

National Assembly for Wales
Children, Young People and Education
Committee

Inquiry into Supply Teaching Questionnaire Summary

December 2015

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Children, Young People and Education
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Inquiry into Supply Teaching

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Children, Young People and Education Committee

The Committee was established on 22 June 2011 with a remit to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising expenditure, administration and policy matters encompassing: the education, health and wellbeing of the children and young people of Wales, including their social care.

On 22 January 2014, the Assembly agreed to alter the remit of the Committee to include Higher Education. This subject will continue to be included in the remit of the Enterprise and Business Committee, with both committees looking at Higher Education from their particular perspectives. The Committee was previously known as the Children and Young People Committee.

Current Committee membership:



Ann Jones (Chair)
Welsh Labour
Vale of Clwyd



Angela Burns
Welsh Conservatives
Carmarthen West and South
Pembrokeshire



Keith Davies
Welsh Labour
Llanelli



Suzy Davies
Welsh Conservatives
South Wales West



John Griffiths
Welsh Labour
Newport East



Lynne Neagle
Welsh Labour
Torfaen



David Rees
Welsh Labour
Aberavon



Aled Roberts
Liberal Democrats
North Wales



Rhodri Glyn Thomas
Plaid Cymru
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr



Simon Thomas
Plaid Cymru
Mid and West Wales

The following Member was also a member of the Committee during this inquiry:



Bethan Jenkins
Plaid Cymru
South Wales West

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

INQUIRY INTO SUPPLY TEACHING

The National Assembly for Wales's Children, Young People and Education Committee carried out an inquiry into supply teaching in Wales. As part of the inquiry, the Committee wanted to learn about whether the use of supply teachers affects pupils, and if it does, what impact that has.

The Committee asked children and young people across Wales what they think about their lessons that may be covered by a supply teacher, what sorts of things they learn during those lessons and how they are different from lessons with their usual teacher.

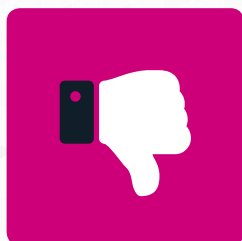
OF THE 929 YOUNG PEOPLE WHO TOOK PART IN THE SUPPLY TEACHING CONSULTATION:



24% OF PUPILS ARE TAUGHT BY A SUPPLY TEACHER EVERY WEEK



80% OF PUPILS SAID THAT THEY LEARNT LESS IN LESSONS COVERED BY A SUPPLY TEACHER



80% OF PUPILS FELT THAT PUPIL BEHAVIOUR WAS WORSE WITH SUPPLY TEACHERS



47% OF PUPILS SAID THEY WERE TAUGHT IN A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE IN LESSONS COVERED BY A SUPPLY TEACHER

National Assembly for Wales

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Inquiry into Supply Teaching

Questionnaire Summary

Background

The National Assembly for Wales's Children, Young People and Education Committee carried out an inquiry into supply teaching in Wales. As part of the inquiry, the Committee wanted to learn about whether the use of supply teachers affects pupils, and if it does, what impact that has.

The Committee asked children and young people across Wales what they think about their lessons that may be covered by a supply teacher, what sorts of things they learn during those lessons and how they are different from lessons with their usual teacher.

This document provides a summary of responses received to the Supply Teaching questionnaire conducted by the Outreach team.

The purpose of this survey was to capture respondent's opinion of supply teaching in Wales. The results outlined in this summary represent the views of those who responded, and not the general public. The survey was not based on a representative sample as a whole.

Methodology

Participants were asked a range of questions about whether the use of supply teachers affects pupils, and if it does what impact it has. Participants were also asked their thoughts on lessons that may be covered by a supply teacher, what sorts of things are learned during those lessons and how they are different from lessons with their usual teacher.

Two surveys were created with the aim of targeting children and young people of school age, and parents and carers of children of school age.

Awareness Raising

The questionnaires were promoted by Assembly staff with relevant groups visiting the Senedd, receiving education visits, and on various social media platforms. Twitter and targeted Facebook advertising were employed to help raise awareness of the surveys.

Key Statistics

1486 Total number of survey responses received

929 Total number of survey responses received from children and young people

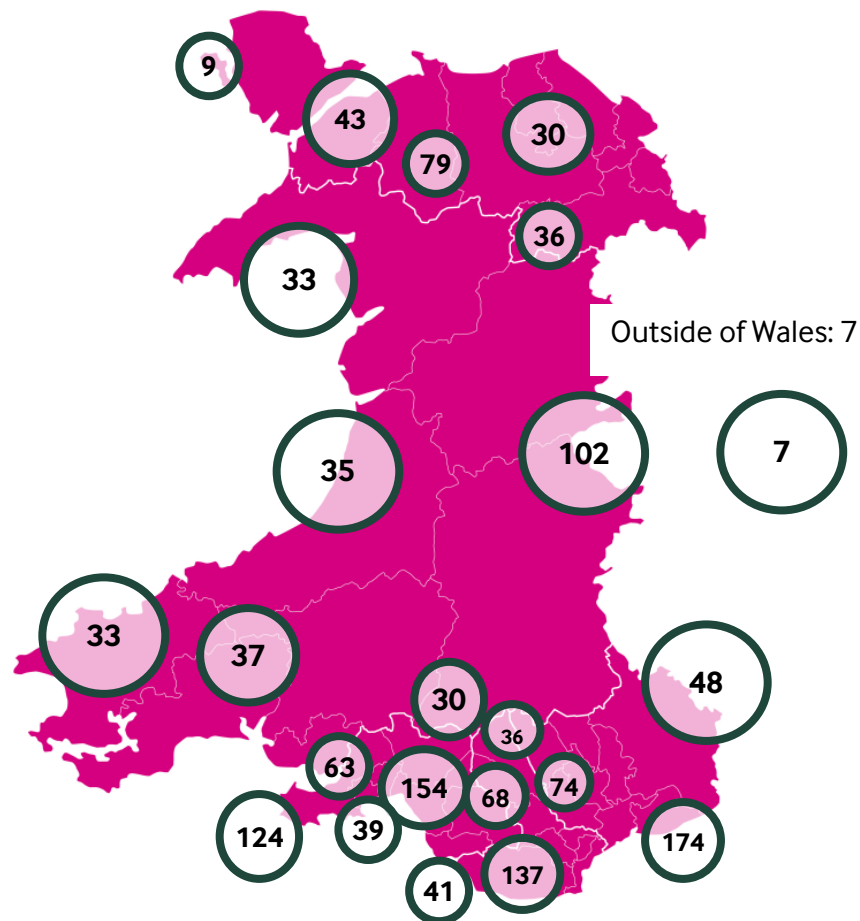
557 Total number of survey responses received from parent and carers

Geographical Summary of Responses

Breakdown by Local Authority Area

Total number of responses: 1,432

Blaenau Gwent: 36
Bridgend: 39
Caerphilly: 68
Cardiff: 137
Carmarthenshire: 37
Ceredigion: 35
Conwy: 43
Denbighshire: 79
Flintshire: 30
Gwynedd: 33
Isle of Anglesey: 9
Merthyr Tydfil: 30
Monmouthshire: 48
Neath Port Talbot: 63
Newport: 174
Pembrokeshire: 33
Powys: 102
Rhondda Cynon Taf: 154
Swansea: 124
Torfaen: 74
Vale of Glamorgan: 41
Wrexham: 36



