

The Pupil Safeguarding Review

Questions for governors and trustees to discuss

Introduction



The Key and Edurio ran a survey in Autumn 2022 of almost 70,000 pupils in primary and secondary schools across England, to measure their feelings of safety in school, out of school and online.

The full report can be found [here](#).

Use this deck of slides to support you as governors or trustees to think through what the findings mean in your own primary and secondary school settings.

How to use this deck

These slides are designed to help you as a governing or trustee board to:

- Ask questions about your school's own safeguarding provision
- Ask questions about data capture and usage in relation to pupil safety
- Initiate discussion with your school's senior leadership team (SLT) about how to improve pupils' feelings of safety in school

In addition, there are 2 companion decks which can be used by school leaders and trust leadership teams/trustees.

Feeling safe in and out of school, and online



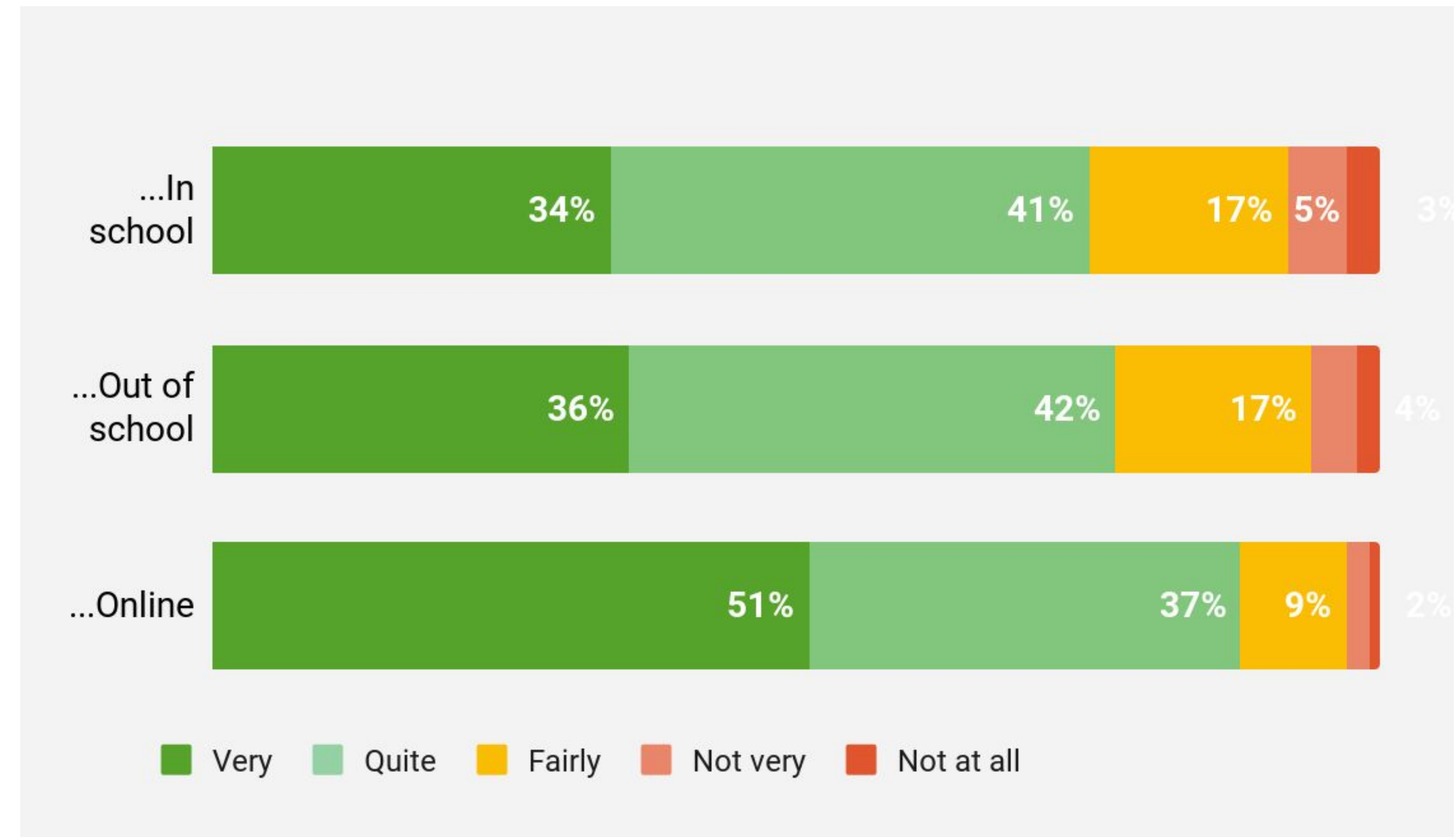
What it shows:

A quarter of pupils report that they felt only fairly safe, not very or not at all safe, in school in the last 6 months. Safety scores for in school are slightly worse than out of school: 75% of pupils feel safe in school, while 78% of pupils feel safe out of school. Pupils feel safest online: here, 88% of pupils reported feeling safe. 8% of pupils reported feeling not very, or not at all, safe in school, compared to only 3% of pupils when online.

Questions to ask SLT:

1. 8% of pupils, on average, say they don't feel safe in school. How true do you think that is of our school setting?
2. Is there a reliable way of measuring pupil safety?

Recently (in the last 6 months) how safe have you felt...?



Sample 68,214

Frequency of feeling unsafe



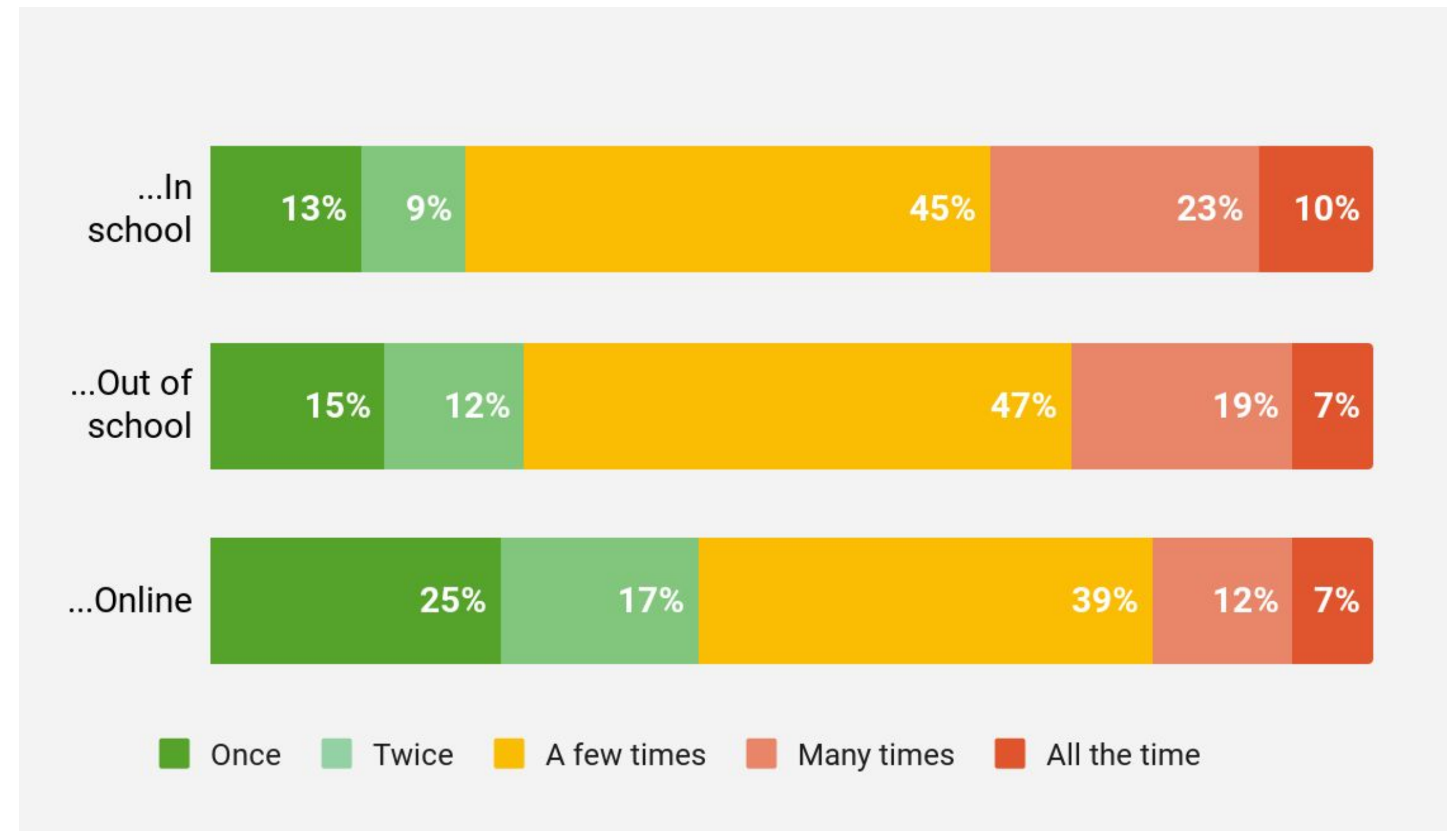
What it shows:

