



**Education
Support**
Partnership

The charity for everyone
working in education

Health Survey 2017

The mental health and wellbeing of
education professionals in the UK

YouGov
What the world thinks

A report from YouGov
commissioned by
Education Support
Partnership

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Foreword

We're proud to have commissioned this survey, the first of its kind which presents a robust, comprehensive picture of the current mental health and wellbeing of education professionals throughout the UK.

As the charity here to support all in the sector, we understand the demands of working in education but we also know from our experience what a positive impact the right support to both individuals and organisations can make. Not only can this unique profession offer incredibly high levels of job satisfaction, it is also increasingly pressurised which is clearly having a detrimental impact on countless individuals.

As a society, the need for clear measures that protect the wellbeing and mental health of all has never appeared more urgent. In education, it would appear acute. For many of the 1,250 education professionals who responded to this survey, the impact of extremely heavy workloads and rapid change is clearly taking its toll, impacting on the health and the ability of significant numbers to perform at their best, feeding the growing recruitment and retention crisis. The scale of the problem is sadly all-too-familiar to our helpline counsellors. They hear daily from those for whom the demands of ever-greater accountability, a growing testing culture and monitoring are becoming too much and deal with thousands of calls every year.

All too often, individuals contact us when it's too late and are already in crisis. But getting the right help at the right time is often the key step to improvement and we have seen time and again that getting this right for individuals and organisations does deliver positive, tangible changes for all; Healthier, happier and more productive staff, leaders and workplaces and in turn healthier, happier students, also better placed to be at their best.

I hope you will read these report findings and our recommendations with interest.

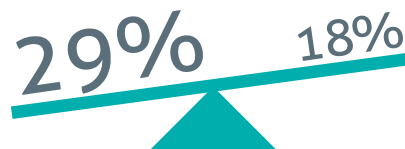
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julian Stanley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line underneath.

Julian Stanley, CEO Education Support Partnership

Executive Summary



75% surveyed said they have faced physical and mental health issues in the last two years because of their work.

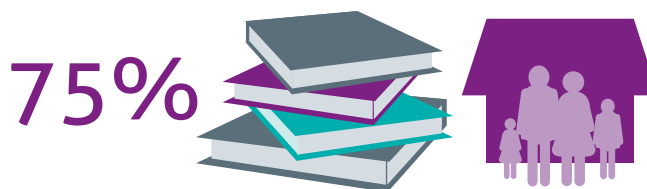


A third said that their job has made them feel stressed most or all of the time in the past few weeks, compared to 18% of the UK workforce overall.



53%

Half have considered leaving the sector over the past two years as a result of health pressures.



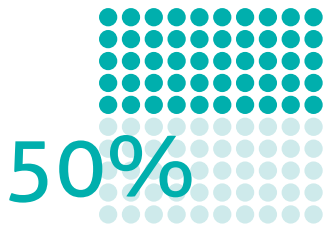
The main reasons given are volume of workload and seeking a better work-life balance.

A majority of education professionals disclose that they have faced physical and mental health issues which they attribute to their work. Overall, three quarters of the profession (75%) report experiencing behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms where work was a contributing factor, and this is significantly higher than for the UK working population overall, among whom 62% have experienced at least one of these.

Many education professionals report high levels of work stress, with nearly a third (29%) saying that their job has made them feel stressed most or all of the time in the past few weeks. This is also much higher than among the UK workforce, where only 18% report these levels of stress.

Nearly half of education professionals feel they do not achieve the right balance between their work and home lives, with 45% stating this. In comparison with the public sector overall, education professionals are significantly less likely to feel they achieve this balance. The public sector overall achieves a positive score of +32 when subtracting the proportion who disagree from the proportion who agree that they achieve the right balance, while this figure is -10 for education professionals.

When education professionals experience mental health issues this has an impact on their work and personal lives. Half of those who experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work say that their work performance suffered (49%) and a sizeable minority (28%) had to take time off work. Close to half (47%) also report that their personal relationships suffered.

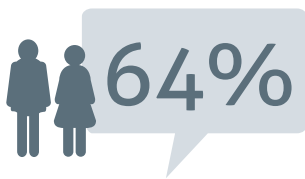


said they had experienced depression, anxiety or panic attacks due to work.



36%

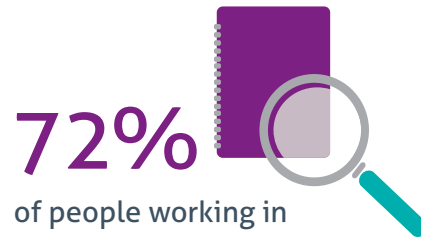
A third of those who said they had experienced problems said they feel it had a negative impact on their student's studies.



would not feel confident in disclosing mental health problems or unmanageable stress to their employer.



Close to half feel that their organisation does not support people who experience mental health problems well.



of people working in education do not feel that they receive sufficient guidance about their health and wellbeing at work.