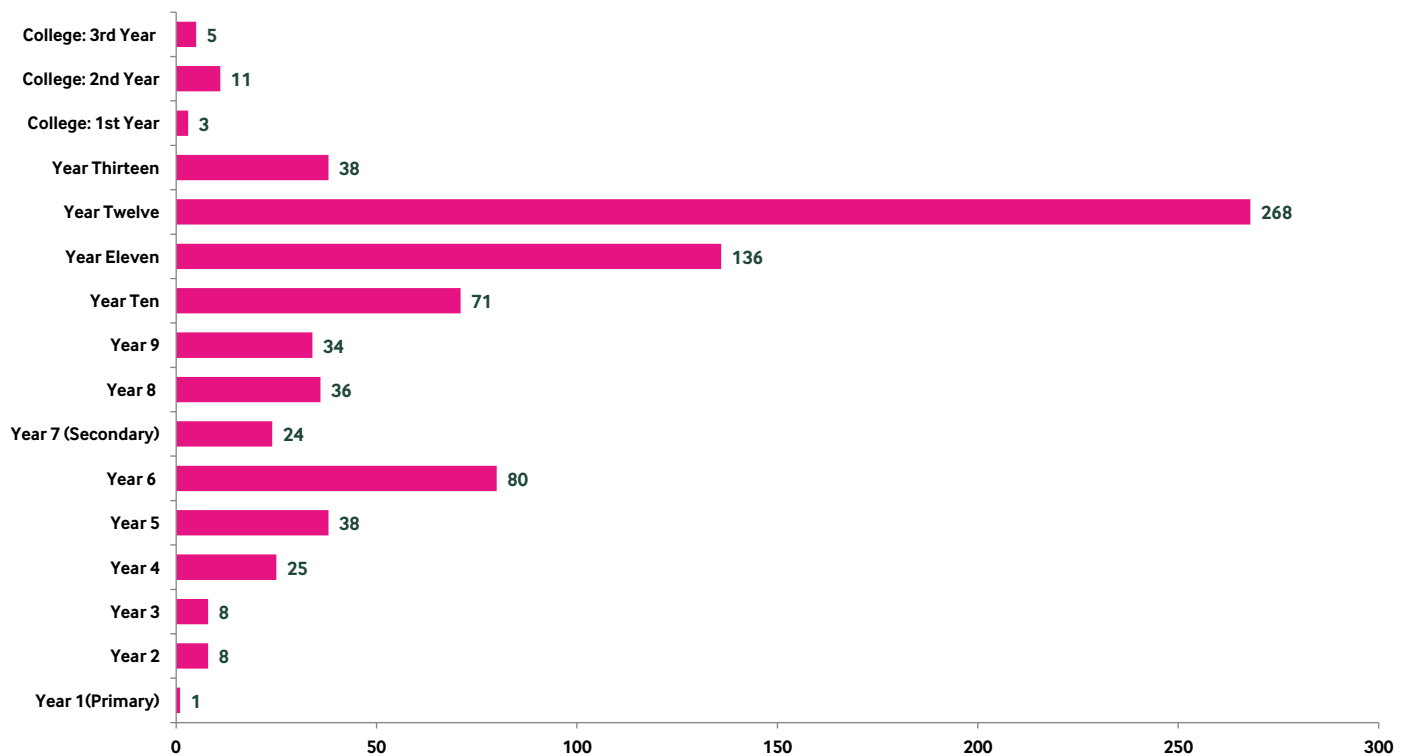
Summary of Responses

Children and Young People

Question one: Which school year are you in?

Total number of responses: 929

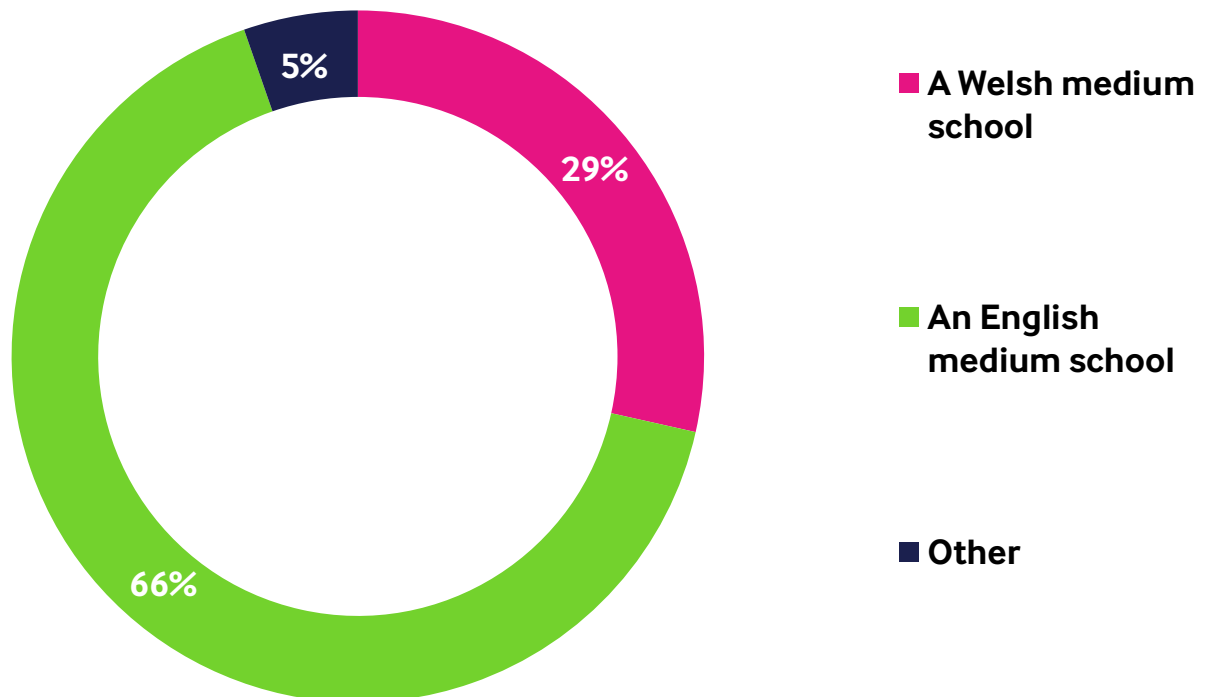
Year 1 (Primary): 1	Year 2: 8	Year 3: 8	Year 4: 25
Year 5: 38	Year 6: 80	Year 7 (Secondary): 24	Year 8: 36
Year 9: 34	Year Ten: 71	Year Eleven: 136	Year Twelve: 268
Year Thirteen: 38	College Year 1: 3	College Year 2: 11	College Year 3: 5



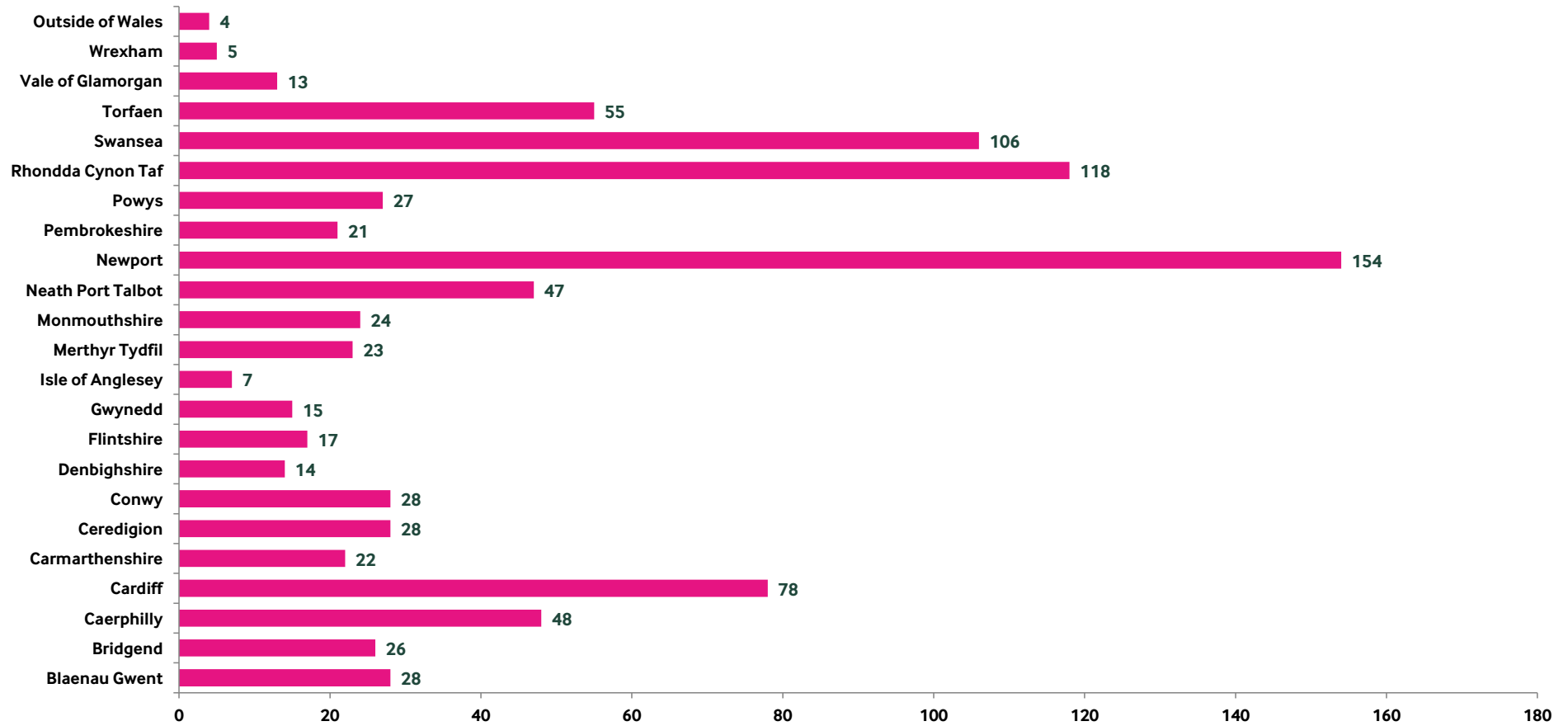
Question two: What medium school do you attend?

Total number of responses: 919

- A Welsh medium school: **29% (262)**
- An English medium school: **66.1% (608)**
- Other: **5.3% (49)**



Question three: Where do you live?

