

Learning for the Future

Research with students in year 5 to 13 on climate change and their education

A large crowd of people, mostly young adults, are gathered for a protest. They are holding various signs and banners. In the background, a tall, thin tower is visible against a blue sky with some clouds. A large, bold '90%' is superimposed over the center of the image. The text 'think its important for all students to learn about climate change' is written in a bold, black font across the middle of the image.

90%

**think its important for all students
to learn about climate change**

This report

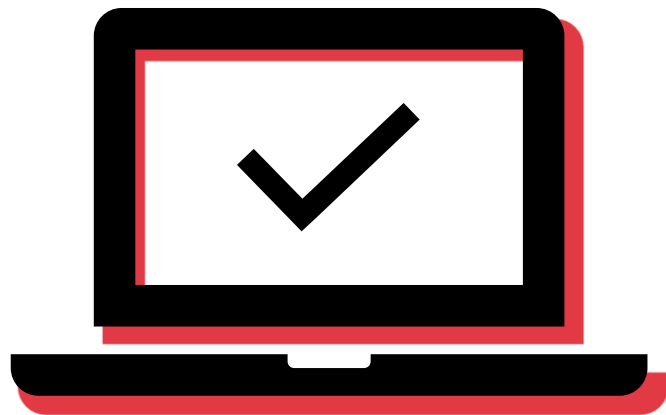
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About the survey

About the survey

The survey was conducted online by Norstat during June and July 2025.

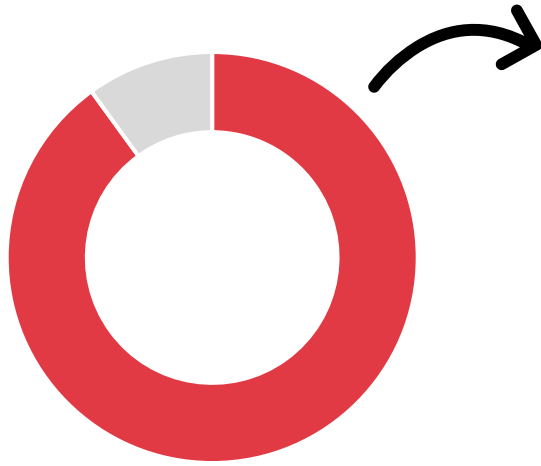
1001 students from year 5 to year 13 in England completed the survey. Respondents reflect the national population of school students in England.



“Climate change refers to changes in the Earth's usual weather conditions over many years. Climate change can happen naturally, but it is also caused by things humans are doing, like burning fossil fuels, cutting down too many trees and over-farming crops and animals. Our world has been getting hotter, and our weather is changing, mostly due to the things humans are doing.”

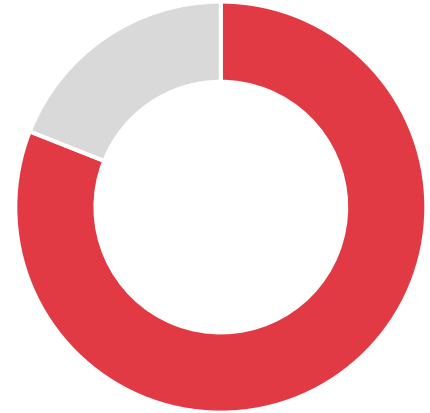
At the start of the survey, respondents were given this definition of climate change to help frame their answers.

**What do student think
and feel about learning
for climate change?**



90%

I think its important for all students to learn about climate change



81%

I want to learn more about climate change

Q. Pick the answer that fits what you think best. [BASE: 955 BALANCE: No response]

“Climate change feels like one of the most pressing issues of our time, and I want to know how I can contribute to solving it. Learning more about climate change will help me make informed choices in my own life, like reducing my carbon footprint and supporting sustainable practices. Plus, I’m curious about the latest research and innovations that could help mitigate its impacts, and I hope that by studying it, I can play a role in creating a more sustainable future.”

**Student respondent
year 10**

Why **do** students want to learn more about climate change?

Answer category	Number of responses
To stop climate change/respond to it	83
To further their understanding	72
Because of the impact it will have on their future	35
Because they believe it's important to know about	33
To help future career aspirations	2

Q. Why do you want to learn more? [250 responses coded]

"I want the world to be here when I get older."

"I want to make sure I have the right information about climate change so that I can make the right decisions for myself and everyone else in the future."

"Because it is important for everyone to know it is real and serious and how we can all help prevent it."

"Because it is our duty to know all we can about it to save our world."

Why **don't** students want to learn more about climate change?

Answer category	Number of responses
Other interests or priorities for learning	50
They've learnt enough already	44
Don't believe in climate change or mistrust the information being given	16
Because of negative effects on their mental health	9
Because they don't feel like they can do anything about it	9

Q. Why do you want to learn more? [250 responses coded]

"Because it's worrying and it effects my mental health."

"Its very doom and gloom, what difference will an individual make when those that destroy keep destroying."

"I can't make a difference - most is generally [the] cycle of the earth."

"I learned about it in school, I don't want to learn any more. I hear about it on the news and people talking about it."

What do you think or feel about learning about climate change?

**I enjoy learning about
climate change**

84%

16%

**I don't enjoy learning about
climate change**

**I'd rather learn about
climate change at school or
college**

67%

33%

**I'd rather learn about
climate change in my spare
time outside school or
college**

**Learning about climate
change makes me feel less
worried about it**

54%

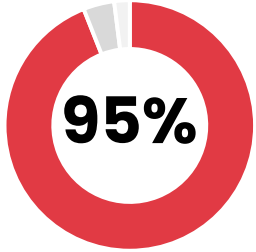
46%

**Learning about climate
change makes me feel more
worried about it**

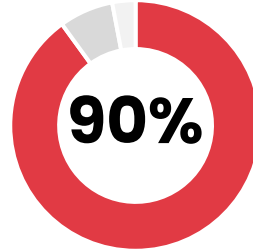
Q. Pick the answer that fits what you think best. [BASE: 955 BALANCE: No response]

**What have students
learnt on climate change
so far?**

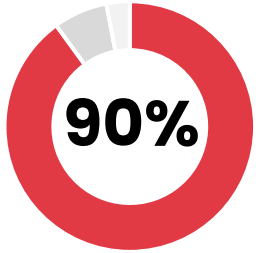
What have you learnt about climate change at school?