Half of the education profession (53%) have considered leaving the education sector over the past two years as a result of health pressures and the biggest reasons given are volume of workload and seeking a better work–life balance.

Students can be impacted by education professionals' mental health issues as well.

A third (36%) of education professionals who have experienced behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms as a result of work feel it had a negative impact on their students' studies, and 13% a negative impact on their results.

Among education professionals who describe their current mental health as poor, the vast majority (86%) partially or fully attribute this to problems at work, with workload and work–life balance emerging as the top two causes.

A fifth of education professionals who have experienced these psychological, physical or behavioural problems did not speak to anyone about it, and the top reason given for not speaking to someone at work about these issues

was that it would be seen as a sign of weakness (31%). Furthermore, a majority of all education professionals (64%) say they would not be confident in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health problems to their employer.

Close to half of education professionals (45%) feel that their organisation does not support people who experience mental health problems well, and within the schools sector those from the secondary phase are more likely than those from the primary phase to feel this way (51% compared with 41%).

and the top reason given for not speaking to someone at work about these issues was that it would be seen as a sign of weakness (31%). Furthermore, a majority of all education professionals (64%) say they would not be confident in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health problems to their employer.

The majority of education professionals do not feel that they receive sufficient guidance about their health and wellbeing at work. Seven out of ten (72%) professionals report this, indicating the need for greater information and guidance on health and wellbeing across the sector.



About the survey

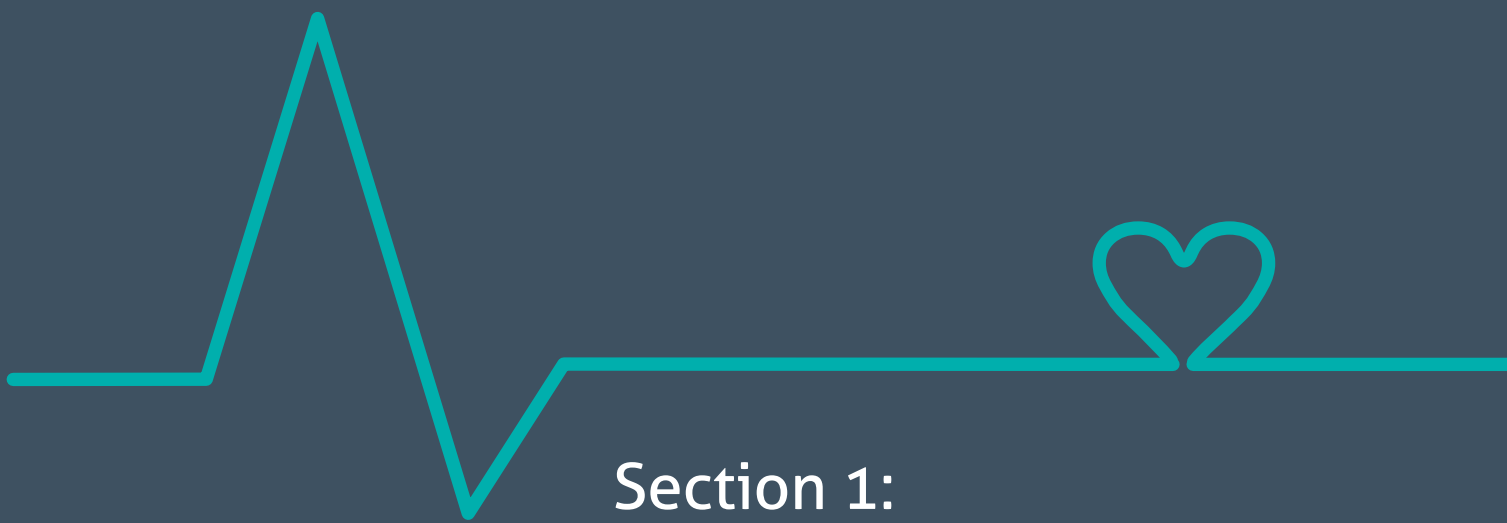
This report, commissioned by Education Support Partnership is the first of its kind to explore mental health and wellbeing specifically across the sector, revealing the scale of problems consistently raised by the thousands we support. It presents the key findings from a survey of 1,250 education professionals that is representative of the whole sector through providing coverage across schools, Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE). The sample covers all job roles within the education profession providing insights from senior leaders through to support staff working in the sector.

The survey covers the impacts on personal and professional lives of those experiencing mental health pressures and poor wellbeing, investigates the causes of issues and what practical measures can be leveraged to provide support to the sector.

The research was undertaken by YouGov and was conducted online during a two-week period in June 2017 (9th to 23rd). Please see Appendix A for a detailed profile of the achieved sample. The findings throughout are presented in the form of percentages which display the view of the education sector. The findings are presented on the basis of all education professionals surveyed, and where there are statistically significant differences between demographic groups these are discussed in more detail.

