Milne's
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ASGs. Moray
Lossiemouth Forres
Elgin-Academy Keith
Elgin-High
Buckie

Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Parent/Carer Survey
Covid-19 | 2020

...for Moray's children and young people

Introduction

Covid-19 led to lockdown of our Moray schools in late March 2020. As a result, schools and officers at Headquarters worked together in establishing new ways of working across our local authority and schools. Contingency plans were put in place, including planning for remote learning and its delivery.

On initial lockdown, the majority of Moray schools provided paper-based resources with most embracing new digital platforms including Microsoft Teams and Google Classrooms. Once established, all schools refined learning and teaching delivery methods, reviewing what was in place and streamlining arrangements for remote learning and teaching.

The Moray Parent Survey was live during the month of June 2020, closing at end of term in early July 2020 as part of the Moray Learner Survey. Designed to elicit responses from learners and latterly, parents on their child(ren)'s home learning experience and to inform future contingency planning, a 'big question' was asked:

> **How has the home learning experience been for you and your family during Covid-19 lockdown and closure of Moray Schools?**

In order to structure responses received, this survey will consider the following aspects:

- Learning platforms and online learning
- Learning and Teaching
- Family and Wellbeing
- School and communication

> **"...home learning has given our son a new lease of life and renewed his interest in learning. It has been a challenge for us and teaching staff but that was to be expected. ..."** *Parent A*

Procedure

Findings for this report are taken from the parent element of the learner survey. In total, **1,206** responses from Moray parents were received with a variety of qualitative comments on their home learning experience as a family.
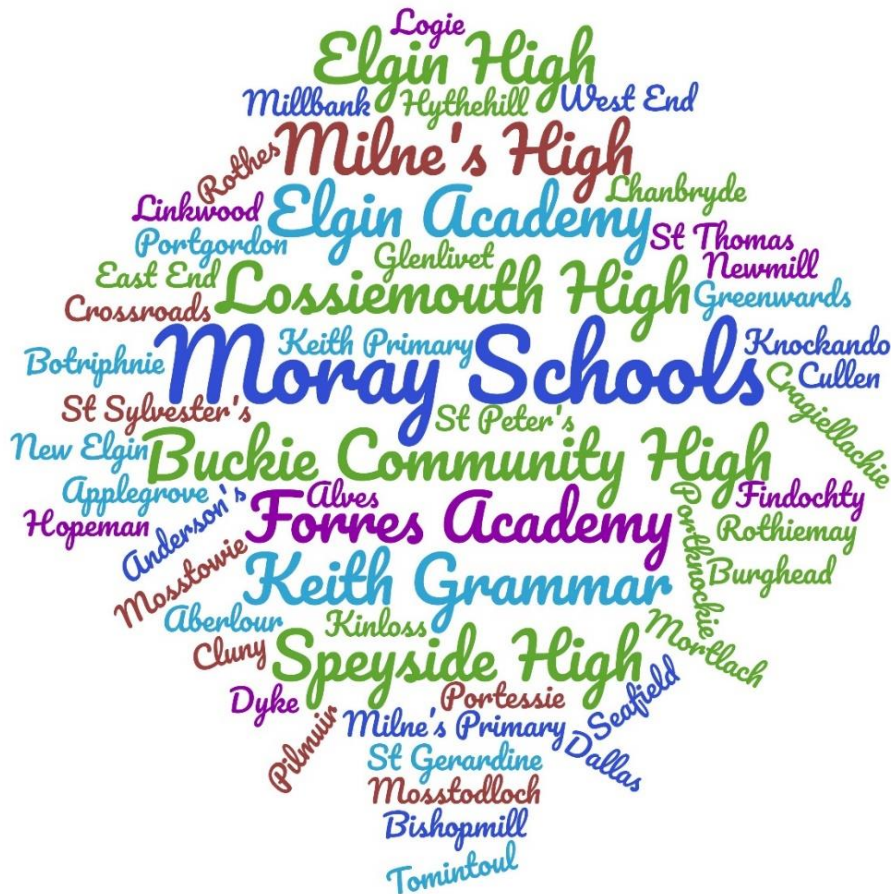
Responses were received from parents of children in **49** of our Moray schools including all **8** of our Moray secondary schools.

> *"...*I think the school has done an excellent job keeping us informed and getting work and help to us as required. It's nice to know you have the support of the teachers when you need it...*" Parent B*

> *"...*I find the children do enjoy the homeschooling once in a good routine. I also think my kids would enjoy team class meetings better if they were able to see their classmates as well as the teacher...*" Parent C*

Findings

Following review of parental comments, responses have been grouped into core themes identified in the Introduction above. Each key theme will be considered in turn, with positive aspects and areas for improvement highlighted, as identified by parent respondents.