Among pupils who have felt unsafe at school in the past six months, a third reported that they felt unsafe many times or more during that period. This is compared to a quarter of those who felt unsafe out of school, and less than a fifth of pupils who felt unsafe online.

Questions to ask SLT:

1. *As a school, how do we know when an issue with a pupil feeling unsafe has been resolved and isn't recurring?*
2. *How many times a year do we monitor feelings of pupil safety, and do we think this is adequate?*

Recently (in the last 6 months) how many times have you felt unsafe...?



Missing school because of feeling unsafe



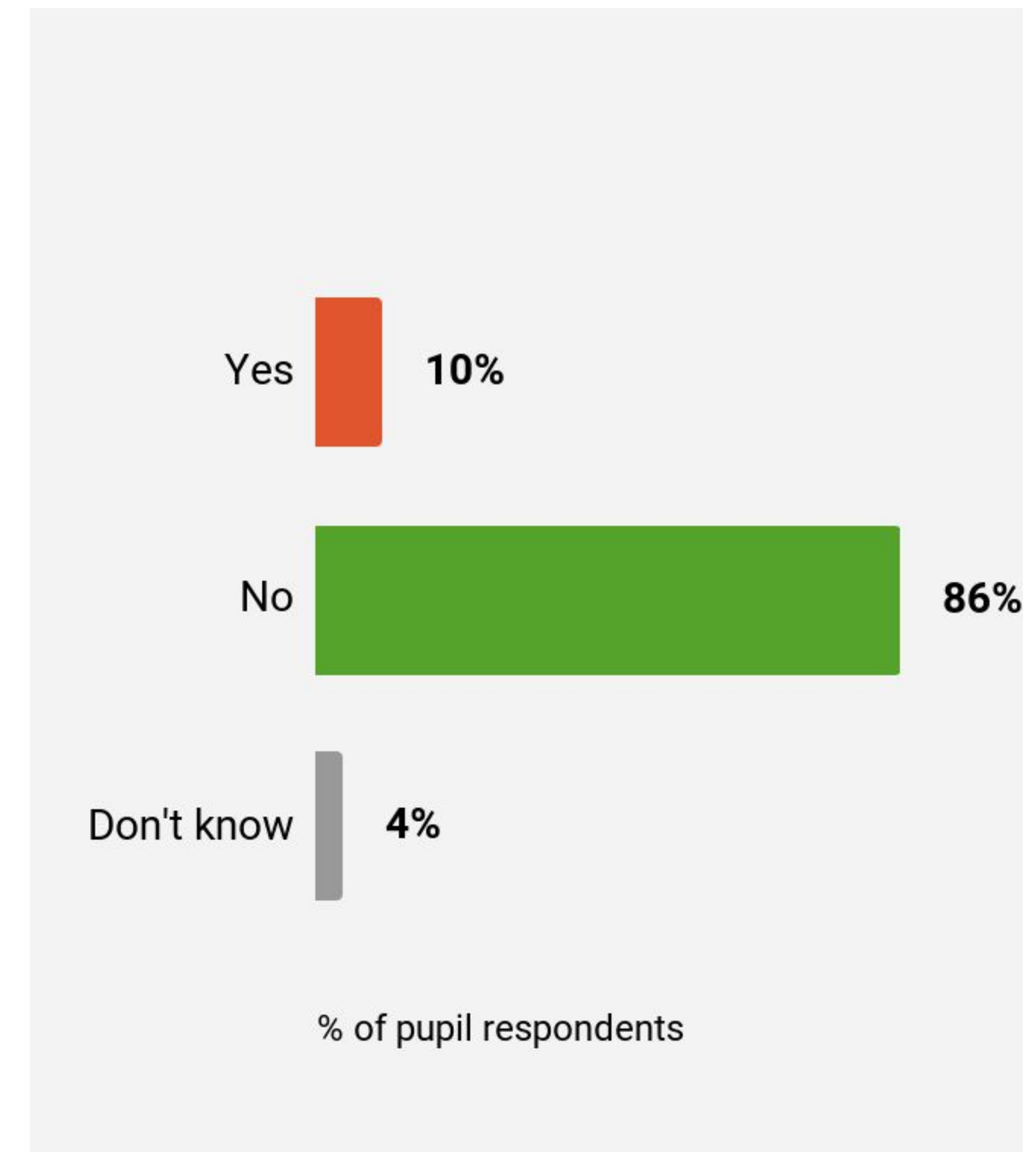
What it shows:

10% of pupils have missed school in the past 6 months because they felt unsafe, and a further 4% didn't want to answer the question. In a class of 30 pupils, this could mean 2 to 4 of those pupils are missing school for safeguarding reasons.

Questions to ask SLT:

1. *How are we reliably identifying pupils who may have missed school because they don't feel safe?*
2. *What processes are in places to support pupils returning to school after absence, and do these support our understanding of feelings of safety?*

Recently (in the last 6 months) have you missed school because you felt unsafe? Overall



% of pupil respondents

Sample 68,214

Where is safe/unsafe?

