



The **State** of
Technology
in
Education

2022: A year of adaptation: How edtech is helping navigate uncertainty and change

After two years of dealing with the fallout of the pandemic, some teachers might have thought that 2022 could only get better. Yes, they would need to address the serious social-emotional needs of their pupils, who were still recovering from trauma and uncertainty. But they likely thought they'd enjoy a year of relative calm after the storm.

Instead, new problems arose that educators hadn't foreseen. Job shifting, high turnover, and increased retirements all conspired to bring widespread staff shortages across all roles. Those who remained in their jobs had to deal with heavier workloads, without the same level of IT and teaching support they had previously enjoyed.

Despite the challenges, there were bright spots in 2022, too. Teachers and IT managers reported feeling more valued and heard at a strategic level. And many pupils felt like their social and emotional needs were being met by their teachers and schools.

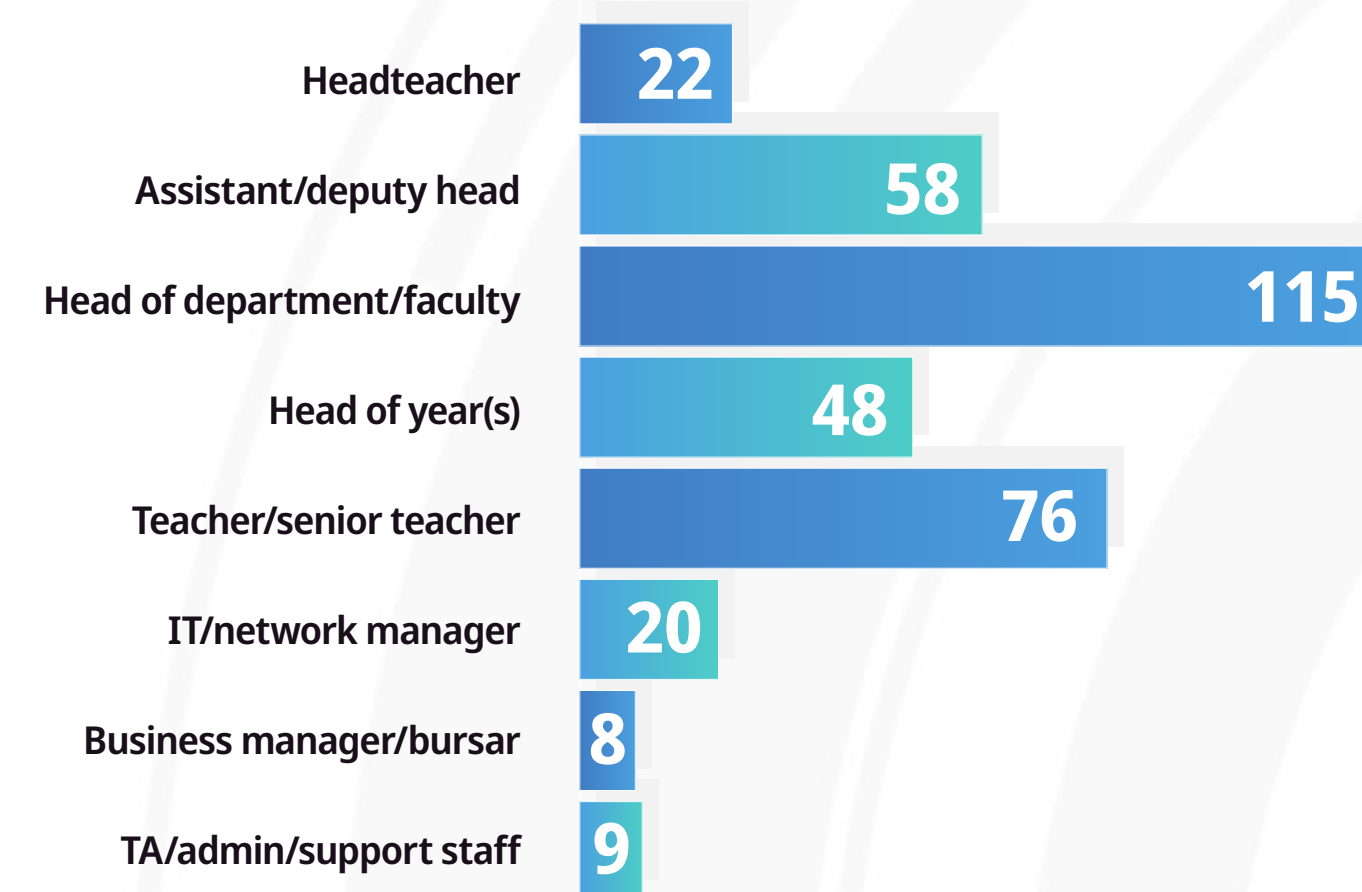
All stakeholders—school leaders, IT staff, teachers, and students—continue to see education technology as critical to addressing the stresses and challenges they face. Tools such as interactive displays and AI digital assistants can alleviate teachers' workloads, allow them to focus more attention on their pupils, and help them create engaging and interactive lessons that help children achieve academic success. For students, these tools not only provide an engaging way to learn, but an avenue for connecting with their teachers and their peers.

About the report

For our State of Technology in Education 2022-23 report, we surveyed more than 350 educators across the country to better understand their unique opportunities and challenges, particularly the role of technology in their lives. This year's report also includes the perspectives of students, which adds yet another layer of insight into the educational landscape of the past year.

Read on to discover what our respondents would most like to change about education today, and how they see classrooms evolving in the future.

Who we surveyed:



Chapters:



1. Social-emotional learning:

It's now a priority, but more action is needed

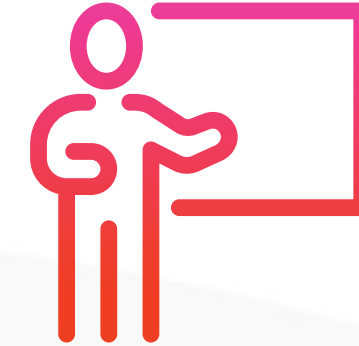
[Read chapter](#)



2. Staffing shortages:

A challenge surmounted by edtech and leadership

[Read chapter](#)



3. The future of education:

Technology and digital fluency are key

[Read chapter](#)



4. The student experience:

Happy at school, hungry for tech

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Social-emotional learning: It's now a priority, but more action is needed

The increased focus on students' social and emotional needs that began during lockdown and remote teaching continues to be a top priority. Edtech has helped support the strategic objective of social-emotional learning (SEL)—the development of interpersonal skills, including self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, responsible decision-making, and social awareness—with a variety of collaboration and engagement tools. But not all schools have been able to use these tools to their full potential, and some have not introduced any initiatives to address social-emotional learning at all. So while students' needs are a higher priority than their achievement overall, putting these good intentions into practice has yet to be realised.

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38%

For the second year running, the largest cohort of educators say social-emotional learning is their school's highest priority.

The headlines:

57%

Trust in tech

The majority of educators agree that technology is a good tool for supporting students' social-emotional needs.

70%

Strategies falling short

Seven in 10 educators say their school has implemented some SEL measures, but that still leaves almost a third feeling their schools are not addressing these issues.

71%

Edtech for engagement

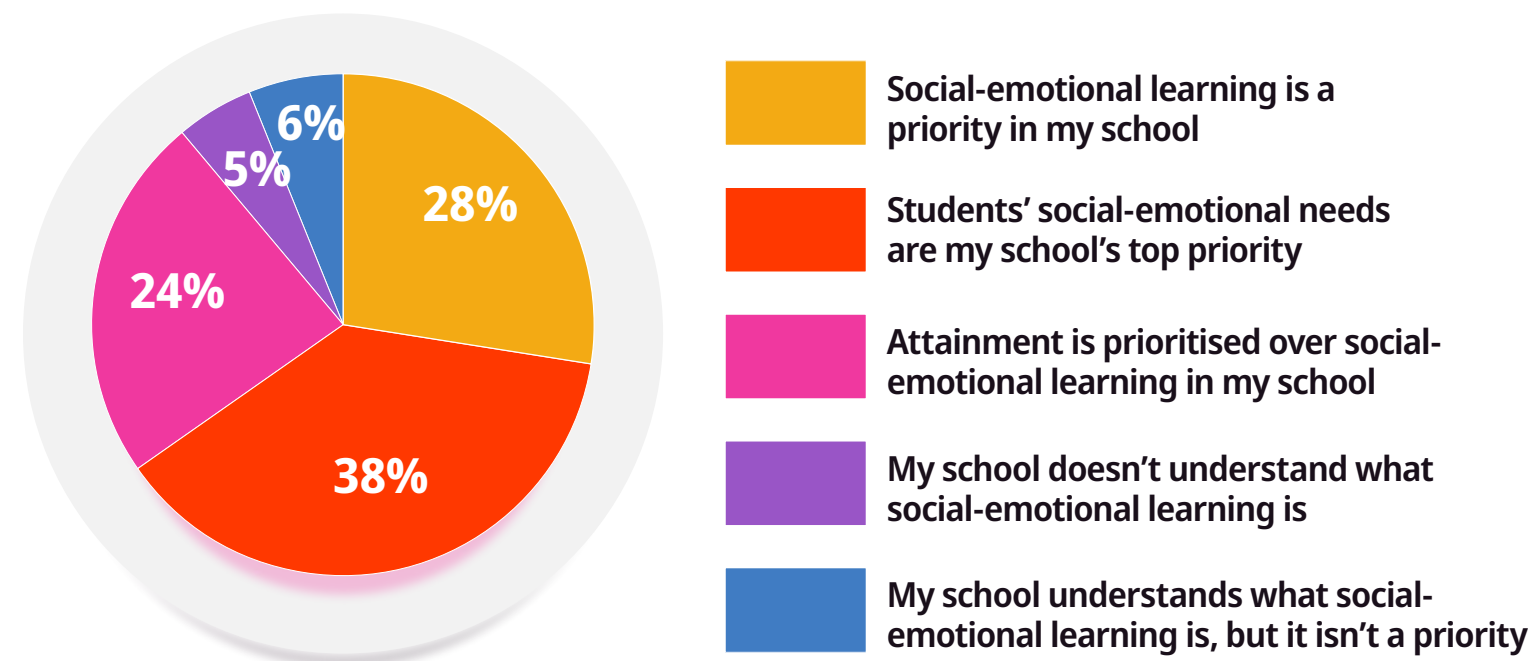
According to the majority of educators, technology is a good tool for student engagement.



