

Education Survey January 2021

Our recent survey of over 4500 members shows:

Schools

75% of respondents are concerned or very concerned about their safety at work
39% were not aware of any risk assessments following the arrival of the new virus strain
22% of the whole knew of risk assessments but were not confident that measures had been put in place to deal with issues raised
60% had had no training of Health and Safety under COVID for example infection control

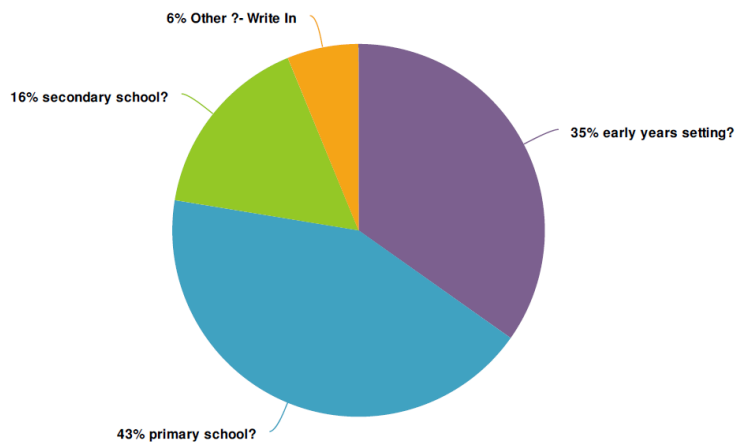
Early Learning and childcare

70% of respondents concerned or very concerned about their safety at work
30% of the whole knew of were not aware of any risk assessments following the arrival of the new virus strain
19% of the whole knew of risk assessments but were not confident that measures had been put in place to deal with issues raised
50% had had no training on Health and Safety under COVID for example infection control

In January UNISON conducted a survey of members working in schools and early learning settings. Over 4500 members took part in our survey. This report outlines some of the key findings from that Survey.

Who Took Part

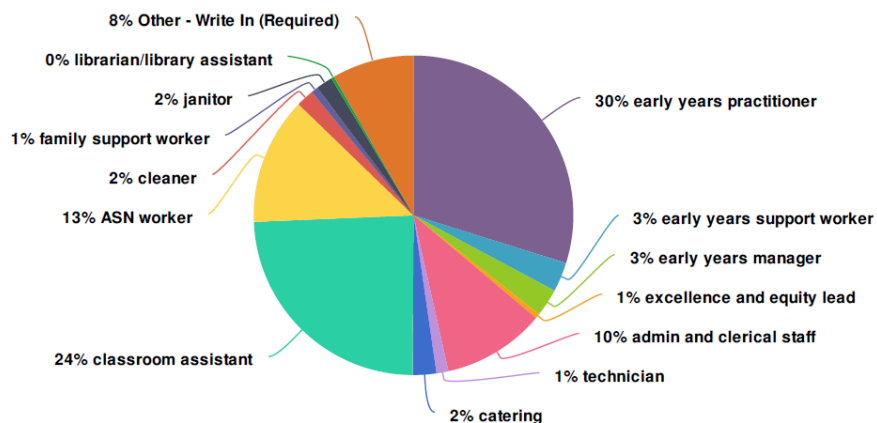
2. Do you work in a



Survey participants worked across all local authorities in Scotland, 35% worked in early years settings, 16% in secondary schools and 43% in primary schools. Those who indicated “other” either were in schools supporting pupils with ASN, working across a few settings or just gave more detail on their setting.