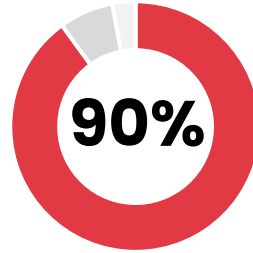
What climate change is



How climate change affects our world



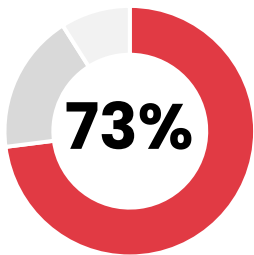
Why climate change is happening



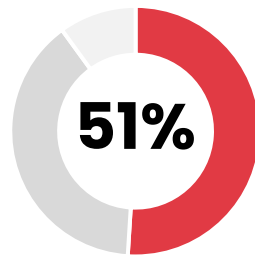
What people can do to help stop climate change

Q. Complete the sentence below by picking yes, no or don't know to describe what you have learnt about climate change at school. [BASE: c.965 BALANCE: No response]

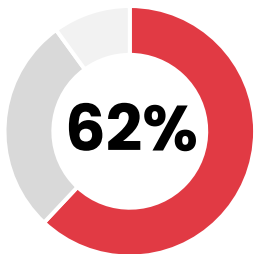
What have you learnt about climate change at school?



What our daily lives might be like because of climate change



How jobs might change because of climate change

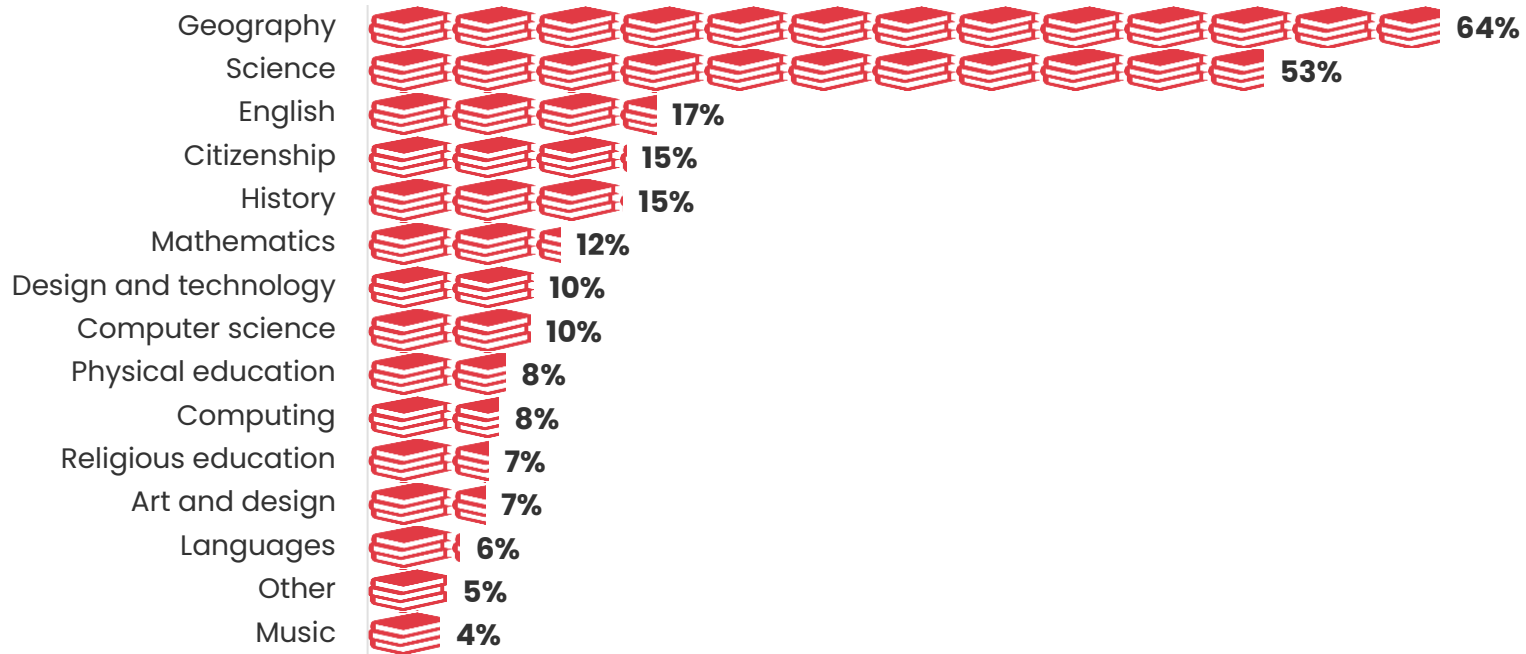


How climate change affects different groups of people differently

Q. Complete the sentence below by picking yes, no or don't know to describe what you have learnt about climate change at school. [BASE: c.965 BALANCE: No response]

**What subjects are
students learning about
climate change in?**

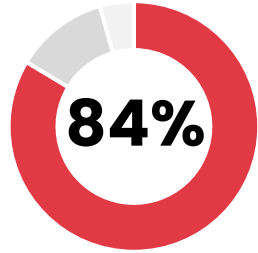
Which subjects have you learnt anything about climate change in? [Asked to year 9 to 13 only]



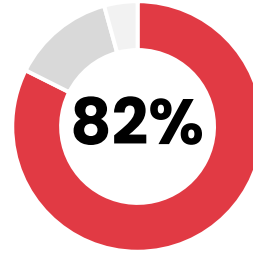
Q. Which subjects have you learnt anything about climate change in? Pick all subjects, thinking only about your current school or college. [BASE: 487 BALANCE: Respondents in year 5-8, No response]

**What do students want
to learn more about?**

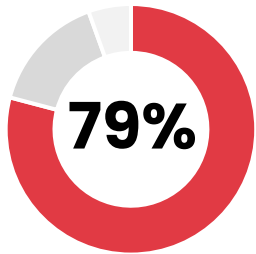
What else would you like to learn about climate change in the rest of your time at school?



