



**Impact of austerity measures
on second level schools**
Survey of school Principals

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Background

- After three plus years of austerity budgets, schools are having to do more with less. Austerity has become embedded in the education system. Schools have less teachers, less money, eroded in-school management structures -and all the while, student numbers continue to rise from 341,312 in 2008/2009 to 356,107 in 2010/2011.
- Simultaneously, the pace of educational change continues to accelerate. Project Maths commenced in all schools in September 2010, while all schools are now preparing for the introduction of the National Literacy & Numeracy Strategy in September 2012 and for a significantly revised Junior Cycle curriculum in September 2014.

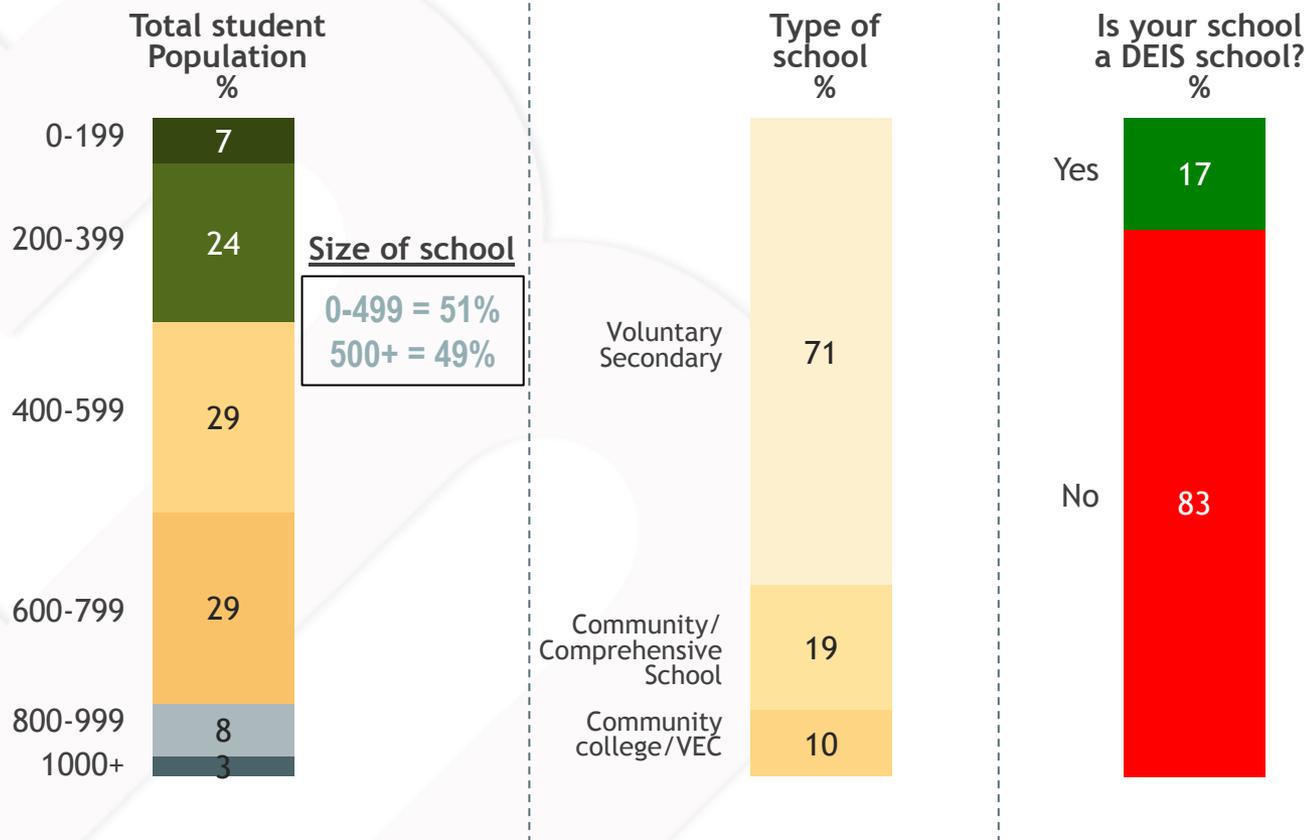
- This presentation reviews the findings of a survey of second-level school principals carried out on behalf of the Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI) by Millward Brown Lansdowne in February/March 2012.
- The key objectives of this study are:
 - To assess the impact of the cutbacks implemented since 2009
 - To understand the impact on Junior Cycle and the Senior Cycle programmes
 - To understand the impact of the moratorium on appointments to promotional posts
 - To assess how the change in Guidance allocation will impact on schools

Research Method

- A questionnaire was developed between Millward Brown Lansdowne and the ASTI.
- A postal self-completion survey was deemed the preferred methodology for this research.
- Pre-paid return envelopes were included in the pack and questionnaires were then posted back anonymously to Millward Brown Lansdowne. All data entry and analysis was completed by Millward Brown Lansdowne.
- 151 second level schools took part in the research.

School Population/Type- half of all schools surveyed have under 500 pupils. Smaller schools are more likely to be DEIS (disadvantaged) schools

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

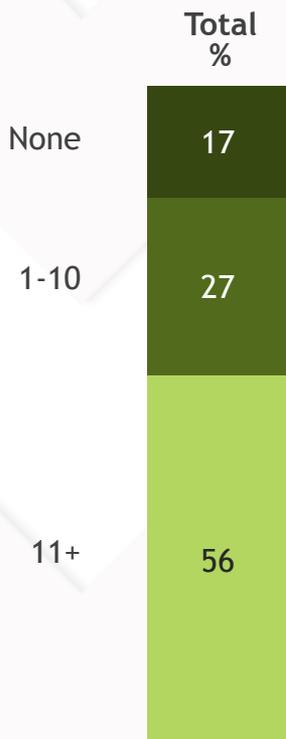


Q1. How would you describe your school?
 Q2. Is your school a DEIS school?
 Q4. Please give student numbers for the school year 2011/12

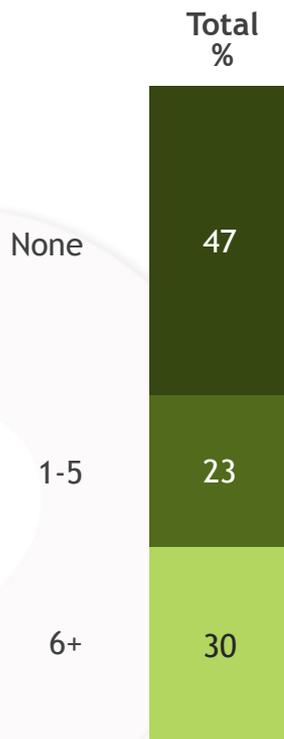
Diversity of Student Population- 8 in 10 schools have foreign national students. Just over half of all schools have Traveller students while 9 in 10 have assessed Special Needs Students

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

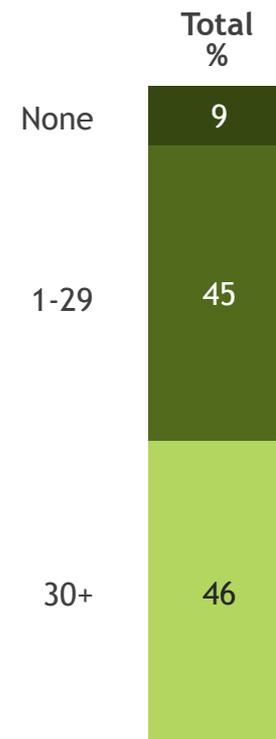
83% of schools have foreign national students



53% of schools have Traveller students



91% of schools have formally assessed Special Needs Students.



EDUCATION CUTBACKS IMPLEMENTED SINCE 2009



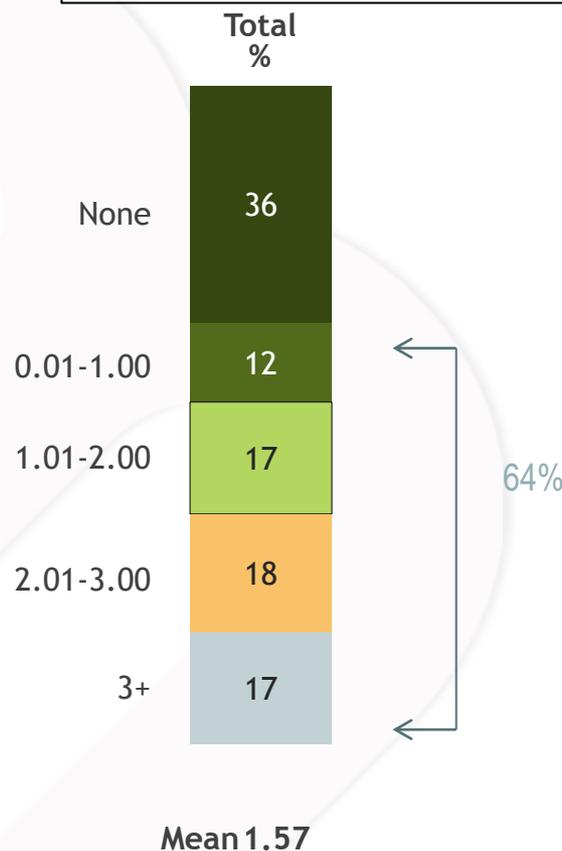
Teaching Posts Lost since 2009 - 83% of all schools have lost teaching posts. The average full-time teaching posts lost across all schools is 1.6, with larger schools hardest hit. Just over half of all schools have lost part-time teachers/hours. This is despite the fact that student numbers have increased significantly during this period (from 341,312 in 2008/09 to 356,107 in 2010/11).

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

83% of all schools have lost either full-time and/or part-time teaching posts

52% of all schools have also lost part-time teachers/hours.