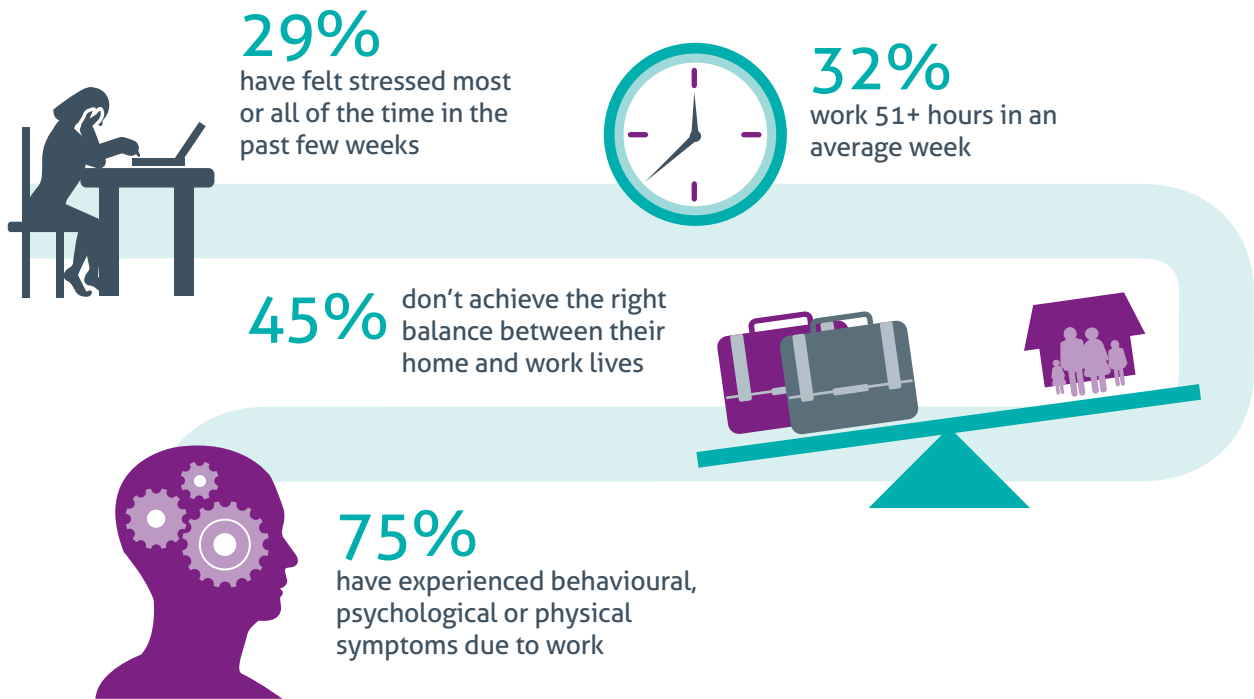
A number of the questions asked in this research have previously been used in other published studies. Where relevant we have contrasted the figures in this report for education professionals with those achieved in other studies. These have been fully referenced.

Additional content has been provided in this report by the Education Support Partnership in the form of case study content. These have been added through the report to add context to the survey findings.



Section 1:

Current picture of mental health and wellbeing amongst education professionals



1.1 The first section of this report sets the scene, looking at the symptoms and pressures education professionals are experiencing in connection with work.

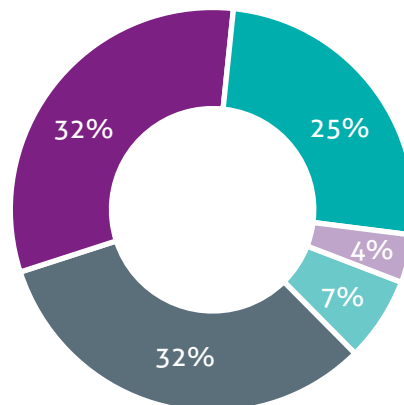
1.2 Many education professionals report high levels of work stress. Nearly a third (29%) say that their job has made them feel stressed most or all of the time in the past few weeks, while close to two thirds (64%) report that it's made them feel this way some of the time or occasionally. Only 7% say their job has never made them feel stressed in recent weeks.

1.3 Among senior leaders, the proportion who have felt stressed most or all of the time in the past few weeks rises to 37%.

1.4 Similarly, when thinking generally about the ongoing level of stress they experience from working, two thirds (66%) of education professionals say that they tend to feel stressed. Within that group, 15% currently feel very stressed and 51% somewhat stressed due to work.

“ In comparison with the UK workforce as a whole, education professionals surveyed here are significantly more likely to say they felt stressed most or all of the time in the past few weeks, with 29% reporting this compared with 18% of UK employees. ”

Source: CIPD (2017)
Employee Outlook Spring 2017



Some of the time Never
Occasionally All of the time
Most of the time

1.5 Meanwhile, the remaining third (34%) of education professionals report that they do not currently feel very stressed from working (26%) or in fact not stressed at all (7%).