Job Roles

3. We know that councils use different job titles but please pick the one that most closely describes your job

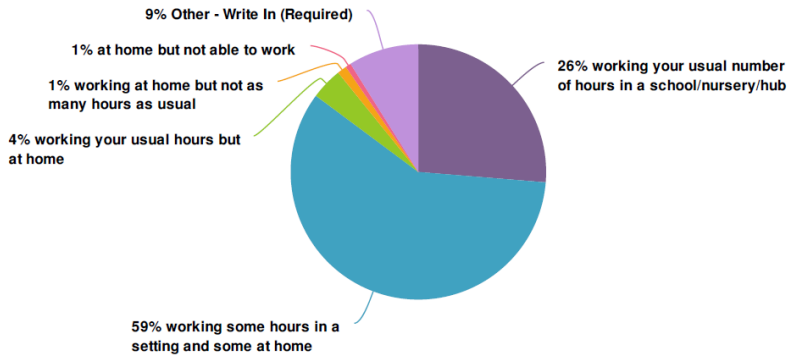


A range of education staff took part. The two biggest groups were classroom assistants and early years practitioners. We also heard from technicians, catering staff, and administrative and clerical staff.

Current Work Patterns

85% of those who responded are working in settings for at least part of the week

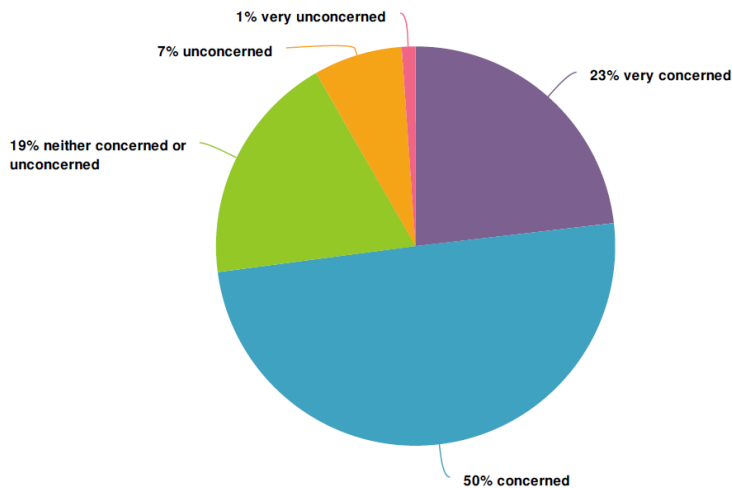
4. How are you working in this new lockdown?



Fears Over Safety at Work

Overall 73% of respondents are worried about their safety. When broken down into schools and early years settings 75% of respondents in schools were concerned or very concerned about their safety at work and 70% of respondents in early years were concerned or very concerned about their safety at work.

5. How concerned are you about your safety at work?



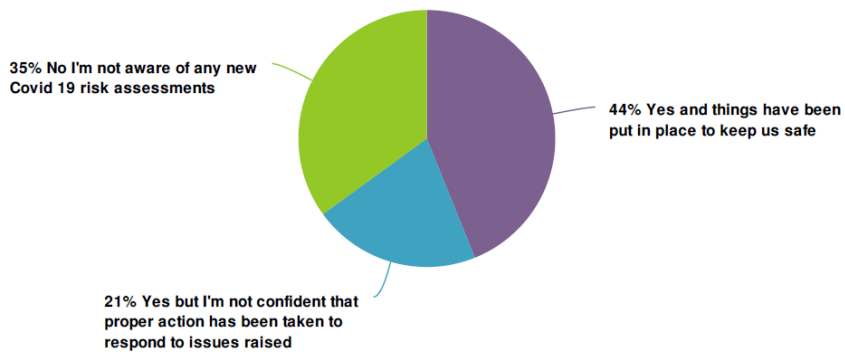
Risk Assessments

Risk assessment followed by the implementation of appropriate mitigations are the key to a safe working environment. It is therefore very concerning that substantial numbers of respondents (35%) are not aware of risk assessments in their workplace. While it may be the case that assessments have taken place the fact that staff are not aware of them is a risk. In order to work safely staff need to understand the risks and the mitigations that are in place. Alongside this, members are telling us that they have not had COVID specific

health and safety training. This means that they are not aware of how to implement mitigations and how to work safely. Again a serious risk.