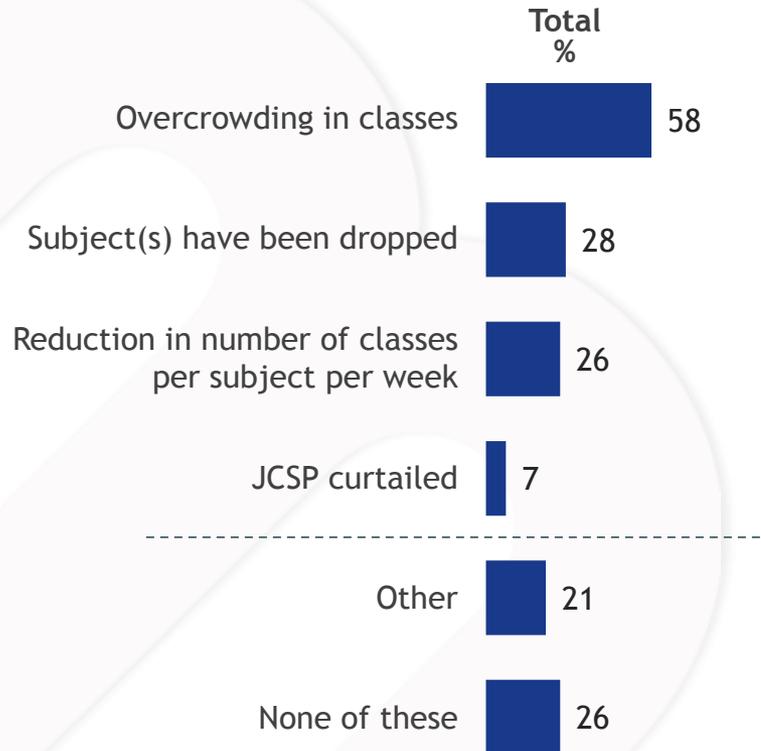
64% of all schools have lost full-time teaching posts since 2009 – rising to 71% among larger schools



Q. 5 The pupil teacher ratio (PTR) for schools was increased to 19:1 in 2009 (20:1 in fee paying schools). Schools have also had reductions in Special Needs posts, EAL posts and Traveller teacher posts. A Redeployment Scheme has also been in operation since September 2011. Taking all these changes into consideration, how many teaching posts have been lost in your school since 2009?

Since 2009, cutbacks have impacted on **Junior Cycle** students - Overcrowding in classes is biggest problem

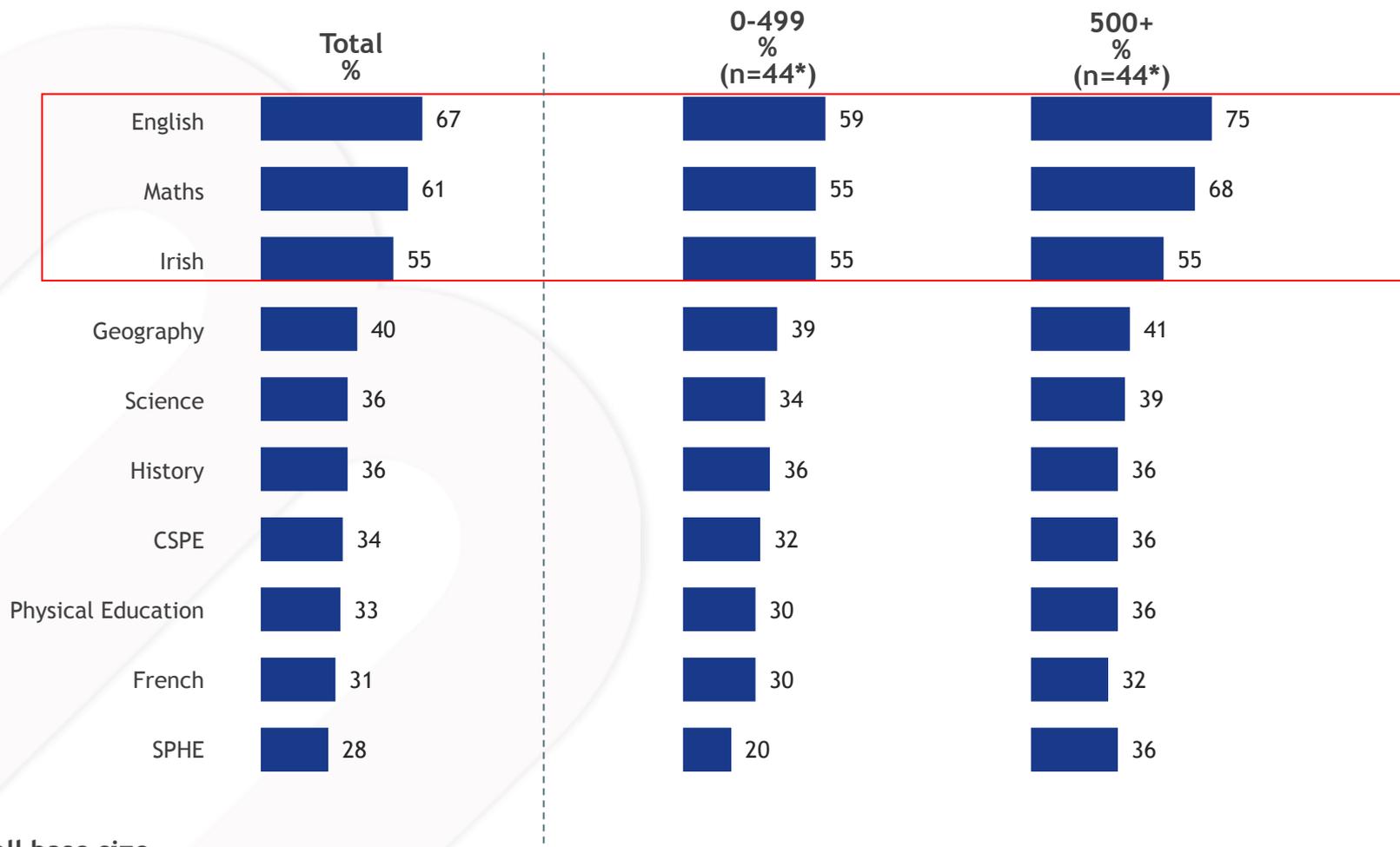
(Base: Total Sample n=151)



Students are in overcrowded classes in the core subjects of English, Maths and Irish. Greater levels of overcrowding in classes among larger schools

(Base: All affected by Overcrowding in classes in Junior Cycle subjects n=88)

Overcrowding by school size

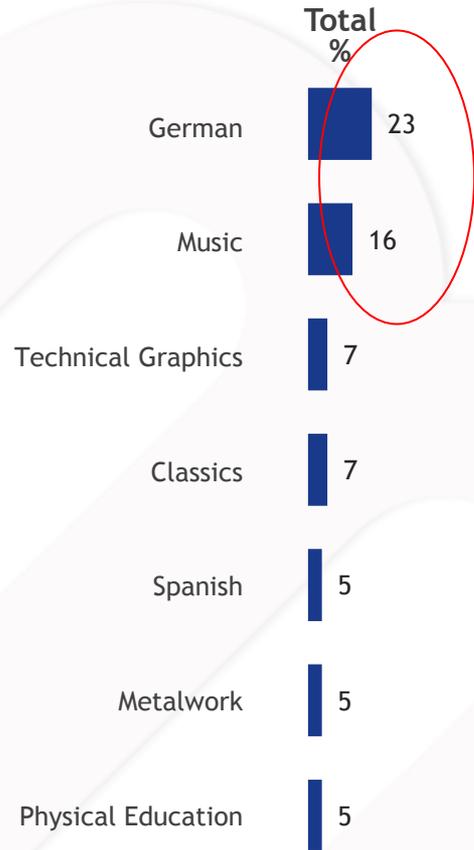


***Caution small base size**
Only top 10 shown

Q.7 We are interested in finding out which subjects in your school are overcrowded since 2009 as a result of the cutbacks. Please complete the below table identifying which Junior Cycle subjects have been affected.

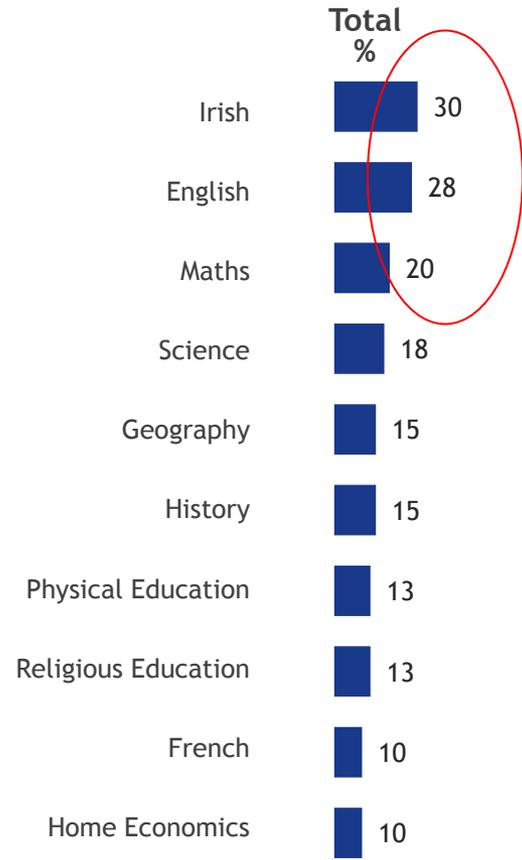
Junior Cycle Subjects Dropped- German and Music most likely to have been dropped. Reduction in timetabled classes for core subjects - Irish, English and Maths classes

(Base: Dropped Junior Cycle subjects n=43*)



*Caution small base size
Under 5% not shown

(Base: Reduced classes in Junior Cycle subjects n=40*)