Social and emotional learning remain essential, but there's conflict and competition

Almost all educators know what SEL is, but about one-quarter continue to believe that attainment takes precedence. With **14%** more school leaders than teachers saying SEL comes first, the strategy-setters are more convinced that their school puts students' social-emotional needs first than those who see the reality in the classroom.

Which of these statements best describes your school's approach to social-emotional learning?

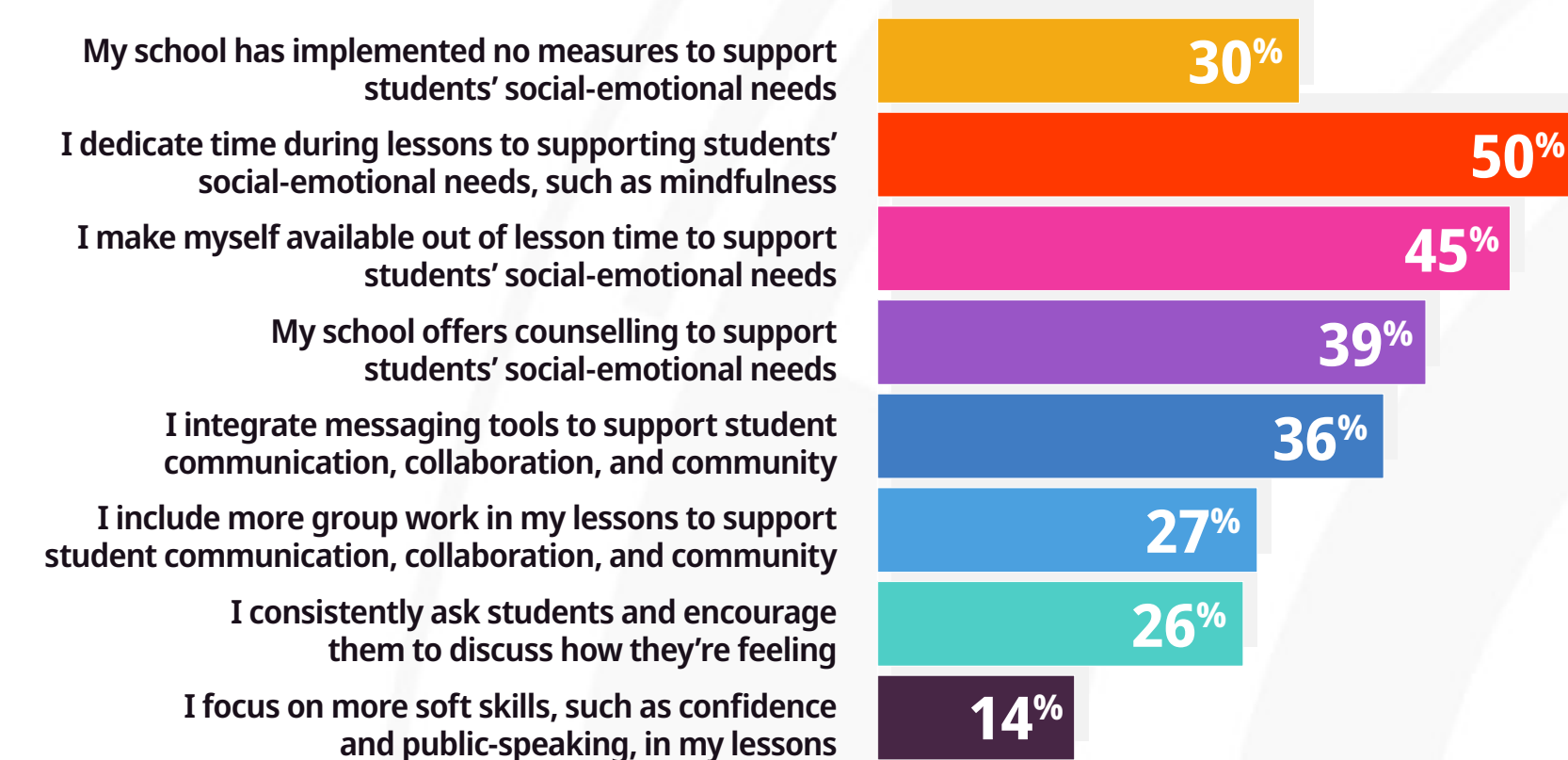


Students are also skeptical of how high their social-emotional needs rank with traditional academics. The majority of students (**77%**) agreed that their teachers care about them, but more than half (**58%**) said that their teachers care more about the results they get. So while students feel individually supported, some feel that their grades remain a higher priority to teachers.

Mixed emotions about schools' social-emotional learning initiatives

There are SEL support mechanisms and proactive efforts in place at many schools. Half of educators dedicate time during lessons to supporting students' SEL needs, such as mindfulness, and almost half make themselves available outside of lessons, too. However, nearly one in three educators said their school doesn't have methods in place to support this priority.

How is your school catering to social-emotional learning?



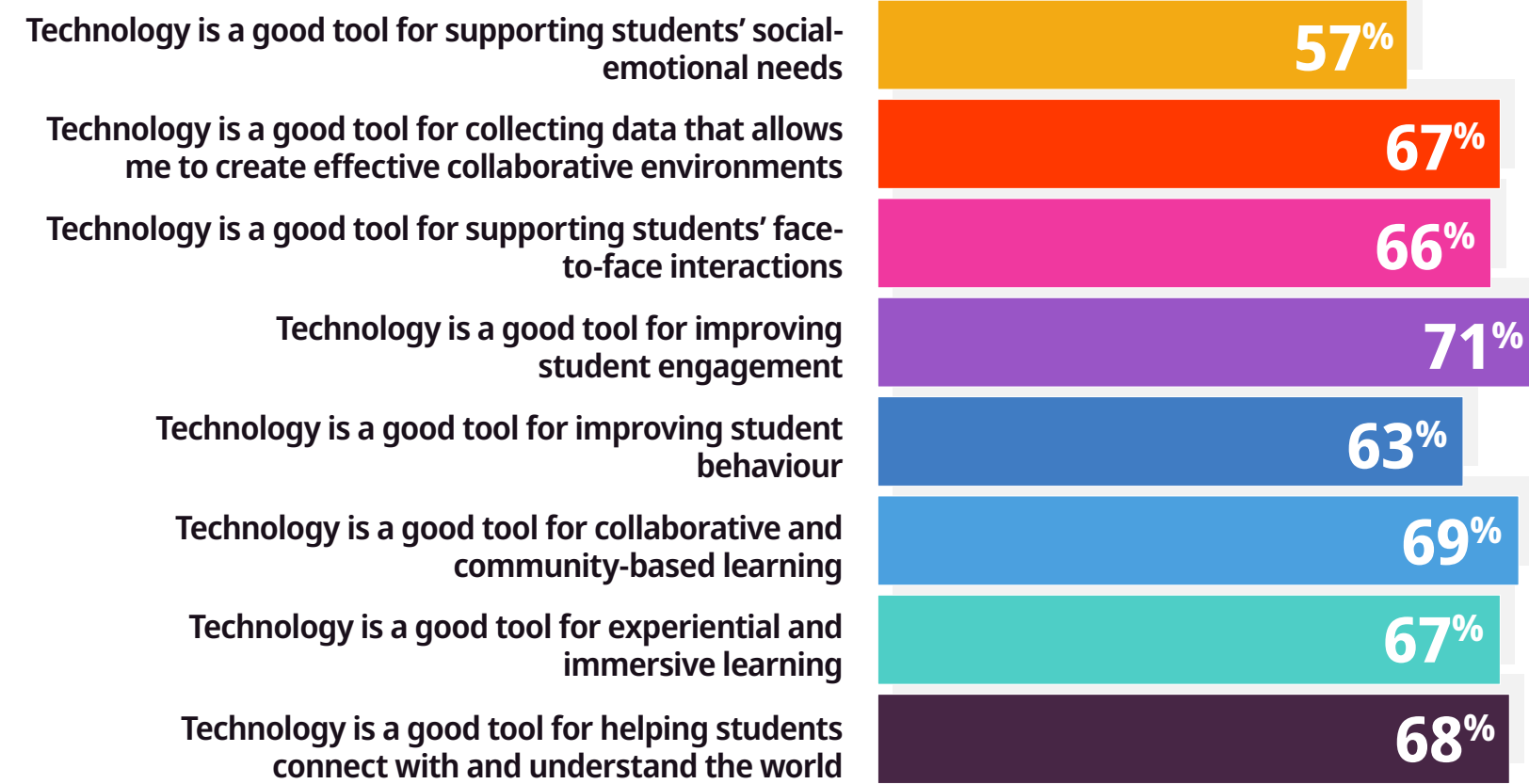
Technology builds connections and social-emotional skills

The majority of educators believe that edtech supports SEL, particularly when it comes to strengthening student engagement and collaboration. Students agree, with **83%** saying that technology helps them connect with their peers. As schools continue to bring their classroom community back together, education technology clearly plays a key role.

“Technology lets me quickly and relatively accurately understand students’ mental state.”

Headteacher, local authority secondary, London

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



What does this tell us about SEL in 2022?

- The emphasis on experiential learning and its benefits for social-emotional learning has resulted in a greater awareness of edtech's value in providing these immersive experiences and supporting students' needs.
- Schools are not currently taking advantage of simple methods that promote SEL. There are many opportunities to implement easy, manageable actions that support students, such as asking how they're feeling.
- Not all educators have the time, resources, or emotional energy to make themselves available outside of lessons.
- With two in five schools offering counselling services, it's clear that they play an important role in students' mental health.
- A big focus on collaborative learning shows how the classroom community has tried to stay together even amidst the disruption.