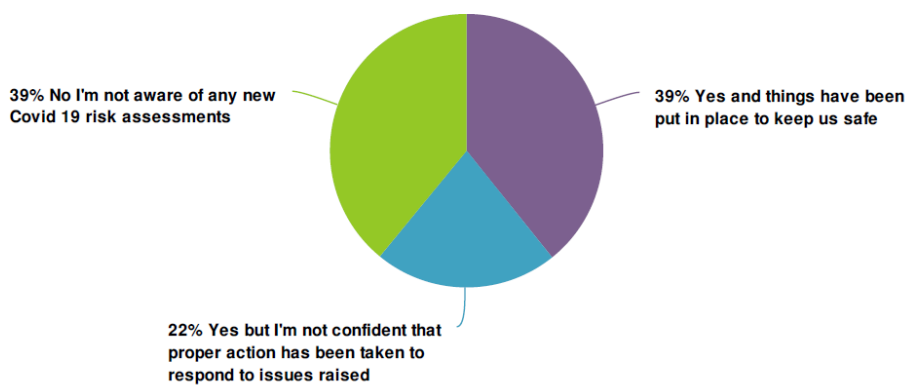
All settings

7. Have new COVID-19 specific risk assessments been undertaken in your setting since the new strain of the virus was discovered?



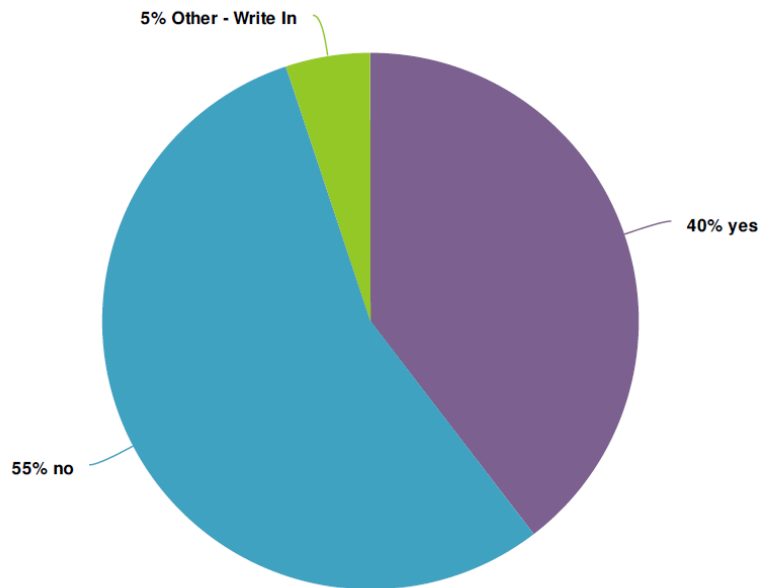
Schools

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Training
All settings

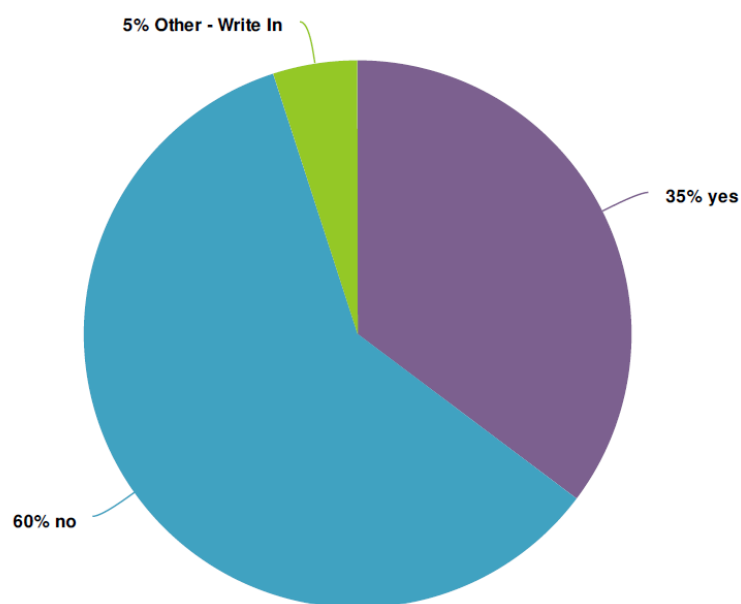
13. Have you had any training on health and safety under Covid-10 for example infection control, correct PPE or risk assessment?