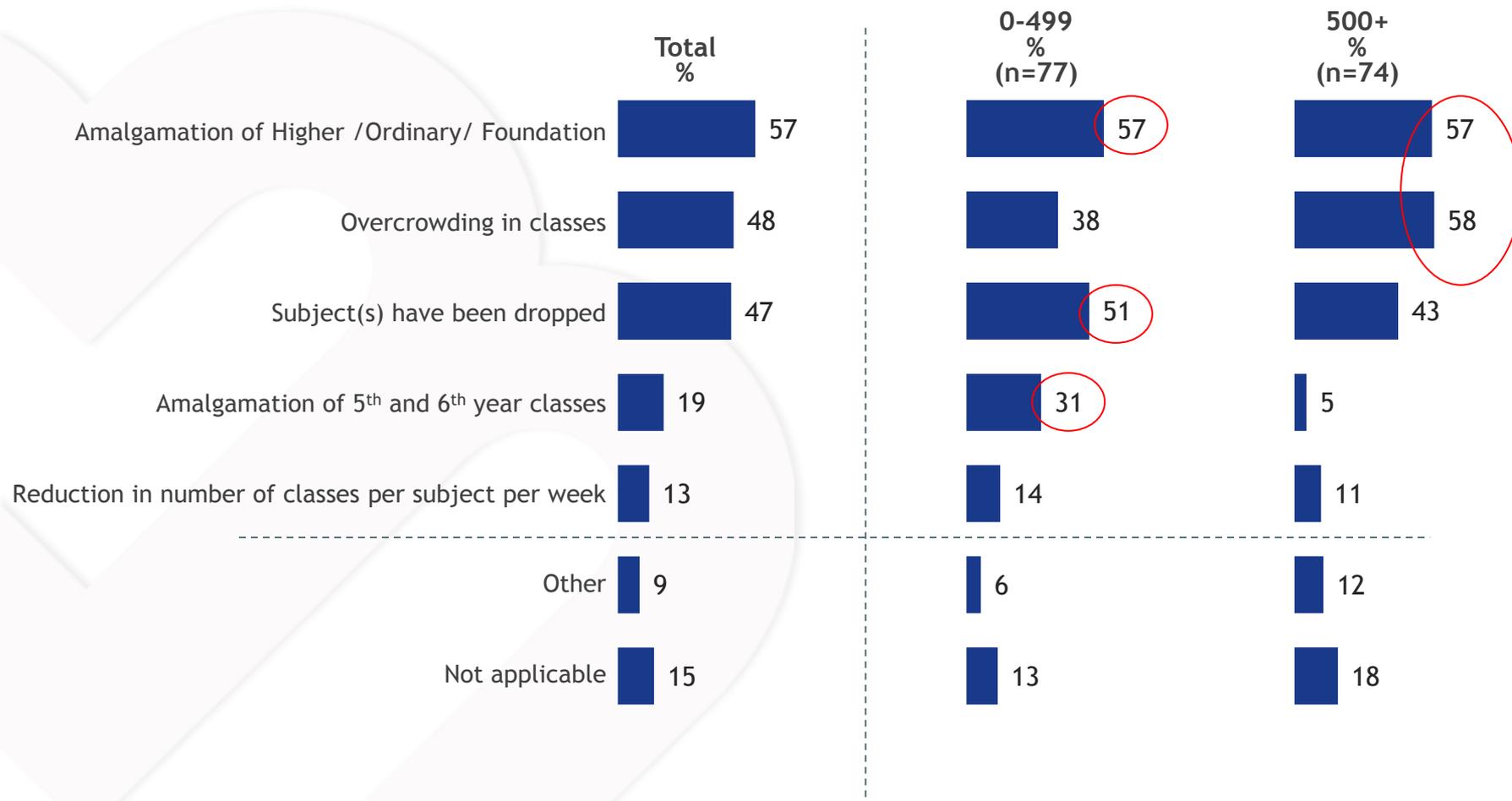


*Caution small base size
Under 10% not shown

Since 2009, cutbacks have affected **Leaving Certificate** students - Amalgamation of class levels is the biggest problem, followed by overcrowded classrooms. Overcrowding is much more of an issue among larger schools while amalgamating 5th and 6th year classes is more prominent in smaller schools

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

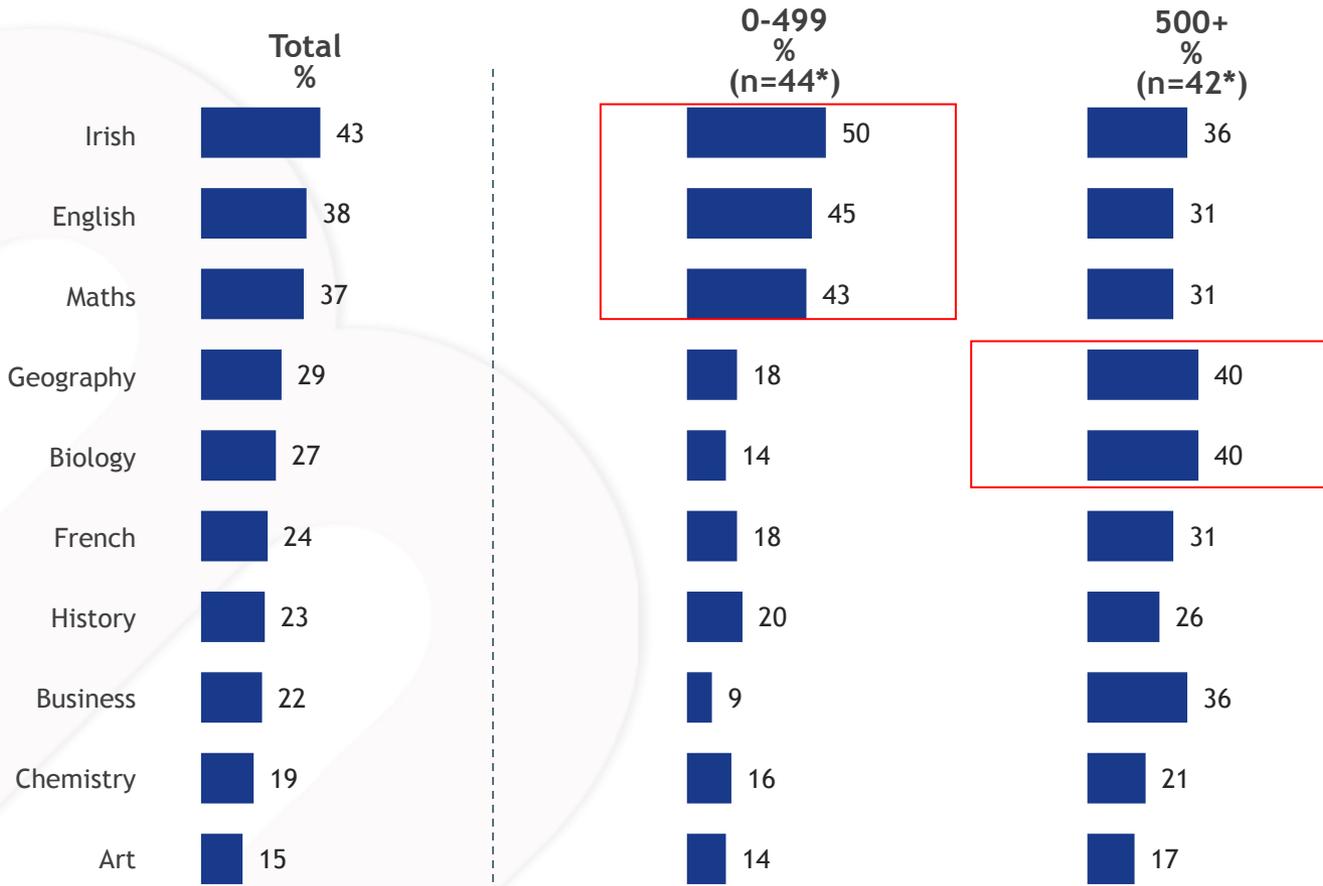
Impact of cutbacks on Leaving Certificate Programme by school size



Leaving Certificate core classes in Irish, English and Maths most affected by amalgamation in smaller schools, with Geography and Biology most affected in larger schools

(Base: All affected by amalgamation of levels in Leaving Cert Programme n=86)

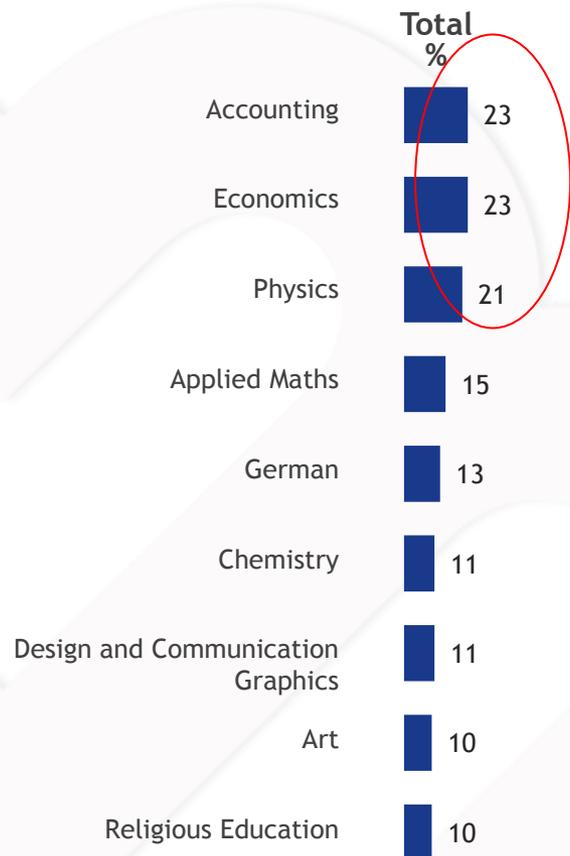
Amalgamation by school size



*Caution small base size
Only top 10 shown

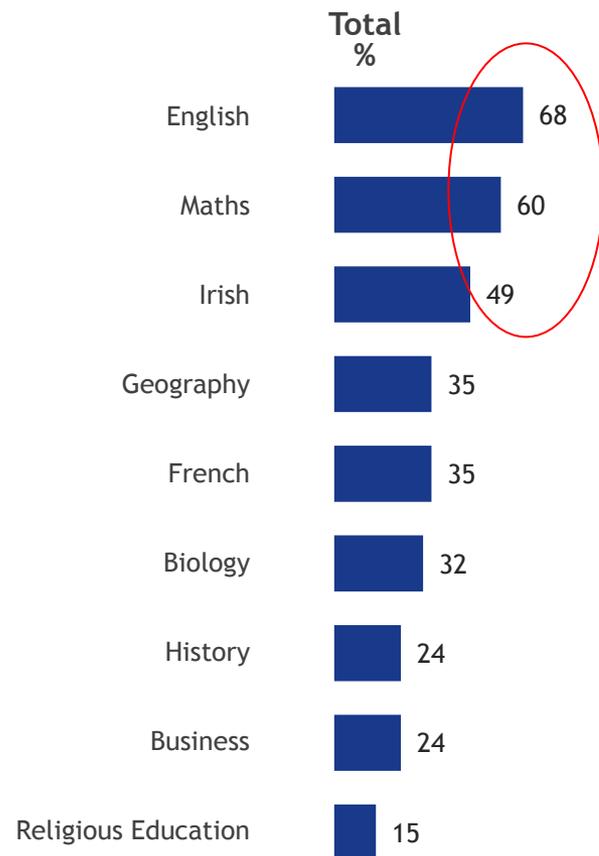
Leaving Certificate subjects dropped and affected by overcrowding: Accounting, Economics and Physics most likely subjects to have been dropped. English, Maths and Irish most likely to be overcrowded