1.6 Among senior leaders, the proportion who feel stressed from working rises to 76%, significantly higher than among school teachers (67%).

1.7 Those with the longest number of years of service are most likely to report low levels of stress, with 53% of those with 31+ years of service saying they do not feel stressed compared with 30% of those with just 1-5 years.

Long working hours are a reality in the education profession

1.8 The levels of stress education professionals are experiencing could be tied closely to the long hours they work. A third of education professionals' work more than 51 hours a week on average. More than half of education professionals (56%) report that on average they work 41+ hours a week.

1.9 This figure rises steeply among senior leaders, with virtually all (92%) working 41+ hours in an average week and two-thirds (66%) working more than 51 hours a week.

1.10 Those with fewer years of service are more likely than people with longer tenure in the profession to be working 41+ hours a week – this is the case for 57% of those with 1-20 years' service in comparison with 50% of those with 21+ years.

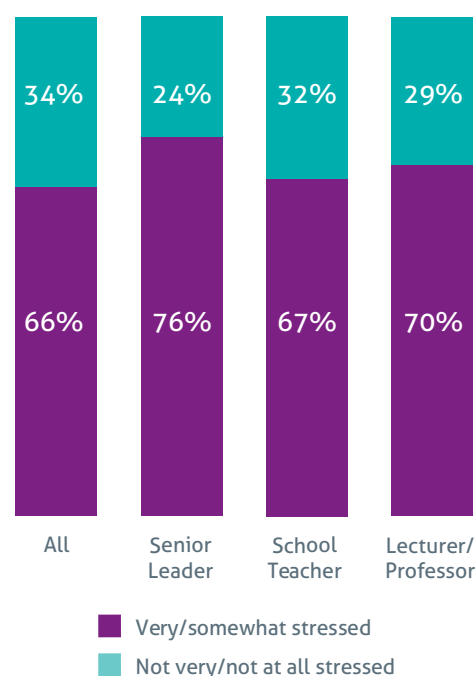
1.11 Otherwise, roughly a third of education professionals (36%) report working 21-40 hours a week on average, and 9% say they typically work less than 20 hours.

“These survey findings indicate that education professionals are working more hours than the UK workforce overall. In 2017, 17% of employees in the UK worked more than 45 hours per week. Comparatively, 32% of education professionals report working more than 51 hours in an average week.”

Source: ONS (2017)

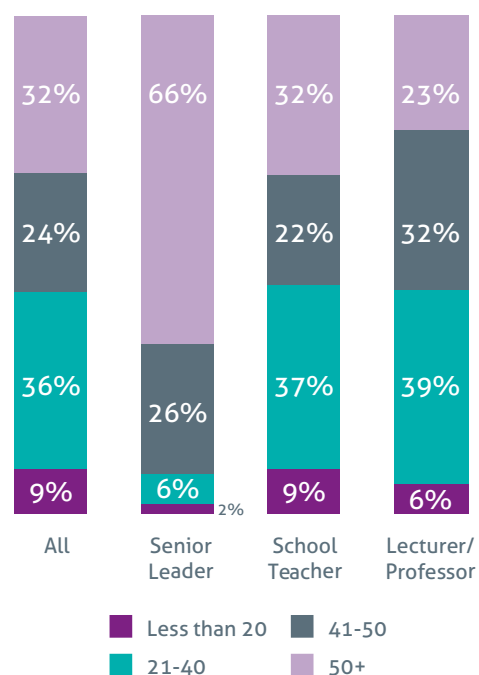
Labour Market Statistics, August 2017

Figure 2: Current level of stress felt from working



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250); Senior leaders (n=254); School teachers (n=595); Lecturers/Professors (n=189)

Figure 3: Average number of hours worked a week



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250); Senior leaders (n=254); School teachers (n=595); Lecturers/Professors (n=189)

Work–life balance appears hard to achieve in the education profession

1.12 Considering the number of hours education professionals are working, it might not come as a surprise that only a minority (35%) feel they achieve the right balance between their home and work lives. Meanwhile, a larger proportion – nearly half (45%) – feel that they do not achieve this balance.

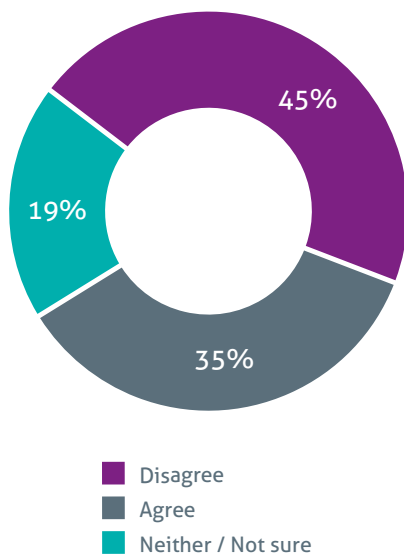
1.13 Senior leaders (65%) are significantly more likely than school teachers (44%) to say they do not achieve the right balance between work and home, which paints a consistent picture to earlier findings indicating that they experience increased levels of stress from working.

