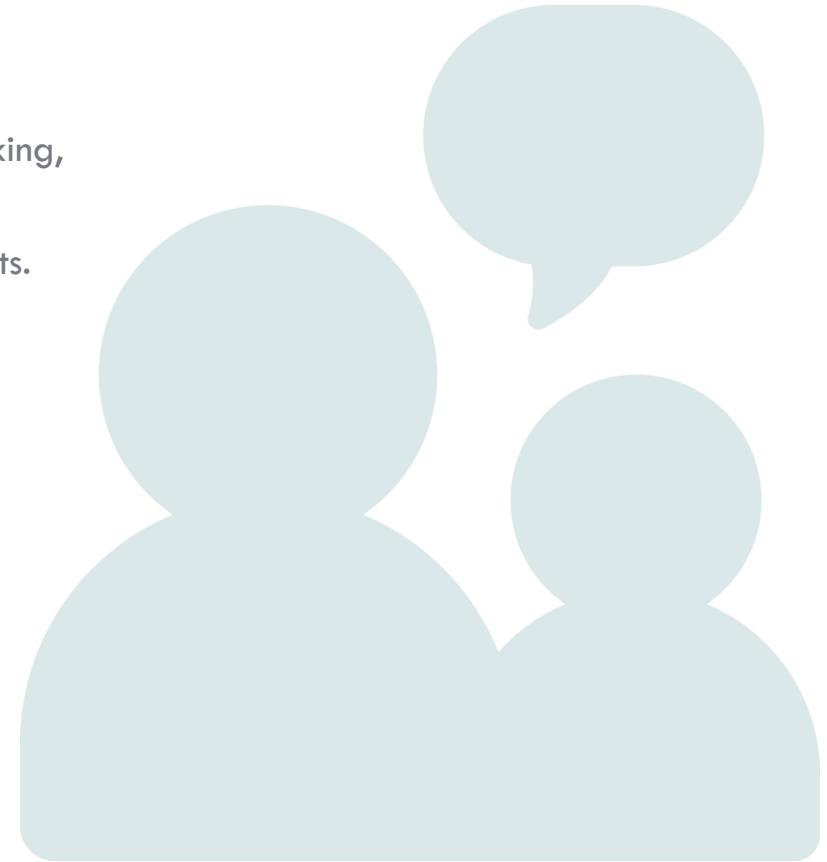
Are references to oracy positive or negative?

We analysed how oracy is described across our random sub-sample of key findings (n=323) and recommendations (n=322).

It was often unclear whether references to oracy were positive or negative.

Positive references were often to good pedagogical interventions that teachers were making, while the negative references tended to relate to pupils' attainment.

Often, 'negative' statements related to issues among students in speech and language units.



How does oracy relate to literacy in Ofsted's reports?

In our sample of key inspection findings (n=323), we found that less than a quarter (23%) of references to oracy made links between oracy and literacy.

When oracy was linked to literacy, it was almost always framed as a means of improving literacy.

*Note that full extracts (key findings or recommendations) sometimes contained multiple references to oracy.

Each reference was coded, meaning that some extracts are double counted as 'relevant'.

Less than
a quarter
(23%)

OF REFERENCES TO
ORACY IN OFSTED'S KEY
INSPECTION FINDINGS
MADE LINKS BETWEEN
ORACY AND LITERACY.



LINKED TO LITERACY?	Number	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
YES	60	19%	23%
NO	191	59%	73%
BOTH (i.e., there are multiple references)	9	3%	3%
AMBIGUOUS (i.e., verdict of reference is unclear)	7	2%	3%

Who is doing the speaking?

When Ofsted describes oracy in its key findings, this is generally in terms of pupils’ talk. Most references to teacher talk referred to the effectiveness of teacher questioning and whether it strengthened pupils’ oracy skills. A smaller proportion were concerned with teachers’ verbal feedback, which was almost always linked to written feedback.

In some cases references to talk focused on pupils and were independent of adult input (“e.g., “Pupils communicate confidently with one another on the playground”) whereas in others, observations were made about teachers without direct reference to pupils (e.g., “Teachers talk too much”). In other cases the focus was ambiguous because although the reference referred to pupils, teacher/adult input was implied (e.g., ‘Pupil talk is well developed’ and ‘Pupils practise their communication through debating’).



	Number of references	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
PUPIL TALK	137	42%	53%
TEACHER TALK	94	29%	36%
BOTH PUPIL & TEACHER TALK	42	13%	16%
AMBIGUOUS	125	39%	48%
WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH	22	7%	8%

Relevant extracts from inspection report 'key findings' sections were more likely to reference pupils' talk than teachers' talk:



53%

**REFERENCED
PUPILS' TALK**

36%

**REFERENCED
TEACHERS'
TALK**

16%

**REFERENCED BOTH
PUPILS' AND
TEACHERS'
TALK**

Are specific groups of pupils referenced?

The majority (62%) of references to oracy in our sample of key findings were general, and not about specific groups of pupils.

Where excerpts did refer to a specific group of pupils, the majority were to pupils with additional needs including speech and language needs.

If oracy was mentioned in relation to pupils' ages, it tended to be in reference to the Early Years.

29%
**OF RELEVANT EXTRACTS
FROM INSPECTION REPORT
KEY FINDINGS REFERENCED
ORACY IN RELATION TO
SPECIFIC GROUPS OF PUPILS**

IS THE REFERENCE GROUP-SPECIFIC?	Number	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
YES	76	24%	29%
NO	199	62%	77%
BOTH (i.e., there are multiple references)	26	8%	10%
AMBIGUOUS	1	0%	0%

Does Ofsted frame oracy as the means or target for school improvement?

By analysing a sample of recommendations (n=322), we found that oracy was most often framed as a target for school improvement. However, over half of all relevant references (59%) also referred to oracy as a means of school improvement, and 37% mentioned both.

When oracy was reference exclusively as a means of supporting school improvement, this was generally as a means of improving literacy (e.g., “In order to improve pupils’ writing, strengthen pupils’ oral communication”).

When oracy was a target for school improvement, there was generally little elaboration or guidance as to how this might occur. When oracy featured in recommendations it tended to be in relation to literacy. A slim majority (54%) of references were to pupils’ talk.

IS ORACY THE MEANS OR TARGET?	Number	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
MEANS	60	19%	59%
TARGET	71	22%	70%
BOTH	38	12%	37%
AMBIGUOUS	4	1%	4%

IS ORACY LINKED TO LITERACY?	Number	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
YES	58	18%	57%
NO	43	13%	42%
BOTH	6	2%	6%
AMBIGUOUS	2	1%	2%



23%

OF RELEVANT EXTRACTS
FROM INSPECTION REPORT
KEY FINDINGS LINKED
ORACY WITH LITERACY

57%

OF RELEVANT EXTRACTS
FROM INSPECTION REPORT
RECOMMENDATIONS LINKED
ORACY WITH LITERACY

Who do recommendations target?

A slim majority (54%) of references were to pupils' talk, with 42% targeting teachers' talk and 8% targeting both.

The overwhelming majority of recommendations were not group specific.



WHO IS THE FOCUS?	Number	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
PUPIL TALK	55	17%	54%
TEACHER TALK	43	13%	42%
BOTH STUDENT & TEACHER TALK	8	3%	8%
AMBIGUOUS	11	3%	11%
WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH	4	1%	4%

IS THE RECOMMENDATION GROUP SPECIFIC?	Number	% of overall sample	% of relevant extracts
YES	12	4%	12%
NO	88	27%	86%
BOTH	4	1%	4%
AMBIGUOUS	3	1%	3%



12%

**OF RELEVANT EXTRACTS
FROM INSPECTION REPORT
RECOMMENDATIONS
DISCUSSED THE ORACY OF
SPECIFIC GROUPS OF PUPILS**

86%

**OF RELEVANT EXTRACTS
FROM INSPECTION REPORT
RECOMMENDATIONS
DISCUSSED THE ORACY
OF PUPILS IN GENERAL**

Summary and next steps

This analysis highlights that oracy does not feature prominently in Ofsted's reporting.

Ofsted inspectors should tighten up how they discuss oracy in inspection reports. This could include, for example, being clearer about whether findings and recommendations relate to:

- Pupils' talk, teachers' talk, or both;
- Universal, targeted or specialist provision.