(Base: All dropped Leaving Certificate subjects n=71)



Under 10% not shown

(Base: All with overcrowding in Leaving Certificate classes n=72)

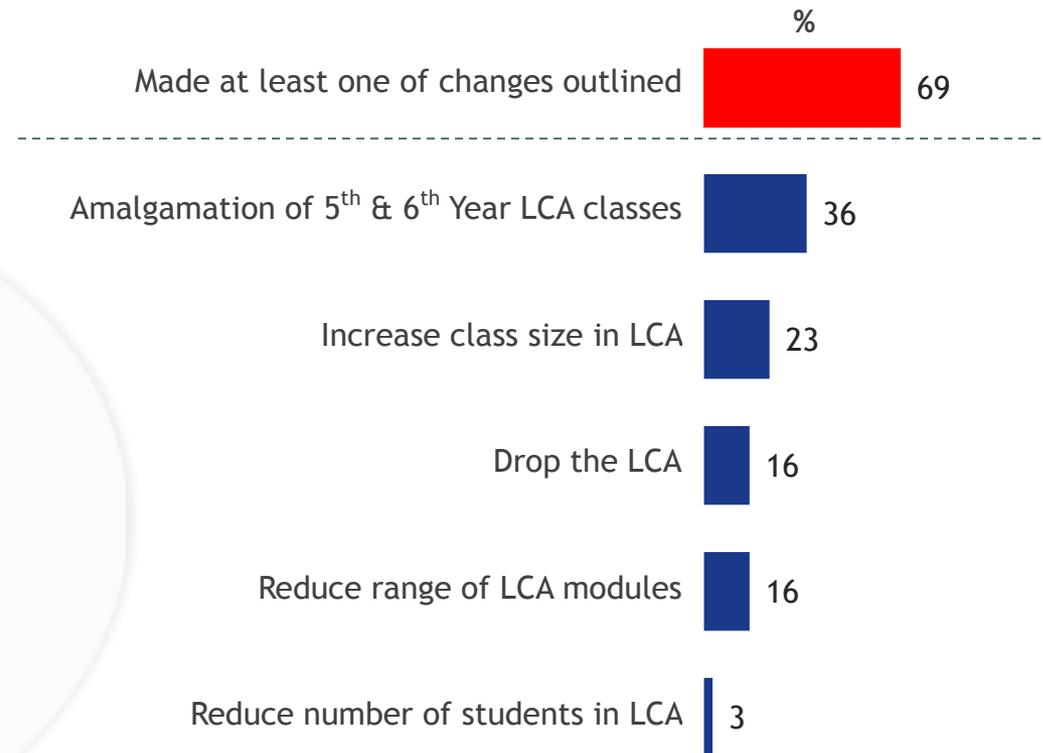
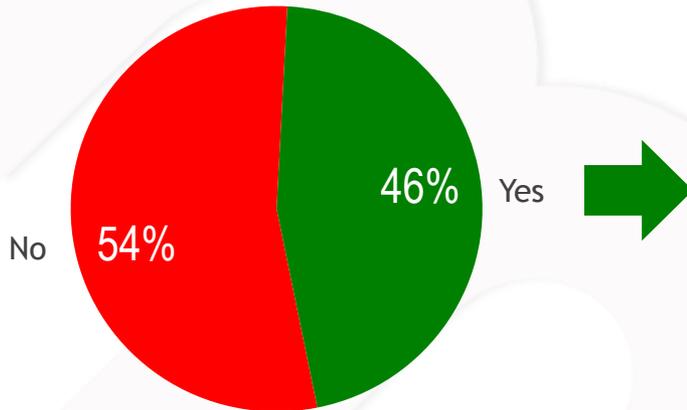


Under 15% not shown

Leaving Cert Applied Programme - 69% of schools with the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme restricted the programme as a result of cutbacks

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

(Base: All who offer Leaving Certificate Applied Programme n=70)



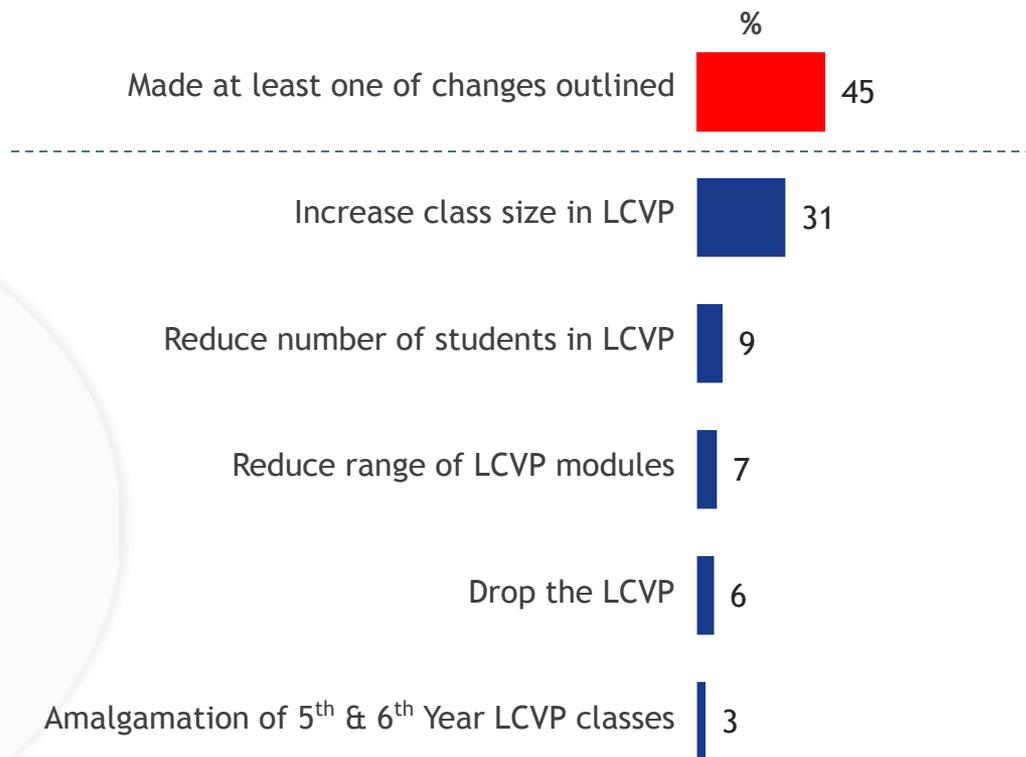
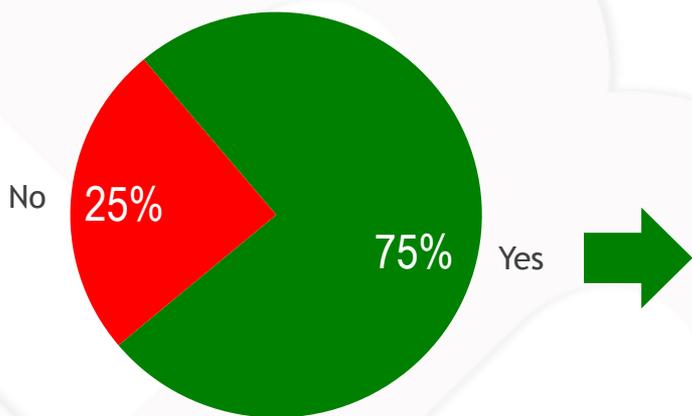
Q. 10a Does your school offer the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme?

Q10b) As a result of cutbacks, did your school make any of the changes listed below in the current school year:

Leaving Cert Vocational Programme - 45% of schools providing the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme restricted the programme as a result of cutbacks

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

(Base: All who offer Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme n=113)

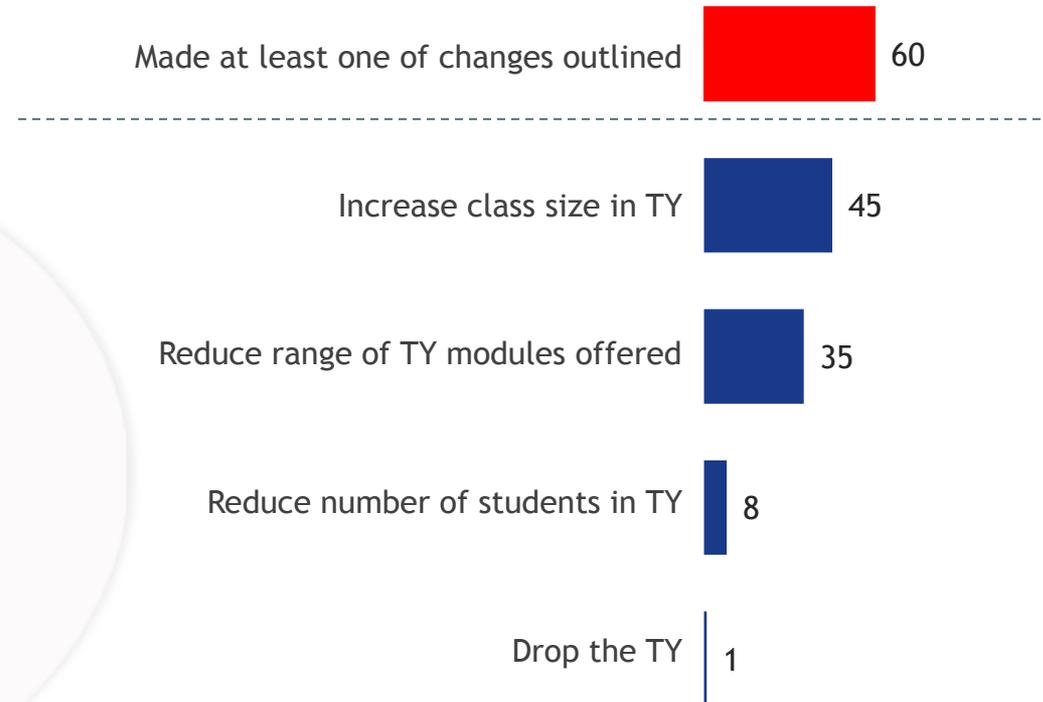
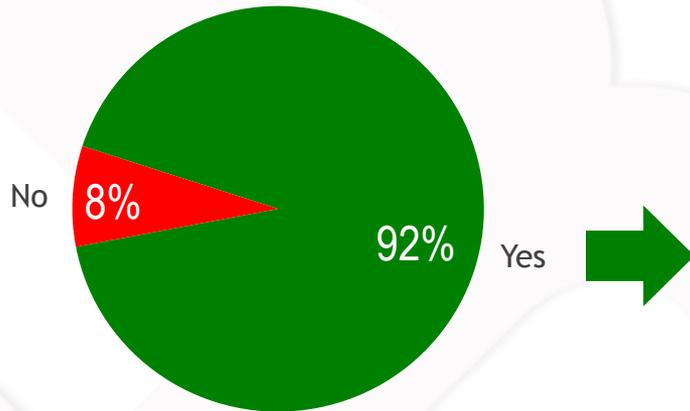


Q11a) Does your school offer the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme?
 Q.11b) As a result of cutbacks, did your school in current school year do any of the following?