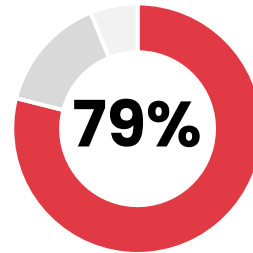
What I can do to help stop climate change



How climate change affects where I live

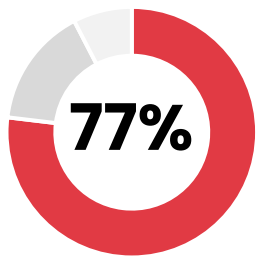


What communities can do to help stop climate change

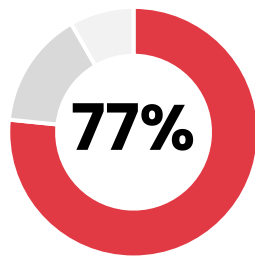


Who causes climate change

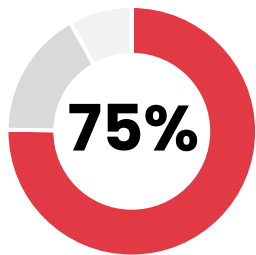
What else would you like to learn about climate change in the rest of your time at school?



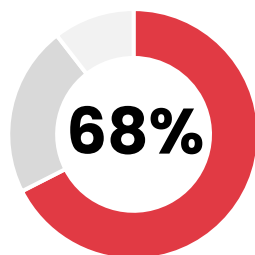
How climate change affects other countries



How climate change changes the way we live and work

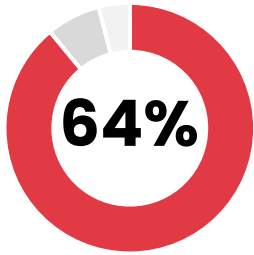


How I can find information about climate change that I can trust

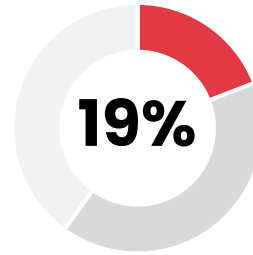


If climate change affects different people fairly or unfairly

What else would you like to learn about climate change in the rest of your time at school?



How I can deal with my feelings about climate change



Something else

"Government measures and support to ensure control of climate change."

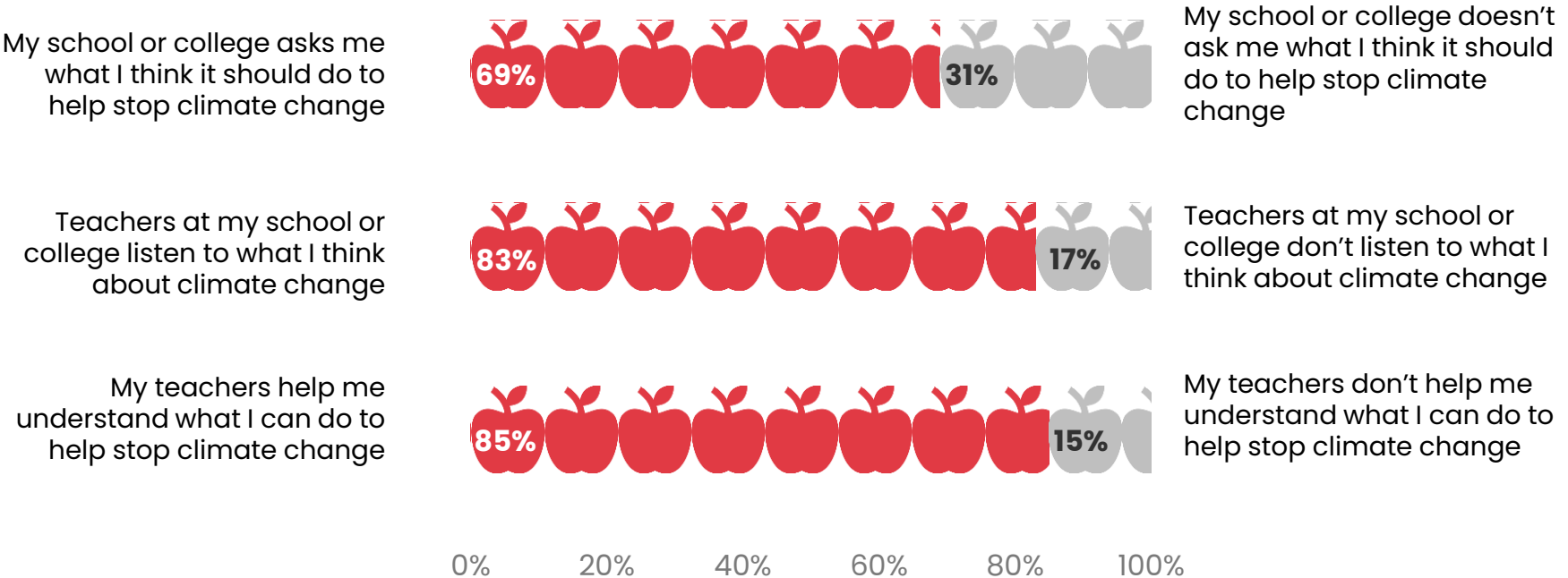
"If it can also affect the economy and manner of living."

"I will love to know how climate change can affect my friends and their family."

"In case I experience climate change, how do I deal with it."

**What do students think
about their school and
climate action?**

What do students think about their school and climate action?



Q. Pick the answer that fits what you think best. [BASE: 955 BALANCE: No response]

What do students think about their school and climate action?