Over half of respondents (55%) say that they have not had any training on health and safety under COVID. This rose to 60% in schools.

Schools

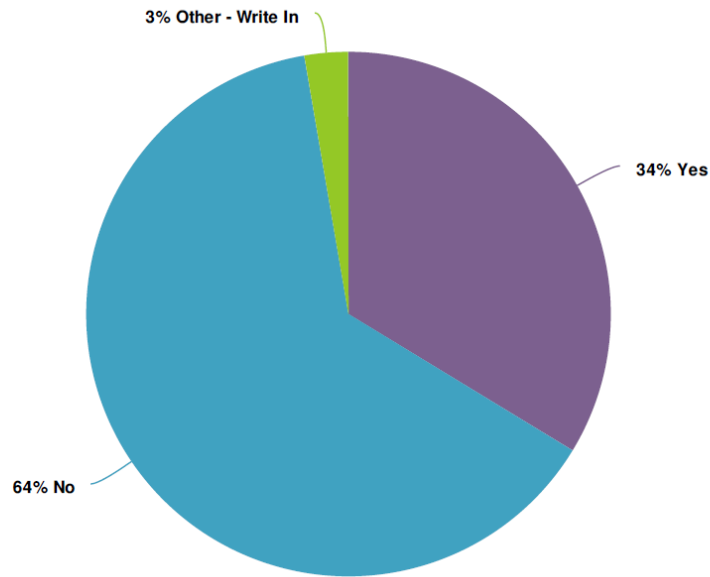
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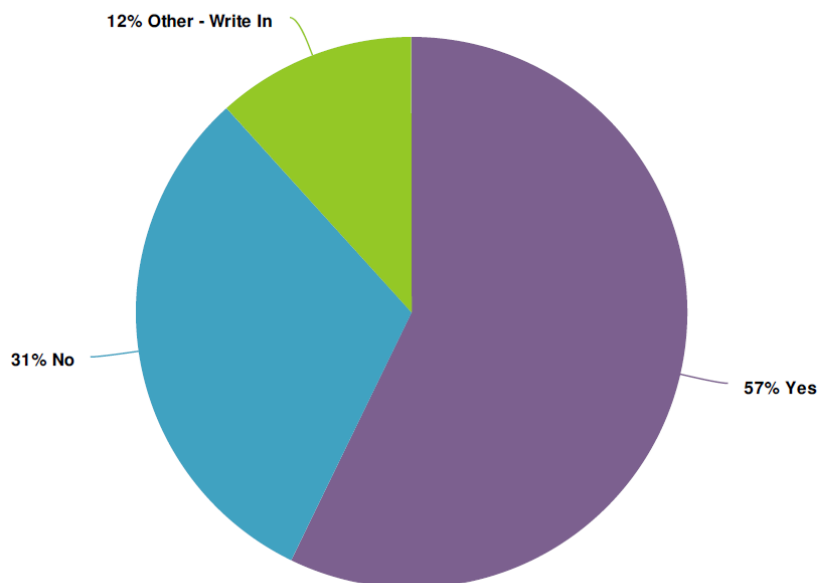
The lack of training is contributing not just to the risk of people not behaving appropriately but also to feelings of anxiety as there is no widespread understanding of what mitigations should and are /are not in place.