Transition Year Programme - 60% of all schools providing the Transition Year have restricted the programme as a result of cutbacks

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

(Base: All who offer Transition Year Programme n=139)



Q12a) Does your school offer the Transition Year Programme?

Q.12b) As a result of cutbacks, did your school in current school year do any of the following?

POSTS OF RESPONSIBILITY



Promotional Posts lost since Moratorium - almost all schools have lost promotional posts, larger schools most affected

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

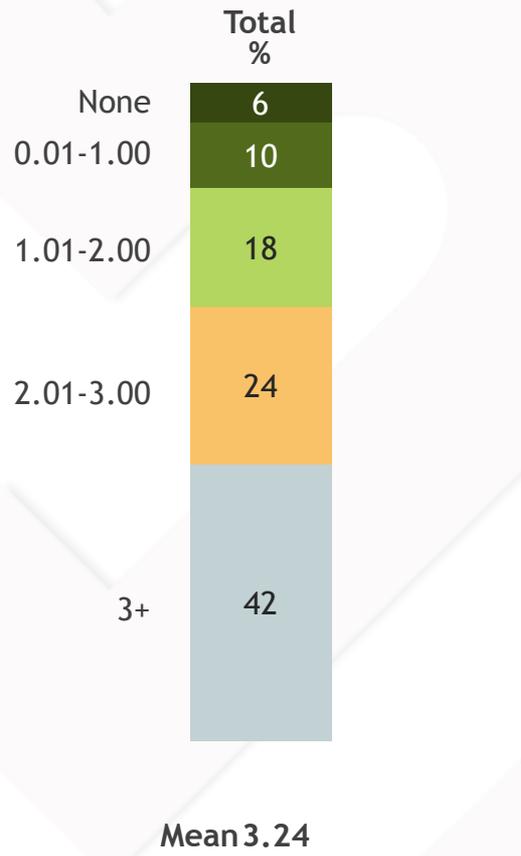
93% of all schools have lost promotional posts



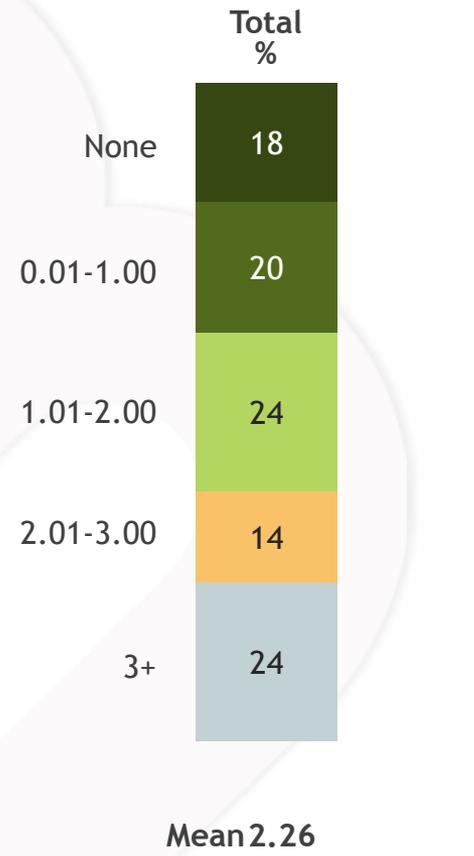
Promotional Posts lost - 94% have lost Assistant Principal promotional posts while 82% have lost Special Duties promotional posts.
 Since Alleviation - 3 in 10 of those schools that lost promotional posts have regained some posts, rising to 4 in 10 in larger schools

(Base: All who have lost promotional posts n=141)

94% of all schools have lost Assistant Principal promotional posts



82% of all schools have lost Special Duties promotional posts

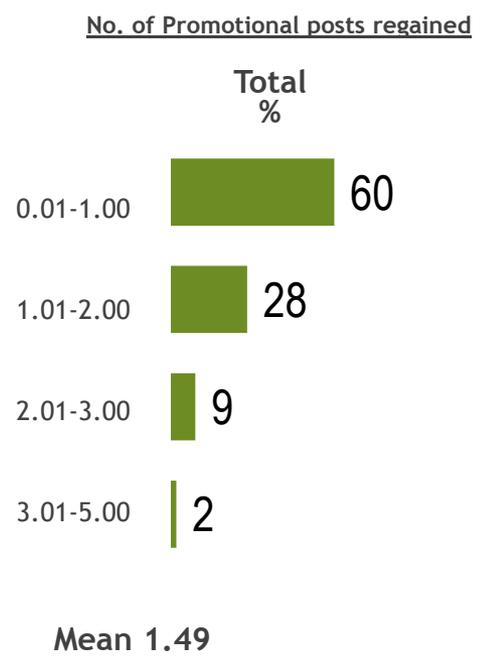


(Base: All who have lost promotional posts n=141)

70% of schools that lost promotional posts have not regained any



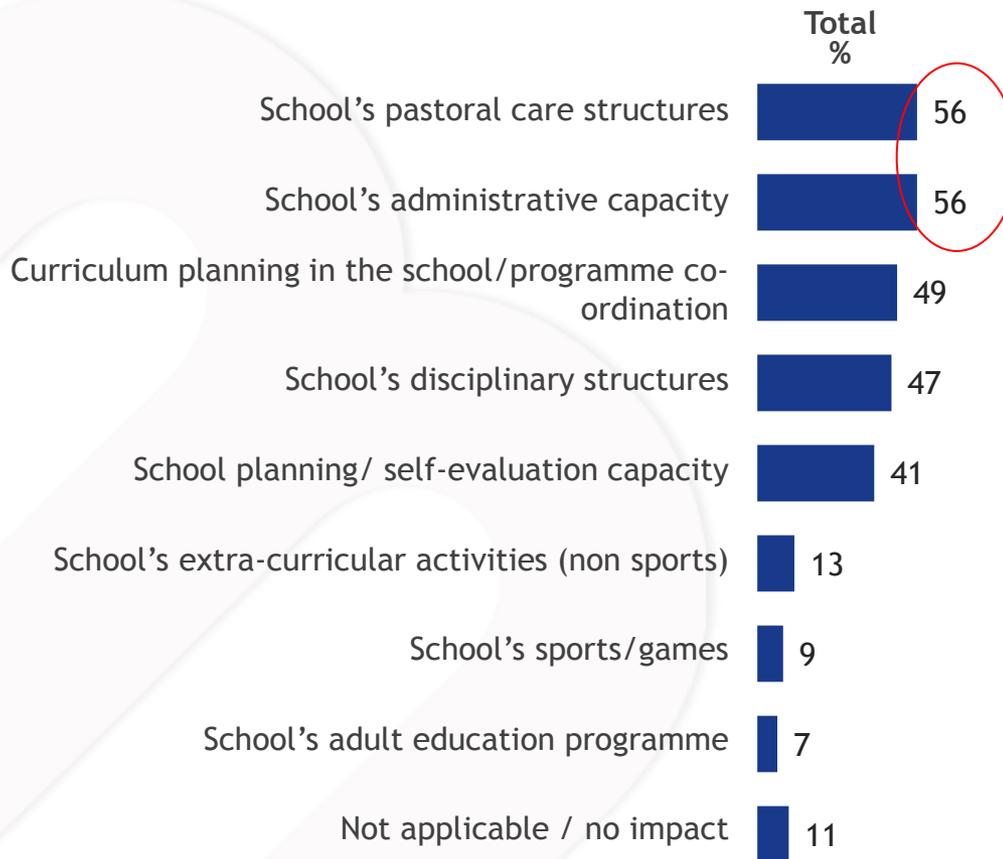
(Base: All regained promotional posts n=43*)



*Caution small base size

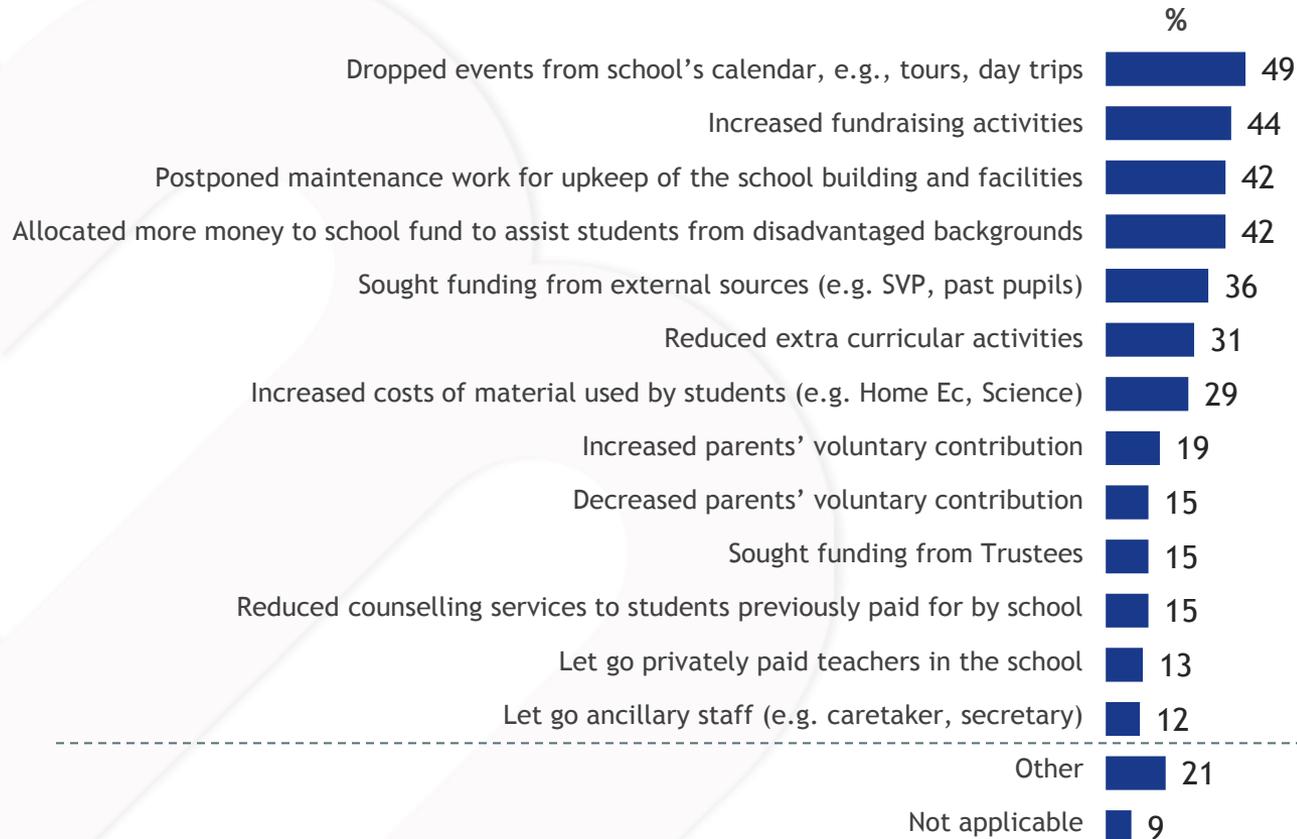
Impact of Moratorium - pastoral structures and administrative capacity most affected