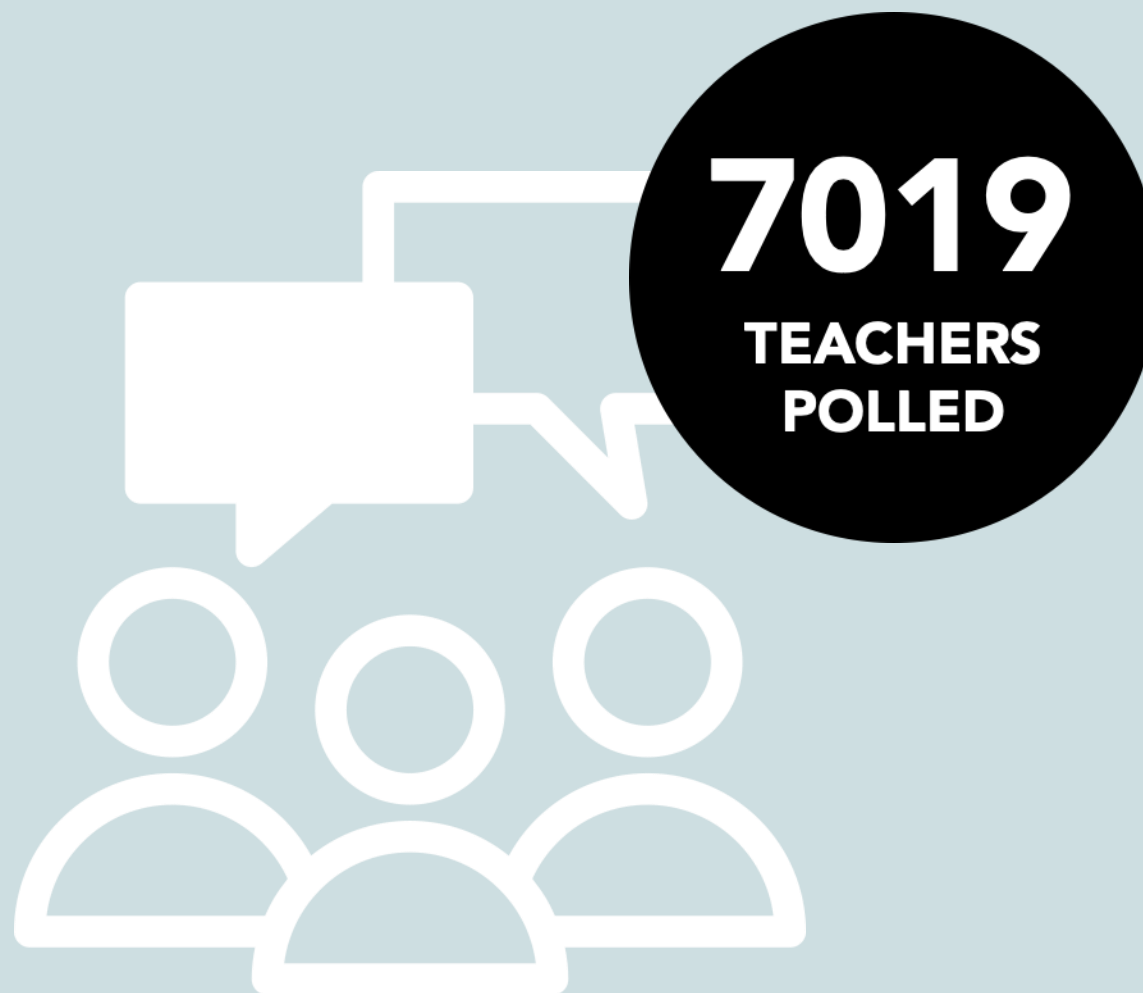
What do teachers think about oracy?



Our approach

We commissioned TeacherTapp to ask teachers what they think about oracy. CfEY devised the questions, and the polling was conducted over 11th and 12th March 2021.

In total, TeacherTapp polled 7,019 teachers.



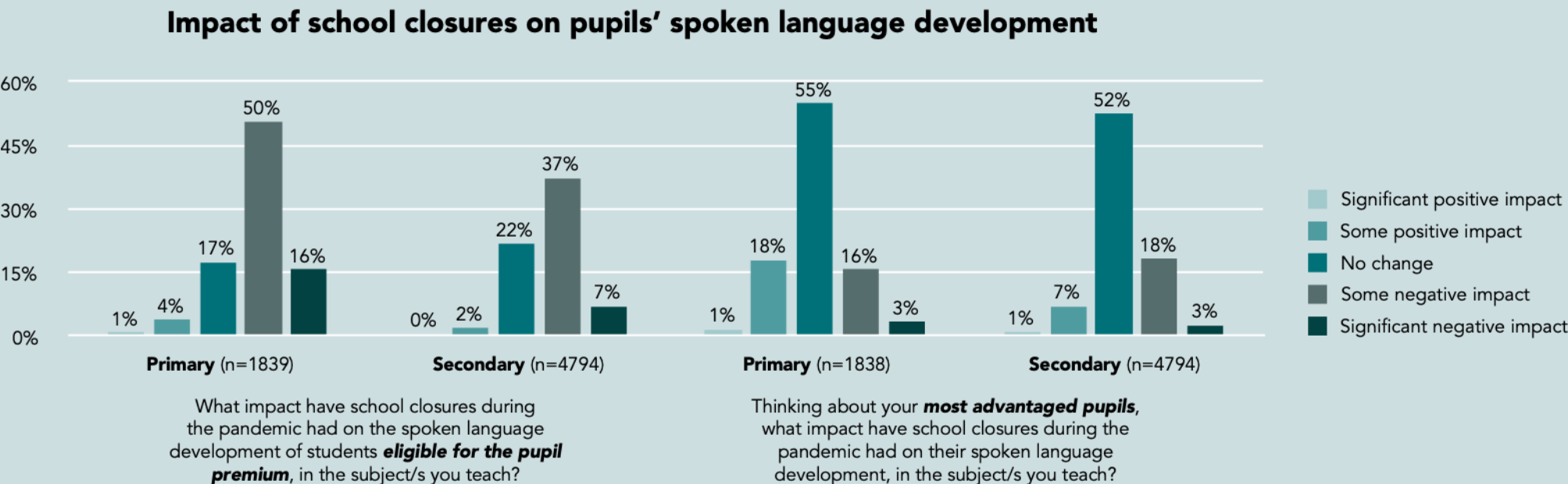
Impact of school closures on pupils' oracy development

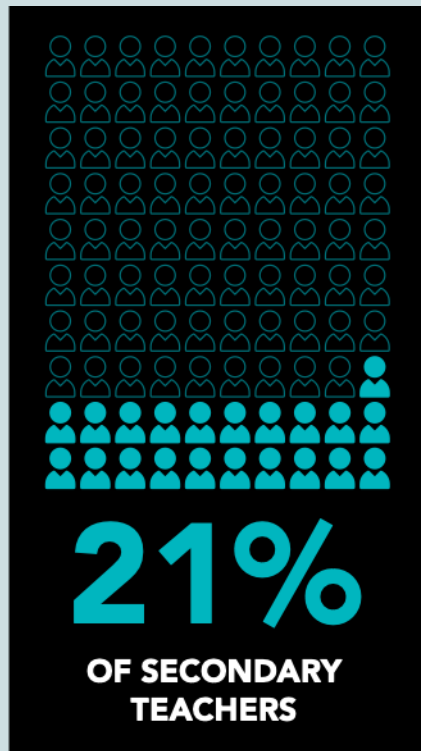
The effects of the pandemic and school closures on pupils' spoken language development have not been felt evenly. Teachers report that for students eligible for pupil premium, school closures during the pandemic had an overwhelmingly negative impact on spoken language development.

Teachers do not believe the impact has been anywhere near as bad for their most advantaged pupils.

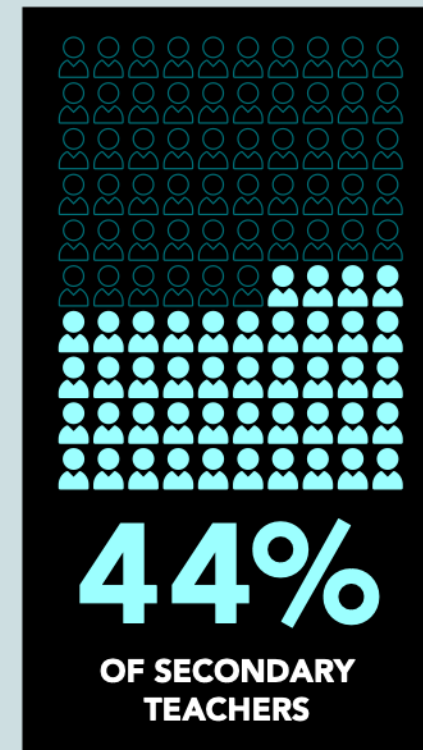
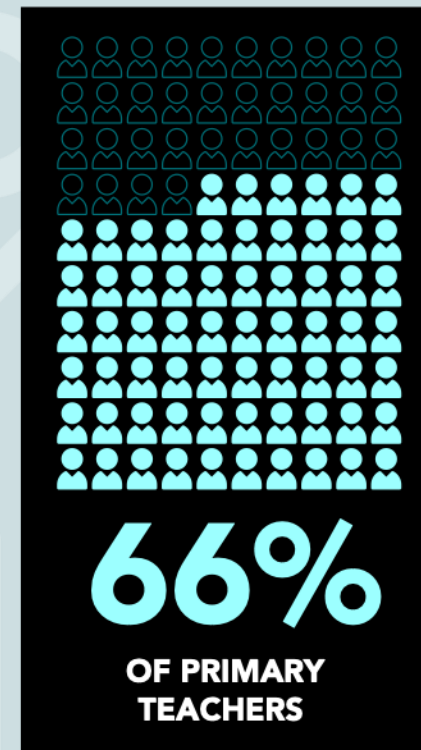
One in two teachers said school closures had a negative impact on the spoken language development of pupils eligible for free school meals. Fewer than one in five said this of their most advantaged pupils.