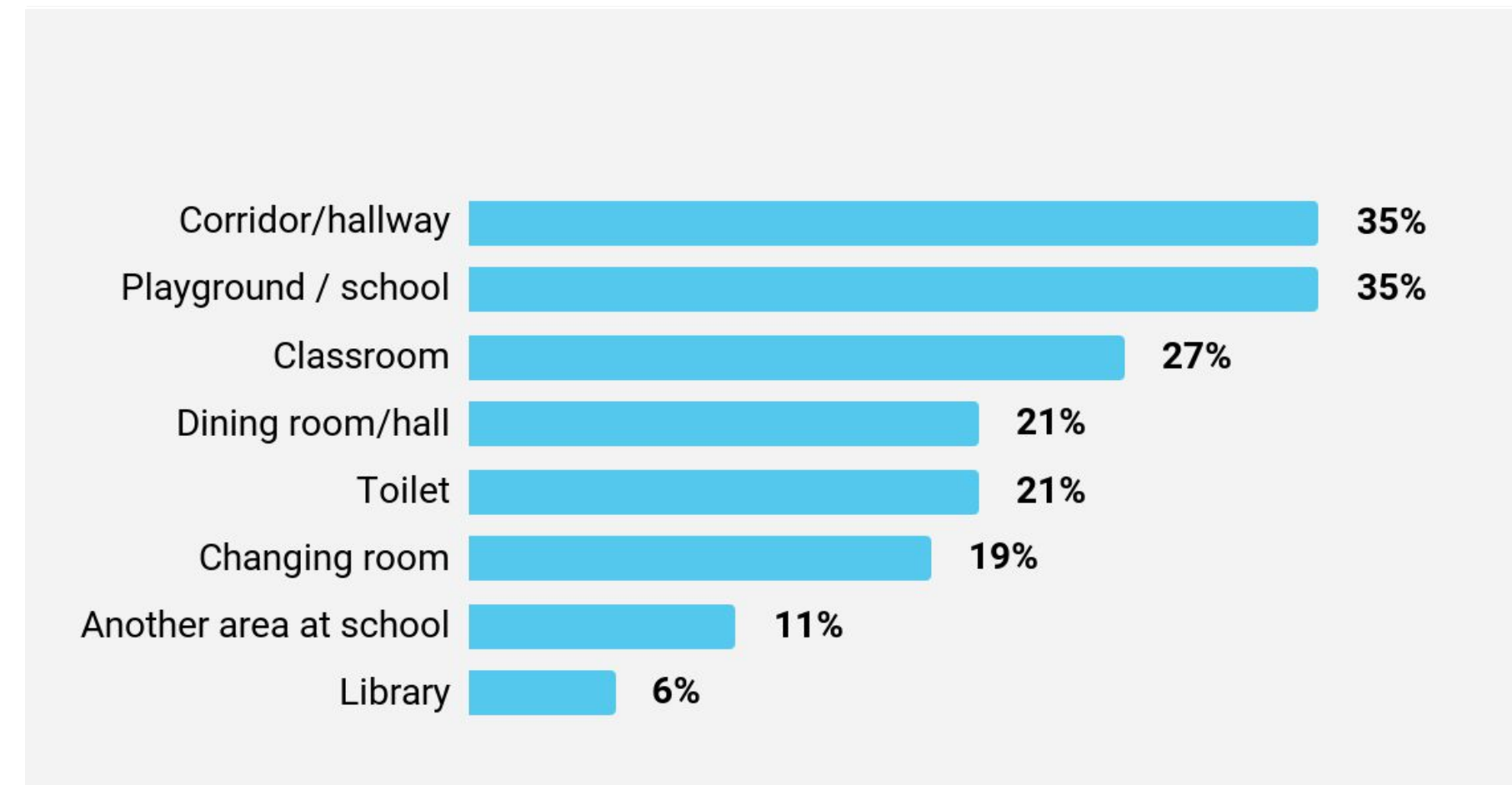
What it shows:

The corridor and school grounds are the areas most pupils felt unsafe. Whilst 26% of pupils reported that they were in the classroom when they felt unsafe, it's also the area where most pupils reported feeling safest. The Library is also a safe space.

Questions to ask SLT:

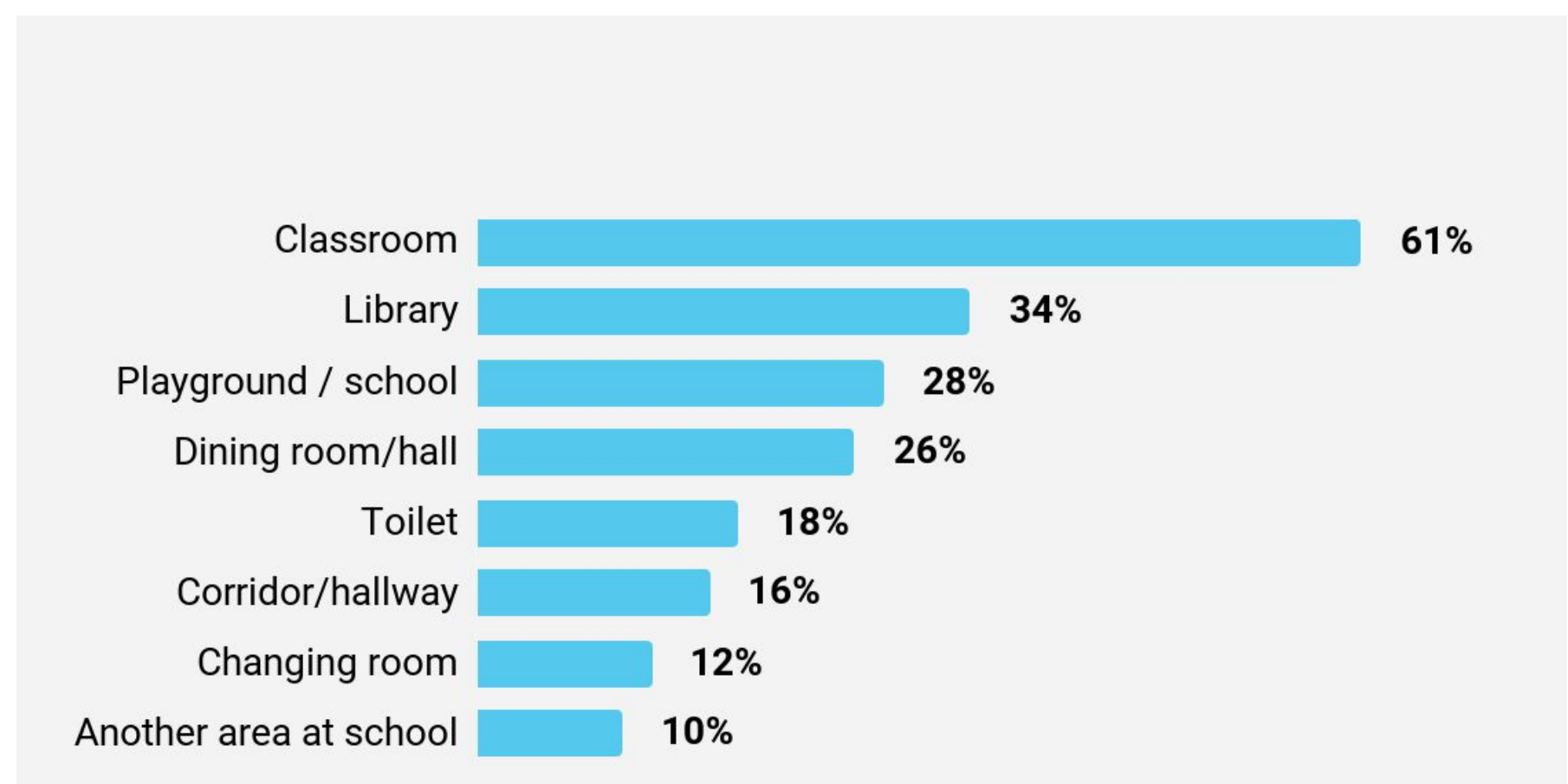
1. Which areas of the school do we understand to be spaces which are relatively “safe” and “unsafe”? How do we know?
2. Can governors take part in a premises walk to understand the school’s approach to managing these spaces?

Where in school were you when you felt unsafe?
Responses from pupils who felt fairly, not very, or not at all safe at school



Sample 15,145

In which place do you feel safest at school?
Responses from pupils who felt quite or very safe at school



Sample 44,358



Who makes pupils feel unsafe?