Education professionals experience a range of physical and mental health issues due to work

1.14 Many education professionals disclose that they have faced physical and mental health issues which they attribute to their work.

1.15 Roughly half say they have experienced behavioural (56%), psychological (50%) or physical symptoms (50%) due to work or where work was a contributing factor. Overall, three quarters of the profession (75%) report experiencing at least one of these symptoms related to work.

Figure 4: Statement: "I achieve the right balance between my home and work lives"



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)

“When looking at the public sector as a whole, employees in the UK are significantly more likely than education professionals to feel they achieve the right balance between their home and work lives. The public sector overall achieves a positive score of +32 when subtracting the proportion who disagree from the proportion who agree that they achieve the right balance, while this figure is -10 for education professionals.”

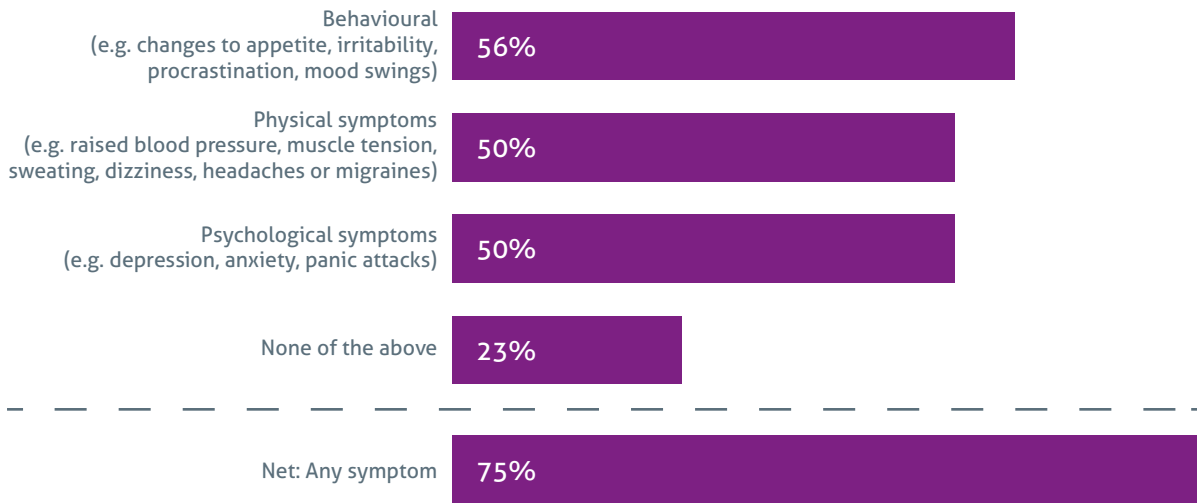
Source: CIPD (2017)

Employee Outlook Spring 2017



Laura was miserable and suffering from panic attacks. A call to our helpline clarified what she wanted out of her life and career. "I have been teaching for years in primary schools and loved it. However, since having my two children I was finding that I was working for at least ten hours at the weekend and most evenings too and still not getting all my work done."

Figure 5: Symptoms ever experienced due to work or where work was a contributing factor



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)

1.16 Many education professionals disclose that they have faced physical and mental health issues which they attribute to their work.

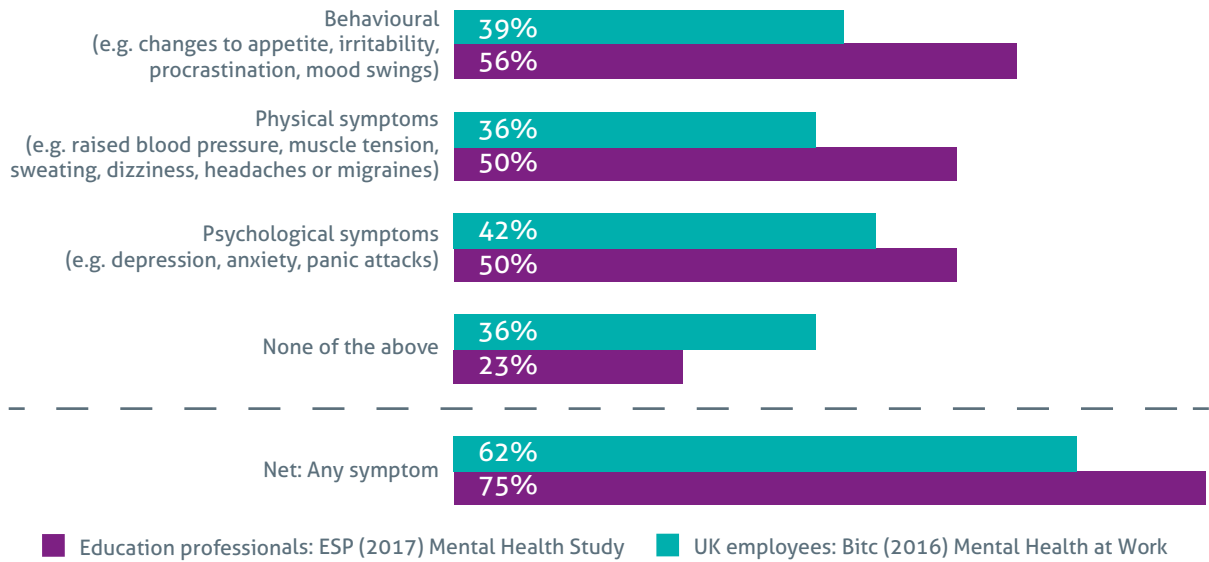
1.17 Roughly half say they have experienced behavioural (56%), psychological (50%) or physical symptoms (50%) due to work or where work was a contributing factor. Overall, three quarters of the profession (75%) report experiencing at least one of these symptoms related to work.