Work Issues

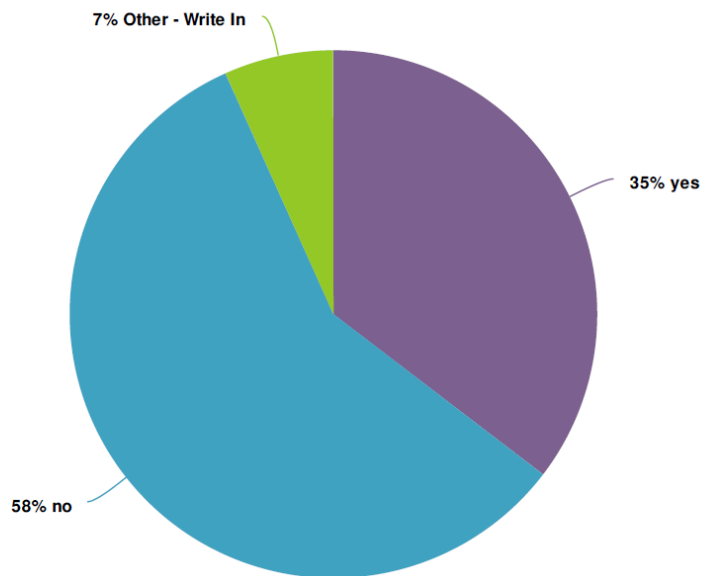
15. Have you been asked to do work that you would not normally do since you returned to work in January?



16. Are you required to be in a setting while teachers are all working from home?



18. Are you being asked to supervise pupils with no teacher leading the sessions?



Members have concerns about the current staff mix in schools. Over half are telling us that teachers are working from home while they are in settings. In schools 35% say they are supervising pupils without a teacher present. It is not clear why this should be the case. There is also a lack of clarity about the tasks that some are being asked to undertake and why teachers are not in settings to undertake that work. Beyond the role stretching members are also telling us that they are being asked to come into settings but are then clearing out cupboards. To many this feels like work being found for them to do

rather than essential work. Its as if they aren't trusted to work from home or no one can think of work for them to do at home so are pulling them into settings for the sake of it.

Comments

Classroom assistants in more frequently than the pupil support teachers - they don't believe we can actually work from home despite other local schools having their CA's doing so

In one particular day they have all 8 support workers in, supposedly for training but all we have been doing is clearing classrooms and tidying up whole school areas such as the library, stage, PE equipment etc!

Only teachers are working from home, classroom assistants are the only staff in classrooms and are working their normal hours with some changes to timings to accommodate the lack of teachers.in the setting.

Rota but only PSA and EYO on it. All teachers at home.

Teaching staff - yes, Non-teaching staff - no 1

Teaching staff are on rota. Support staff are in all the time. 1

Teaching staff have a rota 1

Teaching staff yes, learning assistants no - working school hours 1

Teaching staffs rota working at home mostly but all support staff working normal hours 1

As I work in two schools I can only work in one school per week. I was asked to worked my hours from my 2nd school in my 1st and STOCK TAKE THE READING BOOK CUPBOARD. I should only be in the school if it is essential not being used for organising resources.

Disappointing 1

As an EEL I am doing anything and everything required to keep the setting operational. 1

At the beginning yes but not anymore 1

Been asked to support in the school office although I have told them I am not willing to do this as it's not my role. I am currently in the school clearing out cupboards

Being asked to supervise 2 classes and help in dinner hall would not normally mix with this amount of children 1

Clean out cupboards!! 1

Cleaning out cupboards and preparing to move to a new building 1

Cleaning out rooms just for something to do as teachers not needing our help

Supervise children on my own in the classroom.

It happened at the start until I refused. Why should I do the teachers job on a fraction of pay while most of them are at home.