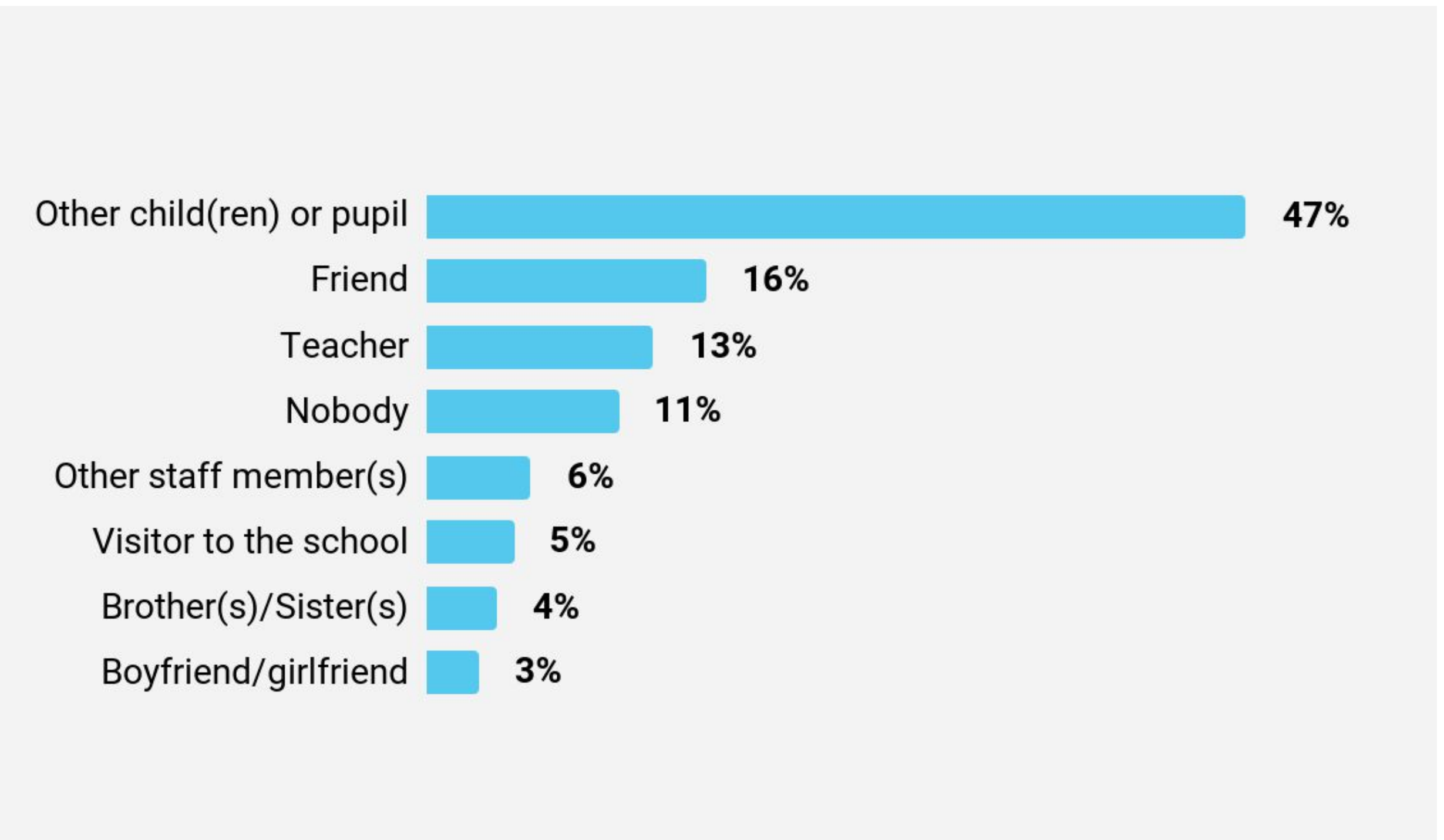
What it shows:

In school, it's mostly other children who made pupils who felt unsafe, feel that way: 47% of pupils who had felt unsafe reported that it was another pupil at school who had made them feel unsafe, and 16% reported that it was a friend. 13% of these pupils reported that a teacher made them feel unsafe, and 6% reported that it was another staff member.

Questions to ask SLT:

1. *Do we have a clear and communicated process in place to support pupils to report other pupils who they don't feel safe around?*
2. *Do we have a clear and communicated process in place to support pupils to report members of staff who they don't feel safe around in school?*

Who has made you feel unsafe in school? Responses from pupils who felt fairly, not very, or not at all safe at school



Sample 15,145

Feelings of safety by year group



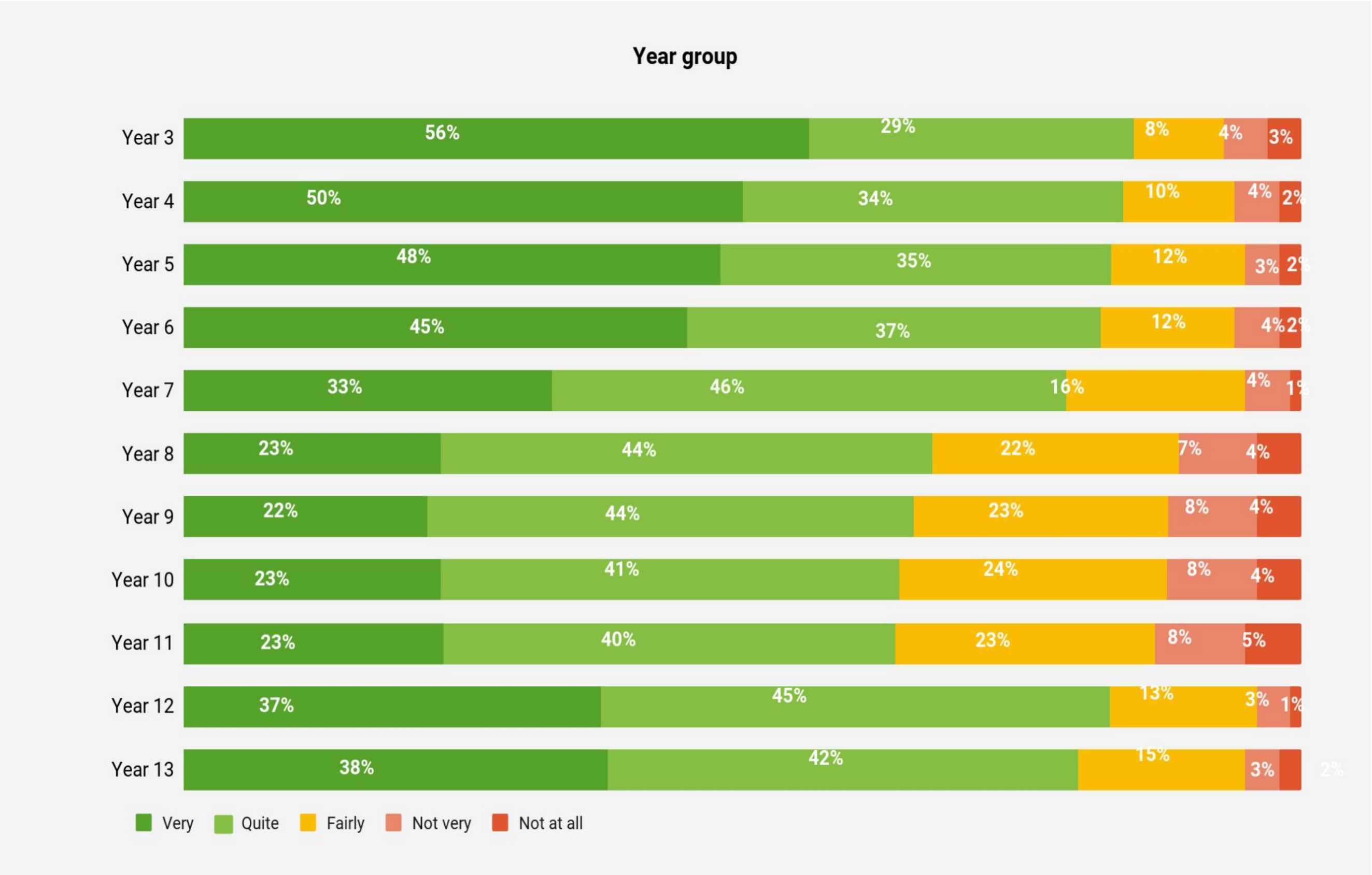
What it shows:

Feelings of safety in school and out of school drop during years 8 to 11, and rise again in sixth form. Online, feelings of safety generally increase as pupils get older.