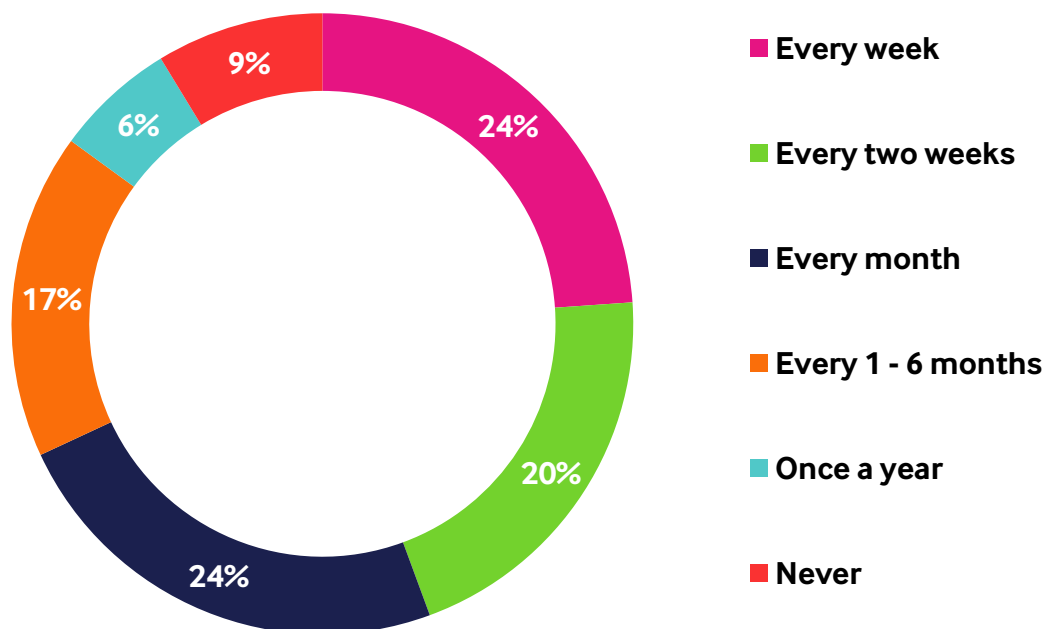


Total number of respondents: 908

Question four: How often are you taught by a supply teacher?

Total number of responses: 908

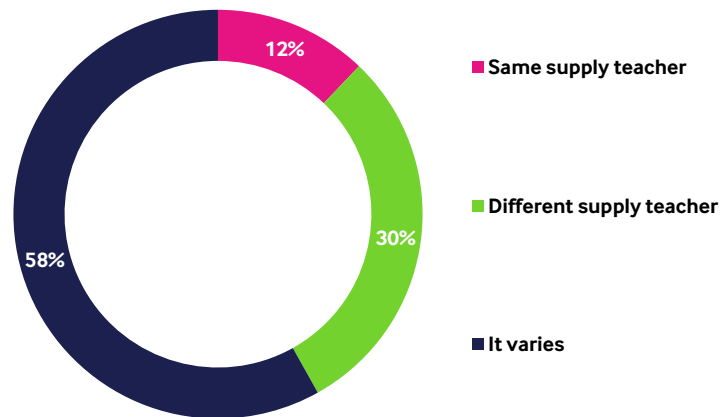
- Every week: **23.8% (217)**
- Every two weeks: **20.4% (186)**
- Every month: **23.6% (215)**
- Every 1 – 6 months: **16.9% (154)**
- Once a year: **6.2% (57)**
- Never: **8.7% (79)**



Question five: If you are sometimes taught by a supply teacher, is it usually the same supply teacher or a different supply teacher each time?

Total number of responses: 900

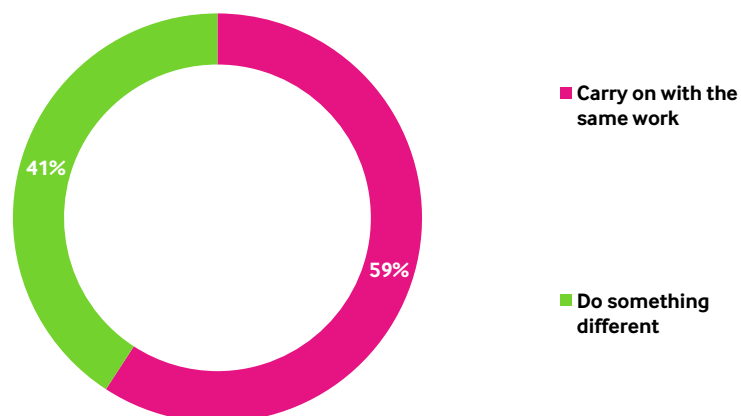
- Same supply teacher: **12.1% (109)**
- Different supply teacher: **29.7% (268)**
- It varies: **58.1% (523)**



Question six: When you are taught by a supply teacher, do you carry on with the same work, or do something different?

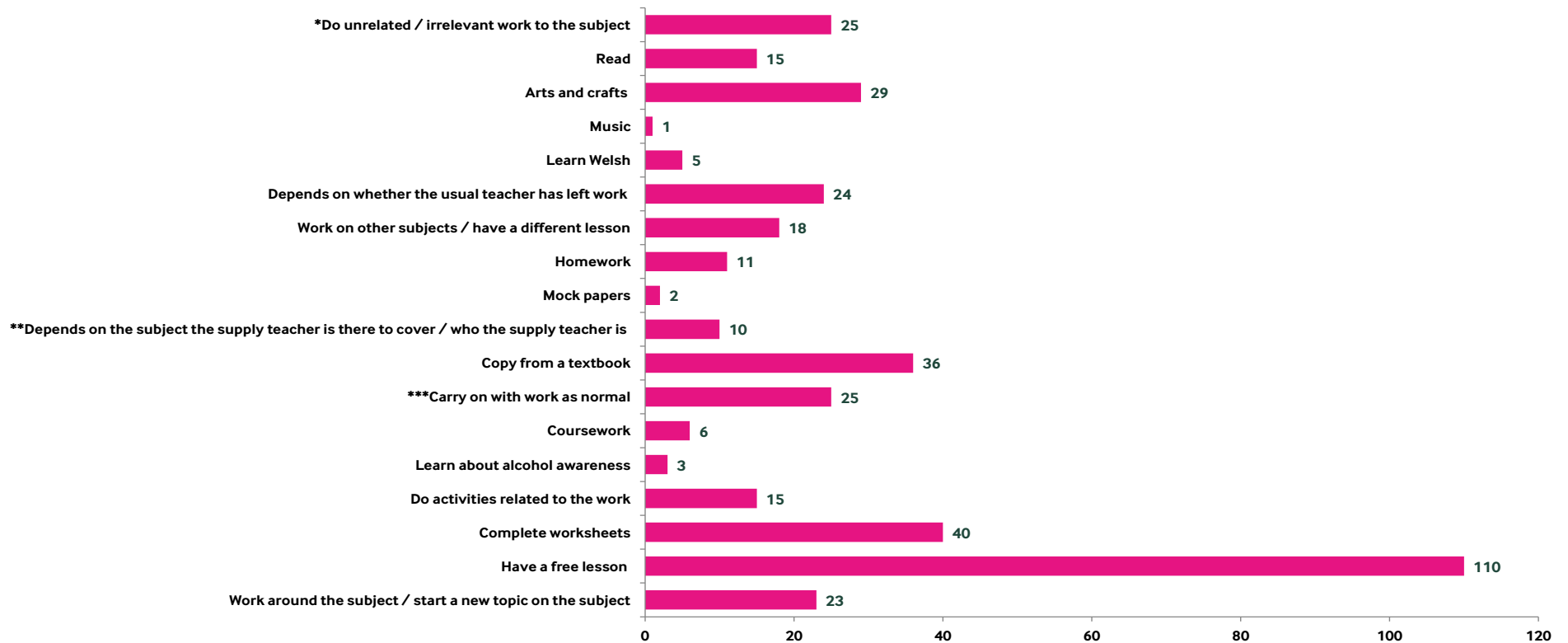
Total number of responses: 899

- Carry on with the same work: **59.1% (532)**
- Do something different: **40.8% (367)**



Question seven: If you do something different, what do you do instead?

Total number of responses: 398



*25 respondents stated that when they are taught by a supply teacher, they undertake irrelevant work related to the subject. This could involve making posters, covering old lessons, completing wordsearch puzzles and other menial tasks.

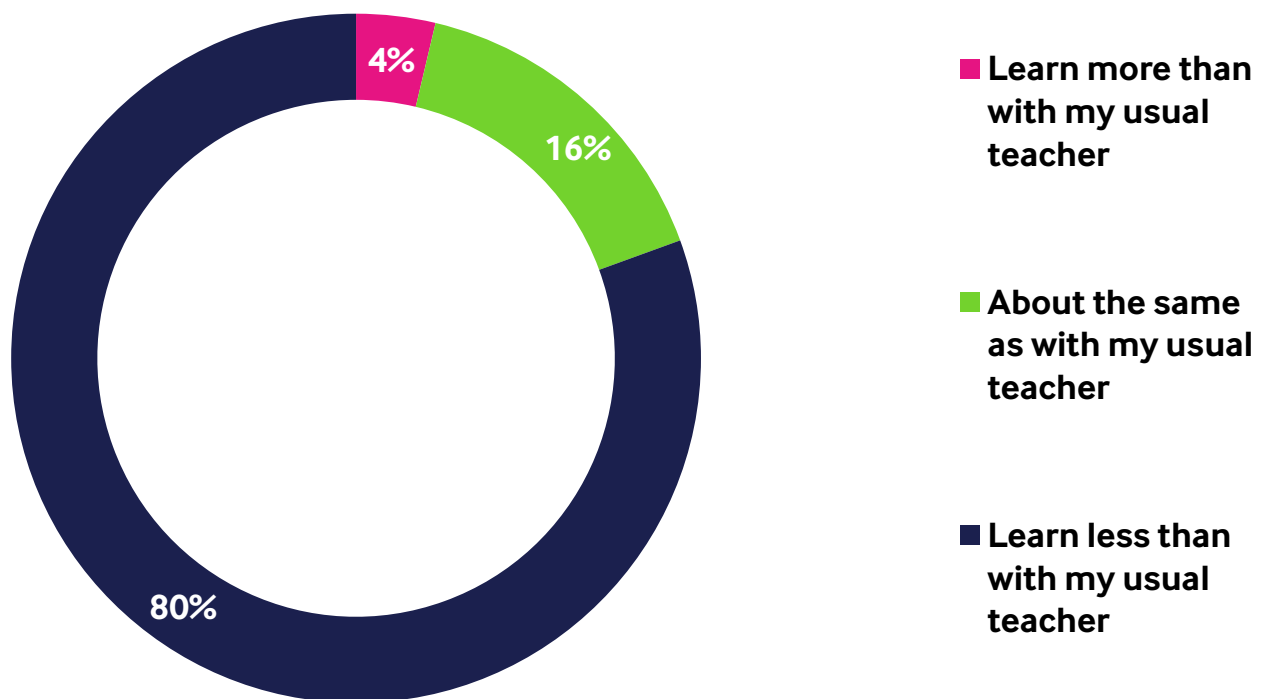
** 10 individuals explained that what they did in a lesson covered by a supply teacher depended on the lesson subject and the supply teacher. If the supply teacher was another member of staff from the same department, they would continue with lessons as usual. If the supply teacher was unfamiliar with the subject or came from a different department within the school, they would either have a free lesson or a different lesson altogether.