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Staffing shortages: A challenge surmounted by edtech and leadership

Staff shortages have posed problems for educators in every role, but mainly for teachers. Despite the hardships these shortages created, educators found relief through the use of technology. And many teachers reported that they appreciated the way their school leadership managed the issue.

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51%

Half of educators say they've had to take on a heavier workload as a result of staff shortages.

The headlines:

61% **Leaning on leadership**
Nearly two-thirds of educators find their school leadership teams to be supportive and effective.

98% **Edtech is essential**
Almost all educators see the benefit of using technology in education.

51% **Nation of innovation**
Half of educators constantly strive to innovate with technology.

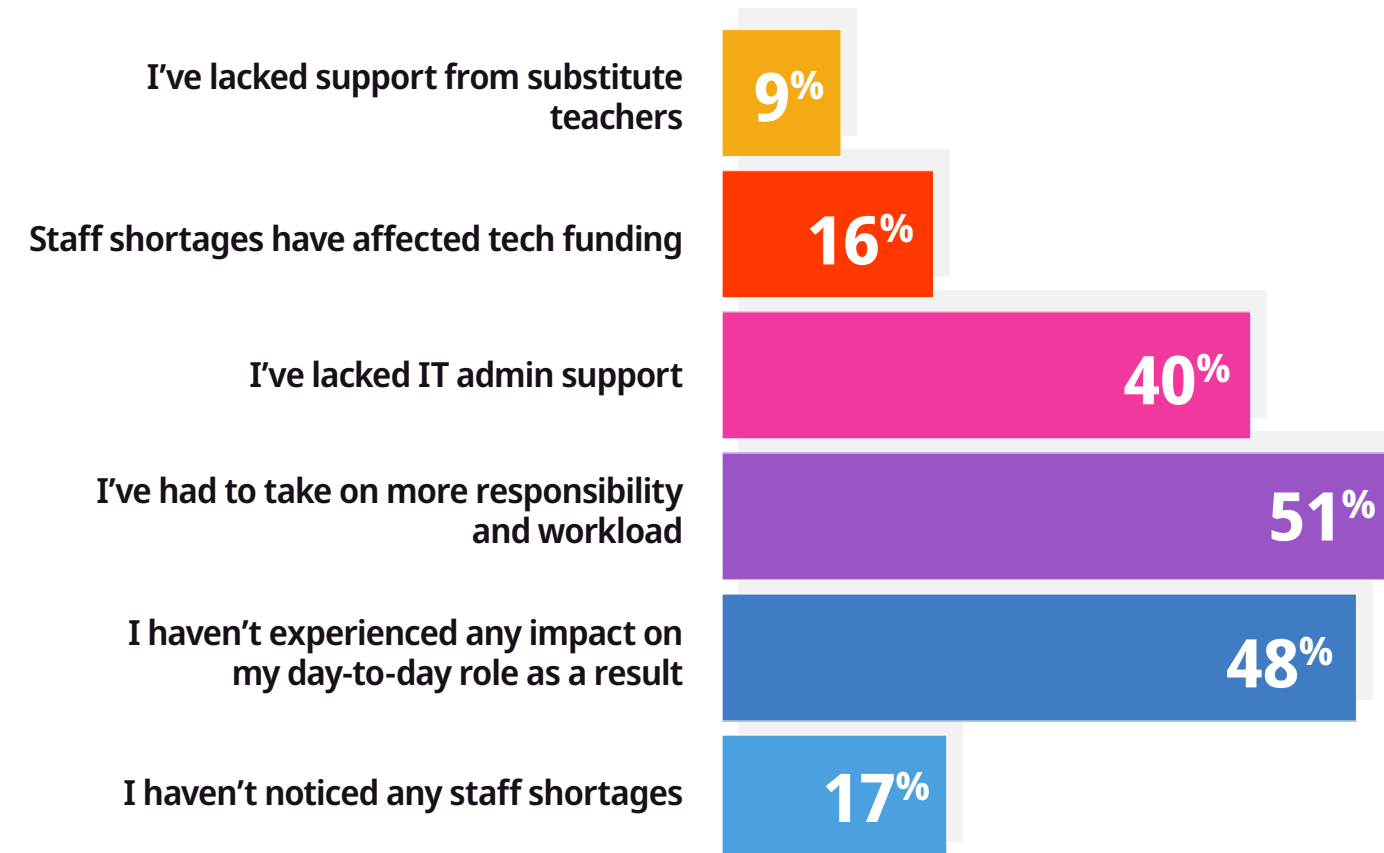
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Staff shortages felt by many, but not all

While almost half of teachers, IT staff, and administrators reported they have not felt an impact on their day-to-day lives due to staff shortages, half said they've had to take on greater workloads with significantly less IT support. Their effort has not gone unnoticed: A morale-boosting **87%** of students believe their teachers work hard.

To what extent have any staff shortages affected your day-to-day role?

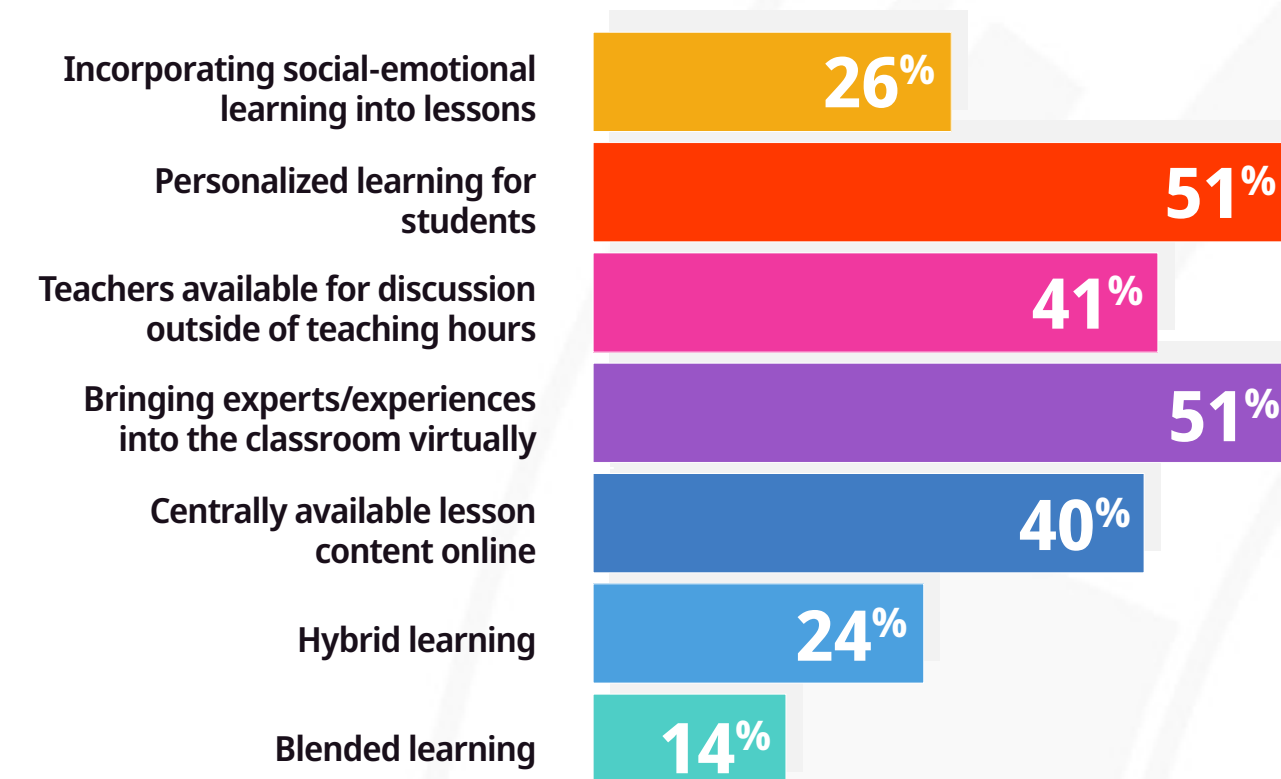


It's encouraging that the majority of educators overall approve of their leadership during this time. But delving deeper, the data reveals that **33%** of teachers and **45%** of IT managers are unsure that their leadership has effectively managed the challenges of staff shortages. And it's not hard to see why this lack of confidence exists. Out of all respondents, **67%** report their schools expect teachers to adapt, and **56%** are left feeling the issue of staff shortages hasn't been discussed or addressed enough.