There is a teacher but he is not present 100% of the time 1

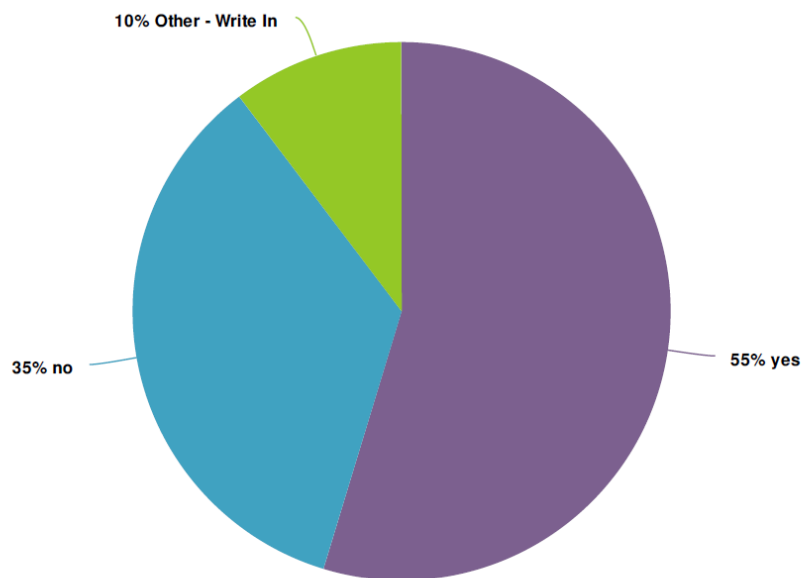
This is about to start in two afternoons per week but we will not be expected to deliver education at those times

Members working from home also have concerns about health and safety issues as 50% of those school staff working from home have not been provided with any equipment to

enable them to do so. Those looking for equipment most popular options are a chair and a phone. Only 3% have had a risk assessment on their home working set up

Infection Control

24. Do you feel that your setting is cleaned often enough to keep you safe from Covid-19?



Cleaning remains a key issue with only just over half (55%) saying that settings are cleaned often enough to keep them safe.

Only 46% are confident that their setting has the staff, resources and expertise to ensure that all health and safety measures and risk assessments are in place.

25. Do you feel that there is enough PPE available for you to work safely?

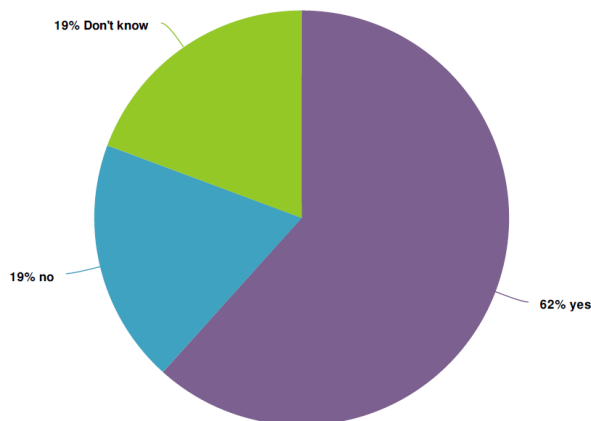


Figure from whole survey

While much of the original concern over PPE is passed some still feel it is lacking. Issues include the quality of aprons for intimate care, many are providing their own face masks

and concerns remain about social distancing among adults not being properly enforced/followed.

Others are not clear about what should be in place which again could be the result of the missing training and risk assessments.

Comments from the survey

I've not really seen any, unless hand sanitizer counts? 1

Masks are available but people don't wear them. 1

Masks are fine however plastic aprons not practical in ASN setting as children just pull them off. Also poorly sized gloves hinder daily tasks.

No face masks available. To have our own. 1

No face masks supplied for support staff. Not enough masks or gloves for medical room etc.

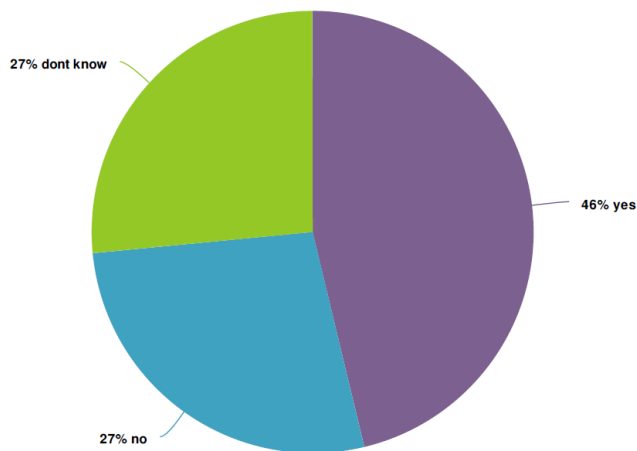
We are only to use PPE if a suspected COVID case arises