1.18 These symptoms are occurring to a relatively similar extent across people of varying job roles, school levels and institution types in the education sector.

1.19 When comparing by tenure, findings indicate that professionals with fewer years of service are more likely to report experiencing behavioural symptoms due to work, with 61% of those with 1-5 years' experience stating this in comparison with 35% of those with 31+ years. These symptoms could include changes to appetite, irritability, procrastination and mood swings, among others.

1.20 The findings below, sourced from the BitC Mental Health at Work study, illustrate that UK employees overall are significantly less likely than education professionals to have experienced behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms due to work.

Figure 6: Symptoms ever experienced due to work or where work was a contributing factor – in comparison with the UK workforce overall



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)

“ In contrast with the UK workforce overall, education professionals report higher levels of behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms due to work, with 75% having experienced at least one of these compared with 62% of UK employees across all sectors. ”

Source:
BitC (2016) Mental Health at Work



"I just couldn't meet the expectations in the time available each week, both in and out of working hours. The workload was relentless and despite asking for support to identify where I could cut it down, I received no guidance. I became exhausted and as a result broke down in front of my class."

"After the Easter holiday I stepped into the classroom and knew I couldn't be there. I went to find someone to speak to and just broke down in tears."

Education professionals' mental health: self-defined

1.21 Despite the levels of stress, negative work-life balance and mental health issues education professionals face, the majority (62%) describe their current mental health as good or very good, while a quarter (24%) say it is neither good nor poor. These findings are relatively consistent across different job roles and institution types in the education sector.

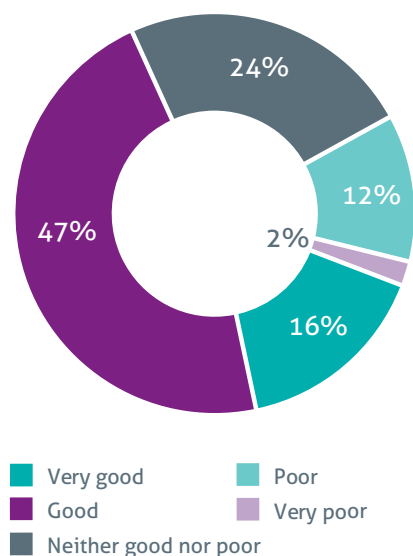
1.22 However, it is concerning to report that 14% of education professionals define their mental health as poor. Later sections of this report will look in more depth at the causes and impacts of these professionals experiencing poor mental health.

1.23 Education professionals report experiencing a variety of symptoms tied to their mental health and wellbeing, many of which could be assumed to have the potential to impact their working lives.

1.24 In the last two years, more than half (56%) have experienced insomnia or difficulty sleeping, and a similar proportion have faced irritability or mood swings (51%).