Family and Wellbeing
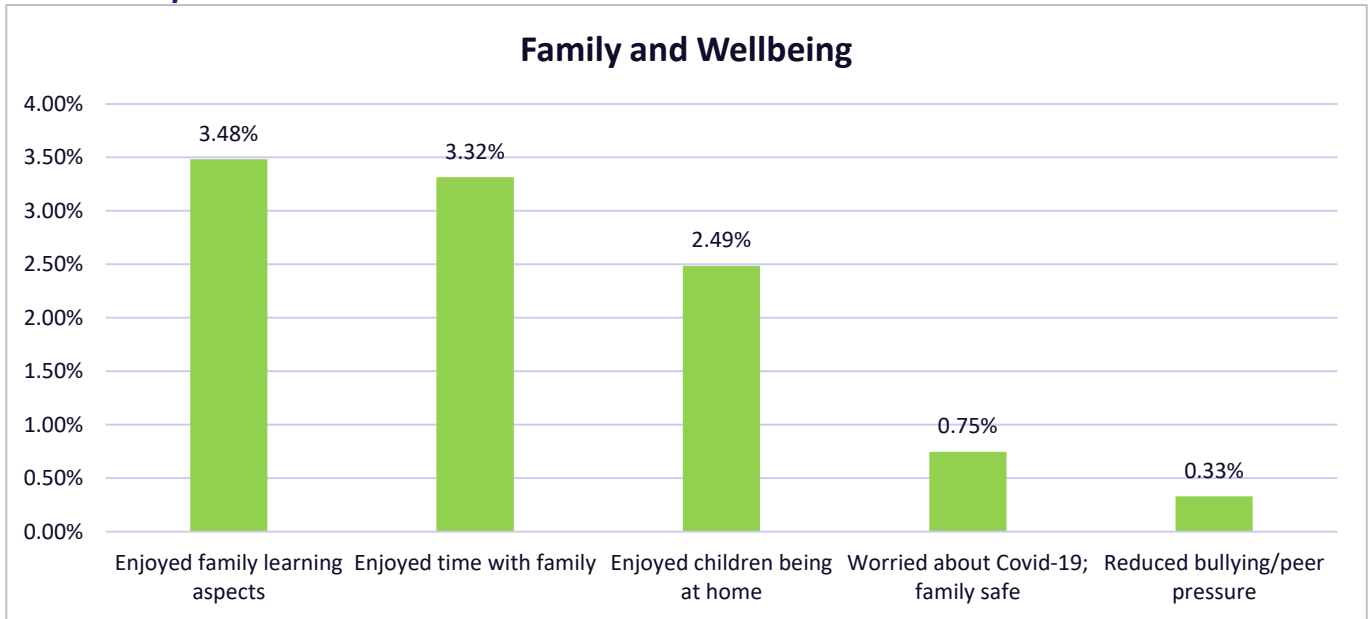
Positive Aspects:


Family and Wellbeing - Positive Aspects	Number	Percentage
Enjoyed family learning aspects	42	3.48%
Enjoyed time with family	40	3.32%
Enjoyed children being at home	30	2.49%
Worried about Covid-19; family safe	9	0.75%
Reduced bullying/peer pressure	4	0.33%

...based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

Overall, **some** parents noted that they enjoyed the family learning aspects of home learning during Covid-19, with **some** noting enjoyment of spending time with their family and children being at home in survey responses. **Some** parents also note that they were worried about Covid-19 and keeping their family safe, happy to have their children at home.

Areas for Improvement:

Family and Wellbeing
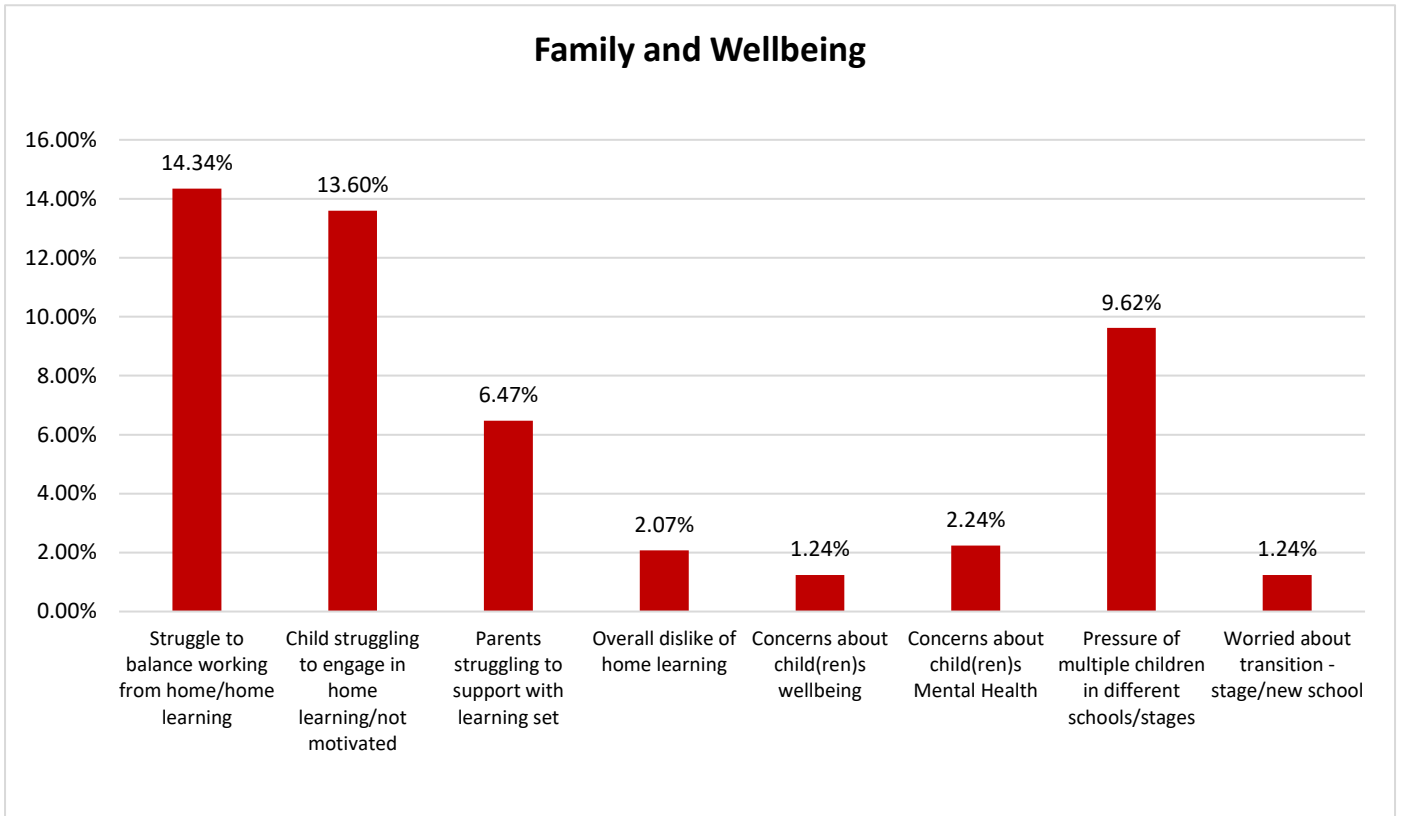
Family and Wellbeing – Areas for Improvement	Number	Percentage
Struggle to balance working from home/home learning	173	14.34%
Child struggling to engage in home learning/not motivated	164	13.60%
Parents struggling to support with learning set	78	6.47%
Overall dislike of home learning	25	2.07%
Concerns about child(ren)s wellbeing	15	1.24%
Concerns about child(ren)s Mental Health	27	2.24%
Pressure of multiple children in different schools/stages	116	9.62%
Worried about transition - stage/new school	15	1.24%

...based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

Overall, a **sizeable** number of parent respondents (173; 14.34%) noted problems balancing home working with the home learning of their child(ren) with a number of parents (78; 6.47%) finding difficulty in supporting learning that had been set by their child's school.