Primary school teachers were particularly likely to highlight the effect of school closures. Over 7 in 10 (71%) teachers in the EYFS and KS1, and 63% of KS2 teachers, said school closures have had a negative impact on the spoken language development of children eligible for the pupil premium. This contrasts with 2 in 10 (20%) EYFS and KS1 teachers, and 18% of KS2 teachers, saying this of their most advantaged pupils.





said school closures during the pandemic had a negative effect on the spoken language development of their **most advantaged** pupils



said school closures during the pandemic had a negative effect on the spoken language development of pupils **eligible for free school meals**

Impact of teaching online on pupils' oracy development

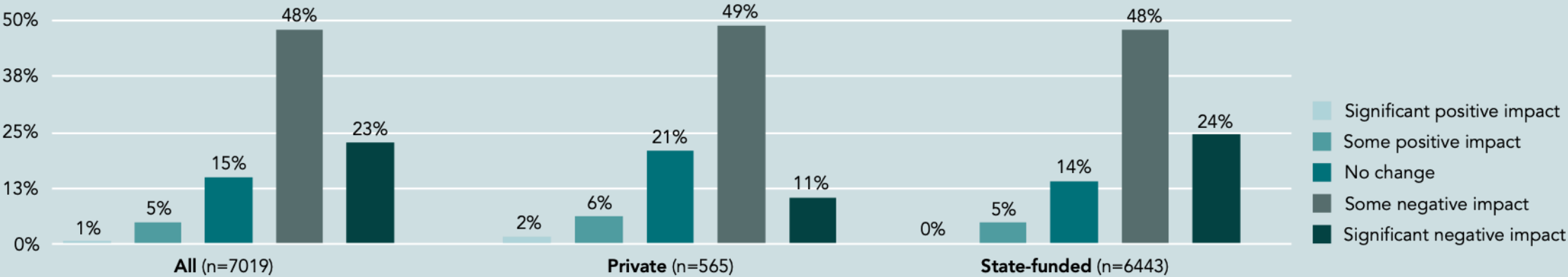
School closures have had a profound effect on opportunities to develop pupils' oracy. Overall, 7 in 10 (71%) of teachers said teaching online had a negative impact on opportunities for them to develop pupils' oracy.

Teachers working in state-funded settings were more than twice as likely to say this negative impact was 'significant'.

Teachers of English and languages were more likely than teachers of other subjects to describe significant negative impact. In these two subject areas, around one in three teachers reported a significant negative impact compared to around 1 in 5 science, art or PE teachers.



How has teaching online affected the opportunities you are able to provide for developing pupils' oracy (their spoken language skills)?



Teachers working in
state-funded settings were

more than

twice as likely

as teachers working in private
schools to say online teaching had a
'*significantly negative*' impact on pupils' oracy



Schools' prioritisation of oracy during the pandemic

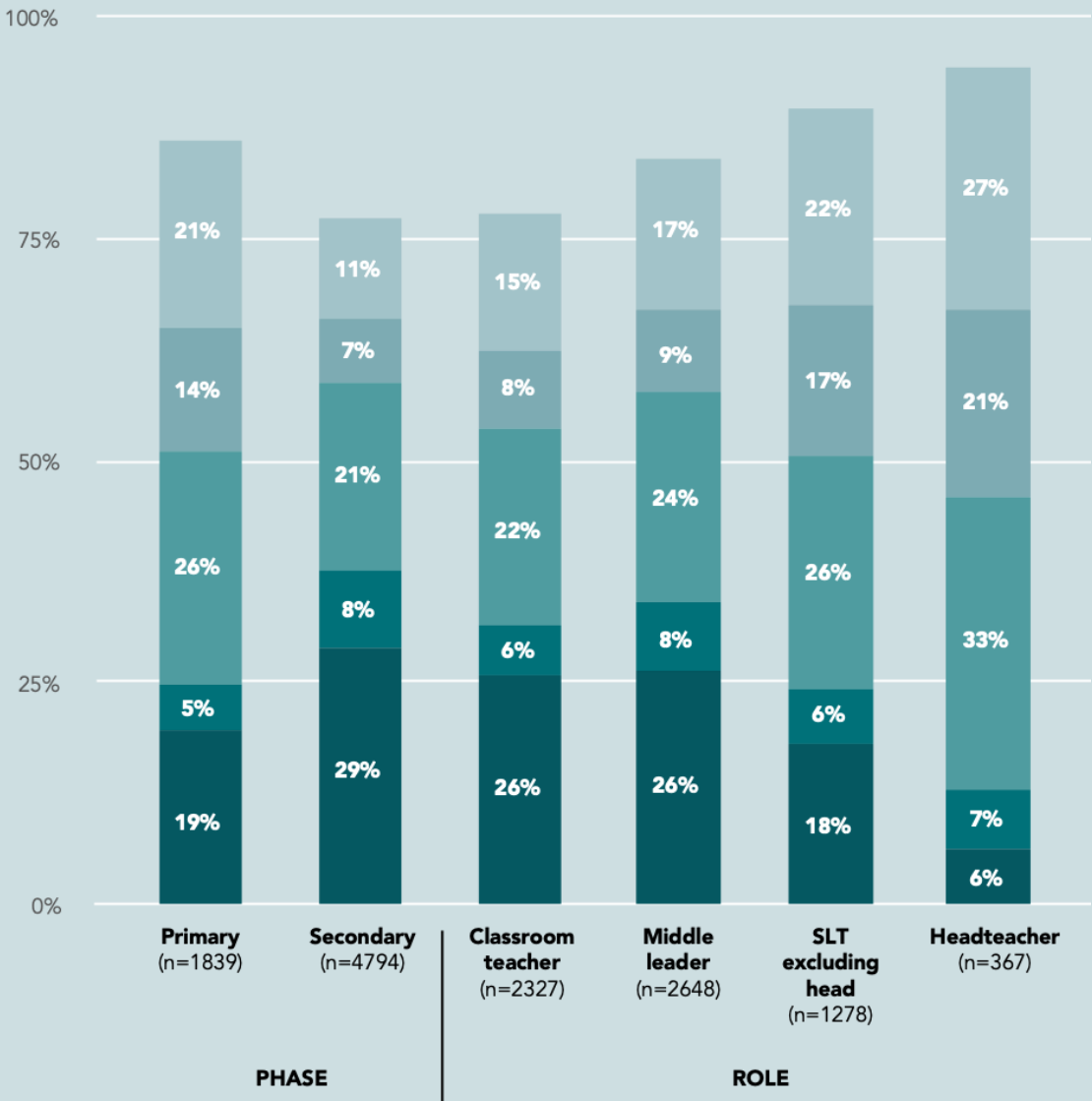
Since March 2020, the way in which schools have prioritised oracy has changed.

Staff in primary schools were more likely than teachers in secondaries to say oracy had been essential throughout. Staff in secondary schools were more likely to report that oracy had dropped in priority, with nearly 4 in 10 saying this.

Views of how schools have prioritised vary, depending on seniority. Classroom teachers were half as likely as headteachers to say that oracy had been essential or prioritised highly since March 2020.

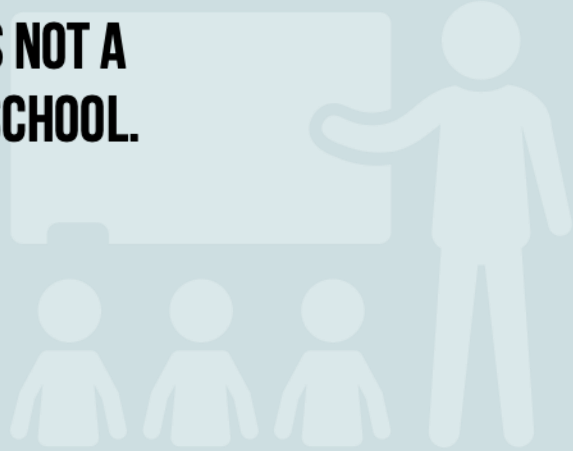
- Oracy has been essential throughout
- My school has prioritised oracy more highly since March 2020
- My school has prioritised oracy about the same since March 2020
- My school has prioritised oracy lower since March 2020
- Oracy has not been a priority at all, before or since March 2020

Since March 2020, how has the way in which your school prioritised oracy (spoken language skills and ability) changed?



A QUARTER (26%)

OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS
SAID THAT ORACY IS NOT A
PRIORITY IN THEIR SCHOOL.



21% OF HEADTEACHERS

SAID THEIR SCHOOL HAS PRIORITISED
ORACY MORE SINCE MARCH 2020.

7% SAID THEIR SCHOOL HAS
PRIORITISED IT LESS.



7% OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

SAID THEIR SCHOOL HAS
PRIORITISED ORACY MORE
HIGHLY SINCE MARCH 2020,
COMPARED WITH...

14% OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Schools’ prioritisation of oracy after the pandemic

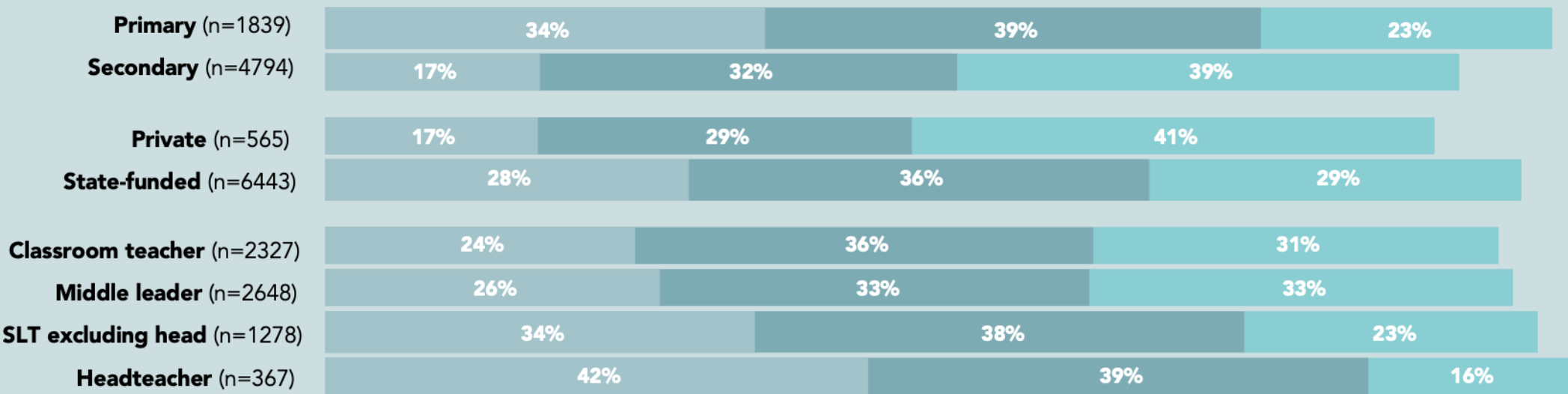
Nearly two thirds of all the teachers in our poll (62%) believe oracy is an essential or high priority as schools re-open.

Primary teachers were more likely than their secondary colleagues to say oracy is essential or high priority as schools re-open after closures. Staff in state-funded settings were more likely than those in private settings to identify oracy as a top priority.

Views about this vary with seniority, with senior leaders and headteachers the most likely to say oracy should be a top priority as schools re-open. Opinion also varies by subject, with English and languages teachers prioritising oracy most highly.

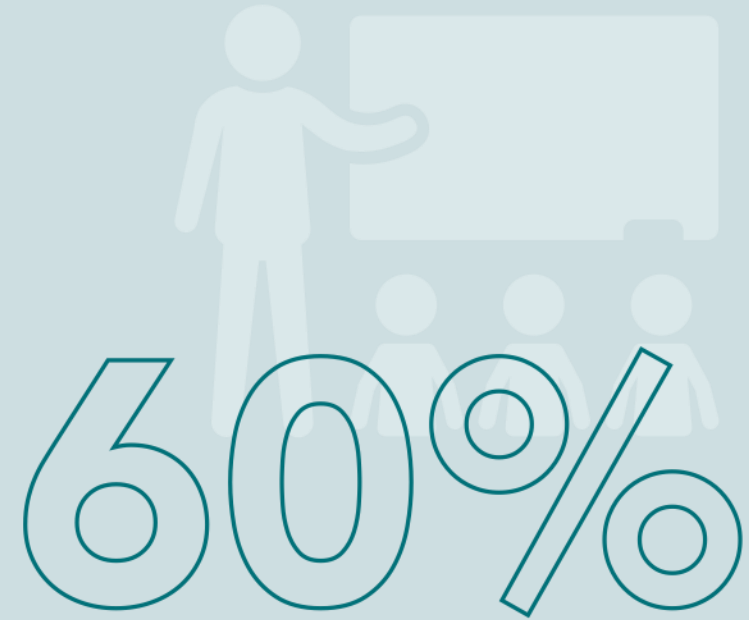
How much of a priority SHOULD oracy (spoken language skills and ability) be in schools as they re-open?

Essential High priority Medium priority



81%

**OF HEADTEACHERS
SAID ORACY SHOULD
BE ESSENTIAL OR
HIGH PRIORITY AS
SCHOOLS RE-OPEN**



60%

**OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS
SAID ORACY SHOULD
BE ESSENTIAL OR
HIGH PRIORITY AS
SCHOOLS RE-OPEN**



73%

**OF PRIMARY TEACHERS
SAID ORACY SHOULD BE
ESSENTIAL OR HIGH
PRIORITY AS SCHOOLS
RE-OPEN**

49%

**OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
TEACHERS SAID ORACY
SHOULD BE ESSENTIAL OR HIGH
PRIORITY AS SCHOOLS RE-OPEN**



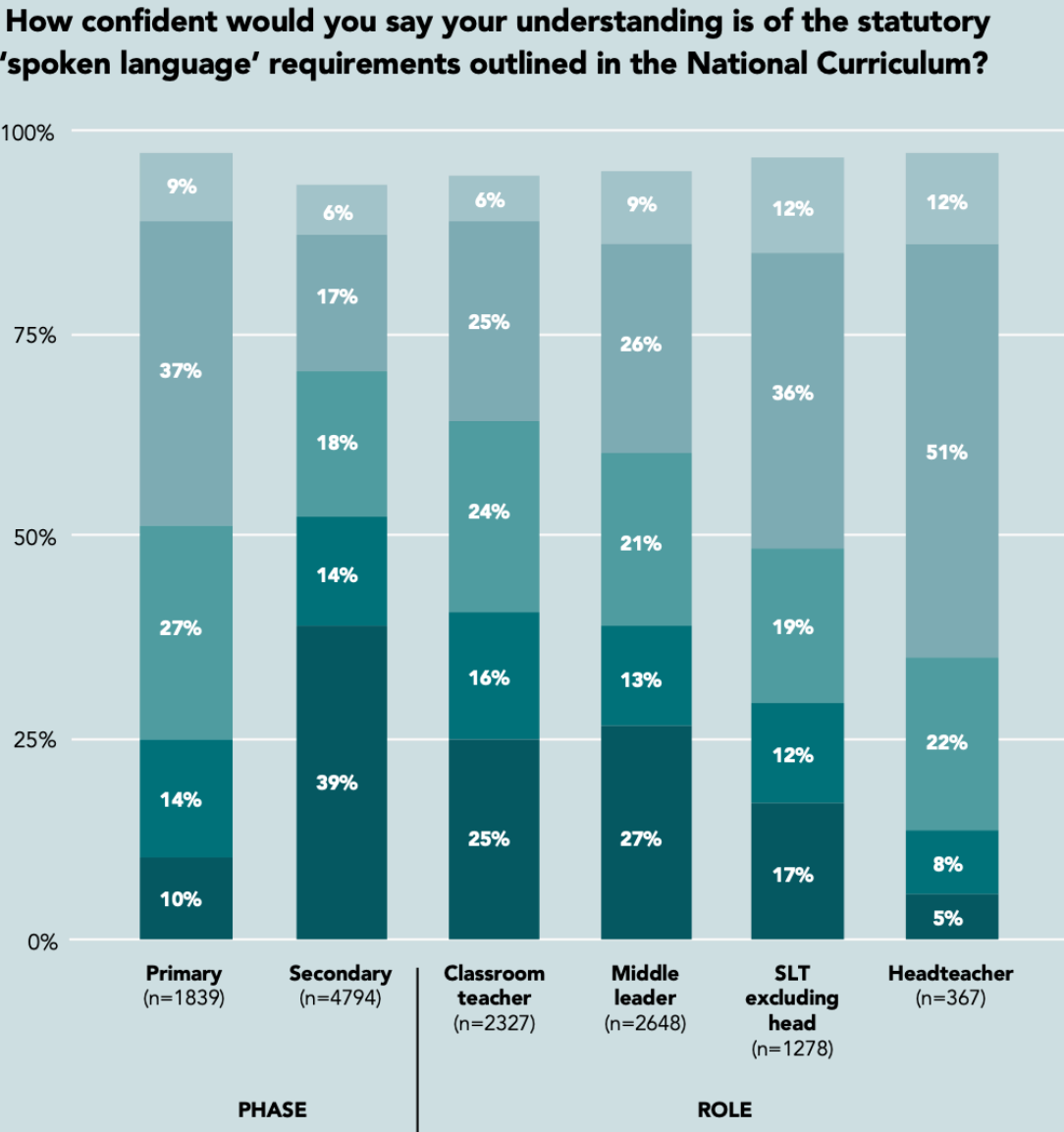
Teachers' understanding of 'spoken language'

Teachers' understanding of the statutory 'spoken language' requirements outlined in the National Curriculum differ by phase and seniority.

Primary school staff are generally more confident than secondary staff. Secondary staff are more likely to report feeling 'not at all confident', with nearly 4 in 10 saying this (39%).

Headteachers are considerably more confident in the requirements than middle leaders and classroom teachers. Nearly two thirds (63%) of headteachers report feeling extremely or fairly confident, and this is double the number of classroom teachers saying this.