***25 respondents stated that when their lessons are covered by a supply teacher, they carry on with work as normal. This would involve covering work they had done in the previous lesson and continue with learning the subject as usual.

Question eight: How much do you think you learn when you have a lesson covered by a supply teacher? Please explain your answer.

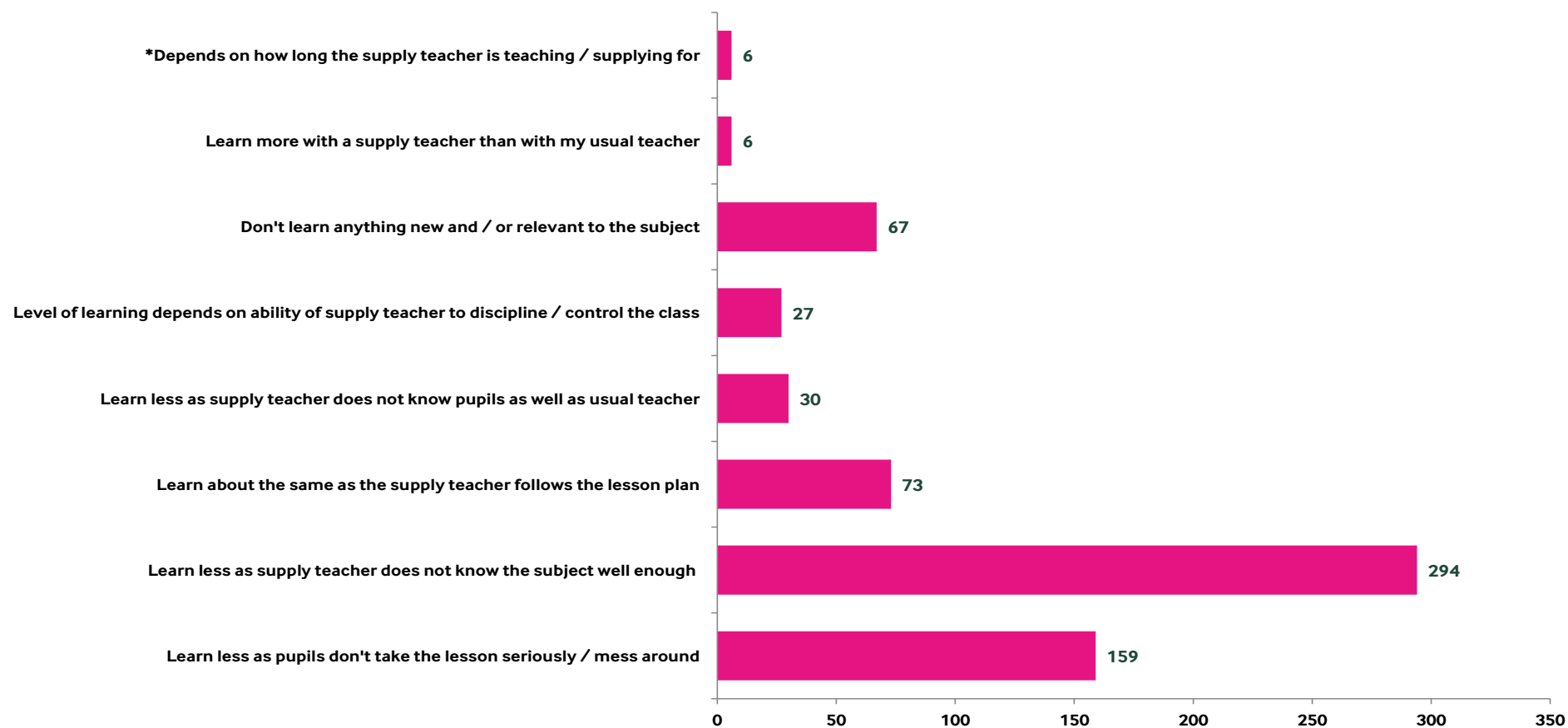
Total number of responses: 864

- Learn more than with my usual teacher: **3.7% (32)**
- About the same as with my usual teacher: **15.7% (136)**
- Learn less than with my usual teacher: **80.5% (696)**



Question eight: comments

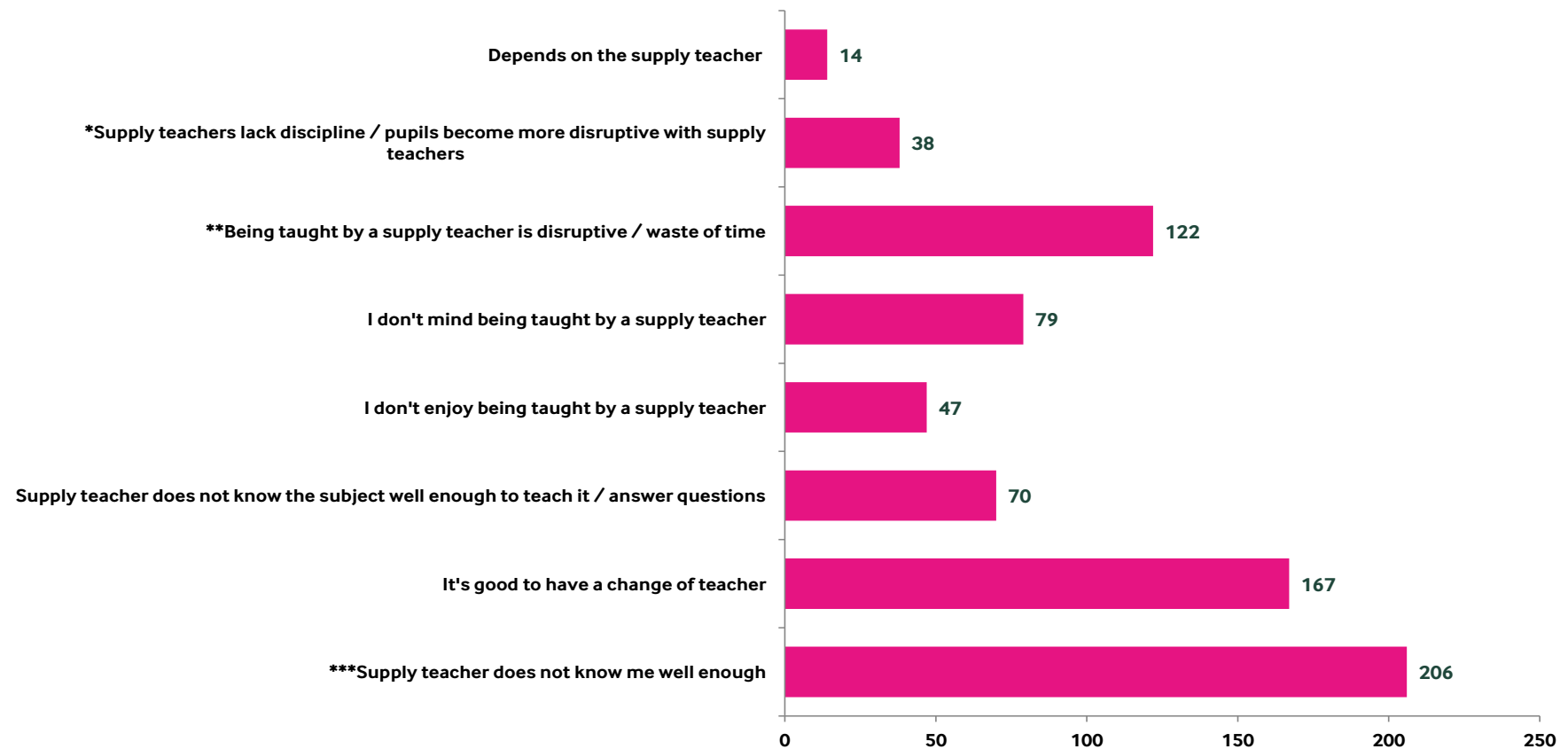
Total number of comments: 662



**Six respondents explained that how much they learnt depended on the length of time the supply teacher is there for, and also included whether the usual teacher's absence was planned. The longer the supply, the more or the same they felt they learnt. This also applied where the usual teacher's absence was planned. Where the usual teacher's absence was unplanned over a short period of time, lessons are unstructured and often involve irrelevant tasks like crosswords, wordsearches or having a free lesson.*

Question nine: How do you feel about being taught by a supply teacher? (For example, do you feel you learn something different; it's good to have a change of teacher, or the teacher doesn't know you well enough).