A **notable** number of parents (164; 13.60%) had difficulty in motivating their child to engage in learning set. From responses given, a further **notable** number of parents (116; 9.62%) struggled with home learning of children spanning different stages of Primary and Secondary school. This included capacity to provide all children with adequate support across (including ICT device access issues as noted in the *Learning platforms and online learning* section below). **Some** parents also note concerns with their child's Mental Health (2.24%) and overall wellbeing (1.24%) as a cause for concern.

> **"...difficult having 2 children at different stages requiring help and support with tasks...don't have a printer so can't complete some of the tasks...very concerned about the impact on my children's education and progress..."** *Parent E*

Learning Platforms and online learning
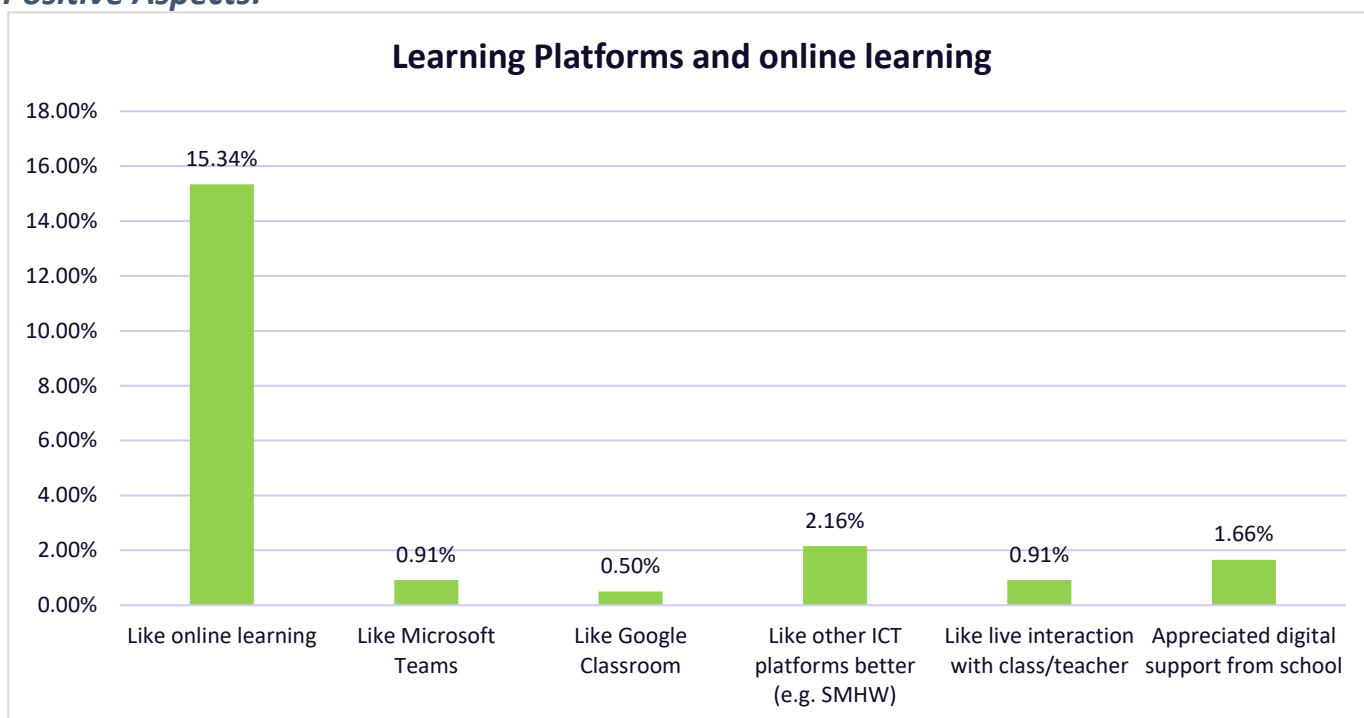
Positive Aspects:

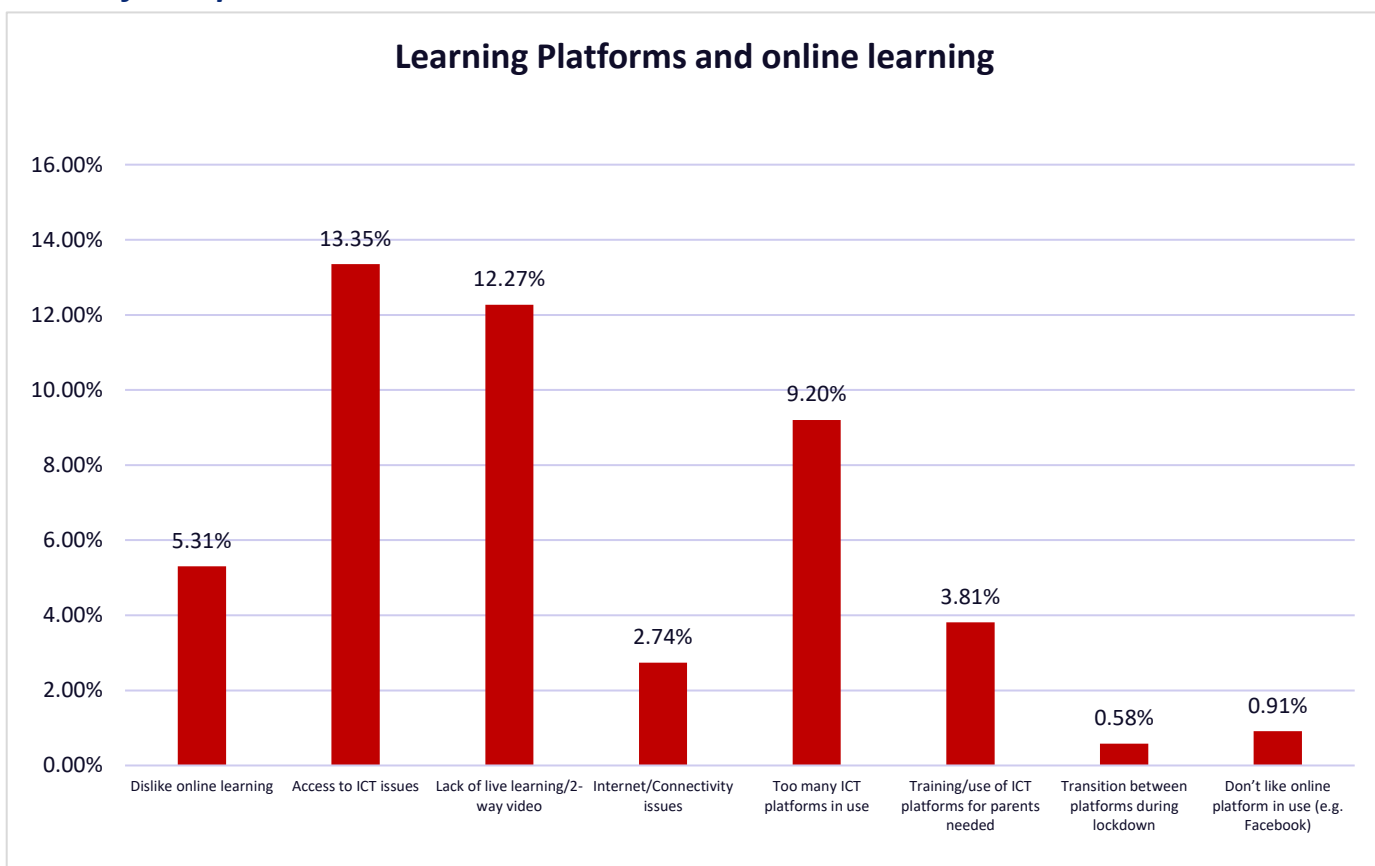| Learning Platforms and online learning - Positive Aspects	Number	Percentage
Like online learning	185	15.34%
Like Microsoft Teams	11	0.91%
Like Google Classroom	6	0.50%
Like other ICT platforms better (e.g. SMHW)	26	2.16%
Like live interaction with class/teacher	11	0.91%
Appreciated digital support from school	20	1.66%

...based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

A **notable** percentage of parents were positive and favoured online learning for their child(ren) (185; 15.24%). Overall, parents made positive comments about learning platforms in use and appreciated digital support received when available from schools (20; 1.66%).

> *"...I am enjoying helping with learning at home and the new work being set if very well explained...easy to work with..."*
> *Parent F*

Areas for Improvement:

Learning Platforms and online learning

Learning Platforms and online learning – Areas for Improvement	*Number*	*Percentage*
Dislike online learning	64	5.31%
Access to ICT issues	161	13.35%
Lack of live learning/2-way video	148	12.27%
Internet/Connectivity issues	33	2.74%
Too many ICT platforms in use	111	9.20%
Training/use of ICT platforms for parents needed	46	3.81%
Transition between platforms during lockdown	7	0.58%
Don't like online platform in use (e.g. Facebook)	11	0.91%

...based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

> *"...I have found it challenging to give all four of my children the attention they need. One of my children requires me to sit with him while he attends to his work as he gets distracted...it's a juggling act with the others..."* Parent G

While noted that a number of learners (64; 5.31%) **disliked** online learning, further notable issues in relation to learning platforms in use and online learning are noted as follows:

- **Access to ICT issues** including having **access to printing at home and sharing devices at home**. This included **parents' home working affecting availability of ICT devices at home** and having a **number of children at home with multiple log-in usernames/passwords for different ICT platforms** (161; 13.35%)
- **Lack of live learning** and **2-way video** where live teaching may have supported learning further (148; 12.27%)
- The **multiple different online learning platforms in use causing some confusion over how to use them and which ones to access for work being set by teachers**. This includes multiple platforms in use within a school and between schools where children attend (111; 9.20%)
- A number of **parents** (46; 3.81%) would have welcomed some form of **training or signposted help guidance for use of online learning platforms**.
- Some parents (33; 2.74%) had **Internet/Connectivity issues** affecting access to online learning platforms