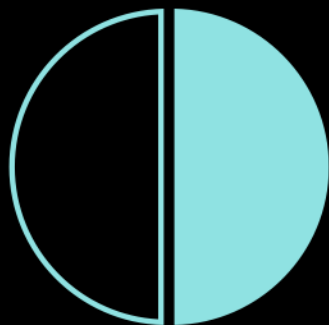
- Extremely confident
- Fairly confident
- Somewhat confident
- Slightly confident
- Not at all confident





**A QUARTER OF
SECONDARY
TEACHERS**

23%



**HALF OF
PRIMARY
TEACHERS**

46%

**said they are confident in their
understanding of the statutory
'spoken language' requirements
outlined in the National Curriculum**



4 IN 10

**SECONDARY
TEACHERS**

39%



1 IN 10

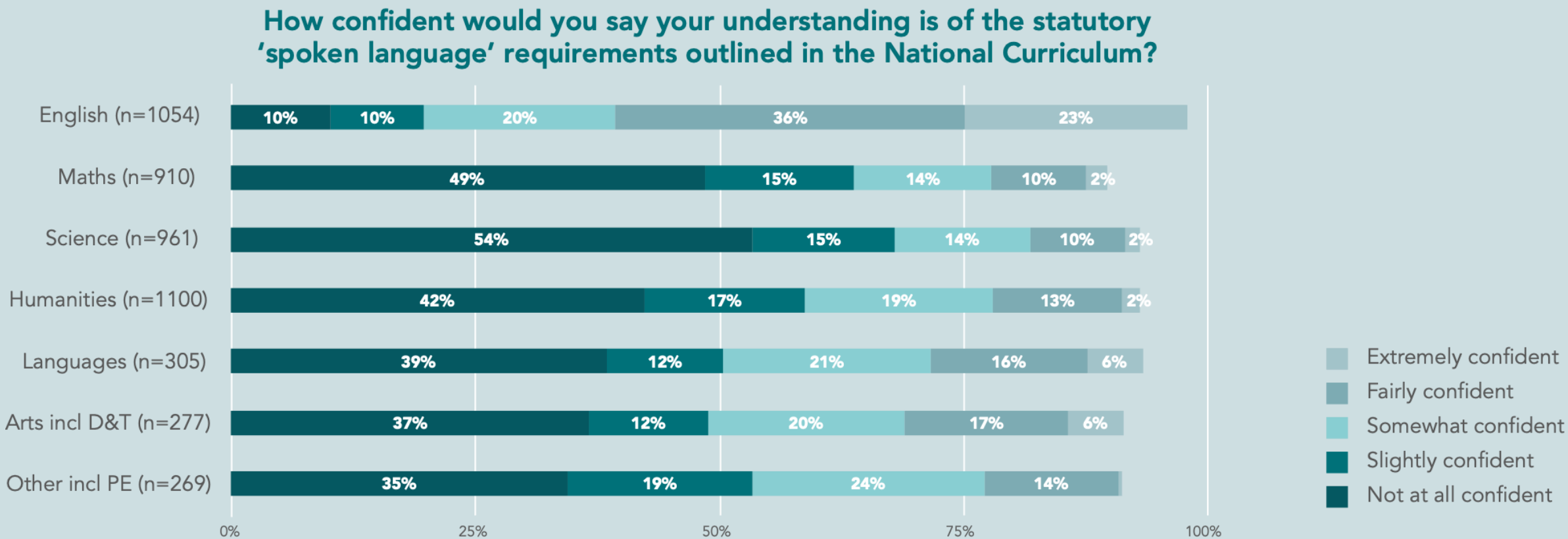
**PRIMARY
TEACHERS**

10%

**said they are 'not at all confident'
in their understanding of the statutory
'spoken language' requirements
outlined in the National Curriculum**

Teachers' understanding of 'spoken language'

Confidence in understanding of the 'spoken language' requirement also varies by subject. English and languages teachers the most confident, and maths, science and PE teachers the least confident.



**6 OUT
OF 10**



ENGLISH TEACHERS (59%)

felt 'extremely' or 'fairly confident'
in their understanding of the statutory
'spoken language' requirements outlined
in the National Curriculum

1 IN 10



**MATHS AND SCIENCE
TEACHERS (12%)**

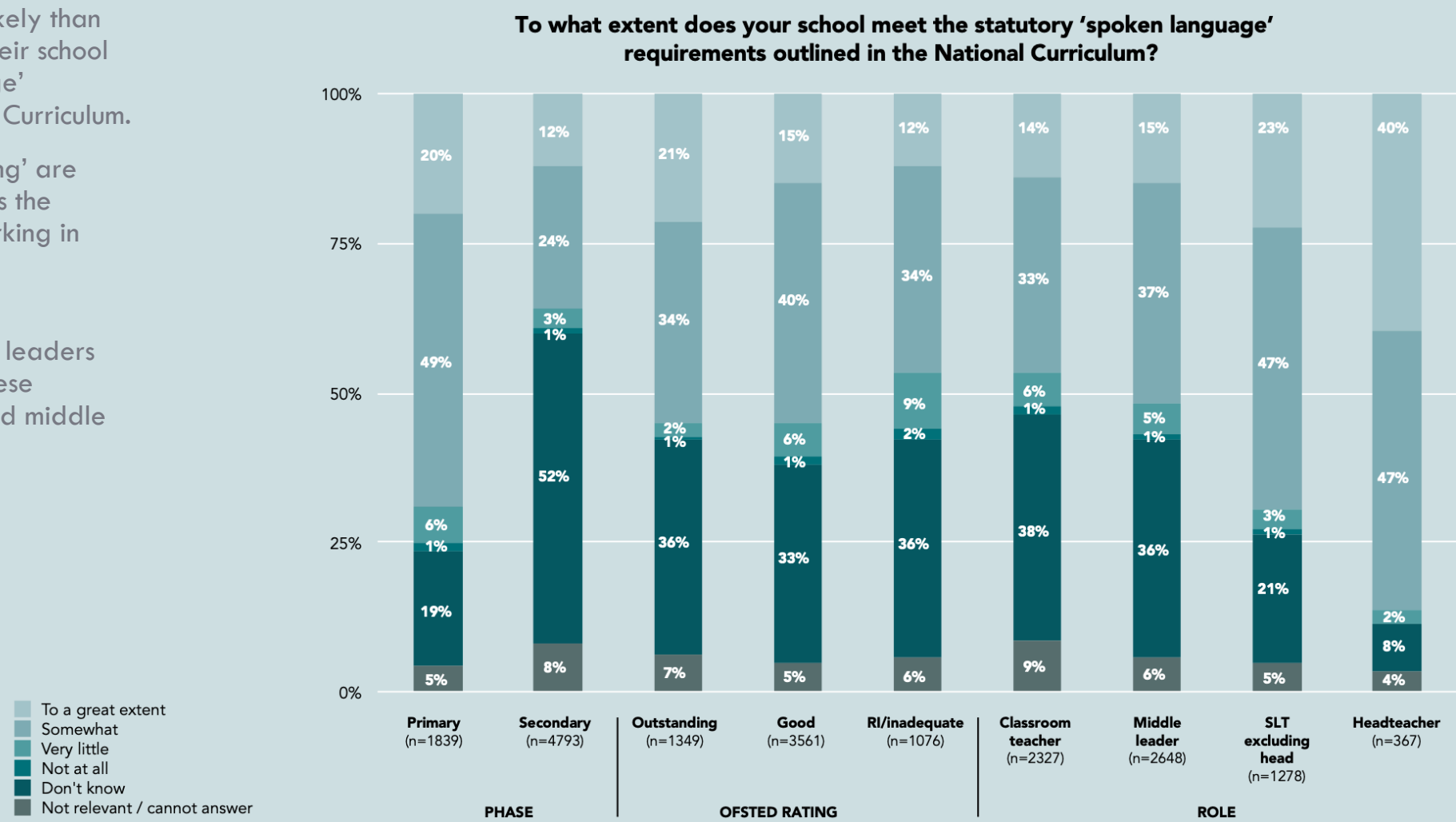
felt 'extremely' or 'fairly confident'
in their understanding of the statutory
'spoken language' requirements outlined
in the National Curriculum

Meeting of statutory 'spoken language' requirements

Primary school teachers are more likely than secondary school teachers to feel their school meets the statutory 'spoken language' requirements set out in the National Curriculum.

Teachers in schools rated 'outstanding' are more likely to feel their school meets the statutory requirement than staff working in schools rated 'good' or 'Requires improvement/inadequate'.

Importantly, while heads and senior leaders believe their schools are meeting these requirements, classroom teachers and middle leaders are not so optimistic.