I want my school or college to do more to help stop climate change



My school or college is doing enough to help stop climate change

I want my school to be the best at help stop climate change and setting a good example for our community



I don't want my school to be the best at helping stop climate change and setting a good example for our community

I want to help stop climate change at my school or college



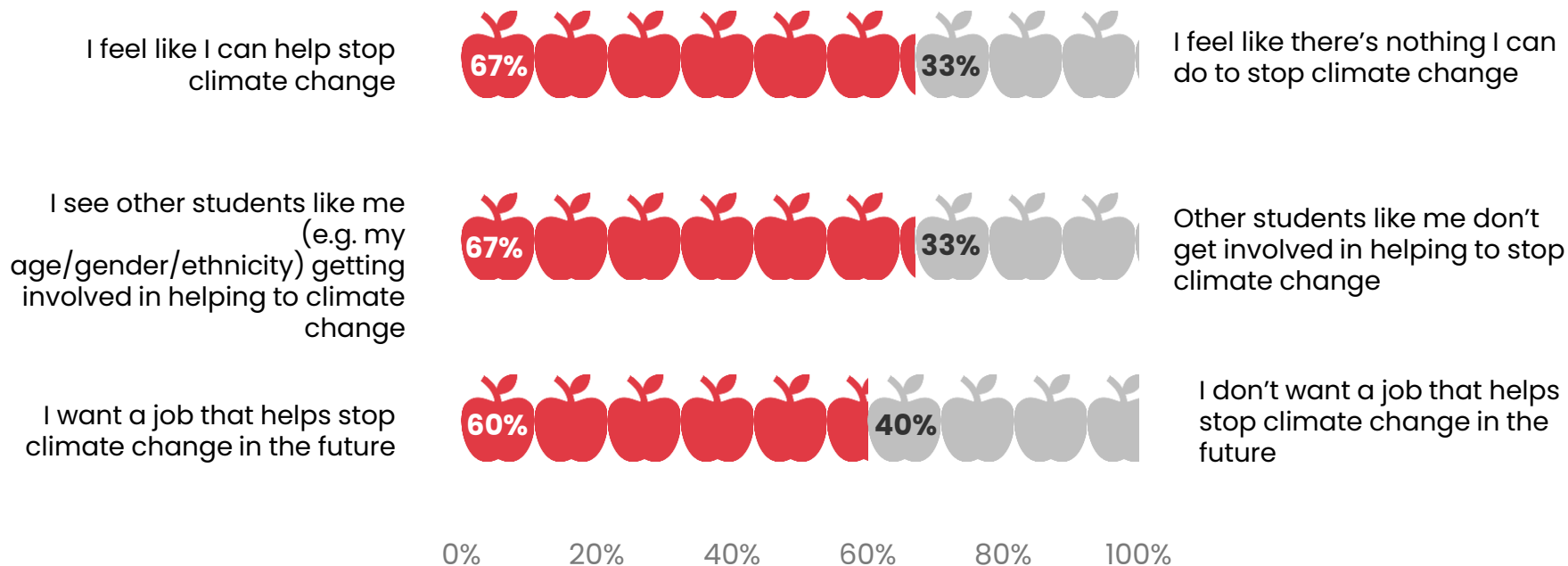
I don't want to help stop climate change at my school or college

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Q. Pick the answer that fits what you think best. [BASE: 955 BALANCE: No response]

**What do students think
about their role in
climate action?**

What do students think about their role in climate action?



Q. Pick the answer that fits what you think best. [BASE: 955 BALANCE: No response]

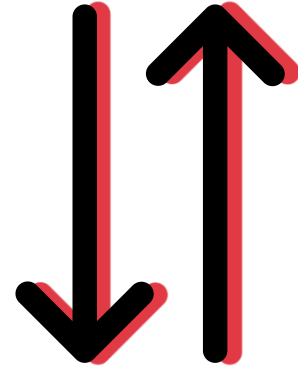
**What difference does
background or
characteristics make?**

We asked survey respondents some details about them, their education, and their background so we can see how these individual differences might affect what they think and feel about climate change and education.

Whilst we found differences for a range of different characteristics and backgrounds, two stand out as showing statistically significant differences across a wider range of attitudes and feelings. These are

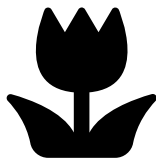
- What access to nature they've had in the week before answering the survey
- Whether respondents' parents or carers have attended university

You can see full details of who the respondents are in the [next section](#), and see more differences in our online report.



What difference does **access to nature** make?

We asked respondents whether they'd spent anytime in nature in the last week. They told us...



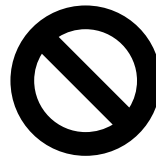
87%

'Managed' nature
e.g. parks, gardens



56%

'Wild' nature
e.g. woods, rivers,
farmland



8%

No nature
accessed

We've used this question to see if there are any differences in attitudes towards learning for climate change depending on access to nature. The next few pages pick out some of the differences we found. The differences shown are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

In general, respondents to the survey who had accessed 'managed' or 'wild' nature in the week before completing the survey are more likely to be supportive of learning for and about climate change than those who hadn't accessed nature.