1.25 Other symptoms commonly experienced include difficulty concentrating (41%) and forgetfulness (39%).

Figure 7: Description of current mental health

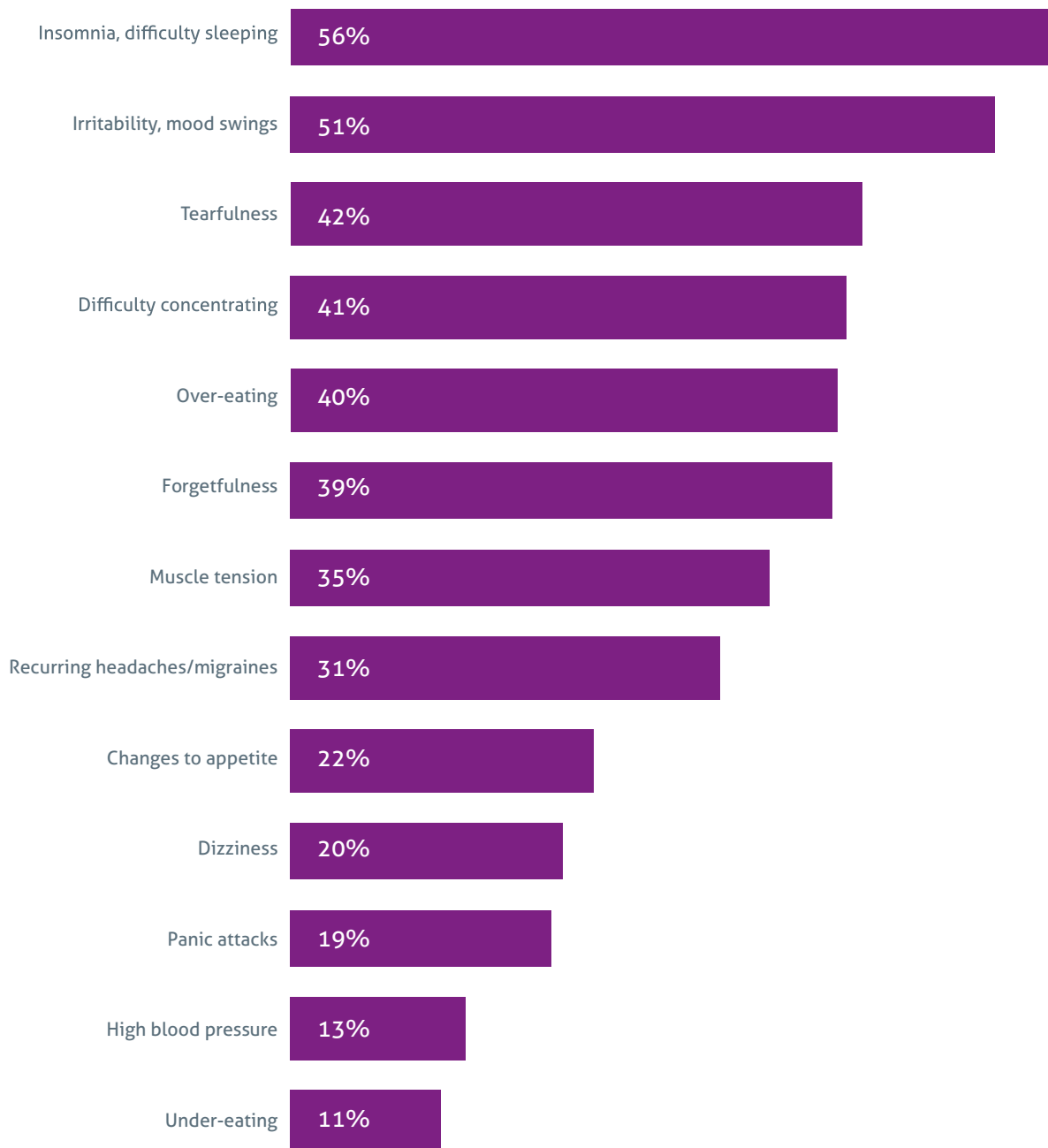


“In comparison with the UK workforce overall, the education sector are slightly less likely to report good mental health. Among UK employees across all sectors, 69% describe their current mental health as good while 11% say it is poor, compared with 62% and 14% respectively for education professionals.”

Source: BitC (2016) *Mental Health at Work*

Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)

Figure 8: Symptoms experienced in the last two years



Base: All education professionals (n=1,241)

1.26 Those who have been working in education for fewer years are most likely to report experiencing many of these symptoms, including irritability and mood swings (54% among those with 1-20 years' experience compared with 41% among those with 21+ years' experience).

1.27 This first section of the report has painted a picture of the working lives of many education professionals, involving high levels of stress, long working hours, a negative work-life balance, and even behavioural and psychological issues. It will now go on to explore the impact that all of this can have on the professional and personal lives of those experiencing mental health issues.



Section 2:
Impacts upon
professional and
personal lives

This second section reports on the impact of experiencing mental health issues on the personal and professional lives of education professionals.

What happens when education professionals experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as result of work?