40%

OF HEADTEACHERS SAID THEIR SCHOOL IS MEETING THE STATUTORY 'SPOKEN LANGUAGE' REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM 'TO A GREAT EXTENT'

14%

OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS SAID THEIR SCHOOL IS MEETING THE STATUTORY 'SPOKEN LANGUAGE' REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM 'TO A GREAT EXTENT'

21%

OF TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS RATED 'OUTSTANDING' SAID THEIR SCHOOL IS MEETING THE STATUTORY 'SPOKEN LANGUAGE' REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM 'TO A GREAT EXTENT'



12%

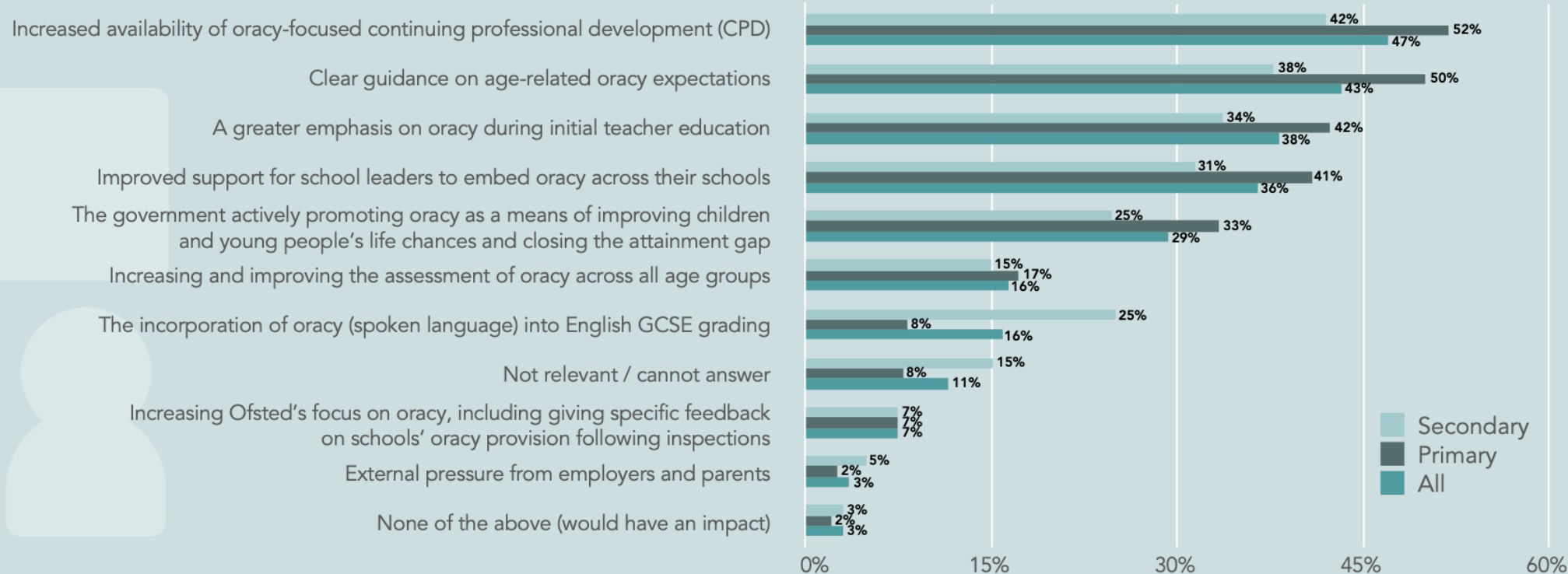
OF TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS RATED 'REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT/INADEQUATE' SAID THEIR SCHOOL IS MEETING THE STATUTORY 'SPOKEN LANGUAGE' REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM 'TO A GREAT EXTENT'



Support to improve oracy in schools

Teachers said that oracy-focused training and clear, age-related oracy expectations would help increase the priority oracy is given as schools re-open. A quarter of all secondary teachers (and 4 in 10 English teachers) said the incorporation of spoken language into GCSE English grading would help.

As schools re-open, what would help increase the priority that oracy (spoken language skills and ability) is given? (n=7018)



4 OUT OF 10

TEACHERS (42%)

**believed that increased availability
of oracy-focused CPD would help
increase the prioritisation of oracy**



4 OUT OF 10

TEACHERS (38%)

**believed that clear guidance on
age-related oracy expectations would
increase the prioritisation of oracy**



3 OUT OF 10

TEACHERS (34%)

**believed that a greater emphasis
on oracy during initial teacher
education would increase the
prioritisation of oracy**



Summary and next steps

Responses to our poll paint a devastating picture regarding the pandemic's impact on pupils' oracy development. Teachers believe school closures will have a far more negative impact on pupil premium-eligible pupils than the most affluent.

Many teachers feel teaching online negatively impacted upon opportunities to develop pupils' oracy, with English and languages teachers feeling this most acutely.

Primary schools have prioritised oracy more highly than secondary schools during the pandemic, and state school and primary staff are particularly likely to flag oracy's importance as schools re-open.

Senior leaders and headteachers are more confident that they understand – and that their schools are meeting – the statutory spoken language requirements set out in the National Curriculum.

Teachers are calling out for additional training and age-related guidance in oracy. Appetite for the statutory assessment of spoken language (including among English teachers) is not high.



A stylized, light blue illustration on a teal background. At the top, a person with short hair and a bow is shown from the chest up, standing behind a rectangular podium. To the right of the person is a microphone on a stand. Below the podium, there are five circular shapes representing an audience, each with a semi-circular base.

What do young people think about oracy?

Our approach

We commissioned YouGov to poll young people aged 16 to 25 ($n=511$), asking for their views on oracy. CfEY devised the questions, and YouGov conducted this polling between 12th and 16th March 2021.

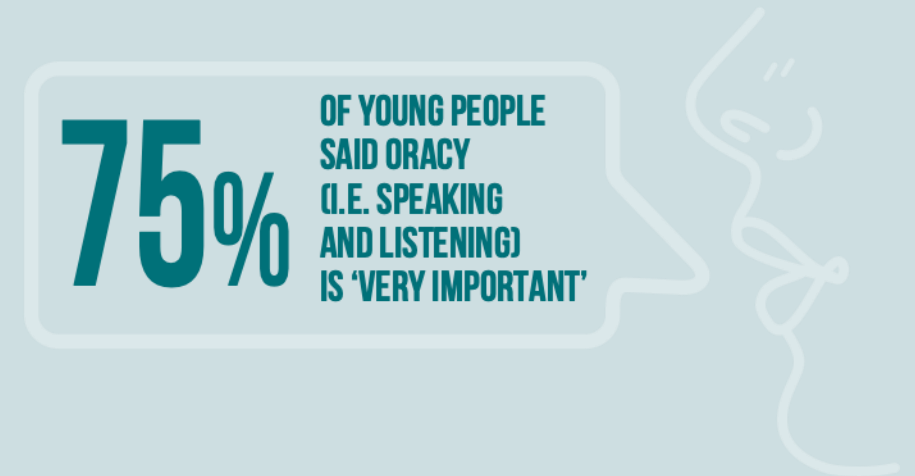
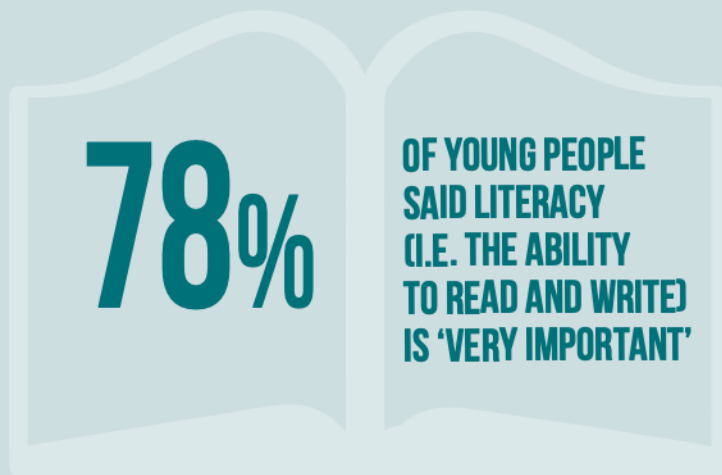
The young people in the sample are broadly representative of the general population, in terms of gender, ethnicity, occupational and employment status, social class, and home region.



Oracy's relative importance

Three quarters of young people say oracy is 'very important' to young people, and 93% of young people say oracy is either 'very' or 'fairly' important. This means young people see oracy as of comparable importance to literacy, and more important to them than numeracy.