> *"...it has been challenging trying to work myself from home and support a primary and a secondary pupil but the work set has been appropriate and achievable..."* Parent H
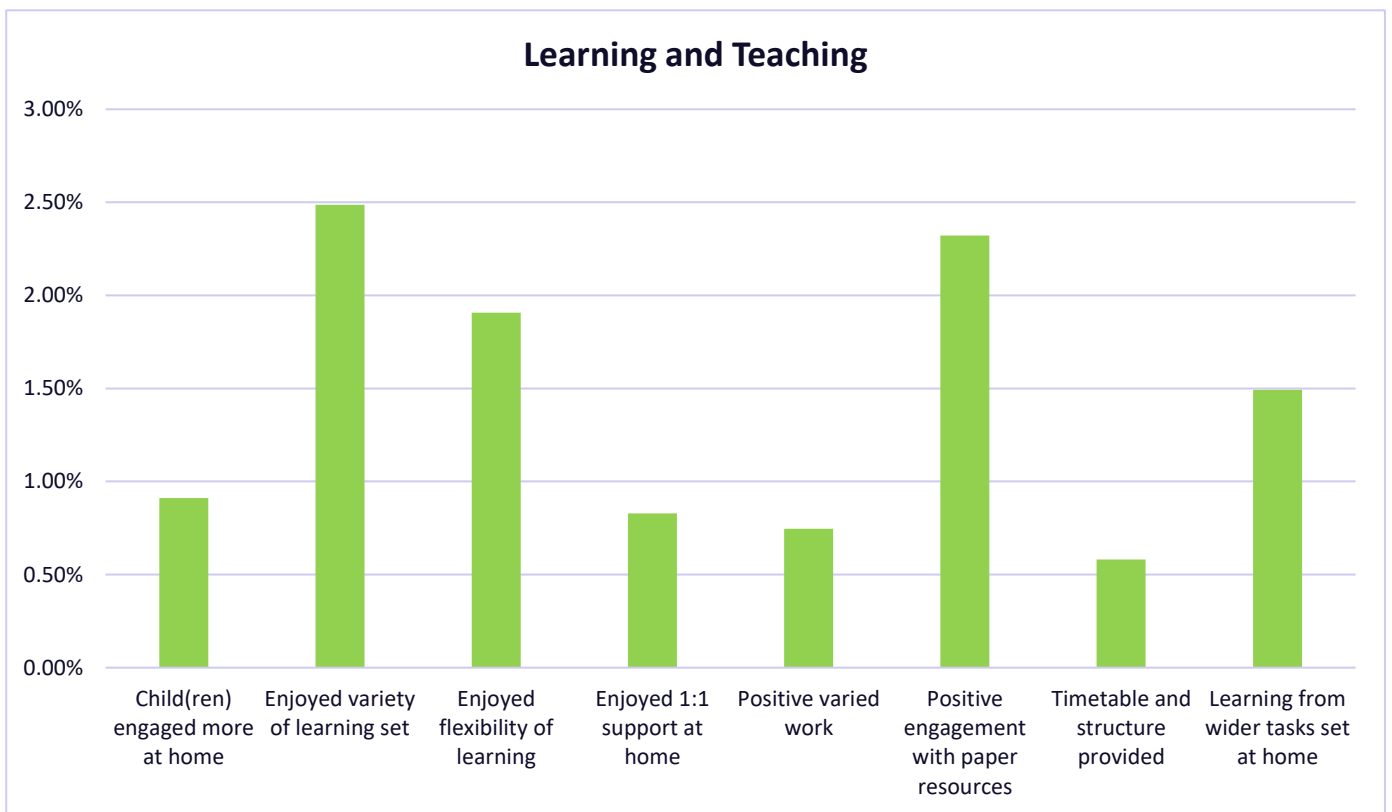
> *"...it would be better if learning was across less platforms...it would also be better if there was similarity in how staff posted work on the platforms...e.g. one uses assignments in teams and others put it in notebook..."* Parent I

Learning and Teaching

Positive Aspects:

Learning and Teaching

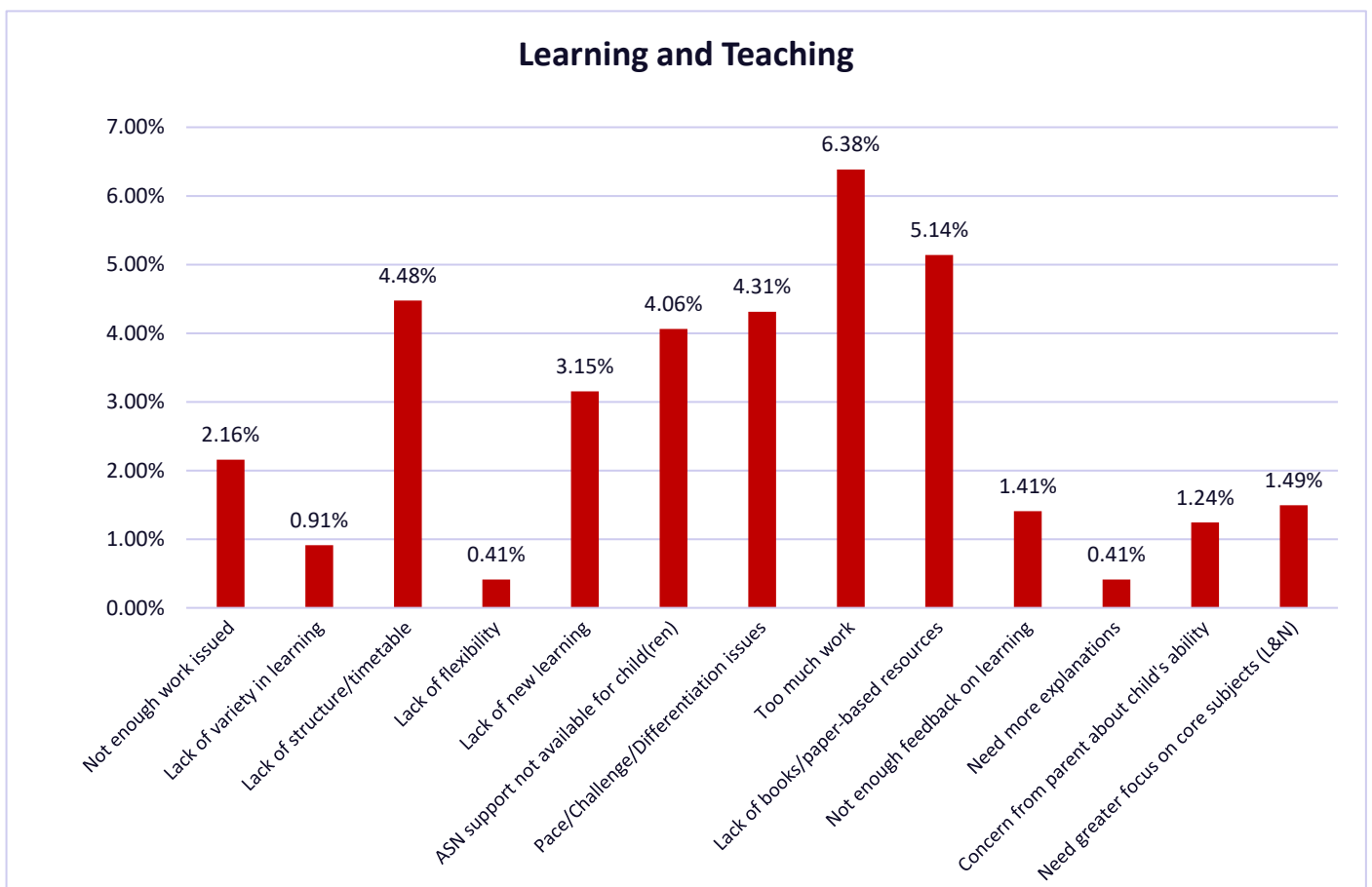| Learning and Teaching - Positive Aspects	Number	Percentage
Child(ren) engaged more at home	11	0.91%
Enjoyed variety of learning set	30	2.49%
Enjoyed flexibility of learning	23	1.91%
Enjoyed 1:1 support at home	10	0.83%
Positive varied work	9	0.75%
Positive engagement with paper resources	28	2.32%
Timetable and structure provided	7	0.58%
Learning from wider tasks set at home	18	1.49%