Support takes time and tech

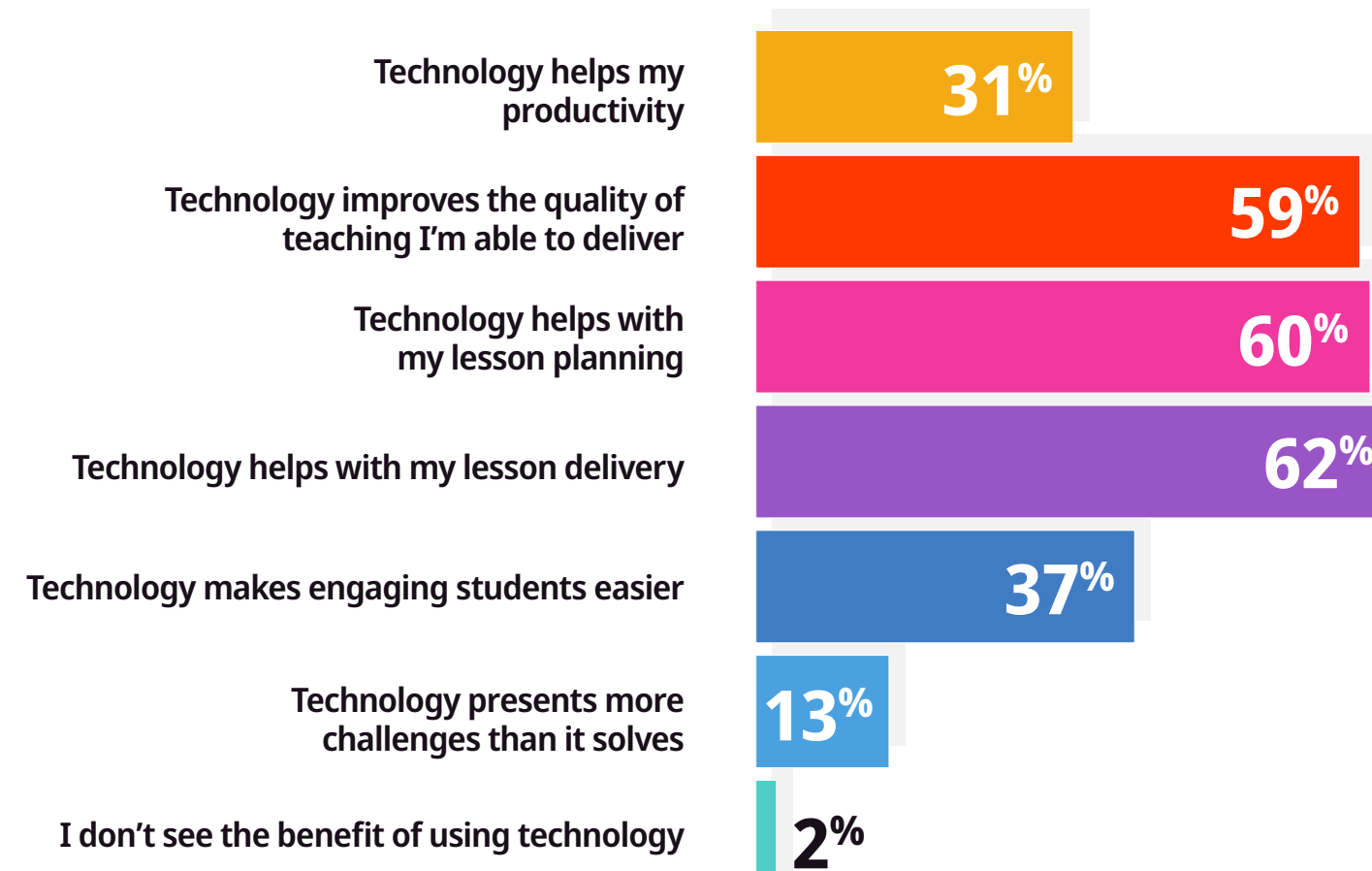
Educators have tackled these demands in a variety of ways, including providing virtual experiences for their students and offering online lesson content. They've also given more of their free time after school to serve students' needs. While this takes a toll on teachers' mental health and well-being, their commitment to their students compels them to make such sacrifices.

Which of the following strategies have you found helpful for teaching over the past 12 months?



Overall, the majority of educators believe that technology improves their teaching, with some pointing to its help with lesson planning and others noting its importance to lesson delivery. This year, we found that educators are more likely to recognise the benefits of edtech, with **12%** fewer educators than last year believing that edtech creates more issues than it resolves.

How does technology impact your day-to-day role?



"When schools use technology, students' desire to learn becomes stronger."

Headteacher, local authority secondary school, South East England

"With the use of technology, students interact more actively with teachers in class."

Headteacher, middle school, London

"Using technology every day in my work environment is a must, especially the audio and video aspect of it."

IT/network manager, secondary high school, Republic of Ireland

Increasing tech use increases teacher confidence

Although they've used and benefited from tech's assistance, many respondents haven't had the capacity to build their confidence, as one teacher notes: "There's not been enough time available to learn about the new changes coming in the technology."

How much has your confidence in using technology in school changed over the past 12 months?



When it comes to educators who increased their confidence, breaking this down by job role shows that IT staff have gained the most confidence (35%), closely followed by teachers (31%) and school leaders (16%). This reflects the enthusiasm shown by one in two educators who say they actively strive to make the most of edtech's potential in unlocking the most impactful, modern pedagogy.

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"I am confident in using technology in the ways that I know. It is possible that it could be used in other ways and I will research and assess if I become aware of other methods that may benefit my students."

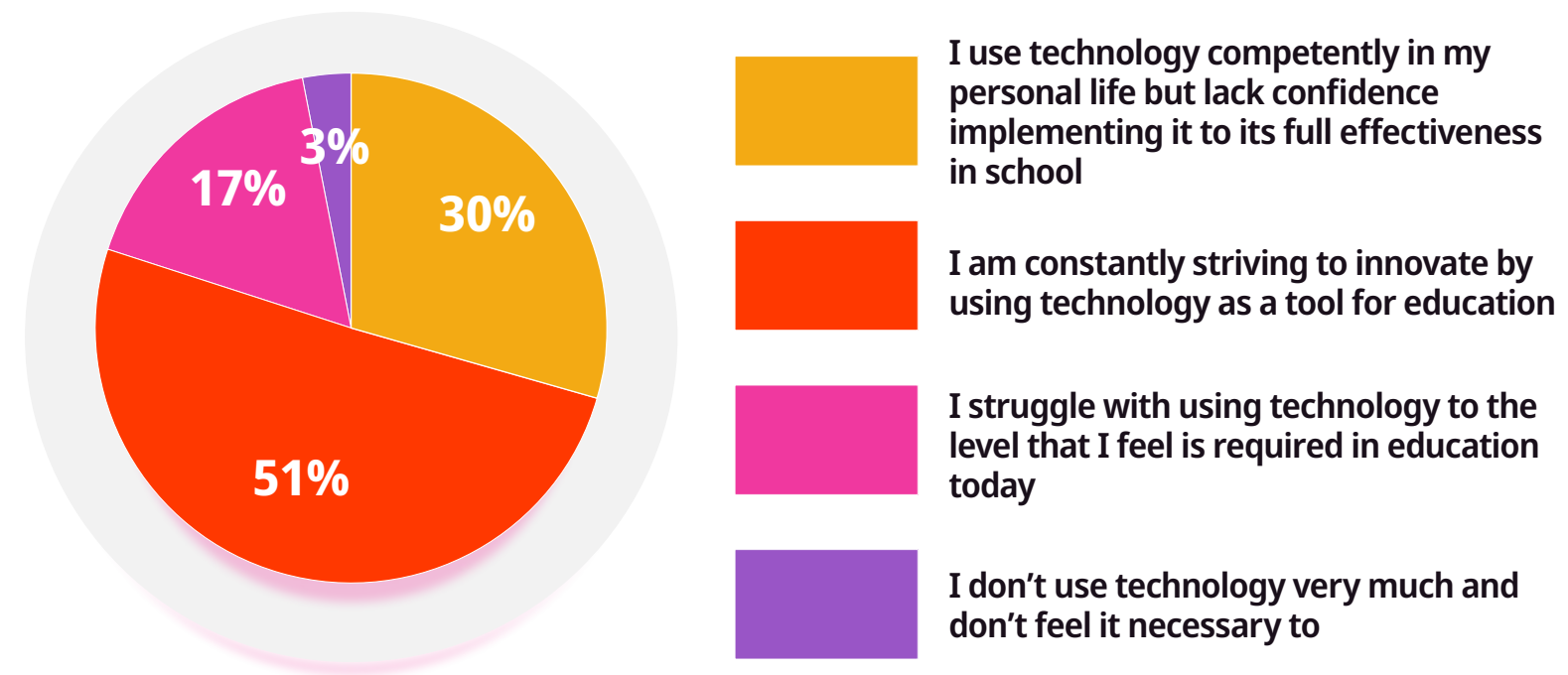
Teacher/senior teacher, SEN school, Yorkshire and Humberside

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Which of these statements describes you best?



In fact, this year's responses are almost identical to last year's, suggesting the appetite for tech growth and progression hasn't been dampened by another challenging year.

"Since lockdown and children working from home, many children are more used to and open to learning with the aid of technology. It is seen as less of a novelty and more of an everyday tool."

IT/network manager, local authority primary, South West England

What does this tell us about staffing shortages in 2022?

- In a time of competing priorities, educators' tech skills haven't increased as much as in previous years.
- So many teachers devoting time outside of lessons indicates they don't feel the resources and initiatives available are adequate.
- While it may benefit students, educators investing more of their own time is not sustainable and only threatens their own well-being and work-life balance.
- Schools can help educators' tech confidence by ensuring the infrastructure and ongoing training is in place to maintain it.
- With educators placing lesson delivery and planning among their greatest benefits, there's evidence of how useful edtech is throughout the year, and especially in times of crisis.

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The future of education: Technology and digital fluency are key

The pandemic and the disruptions it wrought have left educators feeling uncertain about the future. Even so, the majority believe edtech will be a critical part of the education landscape going forward. After proving its value again, tech will continue to grow in both familiar and innovative ways. There will likely be an increase in educators' digital fluency, and the use of edtech to promote and nurture social-emotional learning will also expand.

45%

Digital equity and tech access is ranked as the most pressing issue today.

The headlines:

43% **Front-of-class comes first**
Among edtech tools, interactive front-of-class technology is predicted to grow the most over the next one to three years.