I do not believe wearing a face mask is enough PPE for working up close with 3-5 year olds and staff members who do not adhere to guidance

I'm not aware of any PPE at my work 1

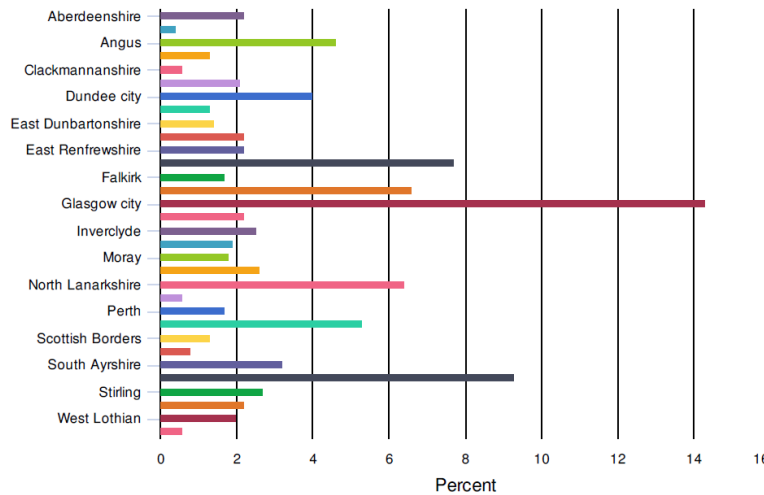
I'm providing my own masks, aprons are available if we need them.

26. Are you confident that your setting has the staff, resources and expertise to ensure all health and safety measures and risk assessments are in place?



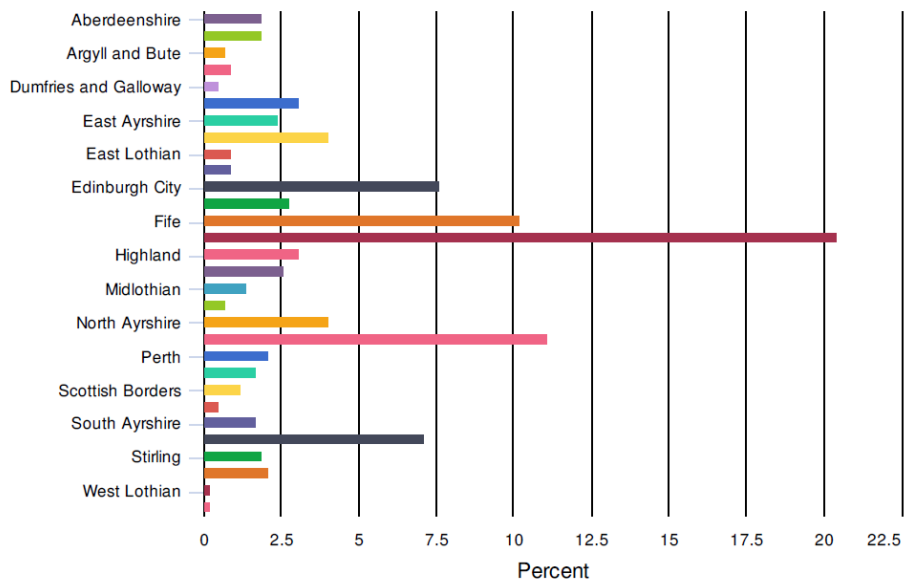
Because of concerns regarding risk assessment we ran the data to see if this was restricted to certain authorities. It was though widespread. The is not weighted in anyway so bigger councils will have more respondents taking part in the survey.

1. Which local authority do you work in?



Schools

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Early Learning

Conclusion

There is widespread concern among members about their safety in the current working environment. Much more needs to be done to both introduce mitigations to ensure that they are safe and to train and support staff to ensure they understand the mitigations that have been put in place and how to ensure their safety and that of the children they are working with.