...based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

Overall, some positive comments from parents were received in relation to **enjoying the variety of learning set** (30; 2.49%), **positive engagement with paper resources** (28; 2.32%) and enjoying the **flexibility of home learning** (23; 1.91%) including ability to structure where and when home learning is completed (e.g. outdoors in garden). A number of parents also **enjoyed setting wider learning tasks at home** (18; 1.49%) and some stated their **children were more engaged at home** (11; 0.91%) than they would have been at school.

> **"...my youngest is especially enjoying it with no distractions and time to complete work without the worry of the class finishing...her confidence in herself has actually improvement especially with Maths..."** *Parent K*

> **"...home learning has allowed my child to work at her own pace...she hasn't felt held back and there have been no distractions..."** *Parent L*

Areas for Improvement:

Learning and Teaching

Category	Percentage
Not enough work issued	2.16%
Lack of variety in learning	0.91%
Lack of structure/timetable	4.48%
Lack of flexibility	0.41%
Lack of new learning	3.15%
ASN support not available for child(ren)	4.06%
Pace/Challenge/Differentiation issues	4.31%
Too much work	6.38%
Lack of books/paper-based resources	5.14%
Not enough feedback on learning	1.41%
Need more explanations	0.41%
Concern from parent about child's ability	1.24%
Need greater focus on core subjects (L&N)	1.49%

Learning and Teaching – Areas for Improvement	Number	Percentage
Not enough work issued	26	2.16%
Lack of variety in learning	11	0.91%
Lack of structure/timetable	54	4.48%
Lack of flexibility	5	0.41%
Lack of new learning	38	3.15%
ASN support not available for child(ren)	49	4.06%
Pace/Challenge/Differentiation issues	52	4.31%
Too much work	77	6.38%
Lack of books/paper-based resources	62	5.14%
Not enough feedback on learning	17	1.41%
Need more explanations	5	0.41%
Concern from parent about child's ability	15	1.24%
Need greater focus on core subjects (L&N)	18	1.49%

…based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

A number of areas are noted as adverse aspects of home learning with regards to learning and teaching. In particular, the following areas are identified by parents:

- **Too much work being set** (77; 6.38%) affecting family life or impacting on their child(ren)s wellbeing where a number of parents struggled supporting children in a variety of schools
- **Lack of books or paper-based resources** (62; 5.14%) with a number of parents requiring more paper-based resources to reduce screen time and need for printing online materials for completion (difficulty in editing some online materials for completion)
- **Lack of structure and timetable** (54; 4.48%) where a number of parents would have welcomed a timetabled programme of lessons
- **Issues around pace, challenge and differentiation** to meet the needs of their child(ren) (52; 4.31%)
- **Support for their child(ren) with Additional Support Needs** not catered for, affecting access to learning (49; 4.06%)
- Some parents would have welcomed mor**e focus on new learning as opposed to review of previously taught topics** (38; 3.15%)
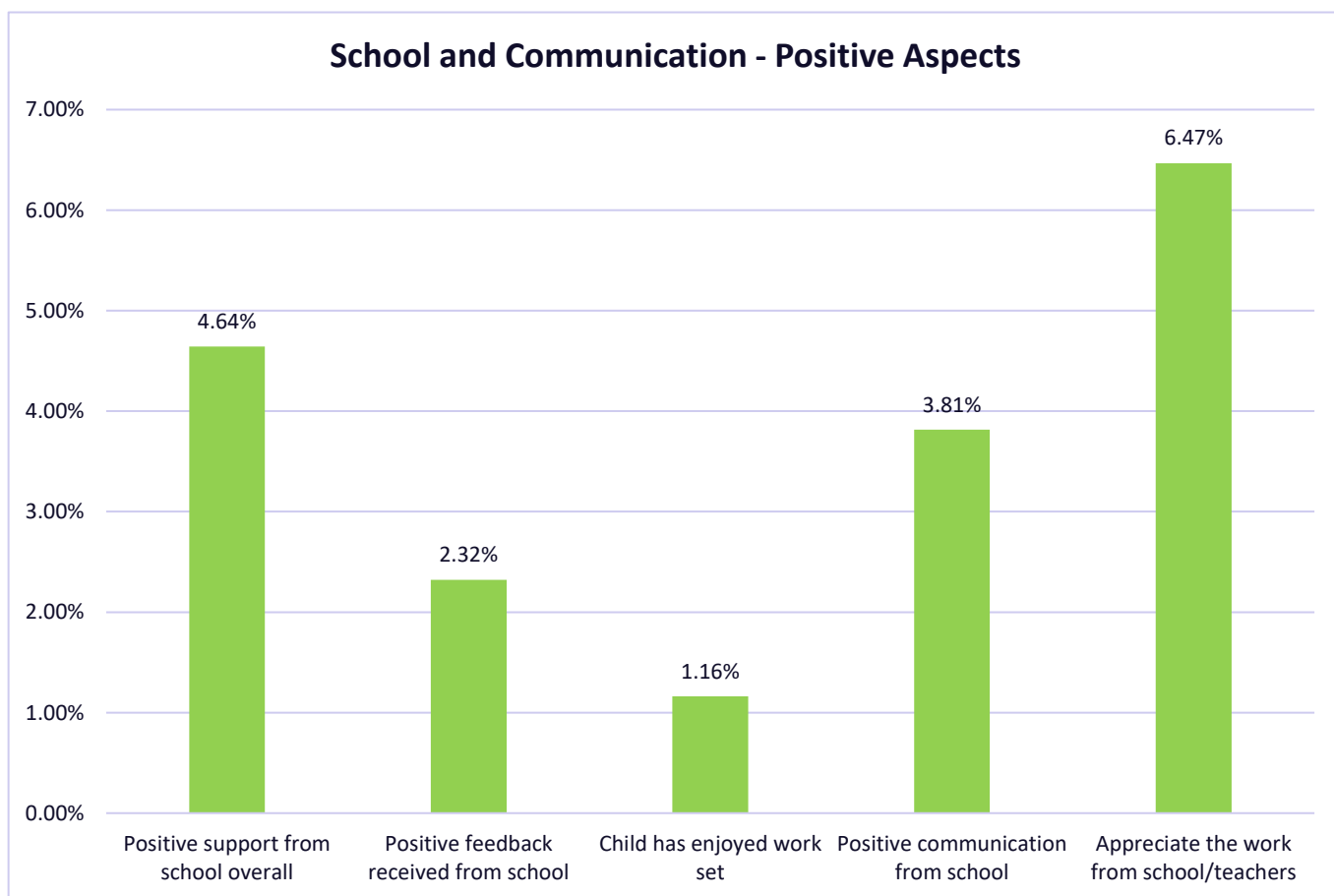
> **"…I cannot get them to sit with technology and do anything…they aren't interested and I'm struggling to keep them focused…I think paper would be easier…"** *Parent M*