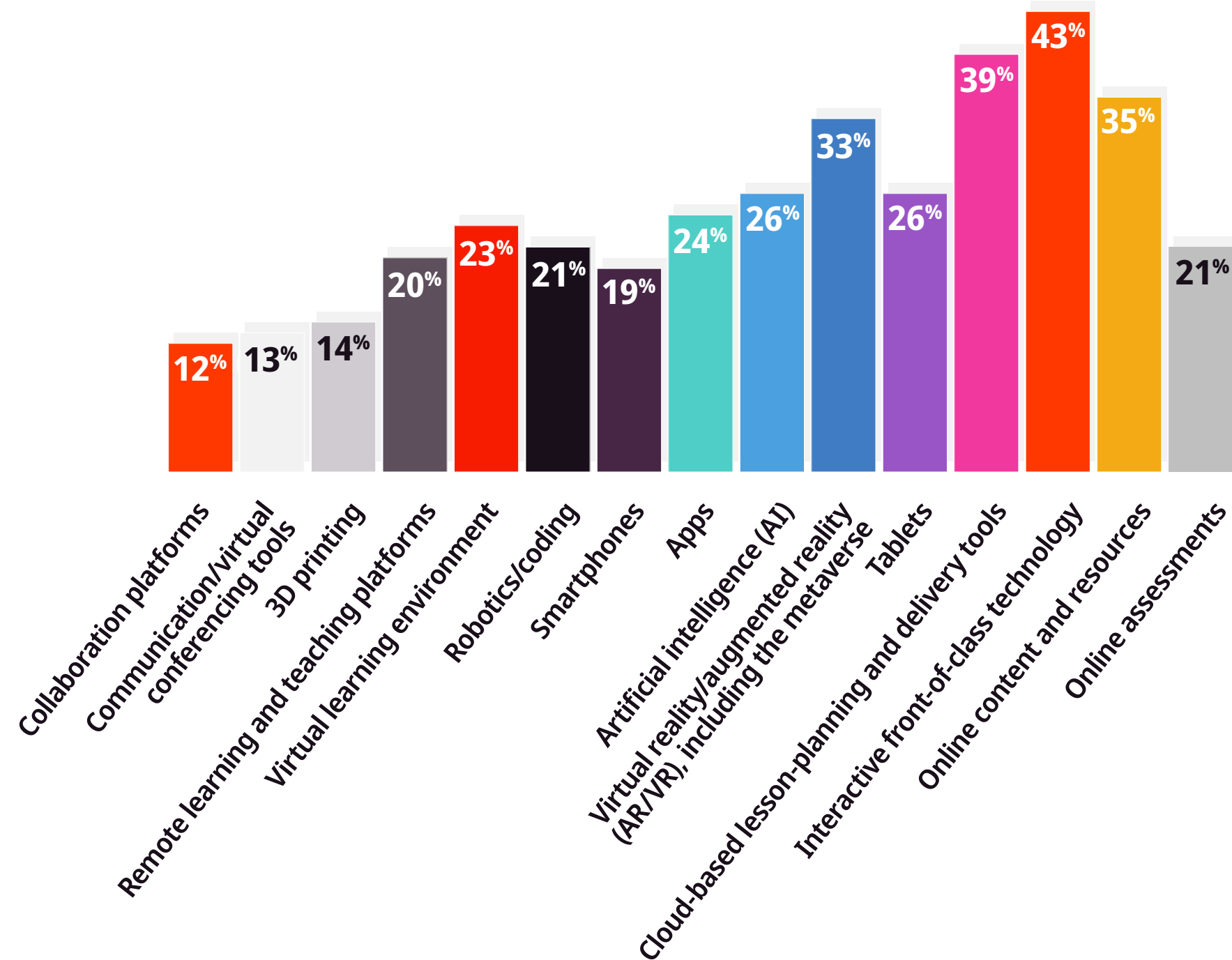
45% **Flourishing digital fluency**
More educators believe their digital fluency will improve in the future, rather than stay the same or diminish.

50% **A soft touch**
Education will focus mainly on soft skills in the future, according to the largest group of educators.

Front-of-class tech at the forefront

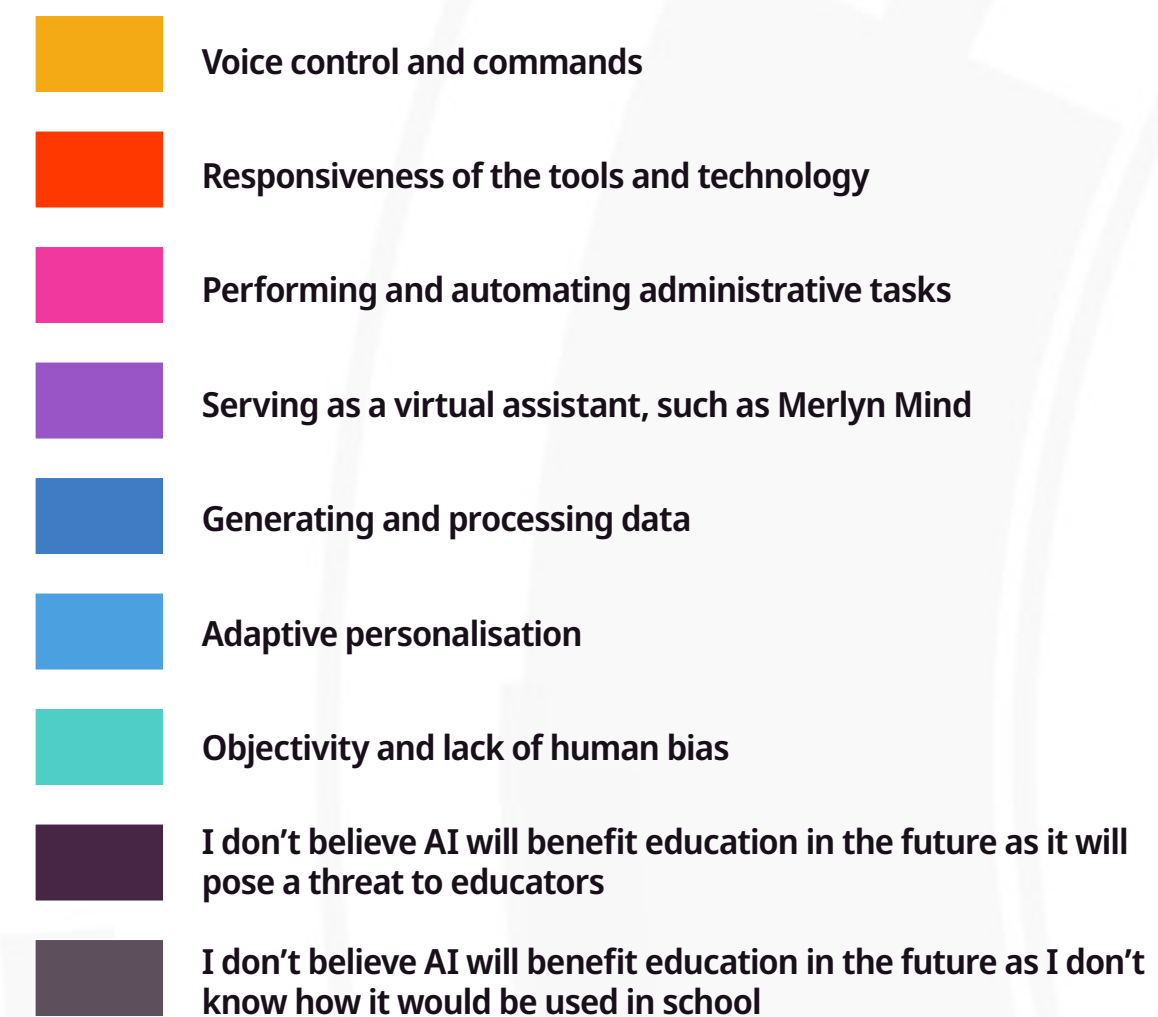
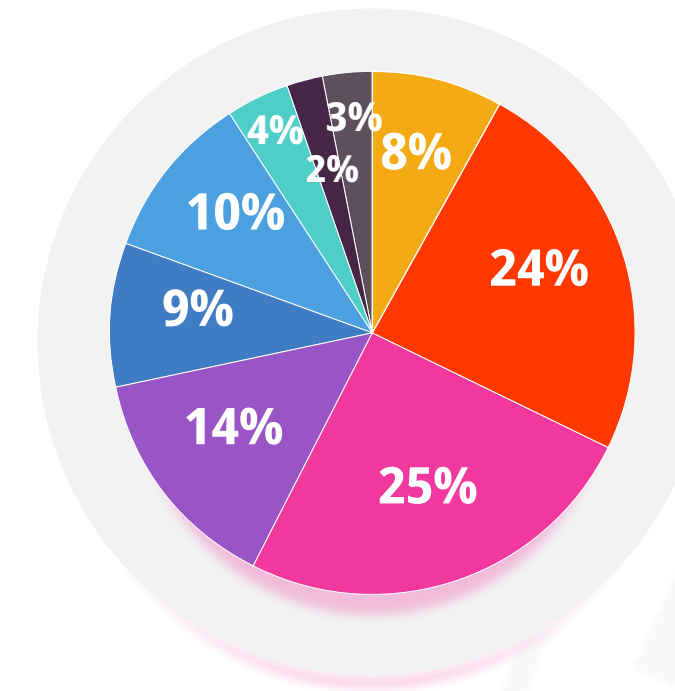
Interactive front-of-class technology will lead edtech's future, with nearly half of educators predicting the tools will experience the most growth. It goes to show that these well-established classroom staples haven't plateaued but continue to represent long-term potential and upgradeability in educators' eyes. It's a trend that's grown consistently over the last four years of monitoring in our reports. Meanwhile, less versatile tools with fewer applications in the classroom rank the lowest, such as 3D printers, which students identify as one of their least favourite to use.

Which technologies do you see experiencing the most growth in education in the next 1 – 3 years?



Front-of-class technology is the frontrunner for school leaders (**40%**), teachers (**58%**), and IT staff (**50%**). Even more novel edtech innovations like AI are welcomed, with AR/VR increasing by **14%** from last year, and just **3%** feeling unsure how AI would be used.

Which of these features and uses of AI will benefit education the most?