Questions to ask SLT:

- 1. **Primary schools:** what support are we giving to year 6 pupils transitioning to secondary school around how to manage experiences when they don't feel safe?
- 2. **Secondary schools:** how are we adapting our safeguarding support for pupils as they move up the school?

Recently (in the last 6 months) how safe have you felt at school?



Sample 68,214

Gender identity and feelings of safety



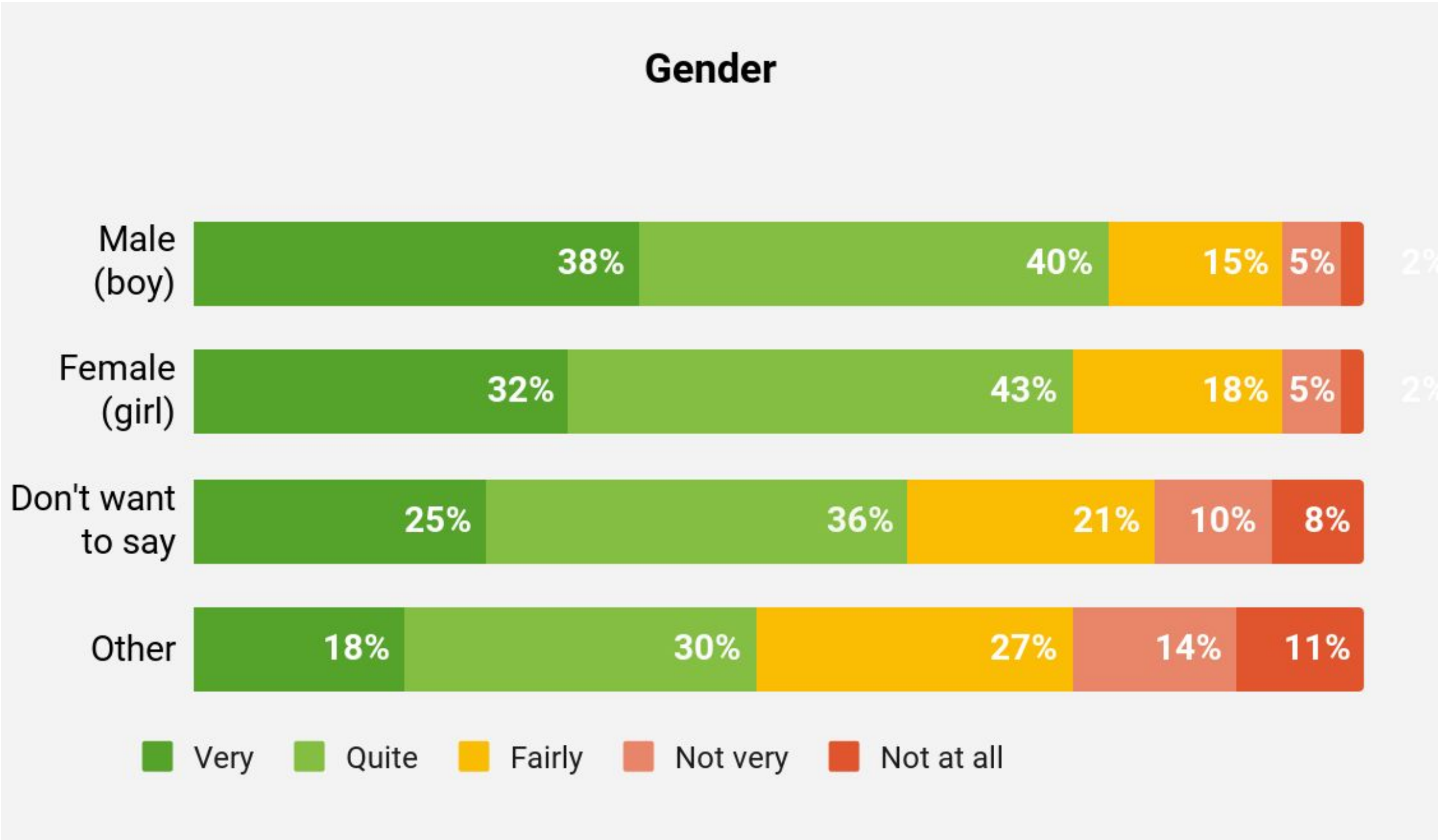
What it shows:

There are significant differences between pupils of different genders: pupils with a gender identity other than male or female have lower feelings of safety than boys or girls.

Questions to ask SLT:

- 1. *How are we ensuring that the school is an inclusive and safe environment for pupils of all genders?*
- 2. *Do we have a policy for supporting pupils who do not identify as male or female? If not, would this benefit our setting?*

Recently (in the last 6 months) how safe have you felt at school?



Male 27815 - Female 27324 - Don't want to say 1410 - Other 1285

Sexual orientation & feelings of safety



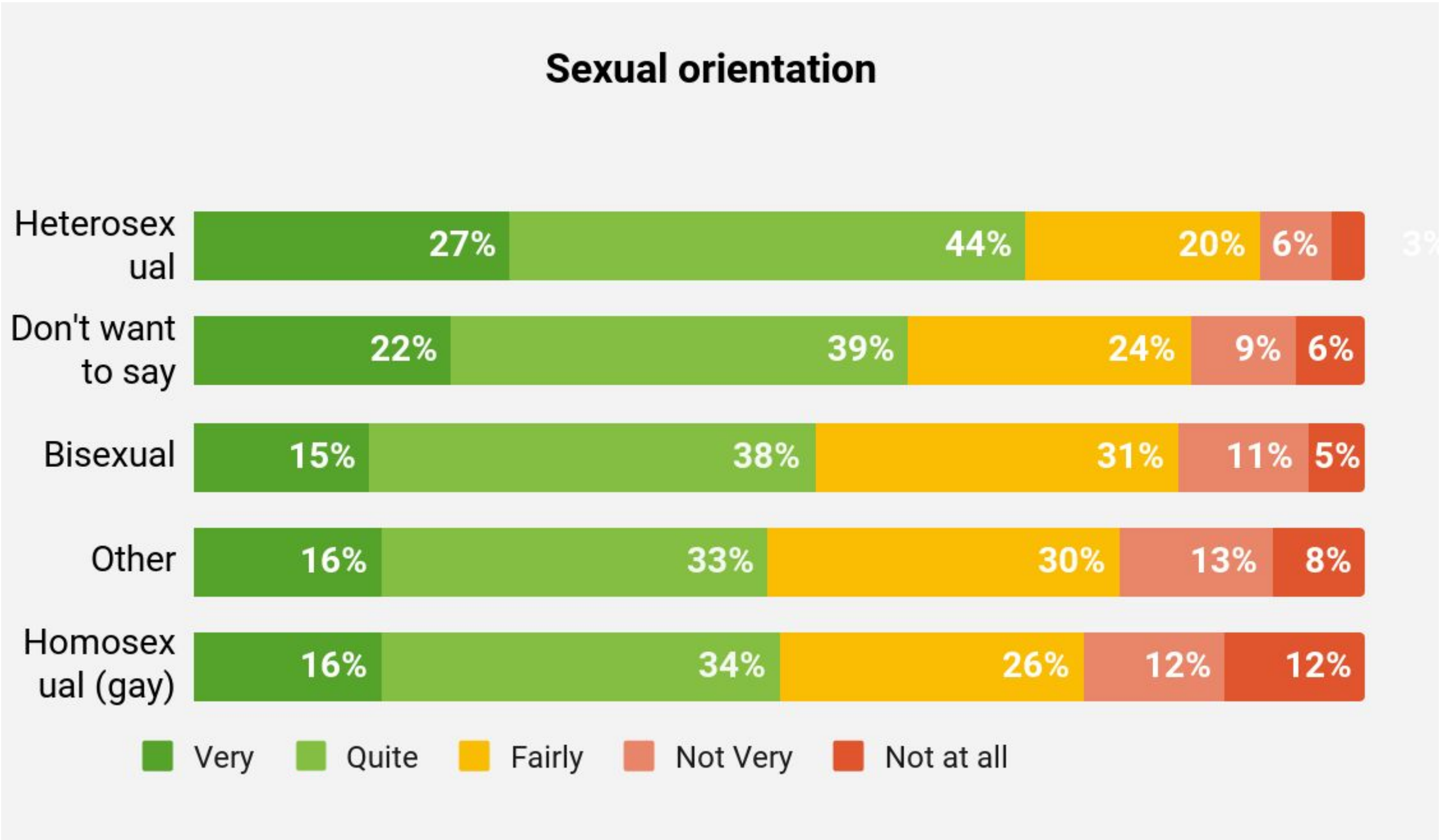
What it shows:

Pupils who identify as homosexual or bisexual have lower feelings of safety than pupils who identify as heterosexual.

Questions to ask SLT:

- 1. *How are we ensuring that our school is an inclusive and safe environment for pupils of all sexual orientations?*
- 2. *Do we have a policy for supporting pupils of all sexual orientations? If not, would this benefit our setting?*

Recently (in the last 6 months) how safe have you felt at school?



Heterosexual 15952 - Don't want to say 1075 - Bisexual 1608 - Other 969 - Homosexual 840

School absence with sexual orientation & gender identity

What it shows:

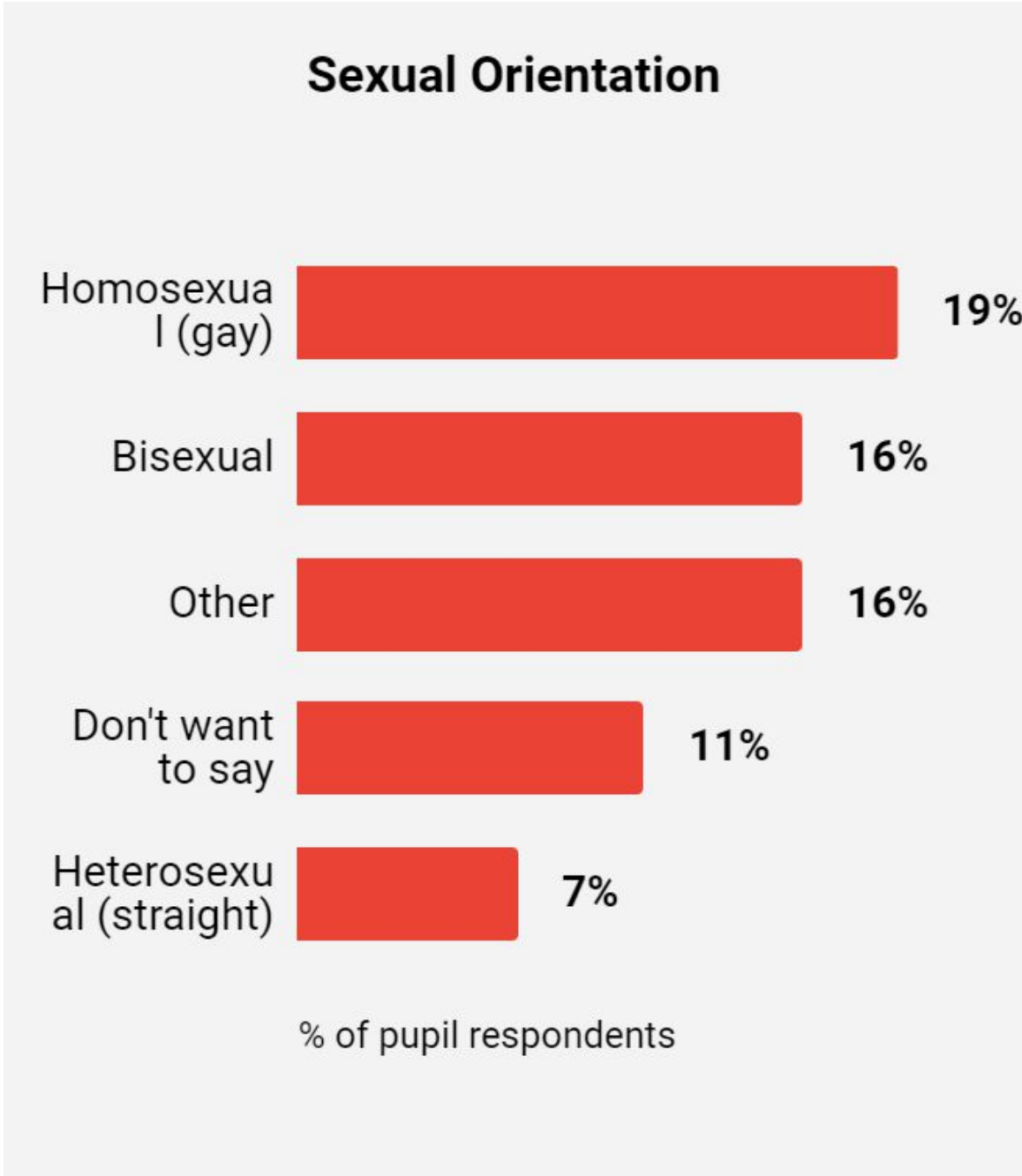
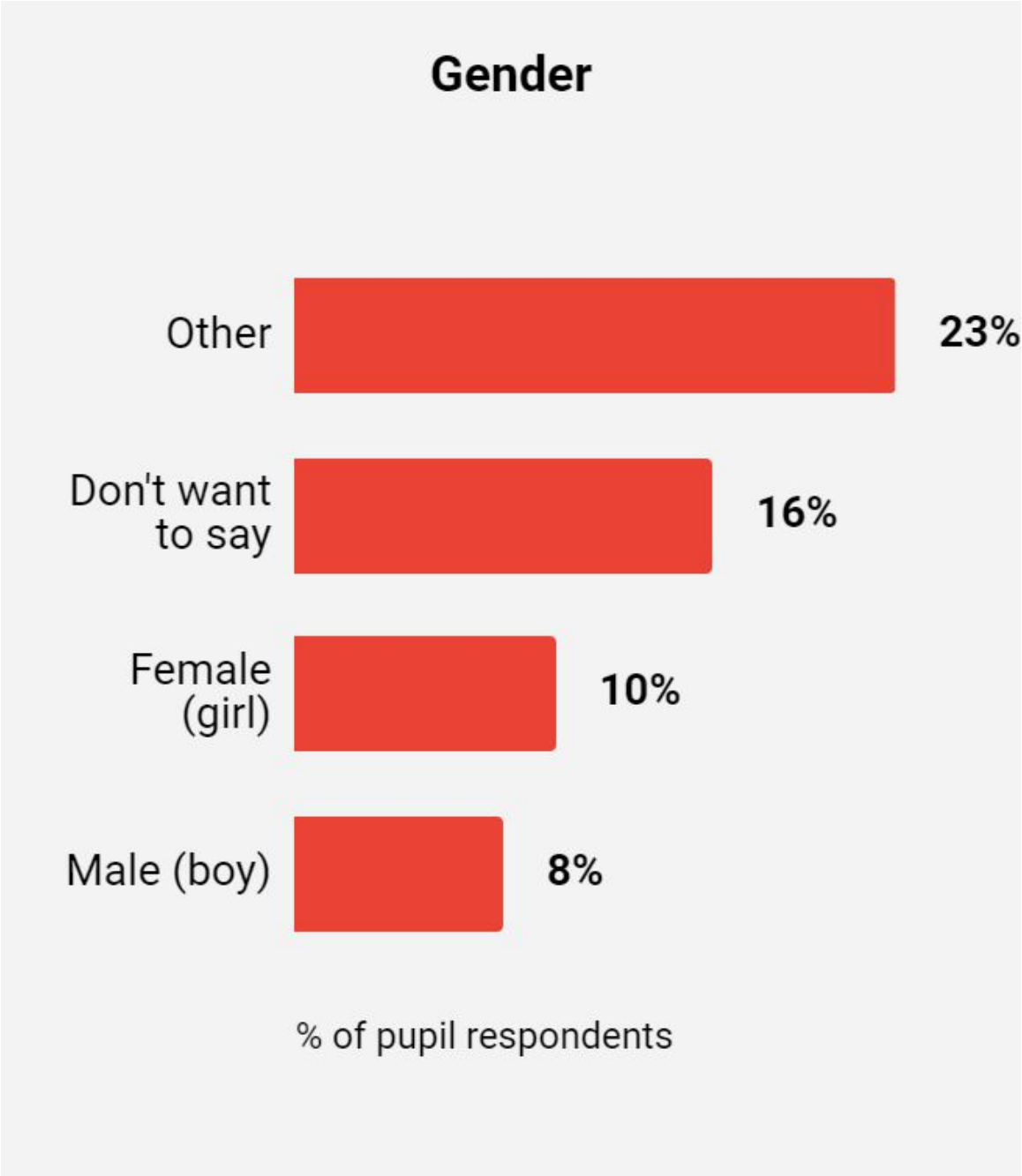
While 10% of pupils overall have missed school because they've felt unsafe, this proportion is far higher for pupils who identify with a gender other than male or female, of whom 23% have missed school.