Number of respondents: 743



**38 respondents explained that they don't enjoy being taught by a supply teacher, on the basis that a significant number of their classmates will lack respect for the supply teacher and behave disruptively. This is exacerbated where the supply teacher lacks the ability to discipline or control such disruptive behaviour.*

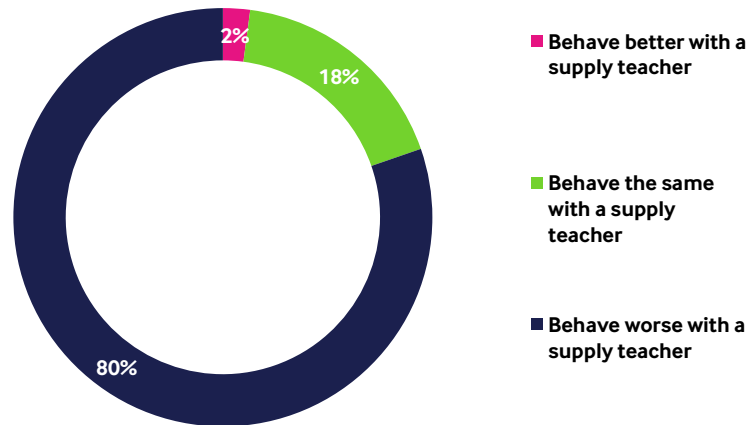
***122 young people stated that being taught by a supply teacher disrupts their flow of learning, and is a "waste of time". Many young people felt that having a free lesson, doing posters or wordsearches were a waste of time when they could be focusing on continuing the lesson plan.*

****206 respondents explained that they disliked being taught by a supply teacher because they didn't know them or the class well enough. Different teaching methods and failing to understand some pupils' special/varying educational needs were cited as reasons for this dislike.*

Question 10: Do you think that you and the other pupils in your class behave the same when they have a supply teacher?

Total number of responses: 863

- Behave better with a supply teacher: **2.0% (18)**
- Behave the same with a supply teacher: **17.6% (152)**
- Behave worse with a supply teacher: **80.3% (693)**

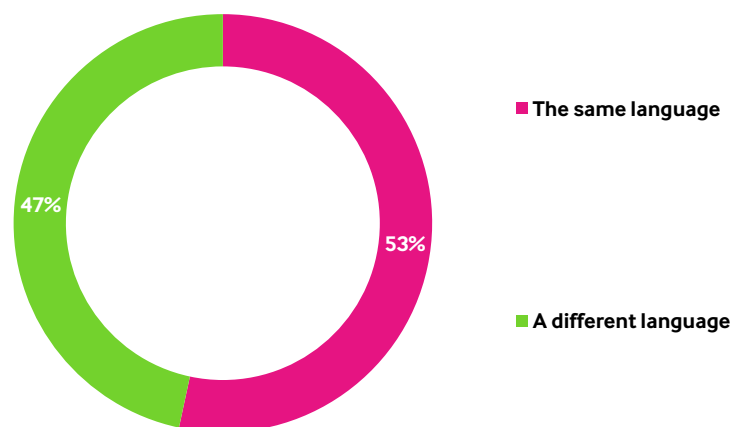


For pupils in Welsh medium schools –

Question 11: When you have a supply teacher, do they teach you in the same language as you are used to being taught in (for that lesson)?

Total number of responses: 238

- The same language: **53.3% (127)**
- A different language: **46.6% (111)**



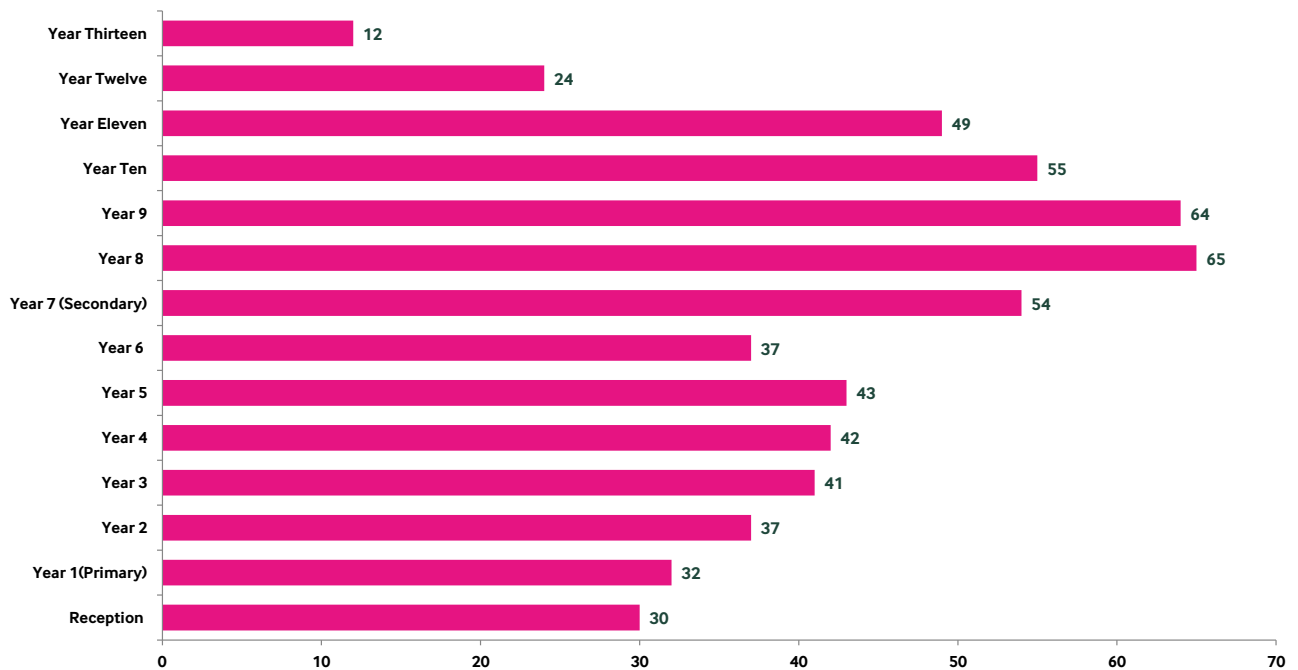
Summary of Responses

Parents and Carers

Question one: Which school year is your child(ren) in?

Total number of responses: 585

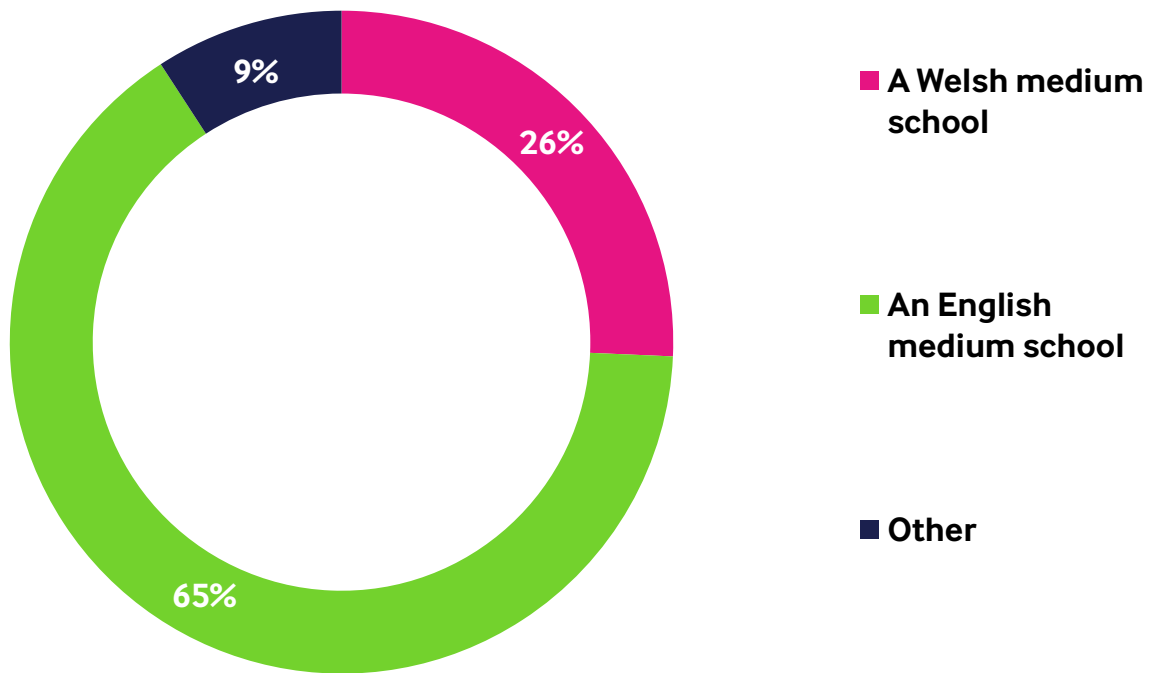
Reception: 30	Year 1 (Primary): 32	Year 2: 37	Year 3: 41	Year 4: 42
Year 5: 43	Year 6: 37	Year 7 (Secondary): 54	Year 8: 65	Year 9: 64
Year Ten: 55	Year Eleven: 49	Year Twelve: 24	Year Thirteen: 12	