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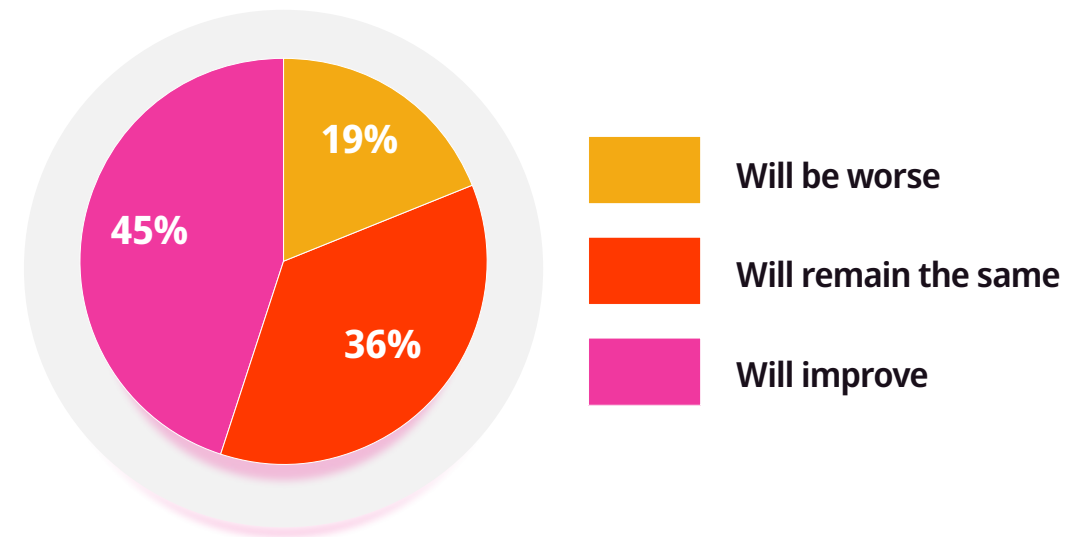
Full steam ahead for digital fluency

The question of whether educators can keep up with edtech’s growth is often asked. But this year’s answer is a firm “Yes.” While digitally native students are inherently immersed in the technological world, the educator community is less predisposed to pick it up so easily. Although it can require a conscious effort to not fall behind, one head of department notes how “increased use results in greater confidence and competence.”

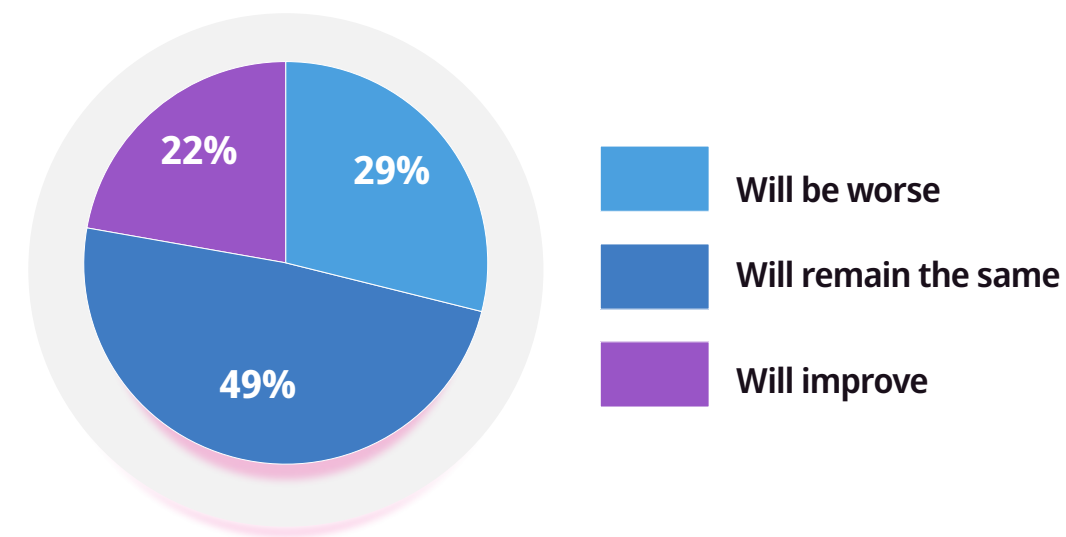
“I have used this period to improve my digital skills and have gained several certifications during this time.”

Teacher/senior teacher, local authority primary school, Scotland

How do you think educators’ digital fluency (i.e., a person’s competence and proficiency with tech) will change in the next 1 – 3 years?



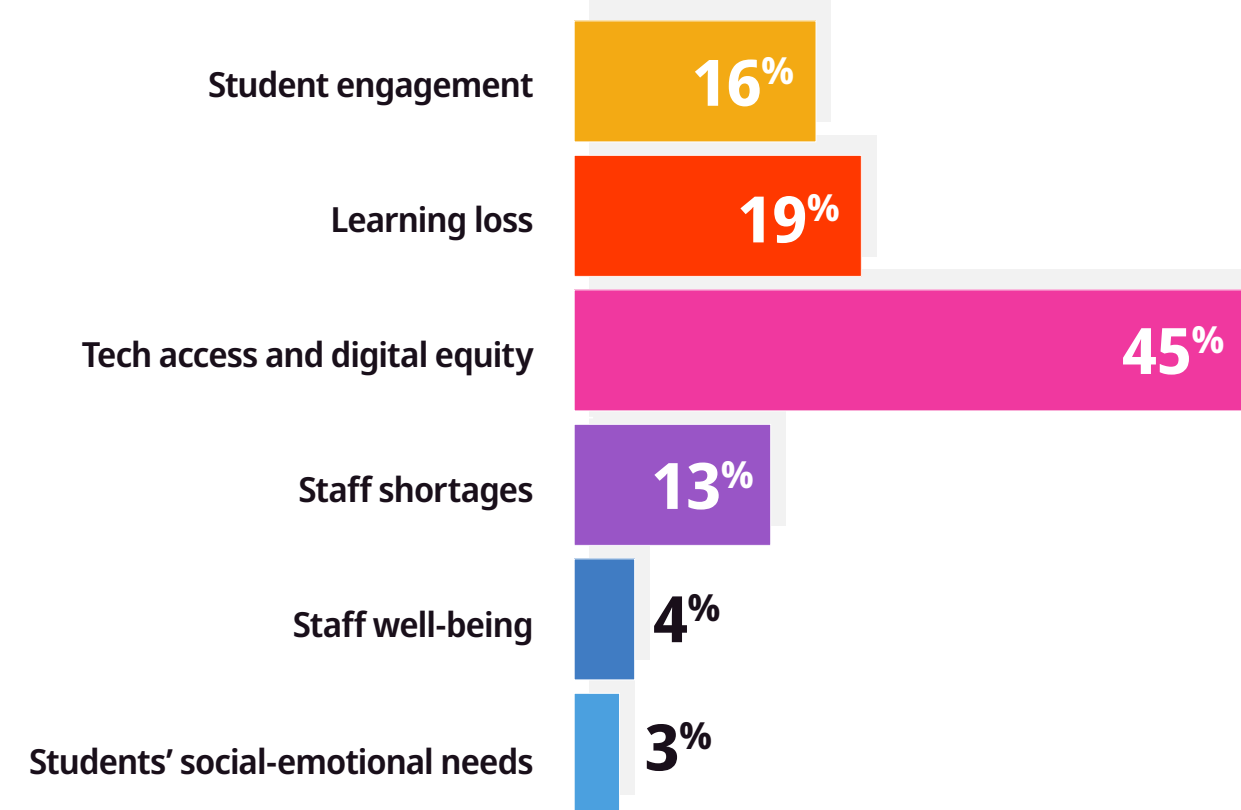
How do you think students’ digital fluency (i.e., a person’s competence and proficiency with tech) will change in the next 1 – 3 years?



Building edtech equity and soft skills are chief concerns

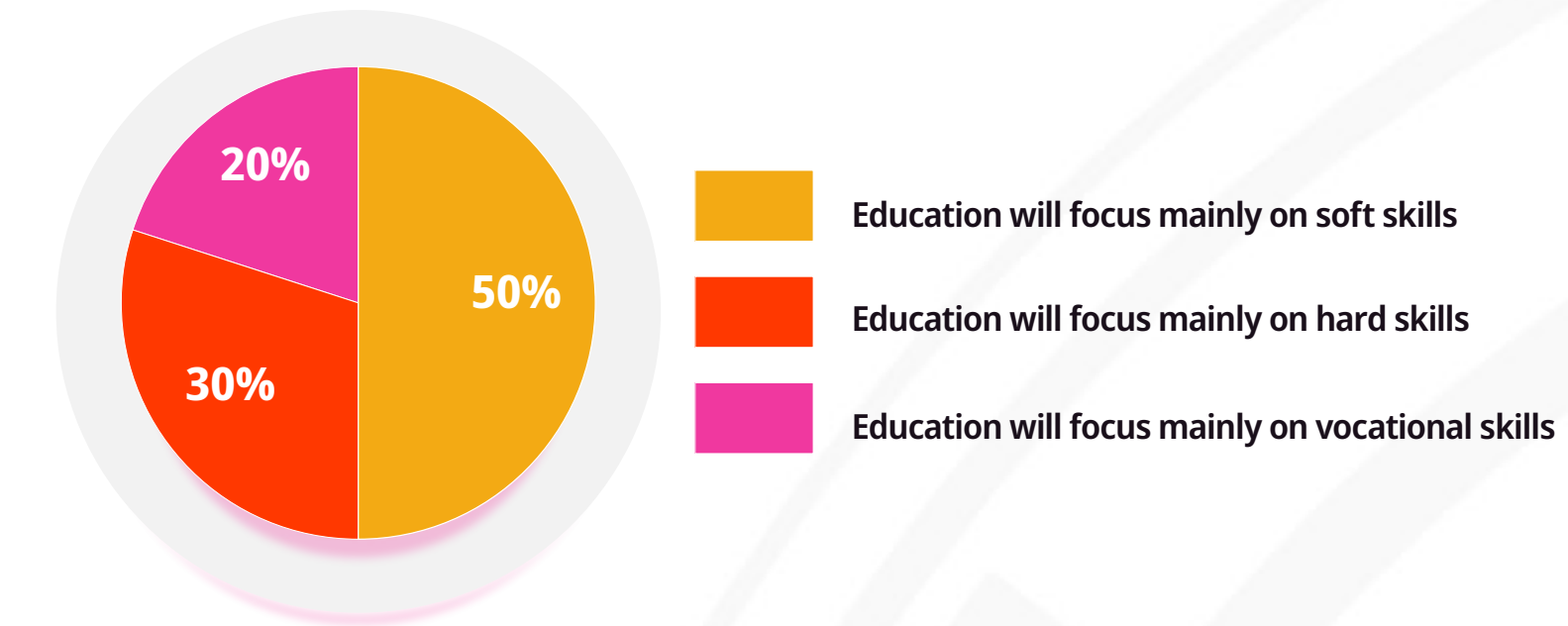
Educators rank equitable access to technology and digital tools as their biggest concern, even before the challenges of staff shortages, their own well-being, and students' social-emotional needs, which is ranked as their lowest concern.