I want to learn more about climate change



I think it is important for all students to learn about climate change

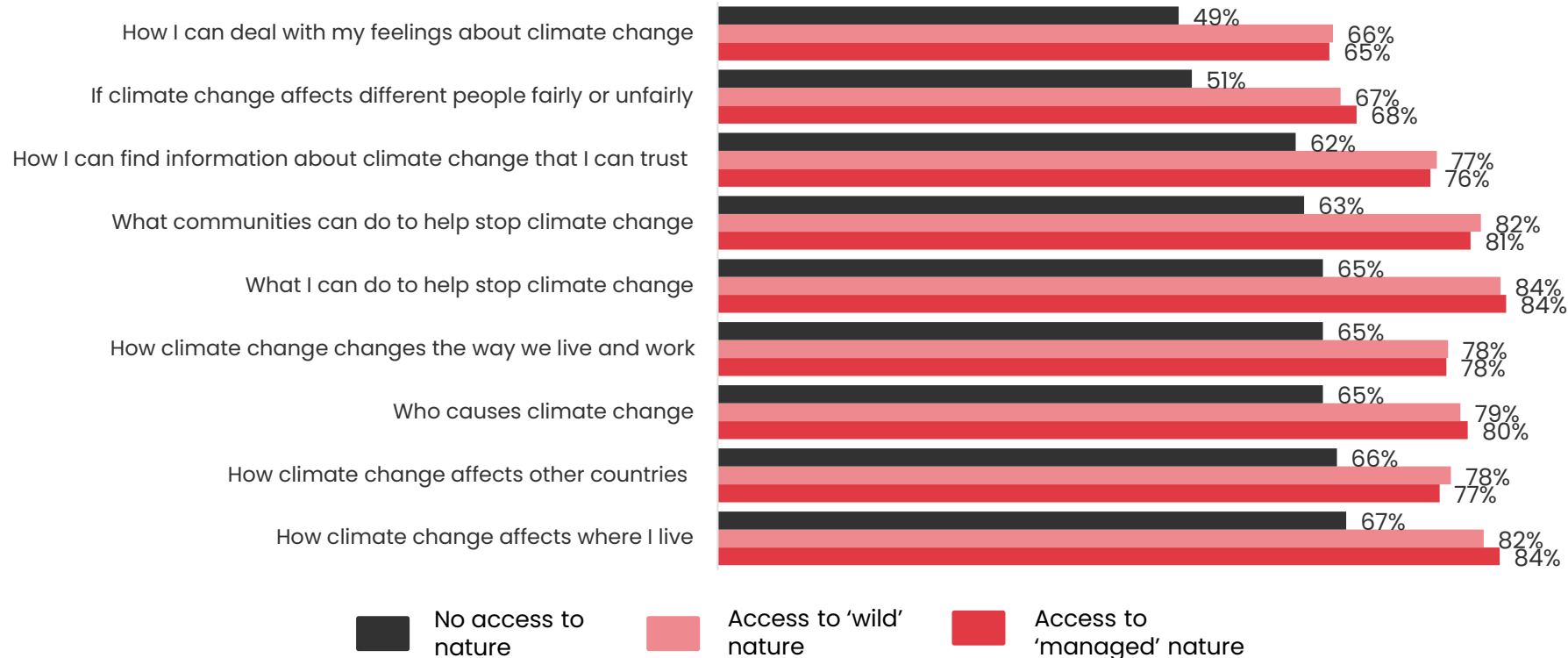


■ No access to nature ■ Access to 'wild' nature ■ Access to 'managed' nature

Respondents who had not accessed any nature in the week before the survey were less likely to say they wanted to learn more about climate change than respondents who'd accessed 'managed' or 'wild' nature. They're also less likely to say they think it is important for all students to learn about climate change.

What would you like to learn about climate change in the future?

Respondents who had not accessed any nature in the week before the survey were significantly less likely to say they wanted to learn more about a range of different aspects of climate change than respondents who'd accessed 'managed' or 'wild' nature.

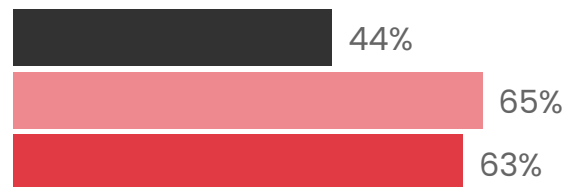


Respondents who had not accessed any nature in the week before the survey were less likely to say they wanted to be involved personally or through their school in helping to stop climate change than respondents who'd accessed 'managed' or 'wild' nature.

I feel like I can help stop climate change



I want a job that helps stop climate change in the future



I want my school or college to do more to help stop climate change



I want to help stop climate change at my school or college



No access to nature



Access to 'wild' nature



Access to 'managed' nature

What difference does it make if students' parents or carers attended university?

We asked respondents whether either of their parents or carers have been to university. They told us...



69%
Yes



30%
No

We've used this question to see if there are any differences in attitudes towards learning for climate change depending on whether respondents' parents / carers have been to university. The next few pages pick out some of the differences we found. The differences shown are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

In general, respondents to the survey whose parents or carers have attended university are more likely to be supportive of learning for and about climate change than those who hadn't accessed nature. Statistically significant differences are shown in the charts that follow.

I want to learn more about climate change



Parents/carers have not been to university

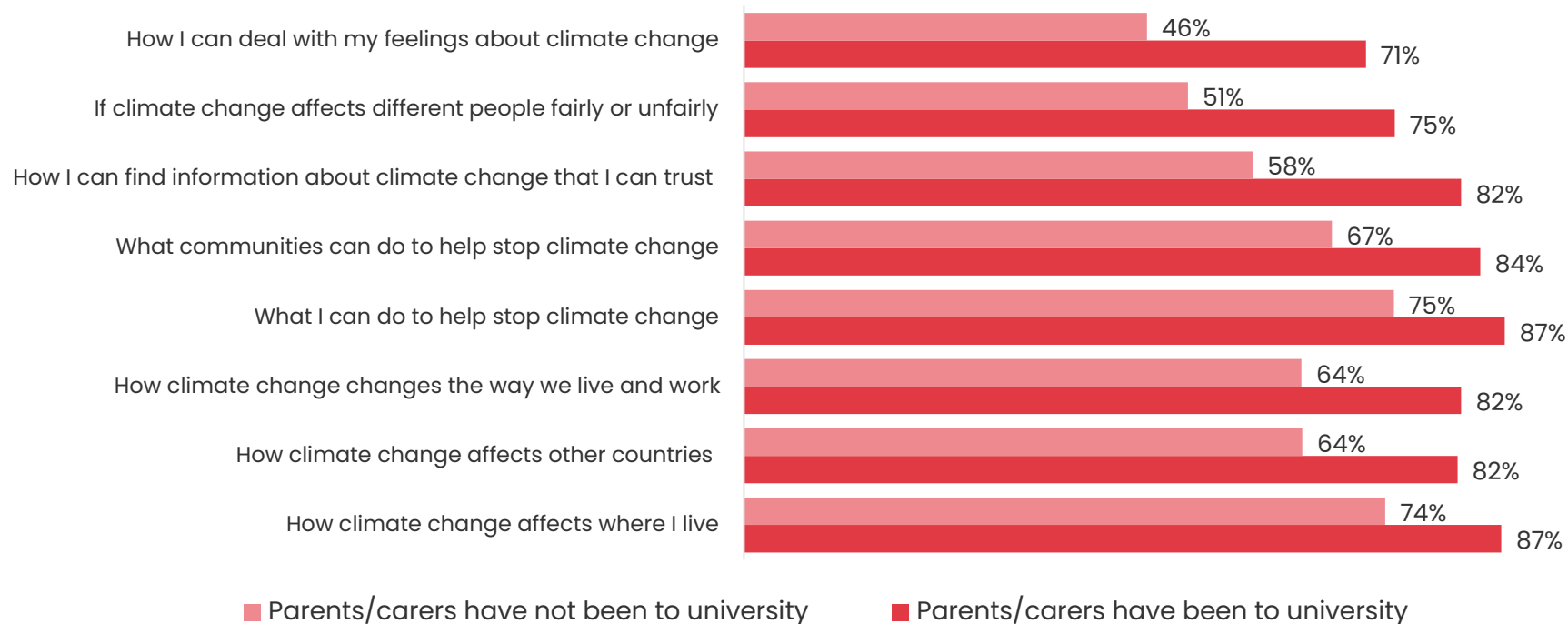
I think it is important for all students to learn about climate change



Parents/carers have been to university

What would you like to learn about climate change in the future?