(Base: Total Sample n=151)



How schools have responded to reduced budgets - 9 in 10 schools surveyed have had to implement at least one of the listed measures. Funding is a key issue

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

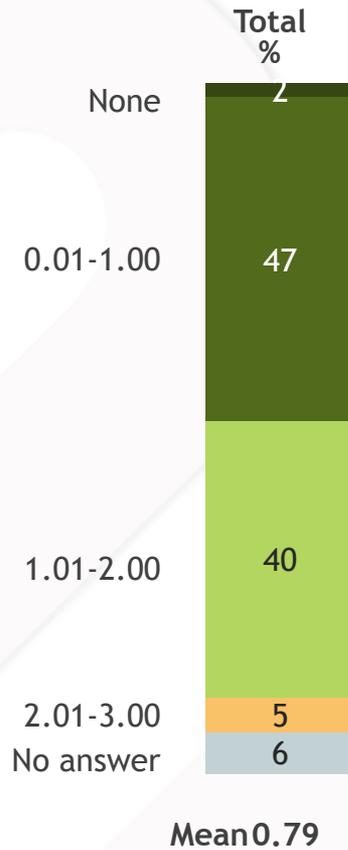


PLANNING FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR, 2012/13



Guidance Allocation will be in-quota from September 2012 - 45% of all schools will lose more than one teaching post.

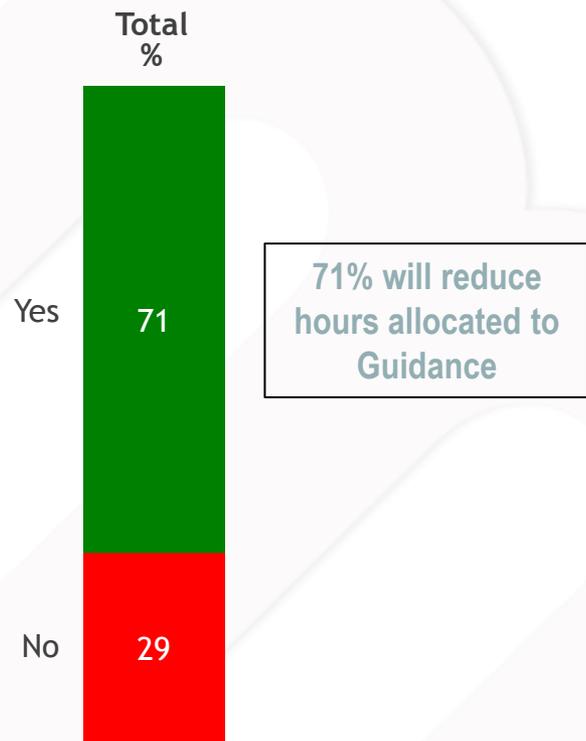
(Base: Total Sample n=151)



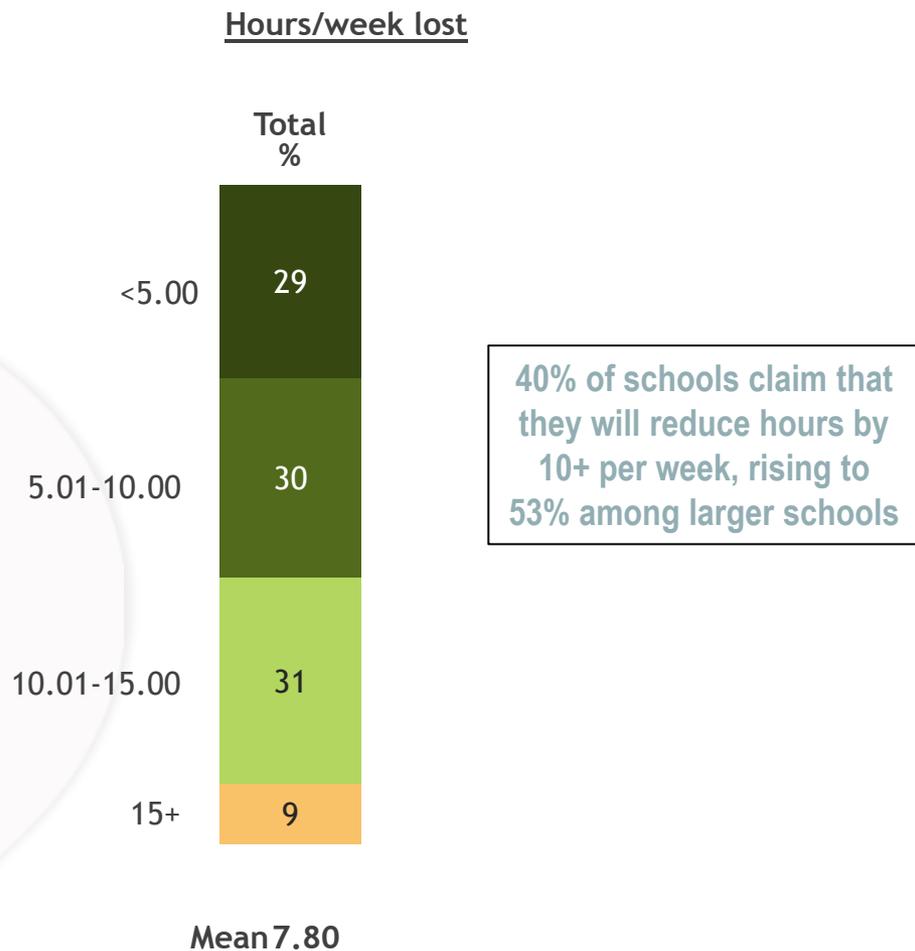
92% of all schools forecast that they will lose some guidance allocation posts.
80% of larger schools will lose more than 1 post compared to 11% of smaller schools

Hours allocated to Guidance - 71% of schools will reduce the number of hours allocated to guidance and on average 7.8 hours per week will be lost

(Base: All losing guidance posts n=139)

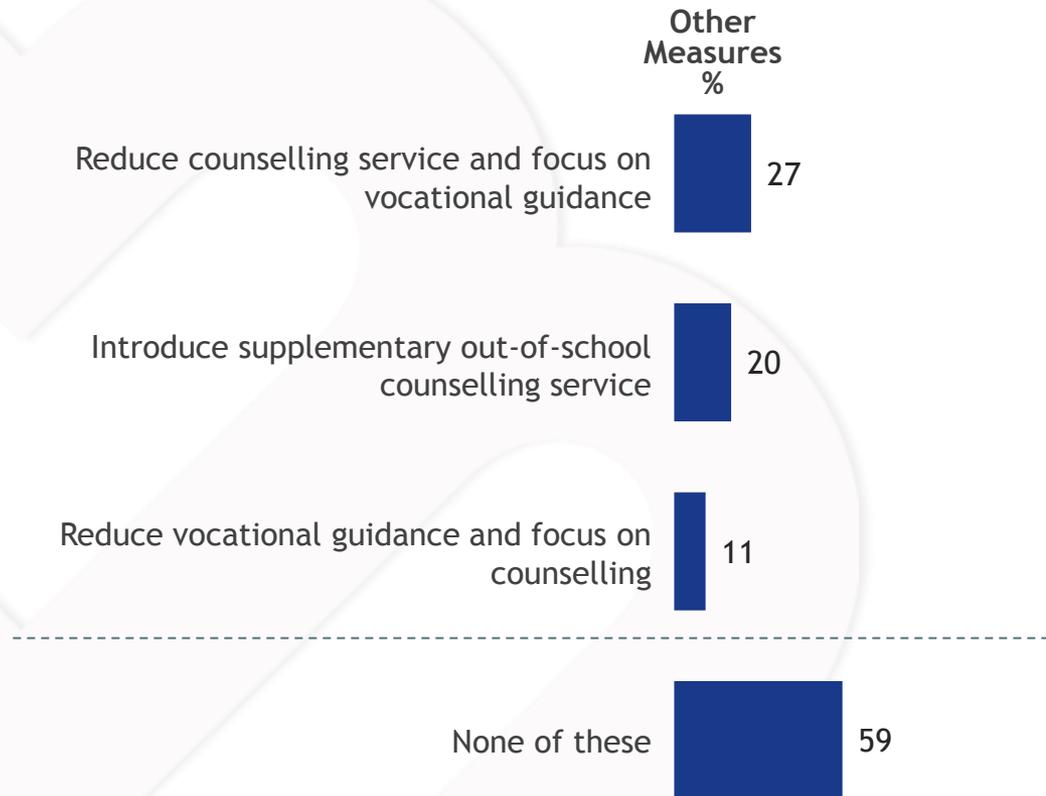


(Base: All reducing hours n=99)