School and Communication

Positive Aspects:

School and Communication - Positive Aspects

School and Communication - Positive Aspects	Number	Percentage
Positive support from school overall	56	4.64%
Positive feedback received from school	28	2.32%
Child has enjoyed work set	14	1.16%
Positive communication from school	46	3.81%
Appreciate the work from school/teachers	78	6.47%

...based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)
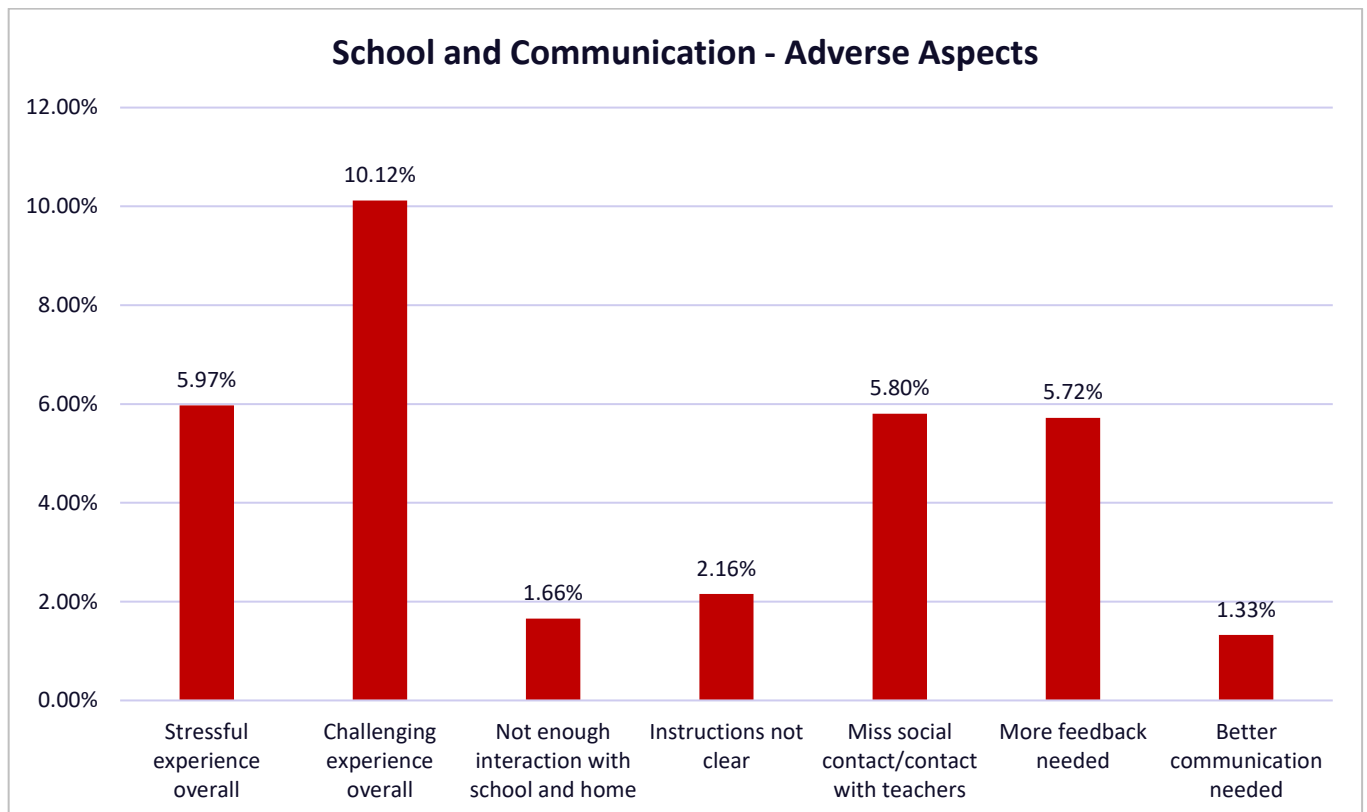
From comments received, **parents were appreciative of work from schools and teachers** (78; 6.47%) and believe that they have received **positive support overall** (56; 4.64%). A number of parents further note that **communication** was positive (46; 3.81%) during the lockdown learning period with **positive feedback received** from the school (28; 2.32%). A number (14; 1.16%) stated that their **child enjoyed the work set**.