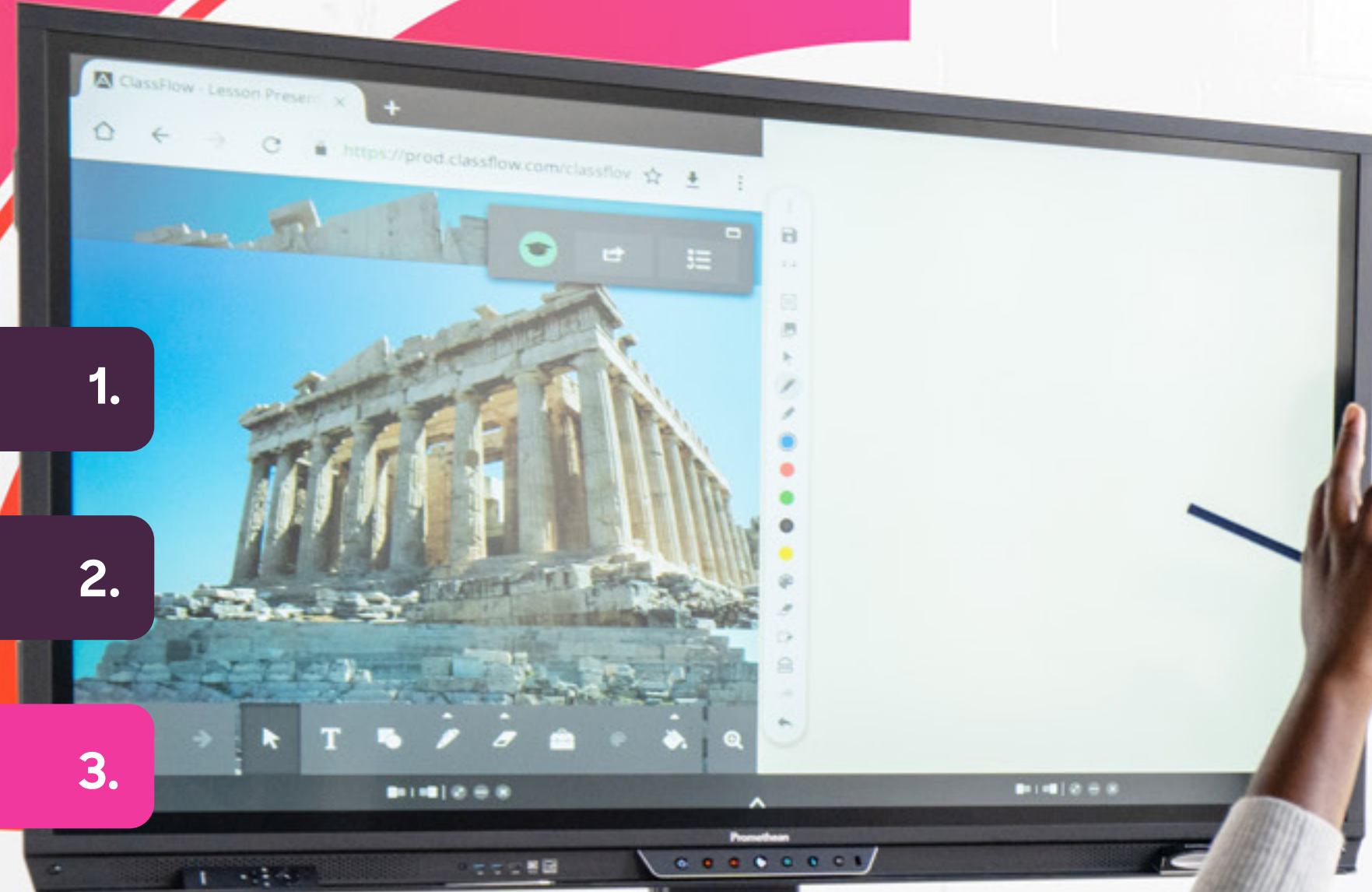
Which of the following is the most pressing issue faced by education today?



Most educators believe that the primary purpose of education is to help students gain the interpersonal skills they need to become well-rounded, emotionally intelligent citizens. However, the reality is that only **14%** of schools currently focus on soft skills.

How do you think the purpose of education will change in the future?





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What does this tell us about the future of education?

- The data shows that the digital fluency of students and educators will grow. Students, who are digital natives, currently outpace their teachers. But the rate of growth in the tech fluency of educators is expected to outpace that of students.
- The continued disruption to education has reaffirmed the need for students to be as resilient as possible, leading soft skills to rise to the top of the agenda.
- With staff well-being such a low concern among respondents, there's a risk that teachers and IT staff won't be able to offer the highest level of instruction and support without adequate care for themselves, especially after a particularly trying couple of years.
- The year's general tech advancements, such as the explosion of the metaverse, have likely contributed to the predicted growth of VR/AR.
- While it hasn't been in the limelight in previous years, the arrival of innovations such as Merlyn Mind have shown the capability of AI in the classroom, winning the confidence of the education community.

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The student experience: Happy at school, but hungry for tech

One of the most encouraging findings of our survey is that students are overwhelmingly positive about their school experience and have a favourable view of their teachers. Students reported that they have a strong learning environment and positive teacher relationships, but would like to see more variety in what they learn.

79% *Most students say their teachers make them happy.*

The headlines:

- 93%** **Stimulating screen time**
Almost all students agree that technology makes their lessons more interesting and enjoyable.
- 87%** **Admiring educators' efforts**
Nearly nine out of 10 students say their teachers work hard.
- 40%** **Learning more about life after school**
If students could change anything about their school, the most popular choices are more interesting lessons and learning about life after they leave.

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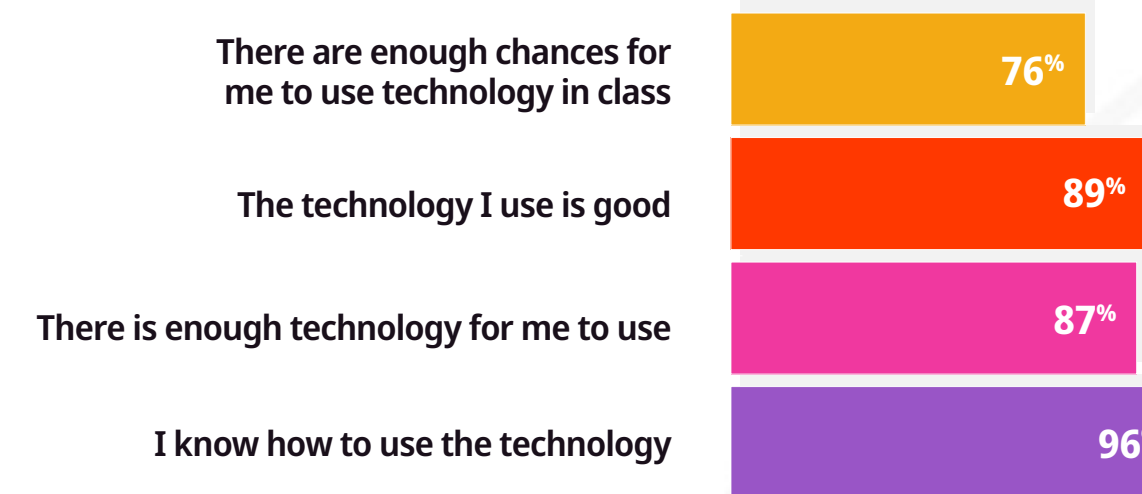
Technology is a help, not a hindrance

It's no surprise that tablets are students' favourite tools, considering how much these devices are used outside of the classroom. But online and remote content also score high, suggesting students appreciate having their content more easily accessible. Those who are concerned that tech can be a distraction should be reassured to learn that most students say it helps them focus on their lessons.

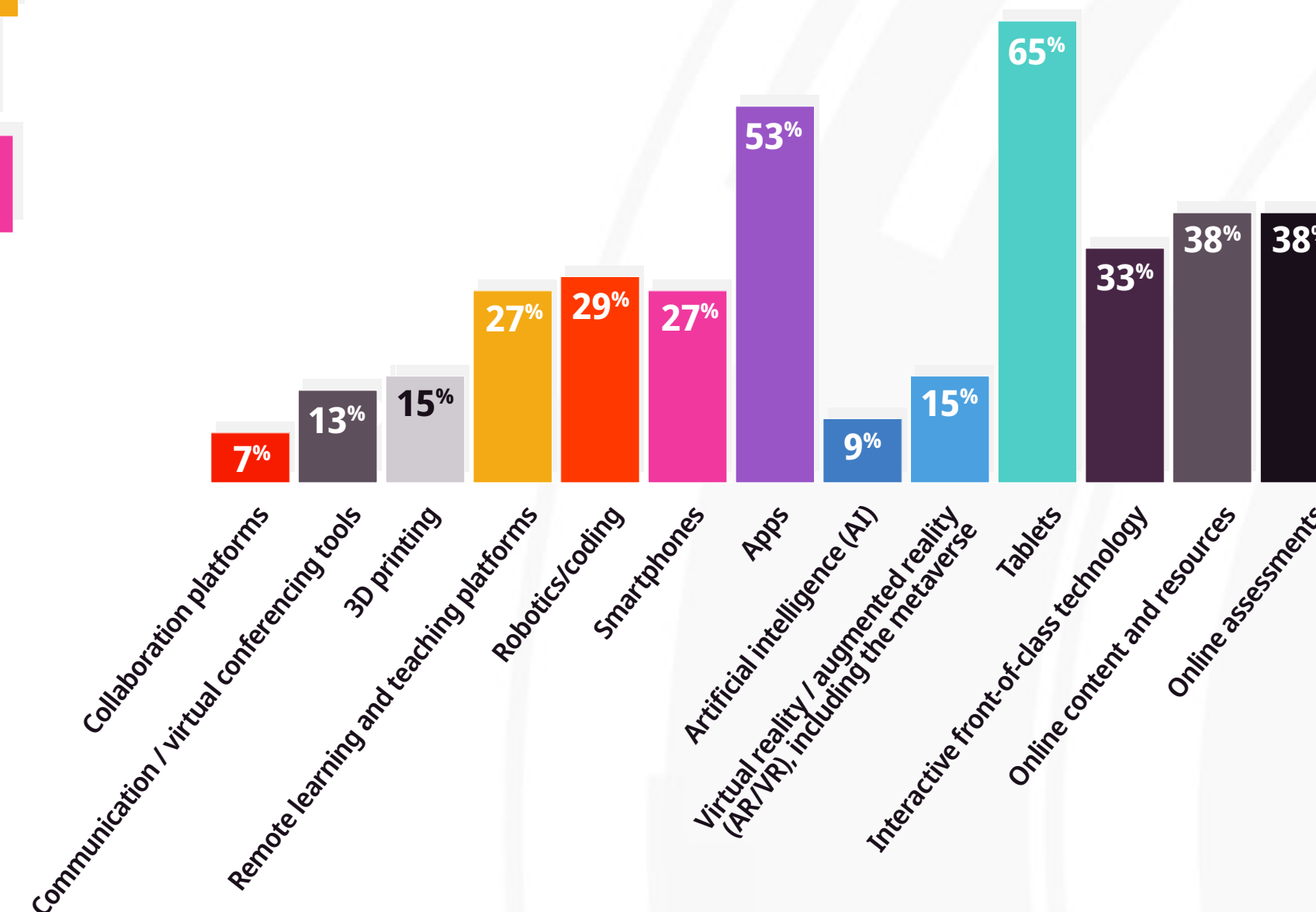
How important is technology in school for you?