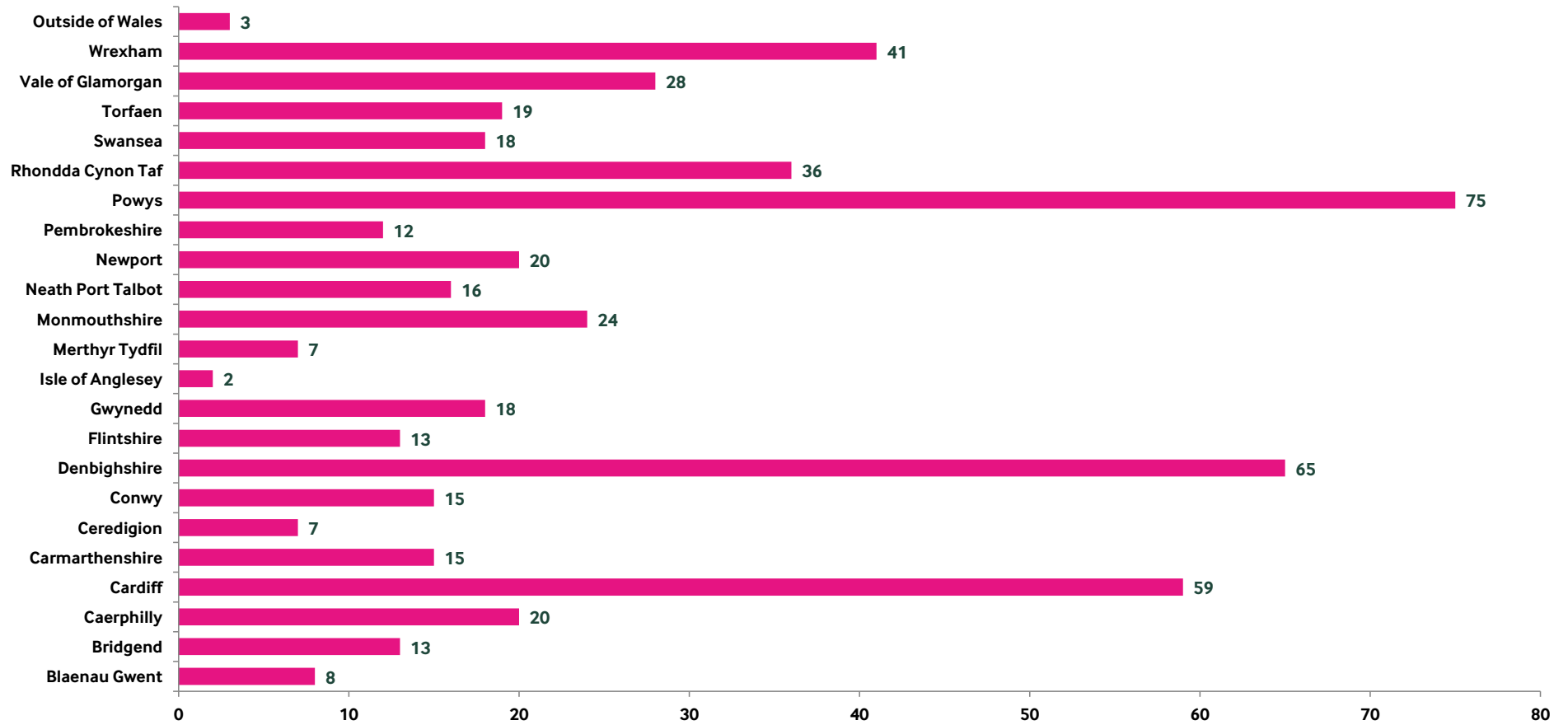
Question two: What medium school do they attend?

Total number of responses: 545

- A Welsh medium school: **25.6% (140)**
- An English medium school: **65.1% (355)**
- Other: **9.1% (50)**



Question three: In which local authority area do you live?

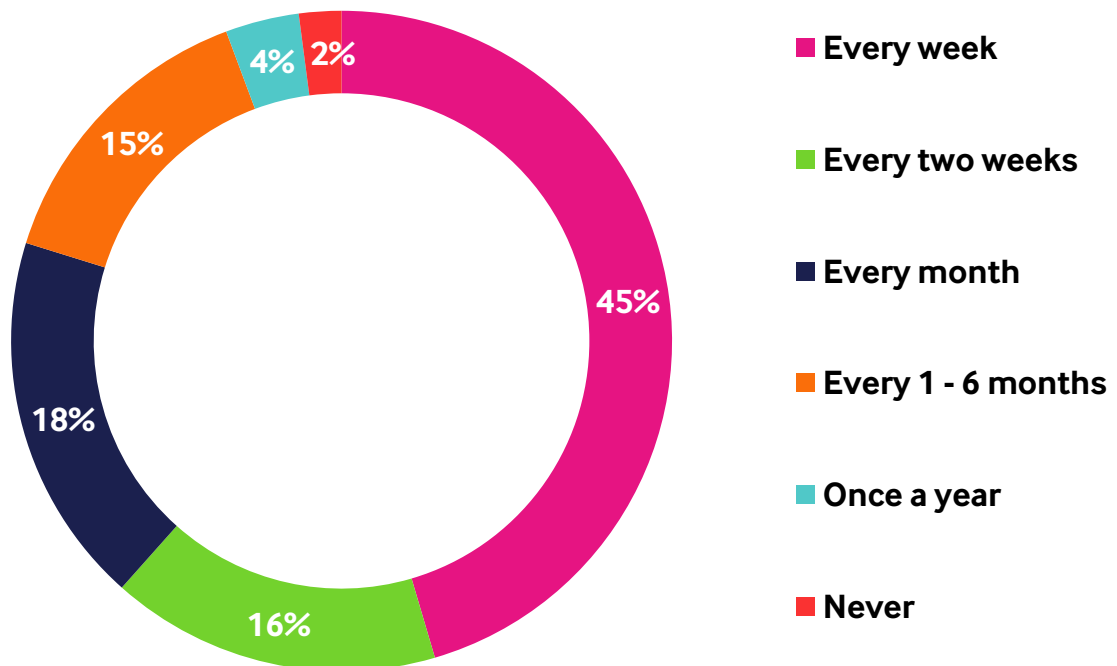


Total number of respondents: 544

Question four: How often are they taught by a supply teacher?

Total number of responses: 434

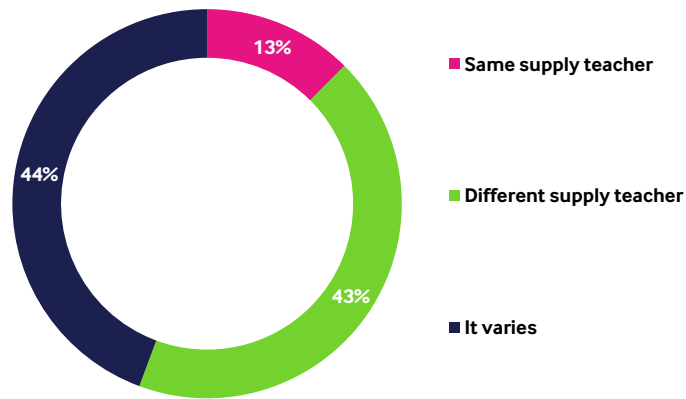
- Every week: **45.3% (197)**
- Every two weeks: **16.1%(70)**
- Every month: **18.2% (79)**
- Every 1 – 6 months: **14.5% (63)**
- Once a year: **3.68% (16)**
- Never: **2.0% (9)**



Question five: If they are sometimes taught by a supply teacher, is it usually the same supply teacher or a different supply teacher each time?

Total number of responses: 433

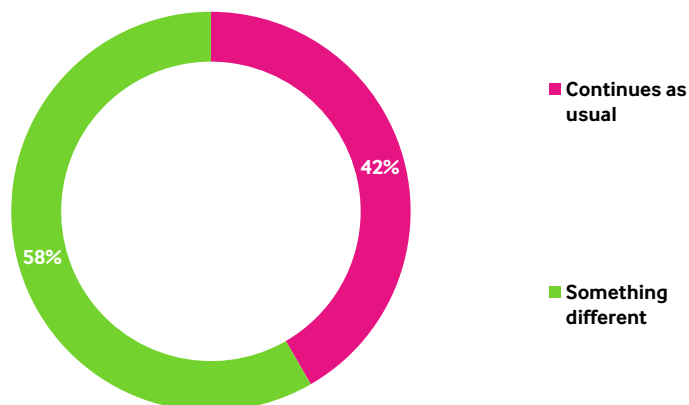
- Same supply teacher: **13.0% (54)**
- Different supply teacher: **43.1% (187)**
- It varies: **44.3% (192)**



Question six: When they are taught by a supply teacher, does the work they do in class continue as usual, or is it something different?