> **"...the support that we have received from the school has been fabulous, daily tasks have been clear and easy to understand..."**
> *Parent O*

> **"...the teachers have been amazing in helping with setting the right amount of work for us to do at home...we have managed every day to get the tasks set completed and we have been working well. Good job X Primary..."** *Parent P*

Areas for Improvement:

School and Communication - Adverse Aspects

Category	Percentage
Stressful experience overall	5.97%
Challenging experience overall	10.12%
Not enough interaction with school and home	1.66%
Instructions not clear	2.16%
Miss social contact/contact with teachers	5.80%
More feedback needed	5.72%
Better communication needed	1.33%

School and Communication – Areas for Improvement	Number	Percentage
Stressful experience overall	72	5.97%
Challenging experience overall	122	10.12%
Not enough interaction with school and home	20	1.66%
Instructions not clear	26	2.16%
Miss social contact/contact with teachers	70	5.80%
More feedback needed	69	5.72%
Better communication needed	16	1.33%

…based on a total survey population of 1,206 parents responding for their child(ren)

"…home schooling has been challenging…As parents that continue to work full time, finding the time to home school is not easy…motivation from the children has subsided…" Parent Q

A **notable** number of parents (122; 10.12%) found the **home learning experience challenging overall or stressful overall** (72; 5.97%) with a number citing that their children missed the **social aspect of school and contact with teachers** (70; 5.80%). A number of parents believe that their children would have benefited from **more feedback** (69; 5.72%) where at times, **instructions** were not clear (26; 2.16%) or **communication** may have been improved (16; 1.33%) as identified by some parents. A number of parents further believed that there was not enough **interaction** with school and home in terms of **general communication** (20; 1.66%).

"…the experience has been very stressful and not enjoyable…most days I'm having to push and push my young child that only started Primary One in August to learn at home…" Parent R

"…very challenging to teach own children with a nursery age child too and at the same time balancing this with work commitments as an essential worker…" Parent S

Conclusions

Parents of learners across Moray schools have provided a range of responses, supportive of informing future home learning activities, the local authority and schools when considering next steps. This survey will inform contingency and scenario planning, coupled with the schools' survey and learner survey findings.

Critical findings include a range of **positive** themes emerging as a result of home learning due to Covid-19:

- **Family learning aspects** and **spending time with family**
- Notable number of children and families **liked online learning**
- **Variety of learning set** and **flexibility** for completion
- **Positive engagement** with **paper resources**
- Work from **schools and teachers appreciated**
- **Positive support** and **communication** from school overall

Reasons where home learning was a **less positive** experience included:

- Balancing **home working** with their **child's home learning**
- Difficulty in **motivating child** in engaging with home learning or work set
- Parents finding it **difficult to support with the learning set** (for example, how to explain concepts)
- Issues with **access to ICT including devices, printing** and managing child(ren)s access to a **number of platforms with multiple logins**
- **Lack of live teaching and learning** with opportunity to interact
- **Too many ICT platforms in use**, including multiple platforms within the same school and between schools where child(ren) of the same family attend
- **Parents** would welcome some form of **training, upskilling or signposting** to help guidance for **use of online learning platforms**
- For a number of parents, **too much work was set** where more **books and paper based resources would have supported home learning further**
- Home learning may have been supported by **more structure/timetabled learning**
- Issues around **pace, challenge and differentiation** of learning set including a number of parents requesting further support for children with **Additional Support Needs (ASN)** and more **feedback on learning**

- Home learning was a **challenging and stressful time overall** for a notable number of families
- Learners **missed contact with peers and teachers**, affecting overall **wellbeing** and **mental health** identified by parents, through absence of social aspect of school

> *"...We are enjoying our time at home doing home learning...I feel the amount of work is fine...it enables us time to engage as a family in other activities to promote good health and wellbeing...it is lovely being able to enjoy family time and share learning together..."* Parent T

> *"...We have a good balance of outside, independent, online and paper-based learning...both children are at different schools but manage well..."* Parent U

> *"...We have enjoyed home schooling...it has given me a great opportunity to find what my child is struggling with so we can do extra work to improve..."* Parent V

Recommendations

Following review of learner feedback, the following recommendations are made in support of home learning or future blended learning approaches in our Moray schools:

PS 1	School leaders should evaluate staff readiness for live learning and teaching using available digital platforms, ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place in adoption of live learning
PS 2	In embracing digital platforms and live learning and teaching, the local authority and schools should look to agree the number of learning platforms in use in order to streamline access to learning and reduce need for learners to work on a variety of platforms
PS 3	In planning any future remote learning in the event of lockdown or requirement for blended learning, schools should structure/timetable learning where appropriate to support continued learning (including opportunities for live teaching and learning), cognisant of family pressures including parent(s) working from home
PS 4	The local authority and schools should work to identify learners with insufficient ICT access and digital connectivity in order to support remote learning using identified digital platforms
PS 5	Schools and practitioners should review tasks set to ensure sufficient pace, challenge and differentiation, supporting the needs of all learners (including targeted support where appropriate to meet Additional Support Needs)
PS 6	Schools should consider a blended approach to learning tasks, mixing paper-based resources with digital learning activities in order to ensure continued interest of learners, providing variety in learning including provision of books and other paper-based resources in support of learning
PS 7	The local authority and schools should provide parents with further access to help guides and supports in order to facilitate access to online digital platforms in support of their child(ren)s remote learning

PS 8	In the event of any future lockdown activity, schools and practitioners should consider opportunities to replicate social interaction online through online platforms with appropriate safeguarding in place

Moray Education
September 2020

> *"...only issue is with the use of so many different platforms...as a parent I cannot keep track with the homework issued..."*
> *Parent W*

> *"...when I am at work, the Childcare Hub has provided a supportive and nurturing hub for my daughter which has been vital in supporting me as a Category 1 key worker..."* *Parent X*

> *"...Well done to our teachers and PSAs who are all working hard to find the correct balance for our children in this difficult time...thank you"* *Parent Y*

"...I have 6 children learning at 5 different levels...they all have so many questions and while helping one the others get bored...I don't have the correct techniques the teachers provide..." Parent Z

"...having the paper based learning packs was very useful, when you have more than one child that has to use the computer for work..." Parent AA

"...the teacher checks in daily on Google Classroom and the feedback on the tasks set are positive, personal and constructive..." Parent AB

"...it would be lovely if teaches were able to include more personal input in their lessons – perhaps film or more voiceovers...our daughter is much more positive about subjects where teachers are online and interactive..." Parent AC