Respondents whose parents or carers have been to university are significantly more likely to say they wanted to learn more about a range of different aspects of climate change than respondents whose parents or carers have not been to university.

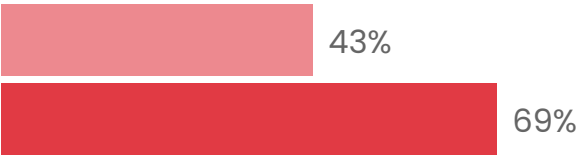


Respondents who said their parents or carers have been to university are more likely to say they want to be involved personally or through their school in helping to stop climate change than respondents who say their parents or carers have not been to university.

I feel like I can help stop climate change



I want a job that helps stop climate change in the future



I want my school or college to do more to help stop climate change



I want to help stop climate change at my school or college

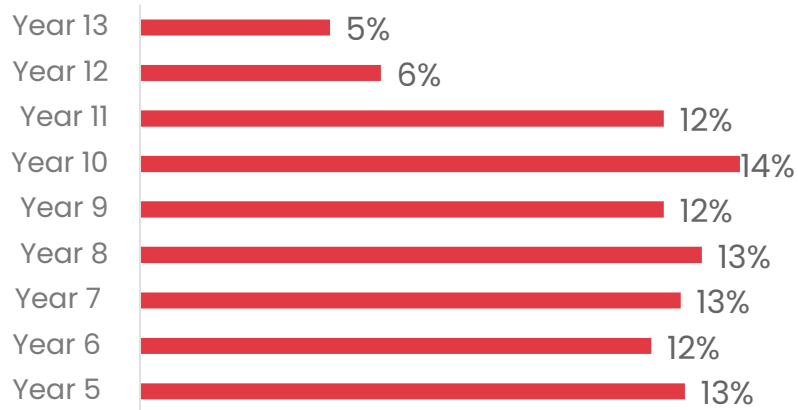


Parents/carers have not been to university

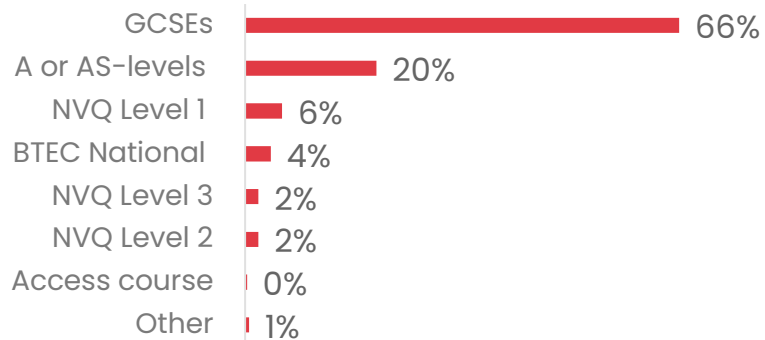
Parents/carers have been to university

**Who are the
respondents?**

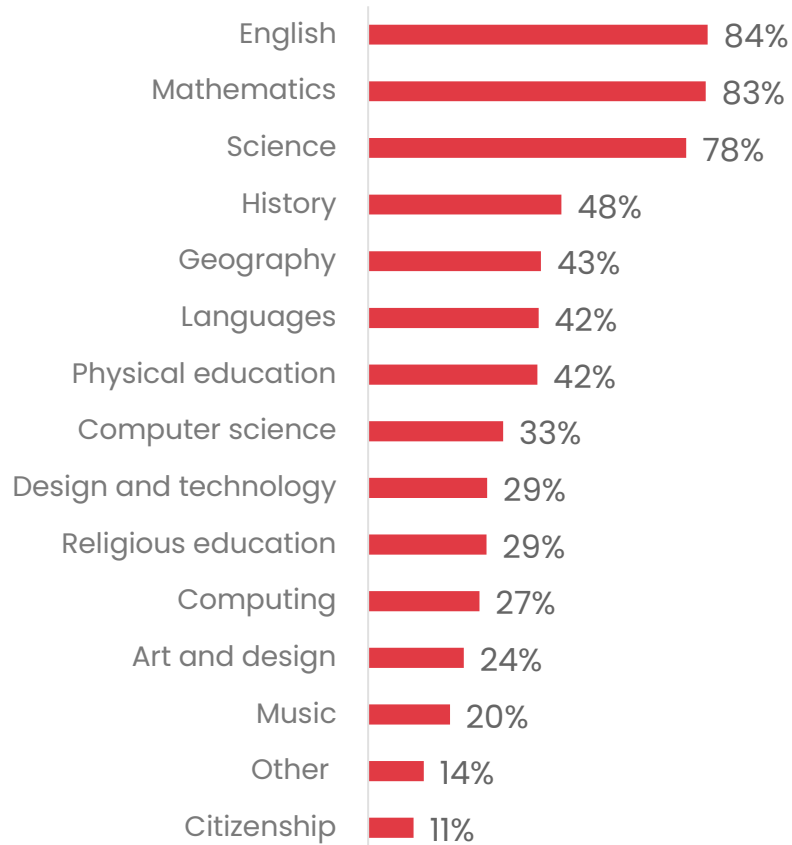
Year group



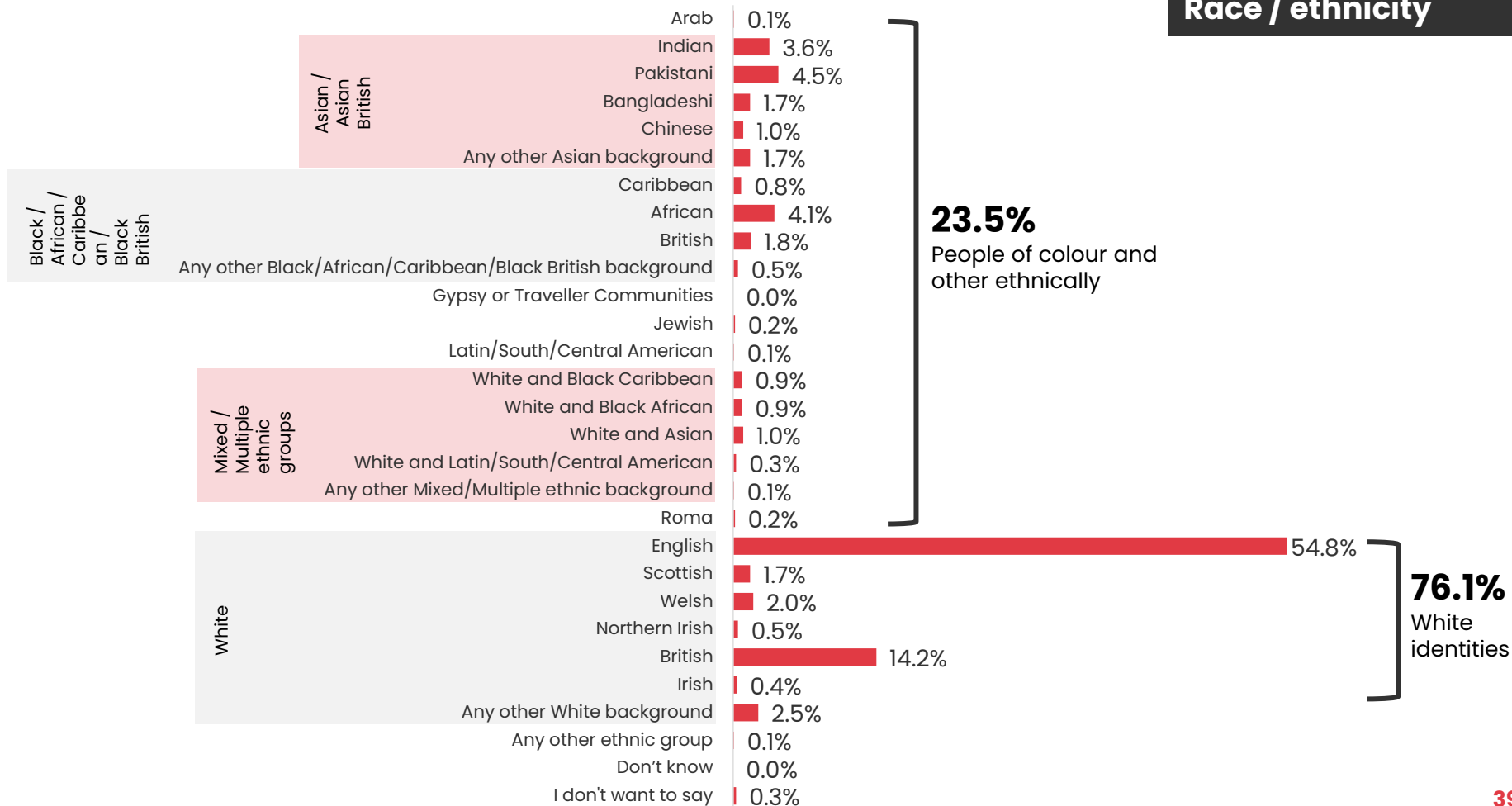
Course [Year 10 and up only]



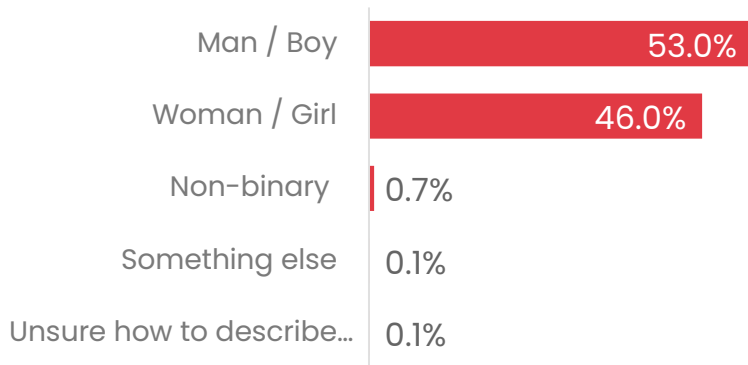
Subjects studied [Year 10 and up only]