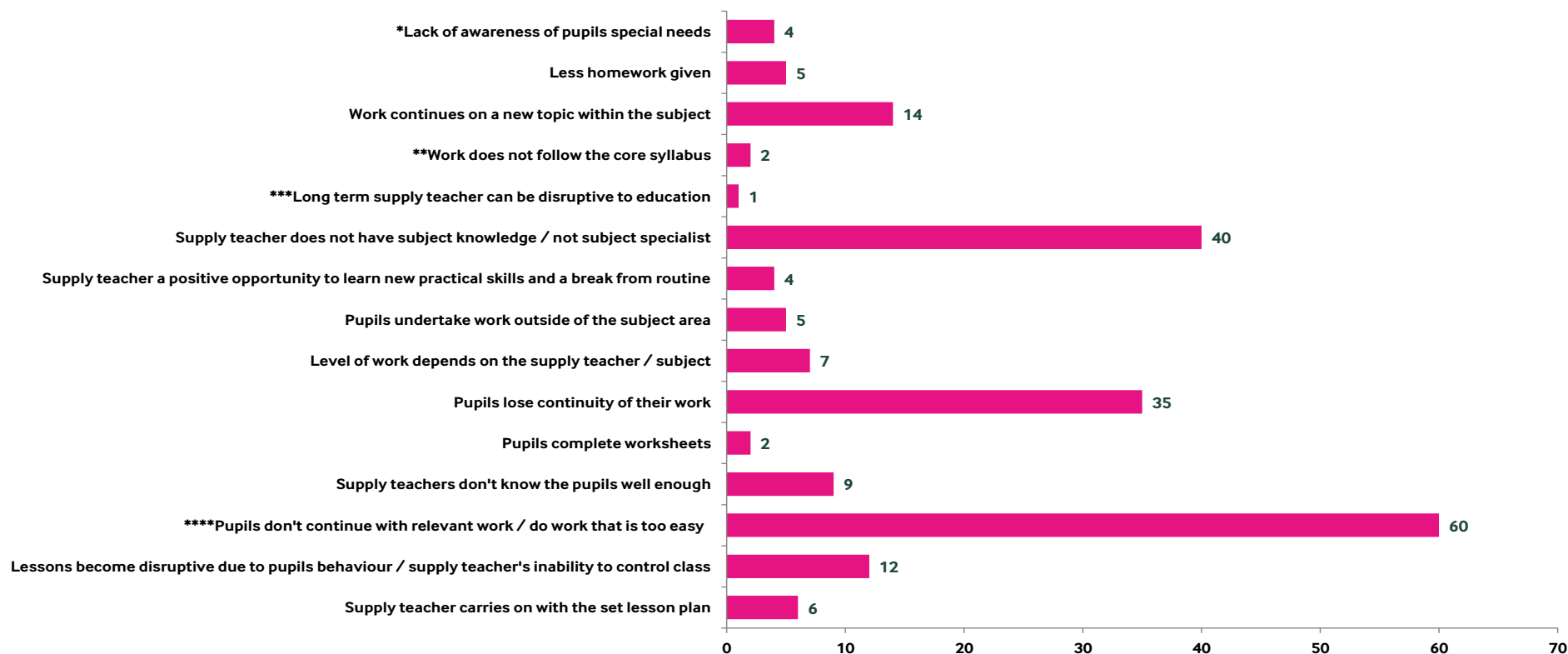
Total number of responses: 420

- Continues as usual: **41.6% (175)**
- Something different: **58.3% (245)**



Question seven: If their work is different do you have any comments on this? (For example, do they work outside the normal subject area?).

Total number of responses: 206



*Four parents and carers explained that the different work their child(ren) undertake undermine their intellectual ability, or fail to recognise their child(ren) special educational needs.

**2 respondents stated that the different work their do does not follow the core syllabus. That is, their child(ren) are not following sub-topics relevant to exam preparation.

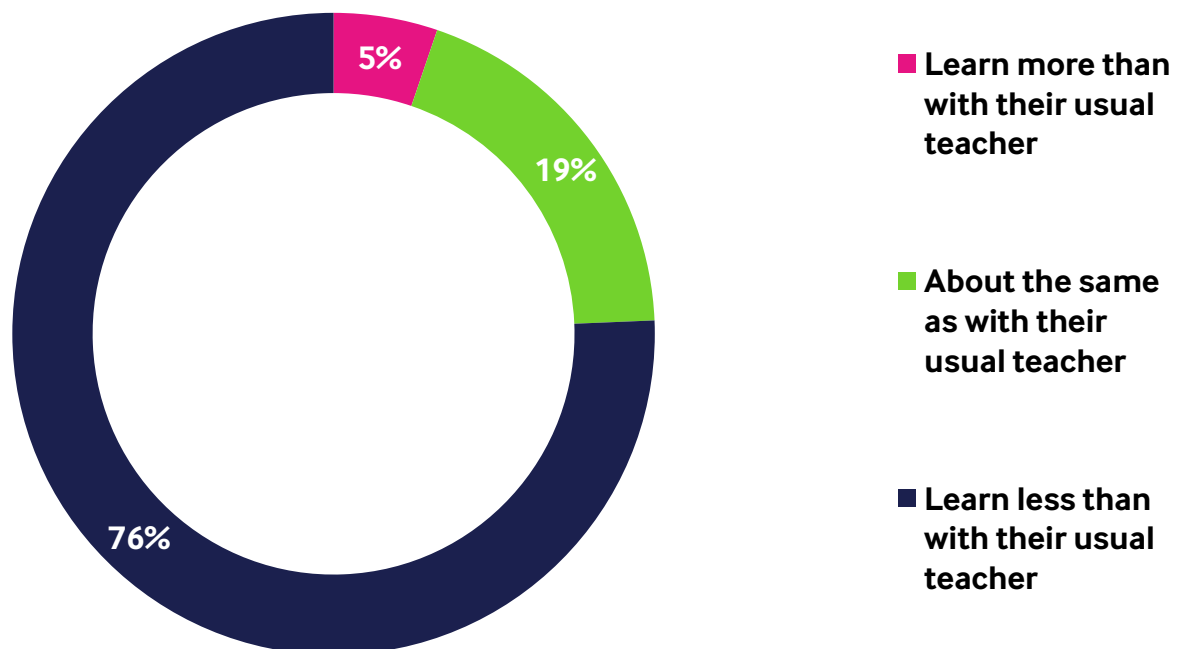
***One parent/carer felt that a long term supply teacher is disruptive to education, particularly when that supply teacher has no expertise in the subject area they are covering. Again, this can adversely affect a pupils potential to obtain a good mark in an exam.

****60 respondents stated that the different work their child(ren) undertakes is irrelevant to the subject, and often complete work that is too easy. For example, going over old lesson plans, completing wordsearches/crosswords or having free lessons.

Question eight: Based on feedback from your child(ren), what do you think about the amount of learning that takes place in a lesson covered by a supply teacher? Please explain your answer.

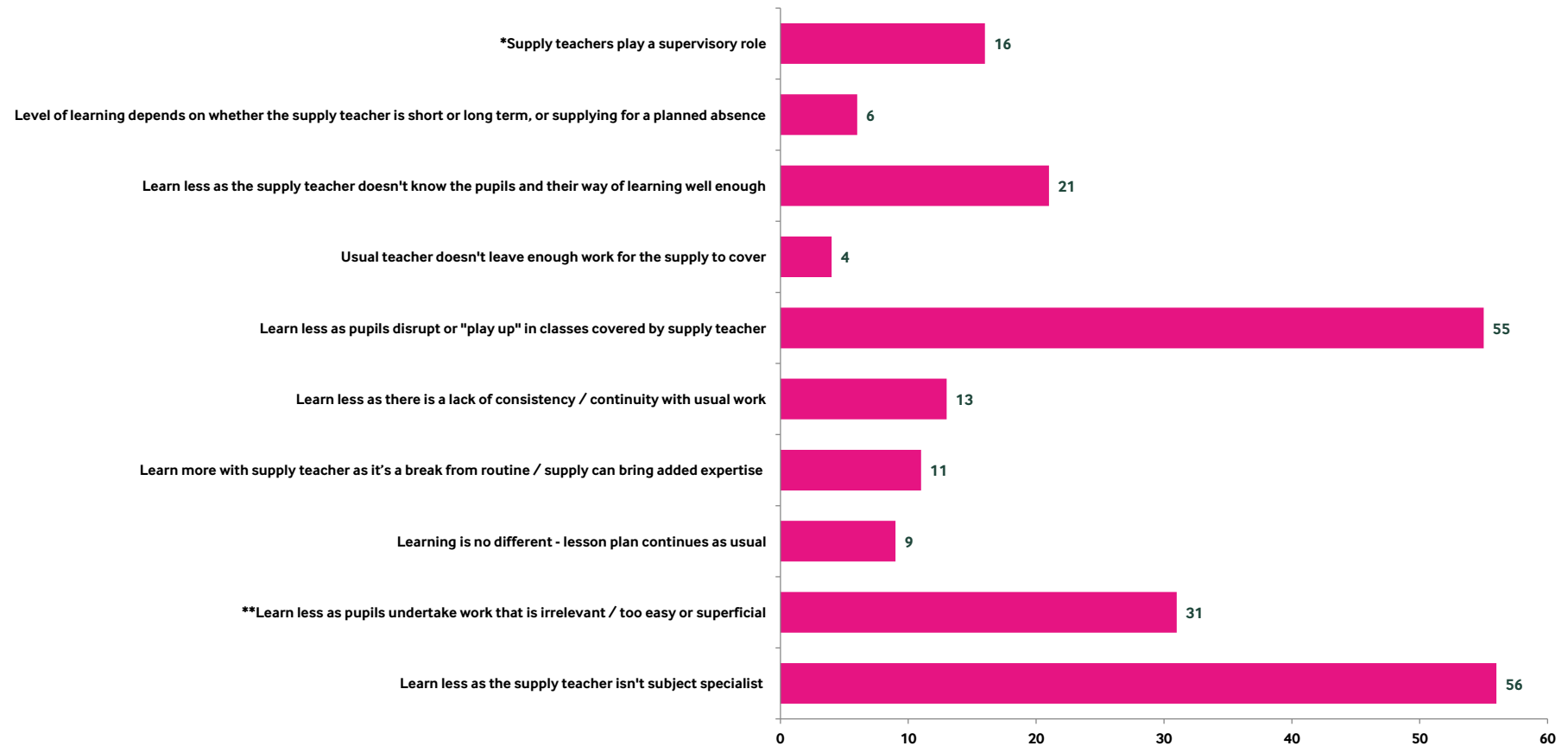
Total number of responses: 382

- Learn more than with their usual teacher: **5.2% (20)**
- About the same as with their usual teacher: **19.1% (73)**
- Learn less than with their usual teacher: **75.6% (289)**