For pupils who identify as gay, the proportion who've missed school because they felt unsafe is 19%, and for pupils identifying as bisexual, this is 16%. This is significantly higher than the overall average for pupils in England (9%).

Question to ask SLT:

- 1. *How easy or difficult would it be for the school to collect data on absence by pupils' gender identity and sexual orientation?*

Recently (in the last 6 months) have you missed school because you felt unsafe?



Sample 5,269

Knowledge of what to do



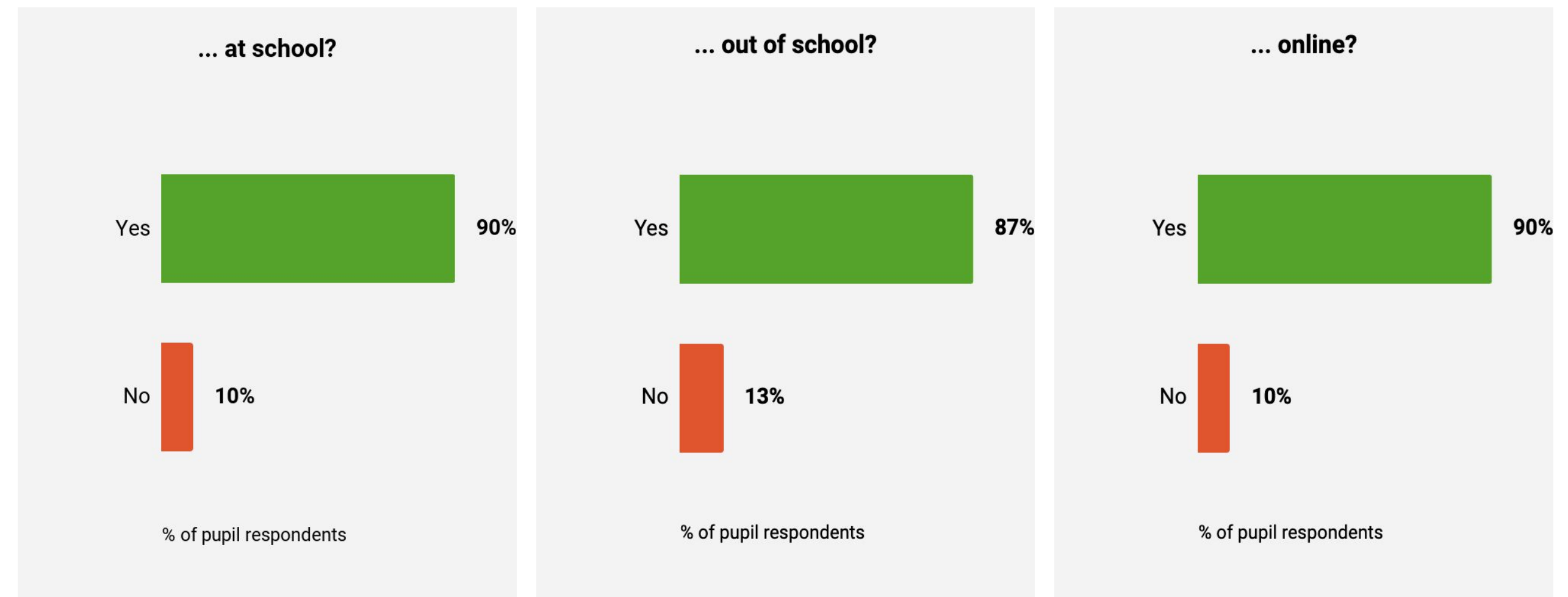
What it shows:

The majority of pupils feel confident they know what to do if someone makes them feel unsafe at school, out of school or online. However, with around 1 in 10 pupils reporting no in answer to this question, this means around 3 pupils out of a class of 30 don't know what to do if they feel unsafe.

Questions to ask SLT:

1. *Do pupils learn about what to do if someone makes them feel unsafe in all contexts (at school, out of school, online)?*
2. *How do we check their understanding of this, and how frequently do you do this?*

Do you know what to do if someone makes you feel unsafe...?