Hours allocated to Guidance: Alternative measures to cutting Guidance

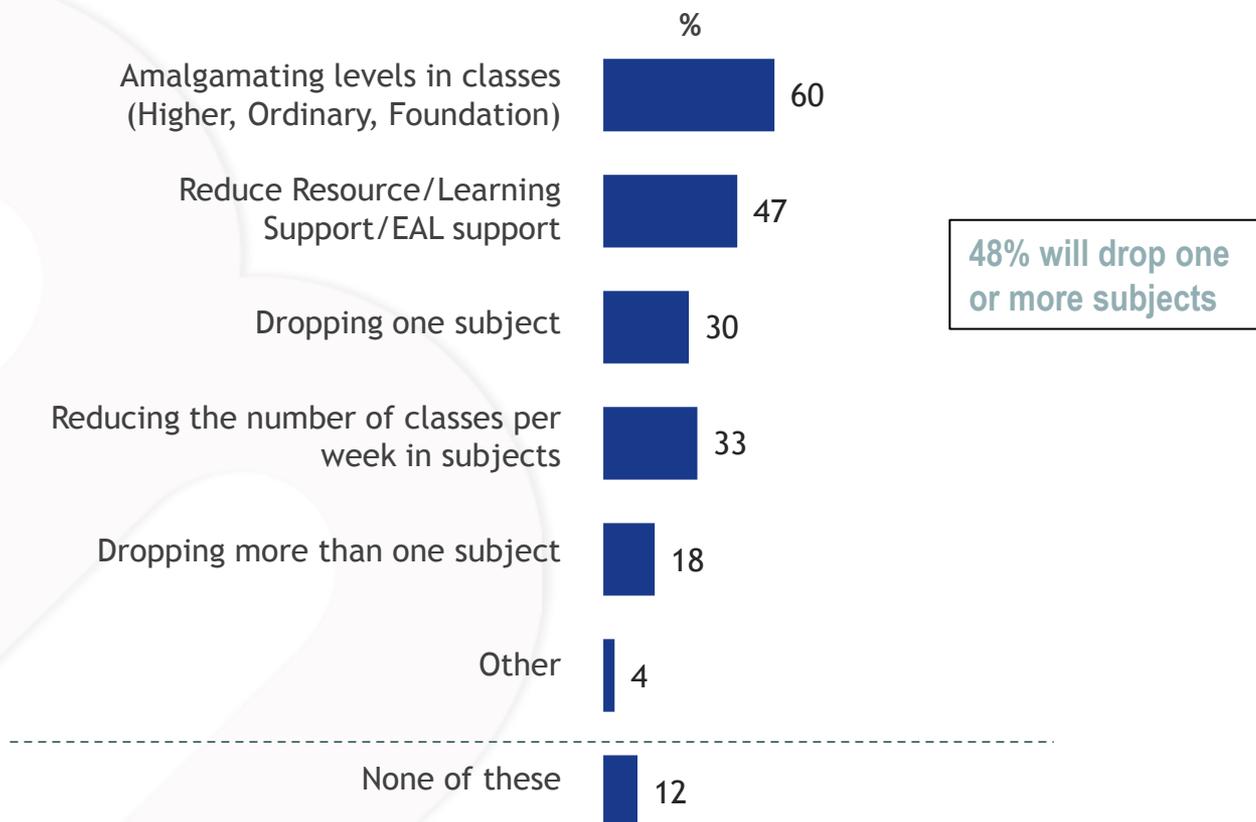
(Base: All those who do not plan to cut guidance allocation hours n=40*)



*caution: small base

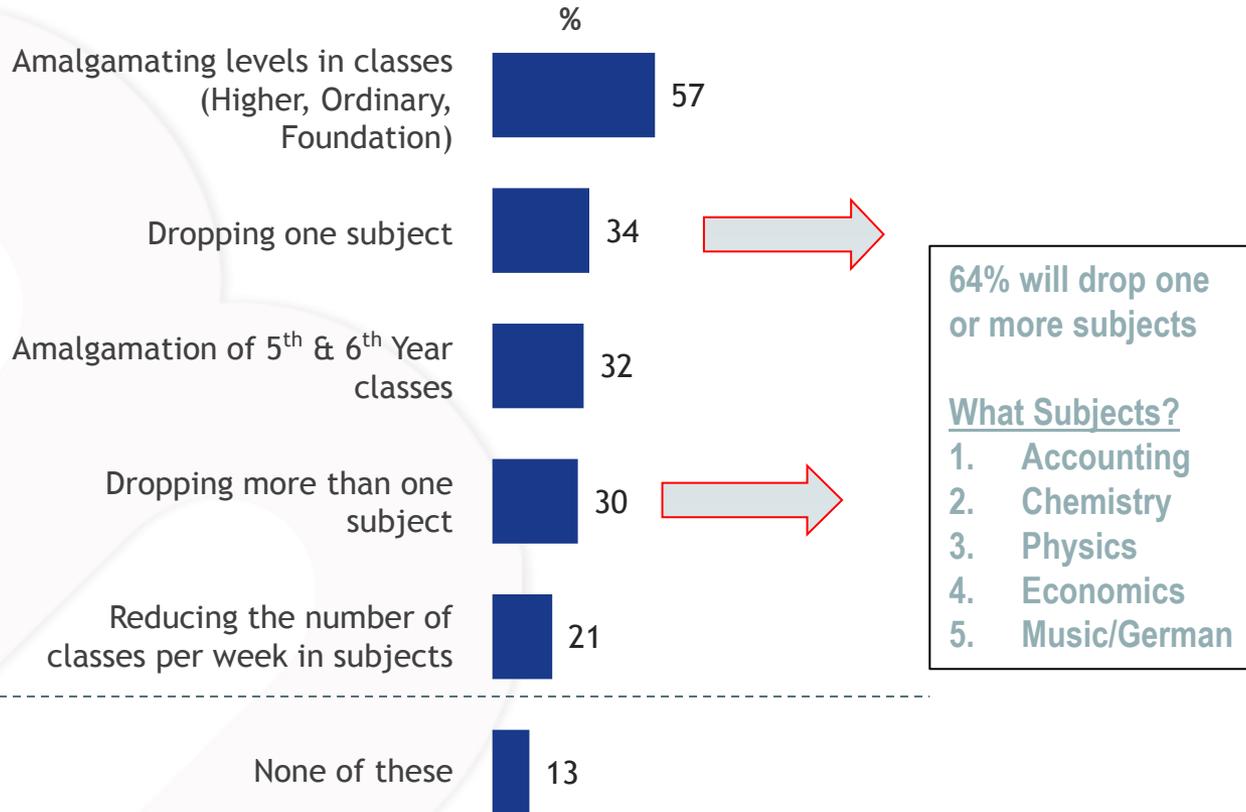
Loss of Guidance provision: Options for Junior Cycle in September 2012 - Amalgamation of levels and reducing resource/learning support are main options being considered

(Base: Total Sample n=151)



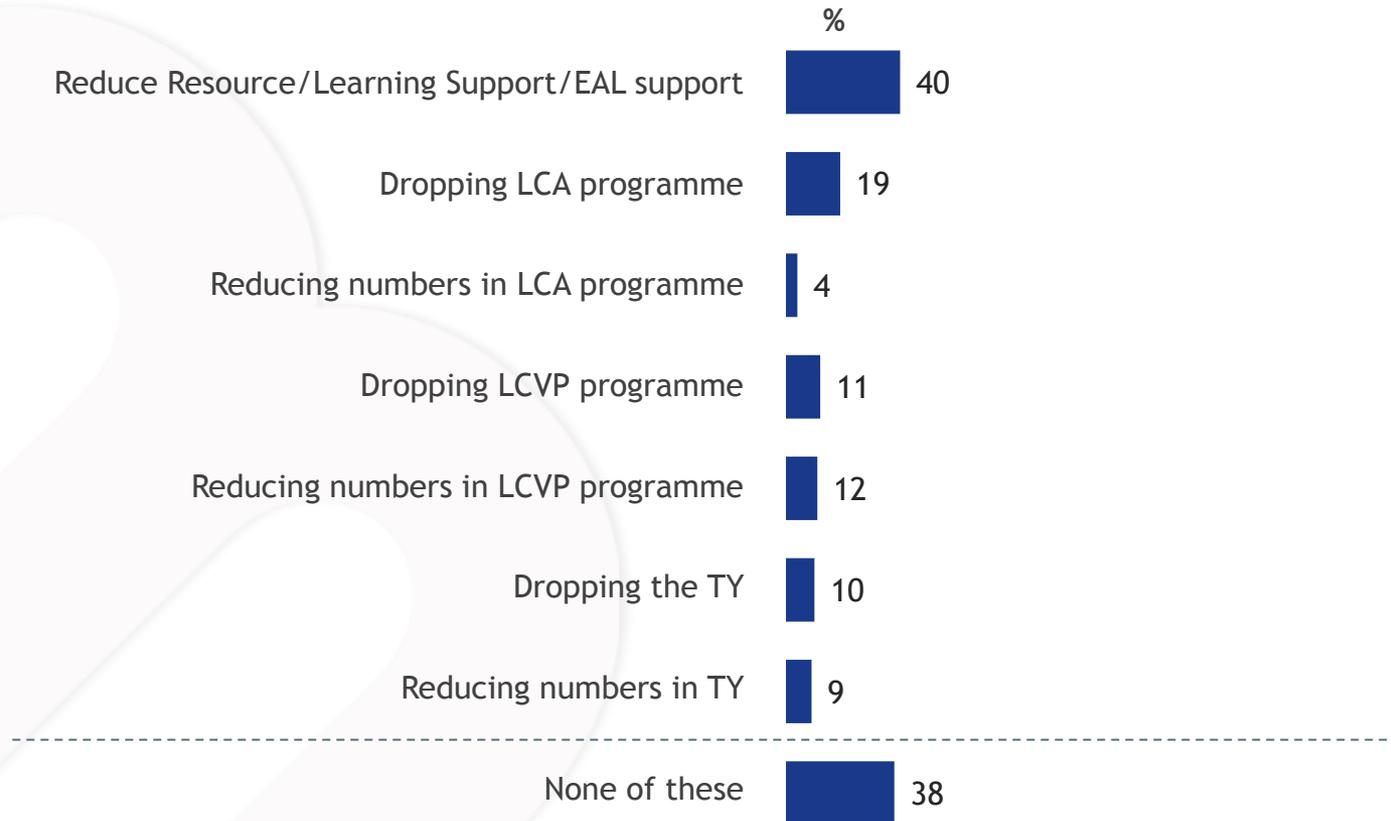
Loss of Guidance provision: Options for Leaving Certificate in September 2012 - Amalgamation of levels in classes and dropping a subject are likely changes