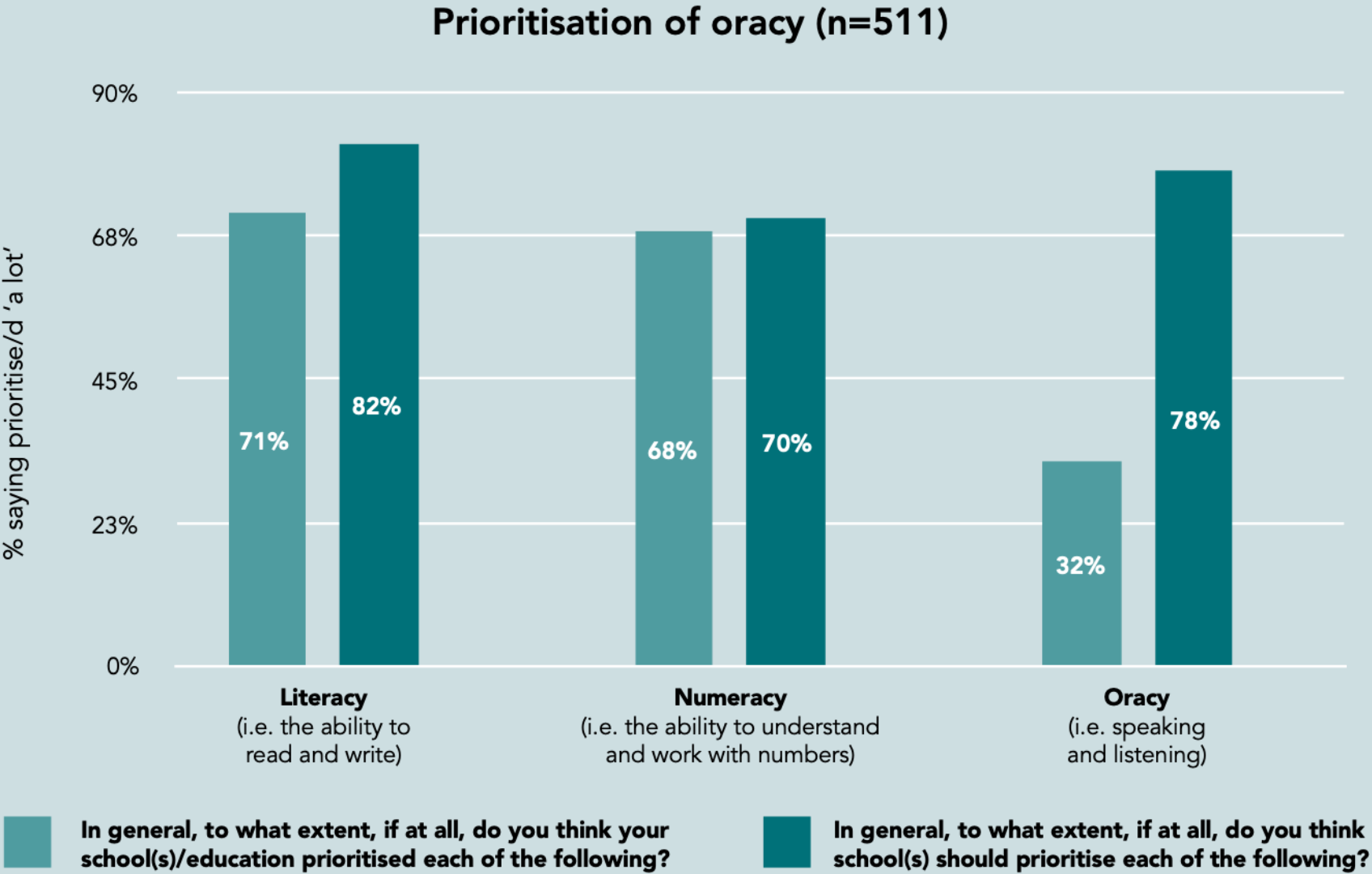
In general, how important, if at all, do you think each of the following are to young people? (n=511)



Prioritisation of oracy

Young people do not believe oracy is prioritised highly enough by schools. Around 7 in 10 young people said their school prioritised literacy and numeracy ‘a lot’, but less than a third (32%) of young people said their school prioritised oracy ‘a lot’.

This stands in sharp contrast with the extent to which young people feel schools should prioritise oracy. Nearly 8 in 10 (78%) of young people say schools should prioritise oracy ‘a lot’.





32%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE SAID
THEIR SCHOOLS/EDUCATION
PRIORITISED ORACY 'A LOT'



78%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE
SAID SCHOOLS SHOULD
PRIORITISE ORACY 'A LOT'

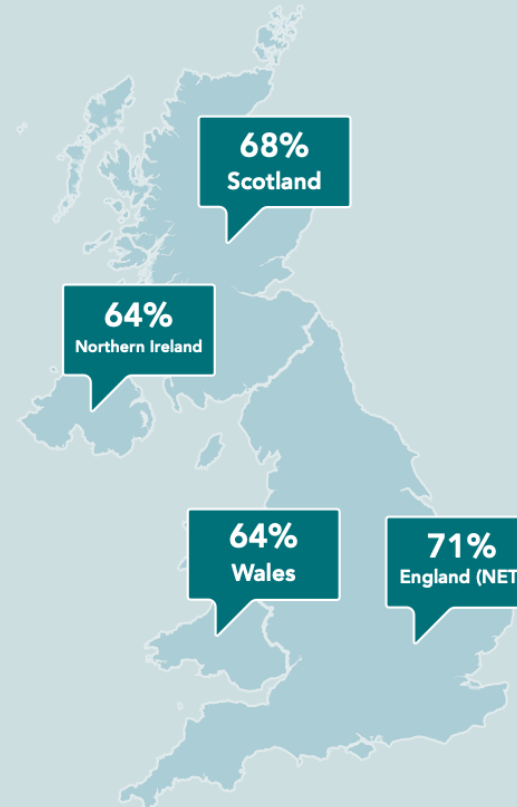
Prioritisation of oracy, by region and country

There are differences the extent to which young people growing up in different parts of the UK feel their school/education prioritised oracy. Young people aged 16 to 25 living in London, the South West and North West are more likely to report that oracy was a priority during their education, than young people in the East of England and North East.

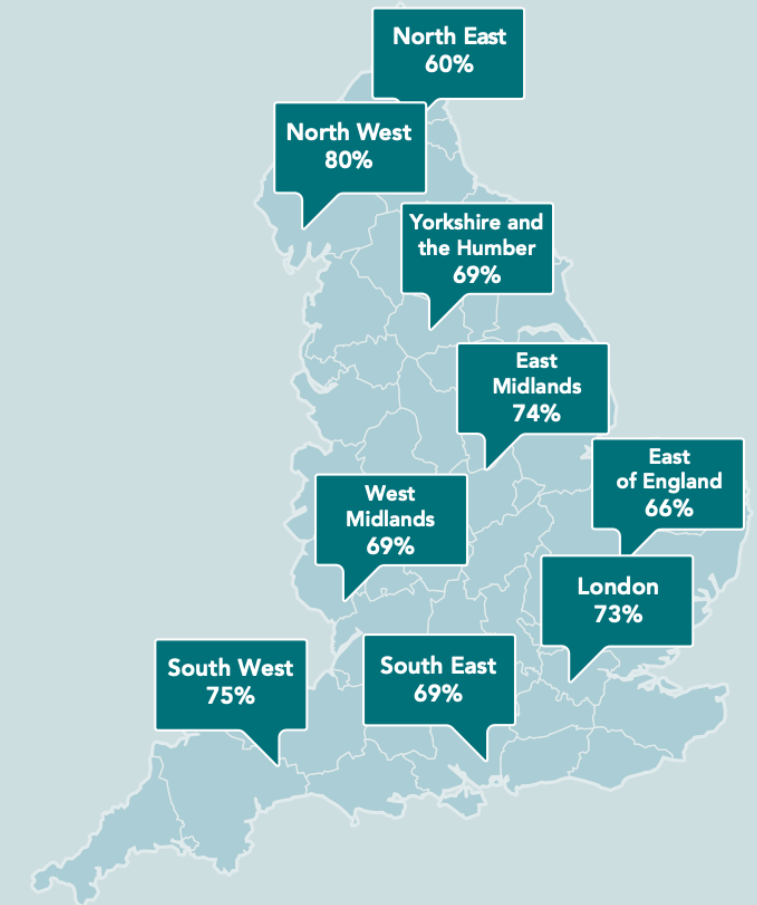
Young people in England are more likely to say oracy was a priority during their schooling than those in the other Home Nations.

In general, to what extent, if at all, do you think your school(s)/education prioritised oracy? (n=511)

National
% whose school prioritised oracy 'a lot'



Regional
% whose school prioritised oracy 'a lot'



How well do employers support oracy?