Sample 68,214

Telling an adult



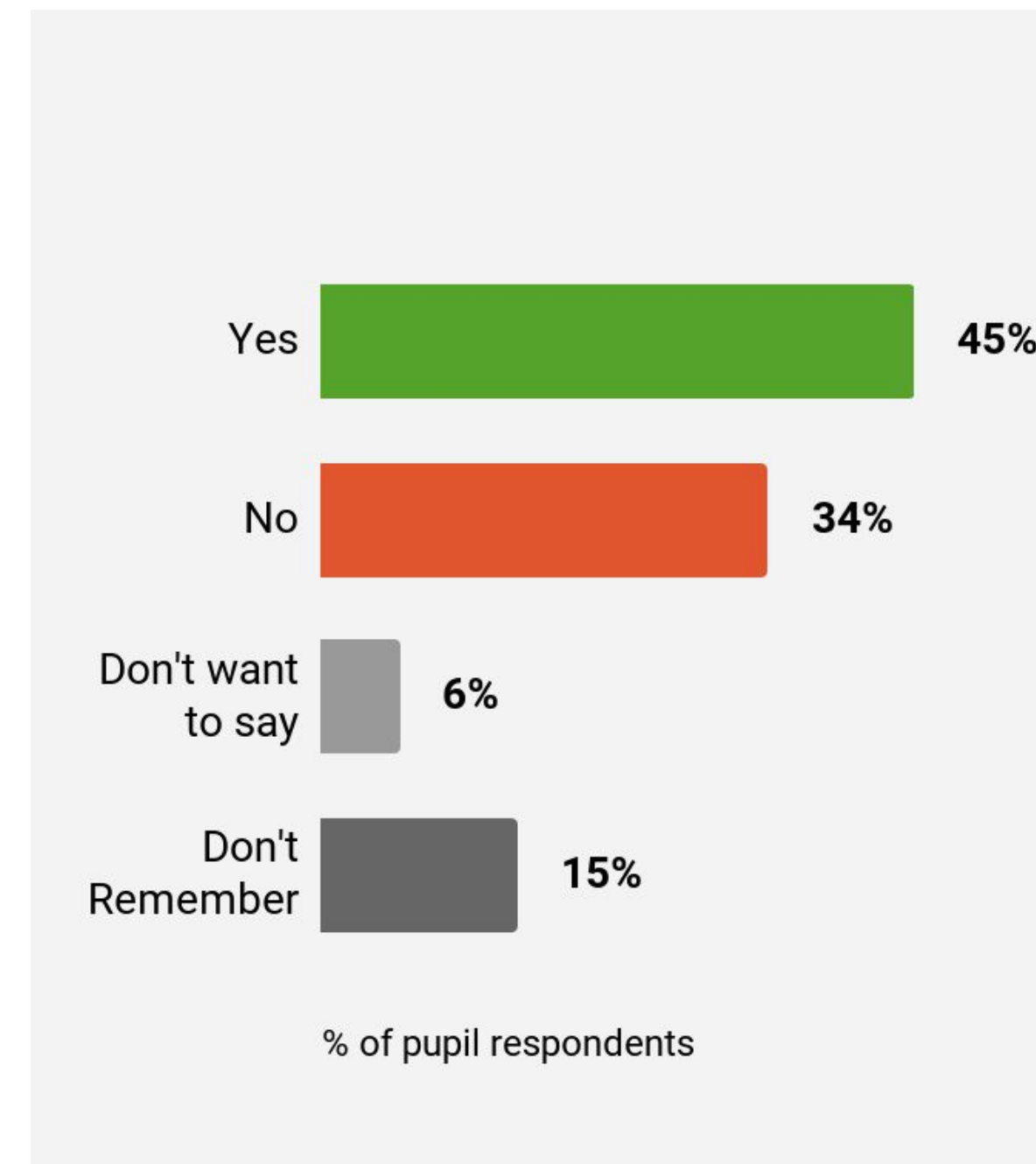
What it shows:

Only a quarter of those who have felt unsafe reported it to an adult at school. 45% of pupils who felt unsafe told an adult outside of school.

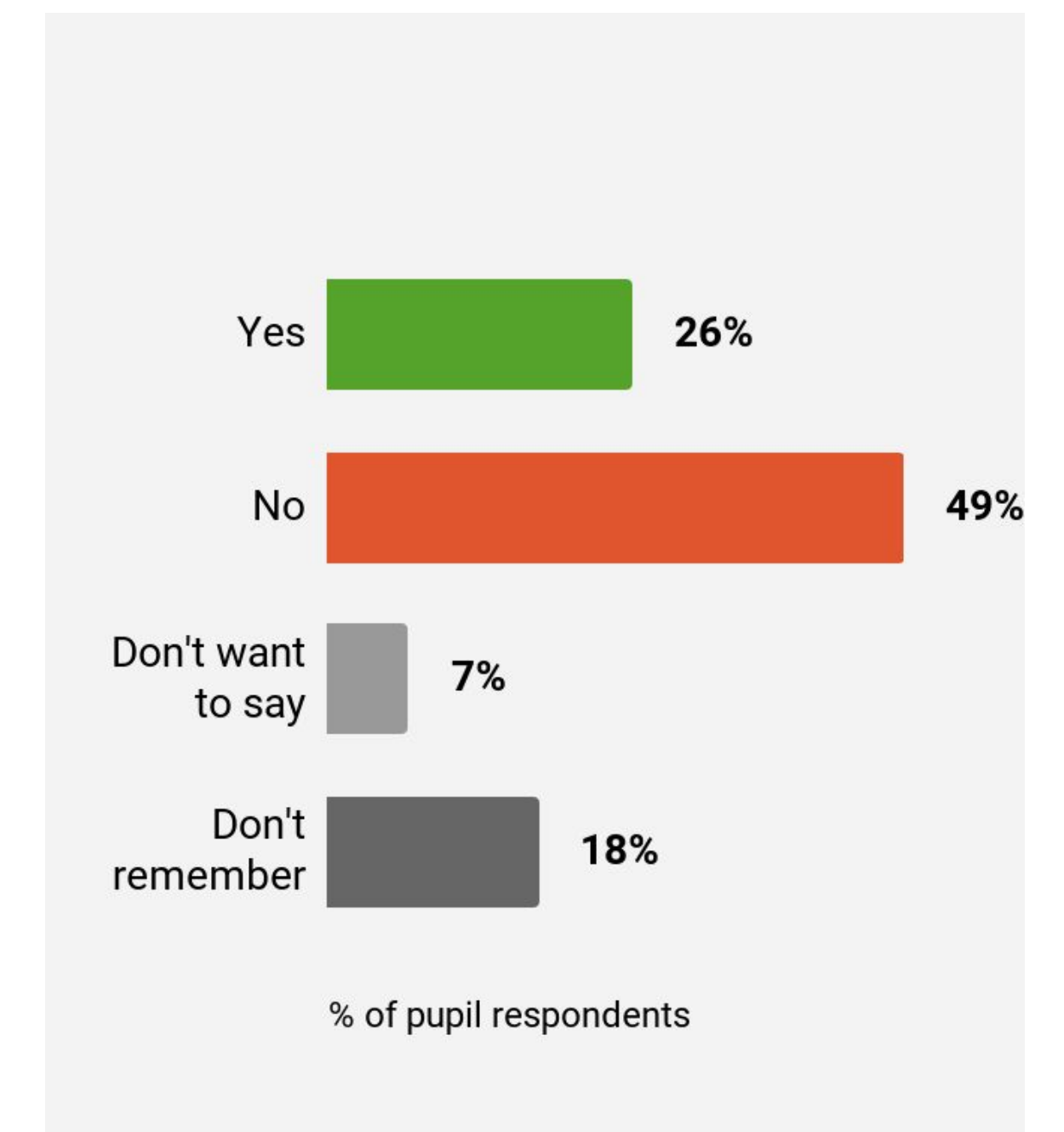
Questions to ask SLT:

1. *What mechanisms do we have in place to support pupils to report if they feel unsafe?*
2. *Are there frequent, diverse opportunities for pupils to report feeling unsafe in school in ways that are confidential and inclusive, and engender a feeling of being “heard”?*

When you felt unsafe, did you tell any adults at school about it?



When you felt unsafe, did you tell any adults outside of school about it?



Sample 15,145

We're here to support you

The Key is the leading support service providing schools and trusts with high-quality guidance that goes further to tackle issues at a deeper level and from all angles. Our Whole School approach gives leaders one trusted source to turn to for any challenge, equipping you with highly-accurate, expertly-synthesised and context-rich resources, guidance and CPD. Because driving lasting change always requires a considered approach.

Our mission to support schools and trusts to get safeguarding right

We know that safeguarding children is a primary concern for school staff, and something we all need to get right. It's a collective responsibility that's complex, sensitive and takes so much more than an outstanding designated safeguarding lead. It takes the whole team - and for this, you need comprehensive knowledge and wrap-around support that everyone can lean in to.

That's why we're pleased to have partnered with Edurio to get pupils' perspectives on their feelings of safety - for the first time - which we believe can transform how all of us in the sector look at safeguarding. And as we share the findings of this review, we're committed to using the insights from pupils themselves to help shape the guidance, support and training schools and trusts need to get safeguarding right for every pupil.

Contact us to learn more about how we can support your school to build a culture of safeguarding. Email us at enquiries@thekeysupport.com.



www.thekeysupport.com