(Base: Total Sample n=151)



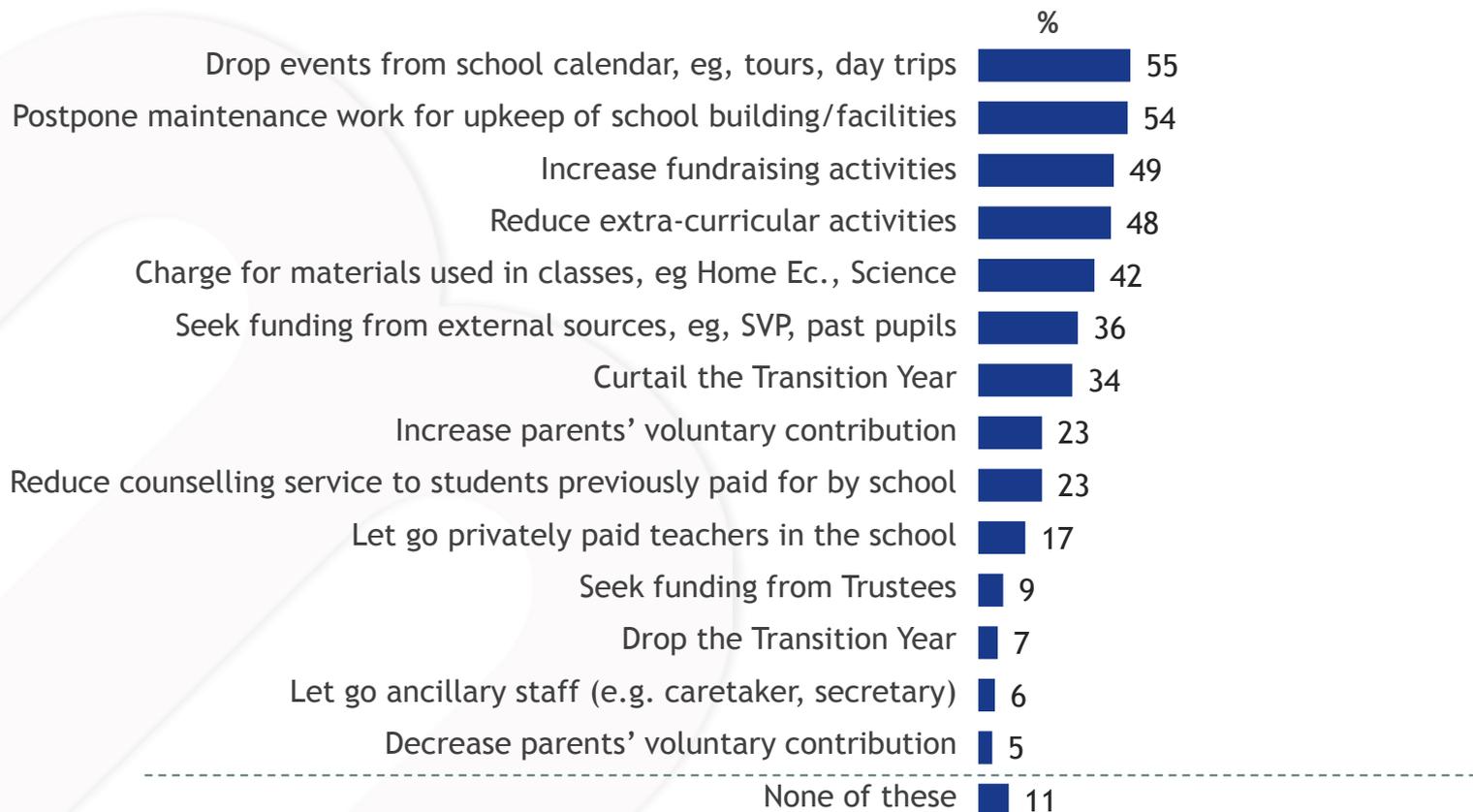
Loss of Guidance provision: Options for other Senior Cycle Programmes in September 2012 - Reducing Resources/Learning support is most likely change

(Base: Total Sample n=151)



The Capitation grant will be reduced by 2% from September 2012. Response to Reduction in Student Capitation grant : fundraising is a key issue. School events and maintenance work will be postponed

(Base: Total Sample n=151)



Challenges - in their own words

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

Like trying to hold back a tide that threatens to wipe out the community that we have worked so hard to build. Trying to help demoralised staff to find the energy to believe that we can still make a difference. It feels like we are slipping into a 3rd world level of provision.

It will be almost impossible to provide a complete education to our students in the light of teacher allocation cuts made in the recent budget. We will lose 1.55 teaching posts between the guidance and disadvantaged post cuts. This is over 8% of our overall teacher allocation as we are a small school. Coupled with the fact that our post of responsibility structures have been decimated in recent years will make it impossible for the smooth and effective day to day running of the school.

The challenges are enormous. We are trying to do more (literacy & numeracy, school self evaluation, new junior cert) with less people. As school leader I am trying to pick up the slack where personnel simply aren't available, particularly in relation to student pastoral care & discipline. I am also teaching a senior branch class out of necessity. There are so many things to be attended to that I feel I am doing a lot of them badly or not at all in some cases. It's impossible to get round to everything. I am reducing options for students in terms of subjects available to them & making classes bigger.

This job has become impossible to do. This is a DEIS school. These students cannot get the extras outside of school i.e. Privately paid by them. Guidance/career services & advice counselling & mental health services: The counsellor is the glue that keeps our student services working. Who is to take up the slack? Principal & Deputy Principal back in classroom since 2012. The students will still need the care, direction, but HSE etc also cutting back. An impossible task.

All the fat is gone out of the system this year, now the options facing us re curriculum are stark. Students are going to suffer -larger classes, less choice, specialist subjects will go. Quality in education is seriously decreased. The job of principal is now almost impossible as we have to deliver the changes in an impossible situation.

Morale - in their own words

(Base: Total Sample n=151)

We have an extremely motivated and hard working staff. However when recently disclosed the extent of recent further cuts to them they were absolutely devastated and morale is currently very low.

Constantly trying to do more with less and less. Posts of responsibility is gone. Teachers are working very hard and media coverage is anti teacher & public service.

The morale of the teaching staff has never been as low. There is a real sense of disillusionment as more and more demands are being made on them while pay and conditions have been continuously cut with increasing austerity. There is a very strong feeling among staff that teaching has been targeted for severe treatment and ultimately the teaching profession will be damaged irreparably in the future.

Morale is low with staff, the greatest burden has fallen on principals and deputy principals who take on the work of lost assistant principals, special duties posts and increased disciplinary and pastoral issues. There needs to be a national forum on where education is going as we have gone back to the 50's in terms of structures and organisation.

Summary of impact of past cutbacks on schools

Summary

Schools are having to do more with less. Austerity has become entrenched in the education system. Schools are under stress in terms of their capacity to deliver a broad curriculum to students. The real losers are the students. Over the last three years, young people are attending schools where classes are larger, subject choice is narrower, pastoral care structures are eroded, Honours and Pass classes are combined and in some instances 5th and 6th Year classes combined. From September 2012 almost all students will have a reduced Guidance Counselling service in their school.

Impact of education cuts since 2009

Second-level schools have lost an average of 1.6 full-time teaching posts since 2009. Eighty-three percent of schools have lost posts. Two thirds of schools (64%) have lost at least one full-time teacher and half of schools have lost at least one part-time teacher.

Subjects have been dropped by schools at both Junior and Leaving Cert level.

47% of schools have dropped subjects at Leaving Cert level. Of those schools which dropped subjects from the Leaving Cert curriculum, 23% dropped Accountancy, 23% Economics and 21% Physics.

The greatest impact of the cutbacks on the Leaving Certificate programme in schools has been the amalgamation of Higher/Ordinary and Foundation level classes (almost 6 out of 10 schools have implemented this since 2009). Maths, English and Irish were the subjects most affected by this action.

7 out of 10 schools offering the Leaving Cert Applied have had to make changes as a result of the education cuts. Amalgamation of 5th and 6th Year classes is the change most frequently cited by schools.

Summary of impact of past cutbacks on schools

45% of schools offering the Leaving Cert Vocational programme have had to make changes as a result of the education cuts. Larger classes is the change most frequently cited by schools.

The majority of schools offer the Transition Year programme and 6 out of 10 of these schools have had to make changes as a result of the cutbacks. Increases in class size and reduction in the range of modules offered are the changes most frequently cited by schools.

Increasing class sizes was the most common response to the education cuts at Junior Cycle (58% of schools), followed by the dropping of subjects (28% of schools).

German and Music were the Junior Cycle subjects most commonly dropped by schools. Maths, English and Irish were the subjects most affected by increased class sizes.

Almost all schools (at least 93%) have lost promotional posts as a result of the Moratorium introduced in March 2009. The majority of schools have lost both Assistant Principal and Special Duties Teacher posts.

Pastoral care structures and the administrative capacity of schools were cited as being negatively affected by the majority of schools.

Summary of future impact of Budget 2012 on schools

Likely consequences of Budget 2012 education cuts

Seven out of 10 schools will reduce the hours allocated for guidance provision in September 2012. These schools will reduce guidance provision by an average of 7.8 hours.

Of the schools which will not be reducing the overall hours allocated for guidance provision, over a quarter said they would be reducing the counselling service part of guidance provision.

Sixty-four per cent of schools are considering dropping one or more subjects from the Leaving Cert programme as a result of Budget 2012 education cuts. The subjects most likely to be dropped by schools are accounting, chemistry, physics and economics.

Forty-eight per cent of schools are considering dropping one or more subjects from the Junior Cycle programme.

As a result of the reduced student capitation grant, the majority of schools will be undertaking some measures. Dropping school events and postponing maintenance work are the most likely consequences. Many schools will attempt to increase fundraising. Some schools are considering increasing parents' voluntary contribution, while others are considering reducing it.

The verbatim comments demonstrate the challenges facing schools in an era of unprecedented cutbacks. Quite clearly the education cuts have had an impact on teacher morale.