Question eight: comments

Total number of comments: 222



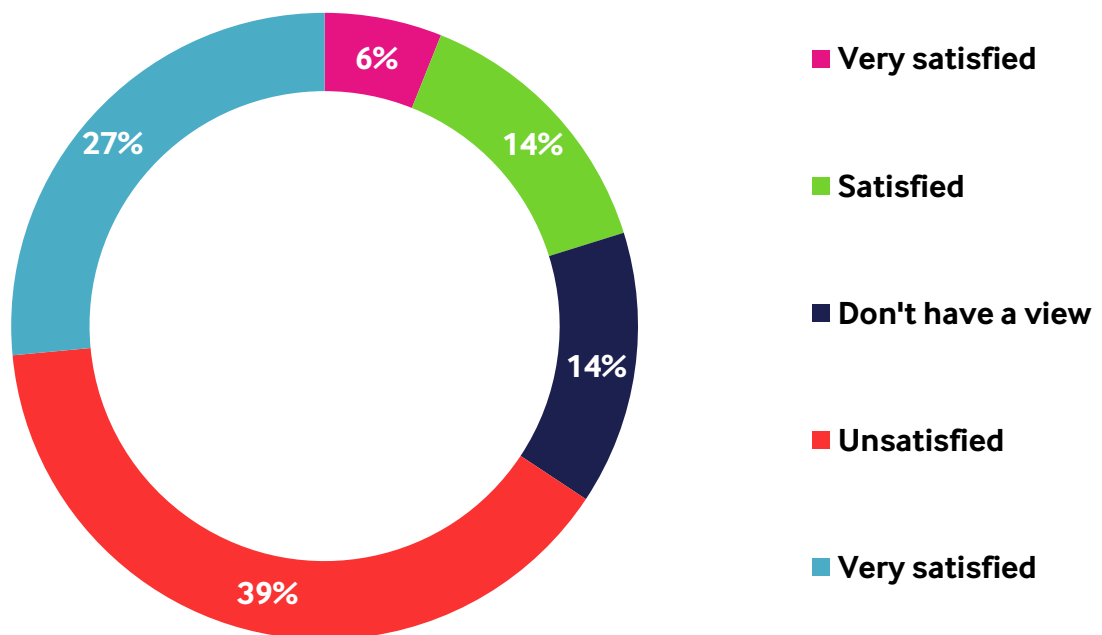
**16 parents and carers, based on feedback from their child(ren) explained that they learn less than with their usual teacher because supply teachers play a supervisory role in classes, as opposed to teaching pupils something new or continuing with the lesson plan.*

***31 respondents argued that their child(ren) learn less than with their usual teacher because the work given by supply teachers is too easy, and/or superficial or irrelevant to the subject. Many are given short tasks that are not challenging and completed quickly, or given a free lesson altogether to talk / complete crosswords and puzzles.*

Question nine: Based on feedback from your child(ren), how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with their lessons when they are being taught by a supply teacher? Please explain your answer.

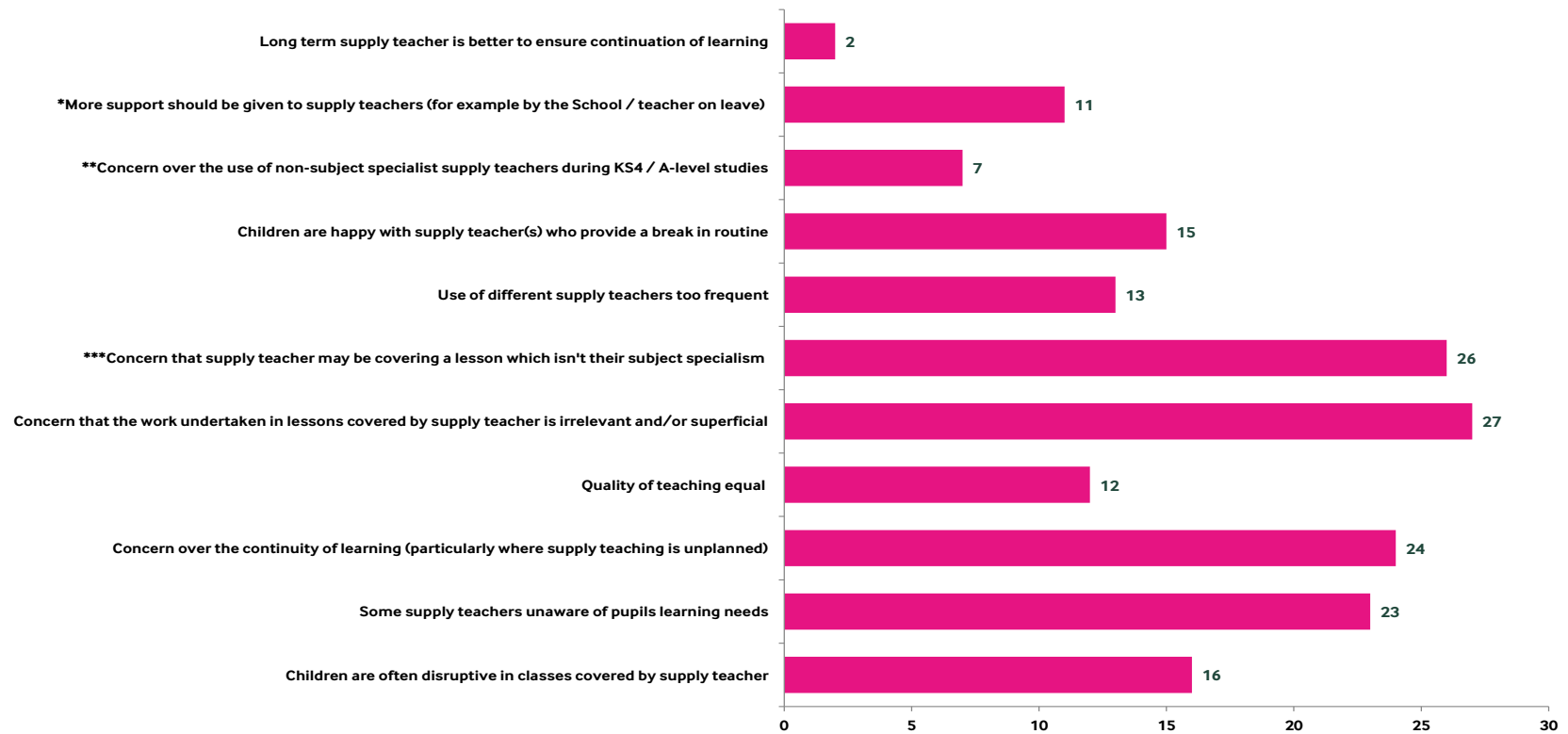
Total number of responses: 381

- Very satisfied: **6.0% (23)**
- Satisfied: **14.0% (55)**
- Don't have a view: **14.0% (55)**
- Unsatisfied: **38.8% (148)**
- Very unsatisfied: **27.2% (100)**



Question nine: comments

Total number of comments: 176



*11 parents and carers explained their concern that supply teachers aren't given enough support to cover lessons. That is, they are not given enough support by the school or by the usual teacher they are standing in for (by not leaving a thorough and comprehensive lesson plan)

**Seven respondents expressed their concern of non-subject specialist supply teachers during KS4 studies which are crucial for their child(ren). There is of course a general concern over the use of non-subject specialists, but respondents were more concerned about the impact their use during these stages would have on exam results.

***26 parents and carers explained their concern over the use of supply teachers for lessons that aren't their subject specialism. Many parents and carers whose child(ren) went to English medium schools stated that their Welsh lessons (second language) were covered by non-Welsh speaking supply teachers. This concern was also expressed by parents and carers of children who went to Welsh medium schools, but the concern applied to all subjects (as opposed to just Welsh lessons).

For pupils in Welsh medium schools –

Question ten: When your child(ren) have a supply teacher, do they teach in the same language as they are usually taught in (for that lesson)?

Total number of responses: 89

- The same language: **91.01% (81)**
- A different language: **8.99% (8)**