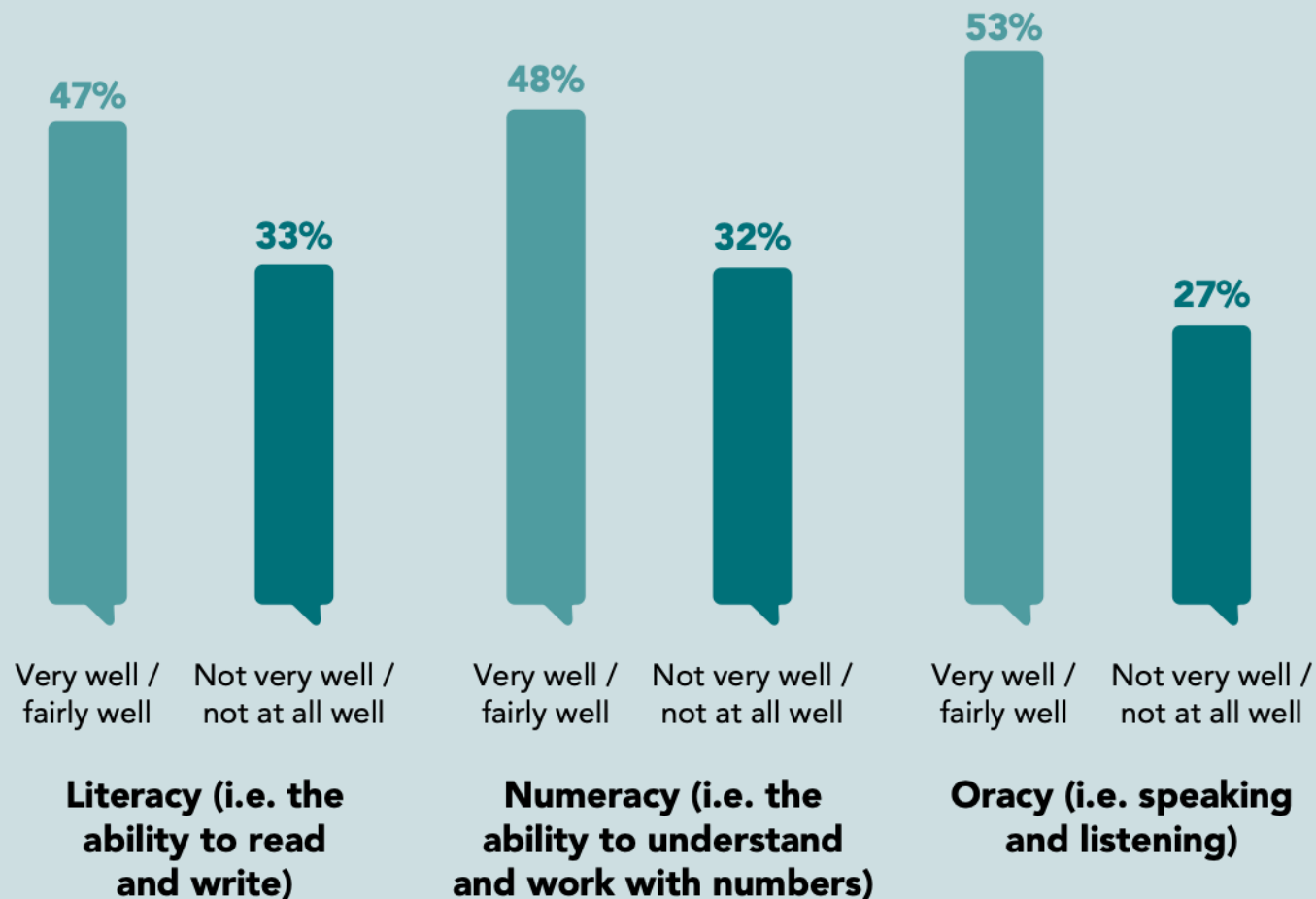
Young people express mixed views about the extent to which employers support them to develop literacy, numeracy and oracy skills. Only half of young people say employers support the development of these skills.

Over a quarter (27%) of young people do not feel employers adequately support the development of oracy skills.

Fewer than one in five (16%) young people feels employers support the development of these skills 'very well'.



In general, how well, if at all, would you say employers tend to support young people in developing each of the following skills? (n=511)



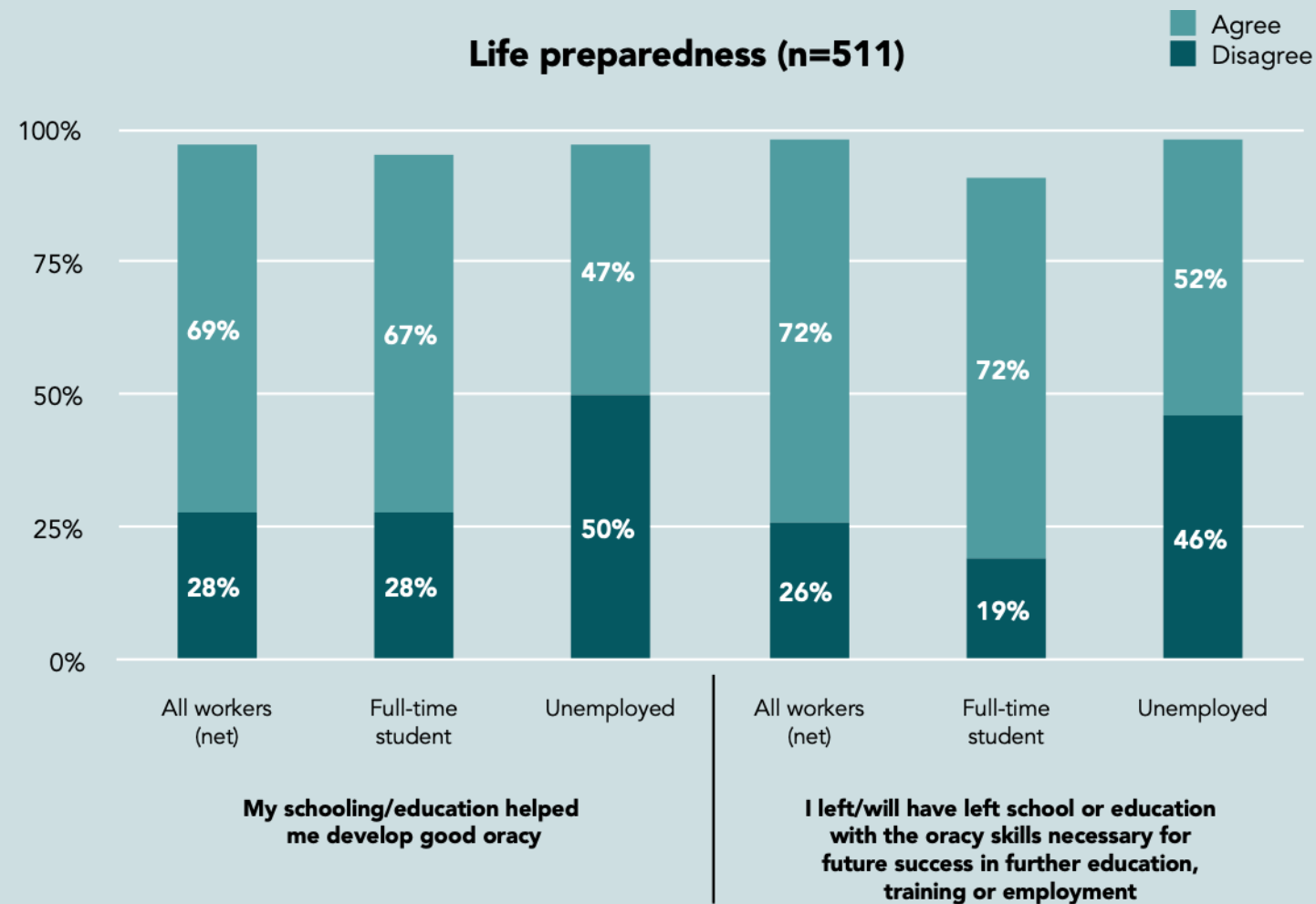
Do young people leave school with adequate levels of oracy?

A sizeable proportion of young people do not feel their education helped them develop good oracy despite the critical role oracy plays in supporting young people’s life chances and success.

Only two thirds of young people in work or fulltime study agreed that their schooling/education helped them develop good oracy.

Disconcertingly, young people in full- or part-time employment were more than 50% more likely to 'strongly agree' (35%) than young people who are unemployed or not working (23%) that their schooling/education helped them develop sufficient oracy skills for success in later life.

Half of unemployed young people (n=47) in our poll disagreed that their schooling helped them develop good oracy, and 46% disagreed that they left school with the oracy skills necessary for future success. This is a stark reminder of the oracy divide, and the costs of missing out on oracy.





1/2

**OF UNEMPLOYED
YOUNG PEOPLE**

(52%) believed they left or will leave school/education with the oracy skills necessary for future success in further education, training or employment

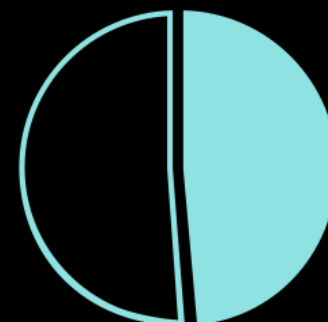
3/4

**OF YOUNG
PEOPLE**

who are full-time students (72%) or working (72%) believed they left or will leave school/education with the oracy skills necessary for future success in further education, training or employment



**TWO
THIRDS**
OF YOUNG PEOPLE
who are full-time students
(67%) or working (69%)
believed their schooling/
education helped
them develop good oracy



**LESS THAN
HALF**
**OF UNEMPLOYED
YOUNG PEOPLE**
(47%) believed their
schooling/education
helped them develop
good oracy



Summary and next steps

Our polling reveals just how important young people believe oracy to be, putting it on a par with reading and writing.

While the large majority young people believe schools should prioritise oracy, most – over two thirds – do not feel their own school prioritised oracy ‘a lot’.

Furthermore, young people growing up in certain areas of England and particularly the East and North East of England are less likely to feel oracy was prioritised during their schooling.

Employers do not give young people enough support in developing good oracy skills. Only half (53%) of young people in our poll say employers do this well.

Unemployed young people are around twice as likely as those in employment or fulltime students to feel that their schooling did not give them sufficient oracy skills for success in later life. They are also around twice as likely to say that their education did not help them develop good oracy.

Schools must prioritise their pupils’ spoken language development as they would pupils’ reading or writing.

In addition, employers must ensure they set clear expectations about new recruits’ oracy, and put in place support to help new recruits meet these expectations.

Particular attention should be given to unemployed young people, and ensuring they have the support they need to develop oracy skills that will enable them to access training and employment opportunities.

How can I find out more?

You can get in touch via:

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