How do you feel about the technology you can use in school?



Which of these do you like using in school?

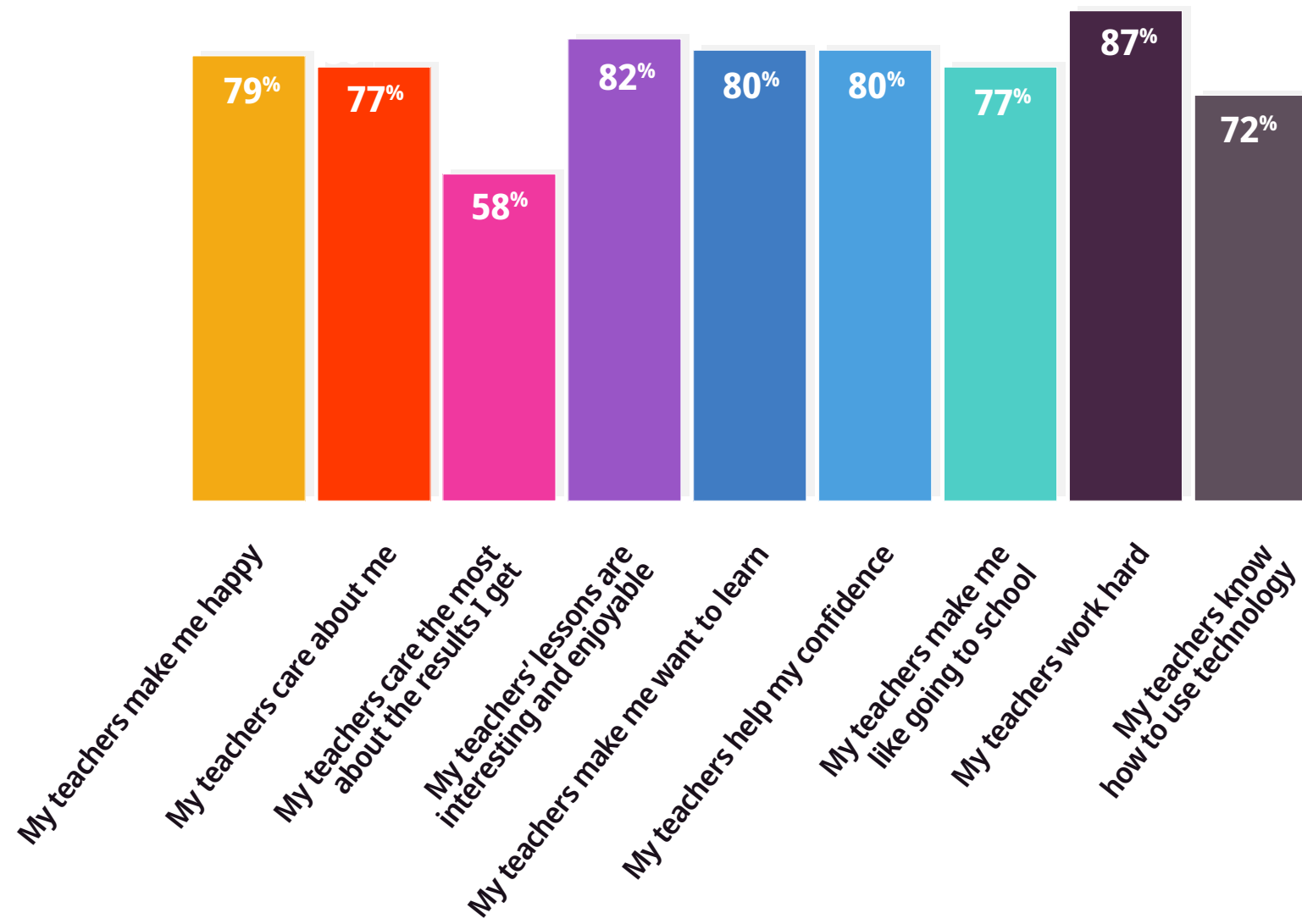


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Top marks for teachers

After working so hard to create engaging lessons and meet the needs of their students, teachers will be pleased to see so many positive responses from students about their classroom experience. They'll also feel encouraged that most students have faith in their tech proficiency.

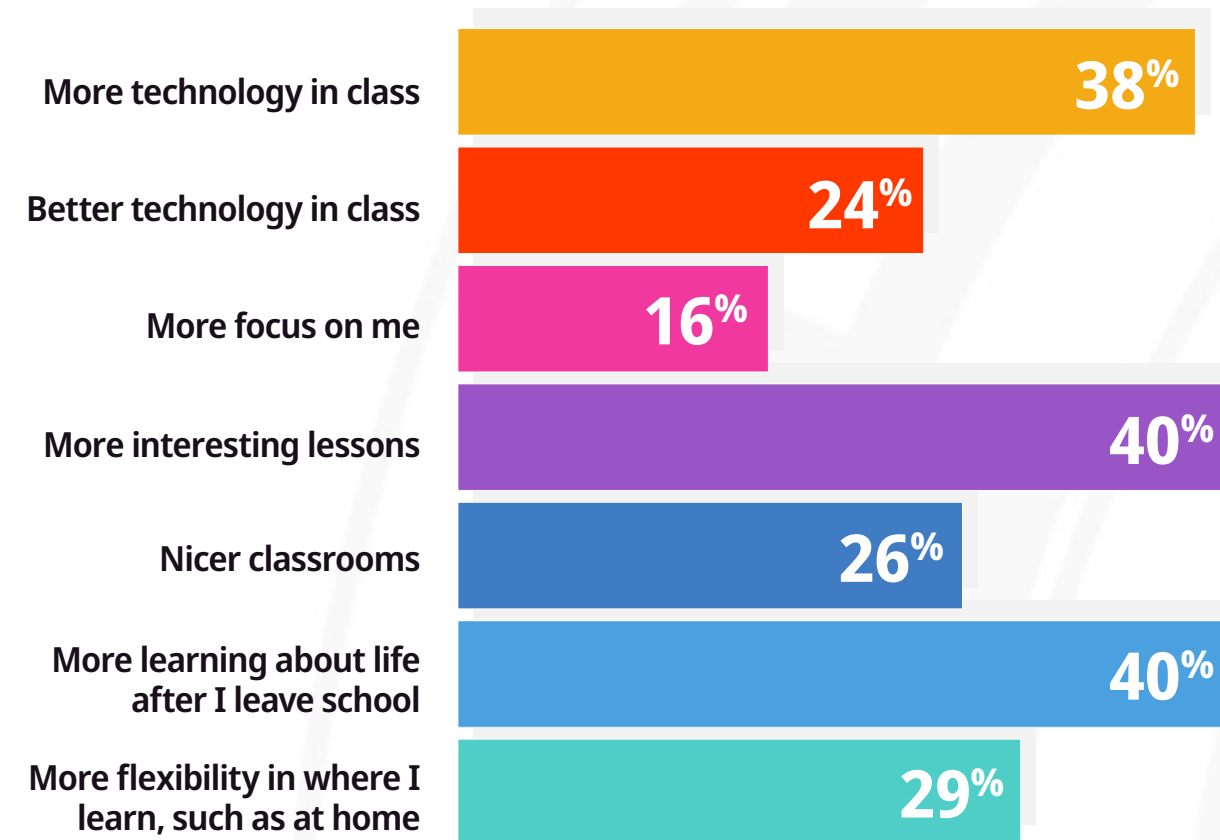
How do you feel about your teachers?



More variety and prep for the future, please!

Increased attention to social-emotional learning and student well-being has paid off, with the smallest cohort reporting they'd like "more focus on me." More flexibility in their learning environment and learning about life when they leave school is their top choice, if they could change anything. Most students are happy with where they learn, suggesting a keenness for the classroom.

What would you most want to change about your school?



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What does this tell us about the student experience in 2022?

- Teachers are not yet making the most of front-of-class displays or the tools and resources available on them. By taking greater advantage of these assets, teachers can create lessons and learning experiences that are more dynamic and immersive.
- Two in five students would like more tech, but will they get it? Among educators, 16% say staff shortages have affected tech funding, which is limited even in the best of times.
- Some students say there aren't enough chances to use the tech that's currently available. The most likely culprits behind this are impacts on tech funding and staff shortages leaving teachers without IT support.
- About three-quarters of students say their teachers make them enjoy coming to school. In the coming year, educators should build on that by developing stronger relationships with students, creating community in the classroom, and enriching their lessons with interactivity and engagement.



The **State** of **Technology** in **Education**

2023 U.K. & Ireland Edition

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