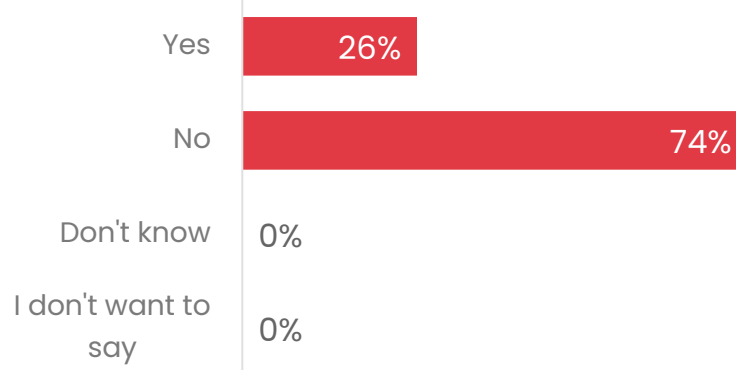
Race / ethnicity



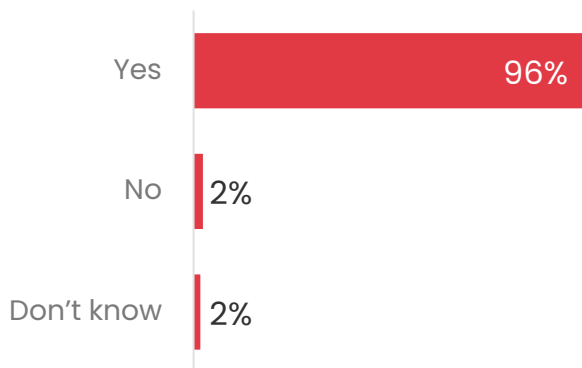
Gender identity



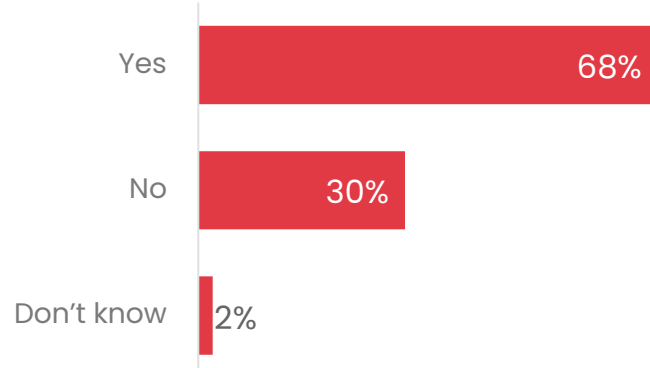
Free school meals eligibility



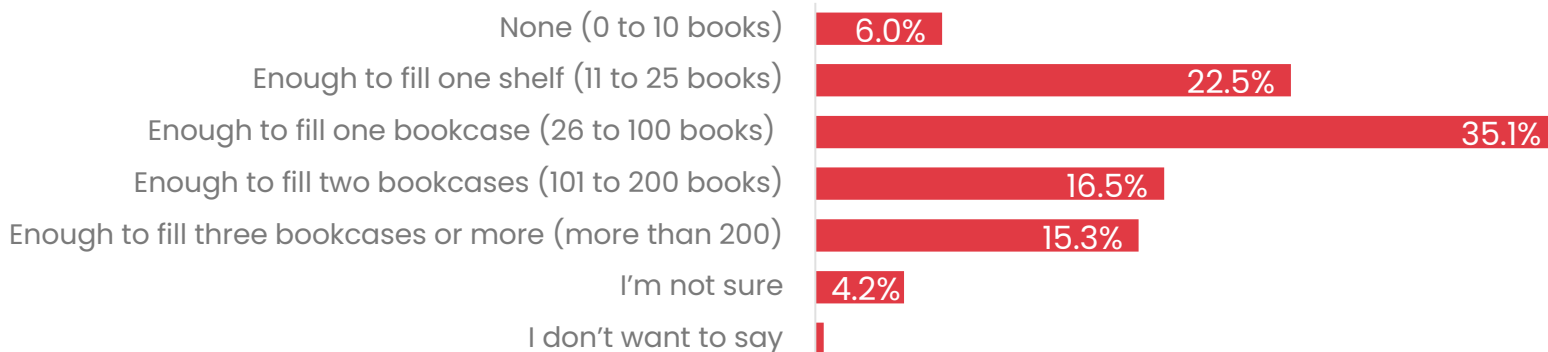
Internet access at home



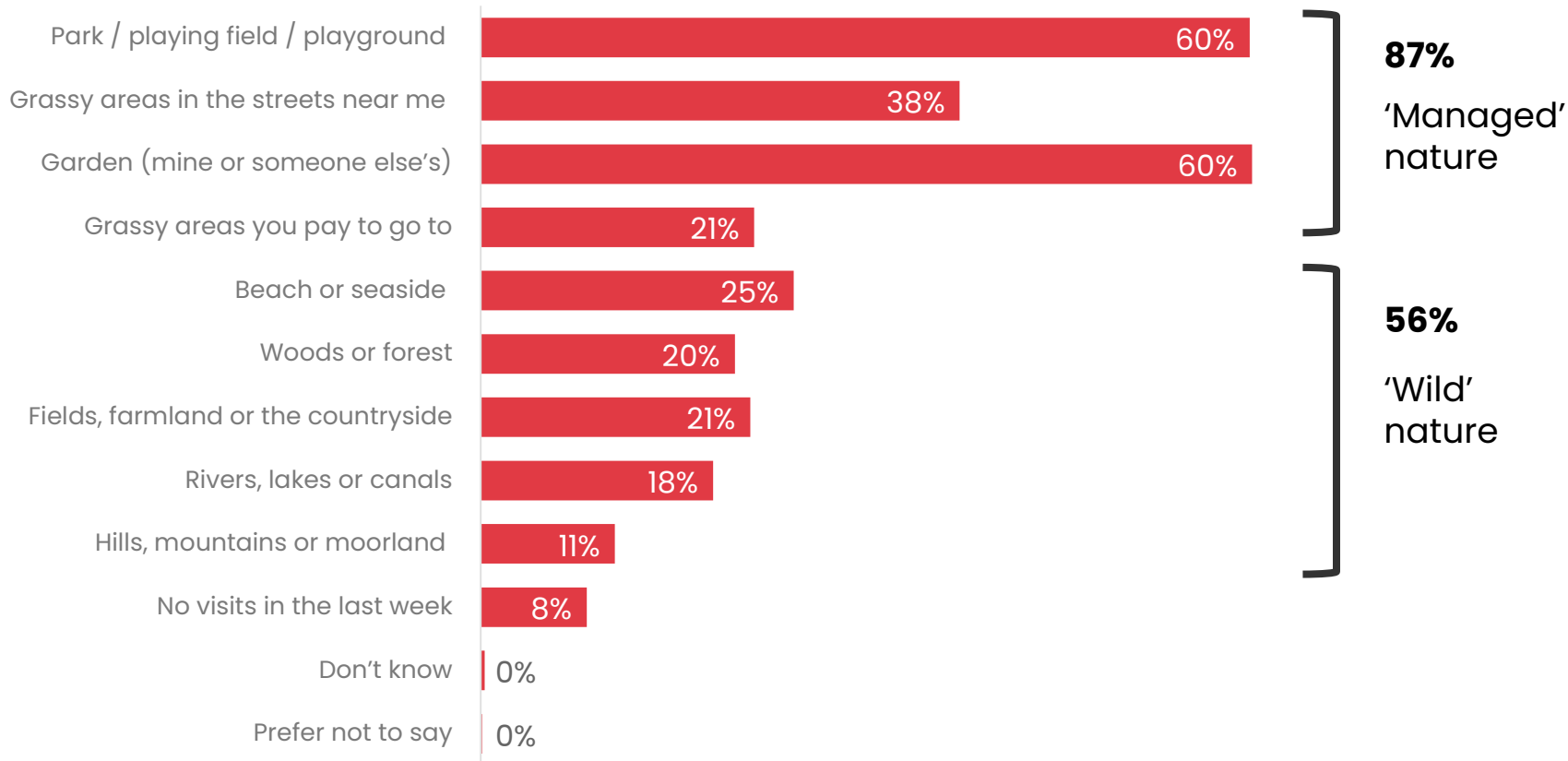
Parents/carers attended university



Book/eBook ownership at home



Access to green and natural spaces



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