49%
said work performance suffered



47%
said personal relationships suffered



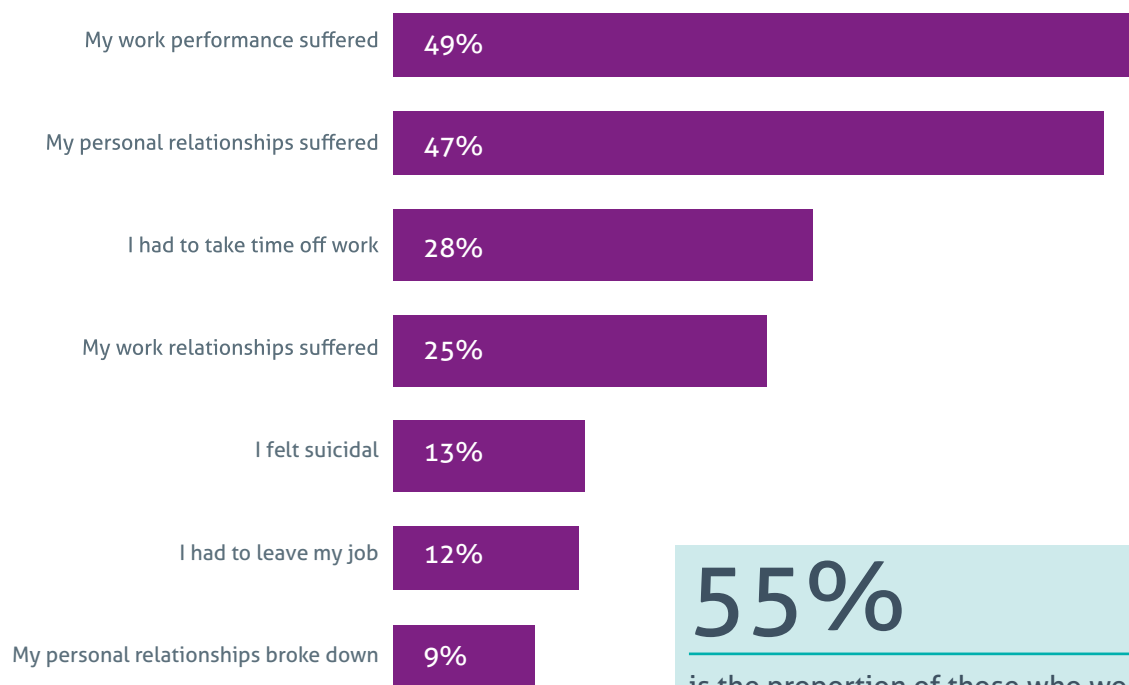
28%
had to take time off work

53%

Half have considered leaving the sector over the past two years as a result of health pressures.



Figure 9: Education professionals' reported impacts of experiencing psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work



Base: All education professionals who have experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work (n=947)

55%

is the proportion of those who work 60+ hours a week who report that personal relationships suffered (41% for those who work less than 40 hours a week)

Social and professional impact of experiencing psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work

2.1 When education professionals experience mental health issues this has an impact on their work and personal lives. For half of education professionals (49%) who experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work, it meant their performance suffered. Furthermore, a sizeable minority (28%) had to take time off work when they experienced mental health issues.

2.2 The impact of having time off from work is an important issue. The survey results show that of those professionals who had time off, half (52%) were away from work for a month or more over the academic year.

2.3 Impacts are also seen away from the workplace. Close to half of education professionals (47%) report that when they experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work their personal relationships suffered. This is consistent across job roles, although professionals in the school sector (48%) and FE sector (52%) are more likely than those who work in HE (38%) to report that their personal relationships suffered.

2.4 More serious impacts are less common but still evident. One in ten of those education professionals who have experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work report they felt suicidal (13%) or that they had to leave their job (12%) when they were experiencing psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work.

The direct impact on students of education professionals experiencing mental health issues as a result of work

2.5 The impact of educational professionals experiencing mental health issues on their students' studies and results is more mixed. Half (49%) of those who have experienced difficulties as a result of work report this had no impact on their students, but a further 36% feel it had a negative impact on their studies and 13% a negative impact on their results.

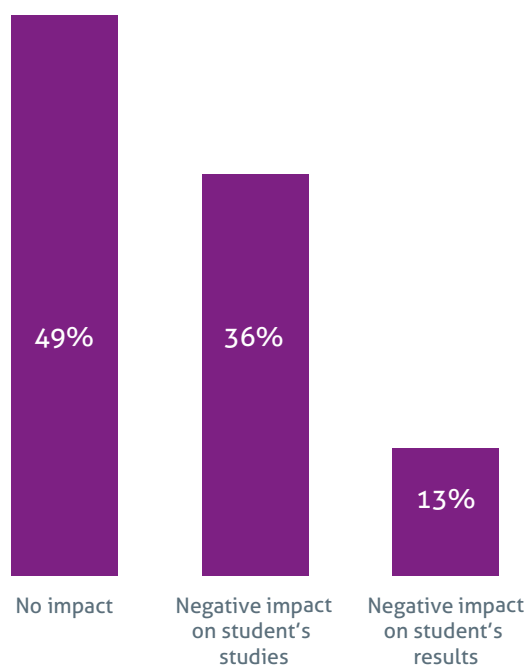
2.6 The perceived impact on students' studies does vary by phase of education. Education professionals who work with students in the school and FE sectors are more likely to report that mental health issues they have faced have had a negative impact on their students' studies – with 39% of those in the school sector and 38% of those in the FE sector reporting this compared with 23% of those in the HE sector.

Health pressures are related to professionals considering leaving the sector

2.7 As a result of health pressures half of education professionals (53%) have considered leaving the education sector over the past two years. Pressures exist around recruitment into the education sector so any potential loss of staff due to health pressures is a worrying statistic.

2.8 Those in senior leadership roles are more likely than those in teaching roles to have considered leaving the education sector – with 65% of senior leaders reporting they have considered leaving the sector compared with 55% of teaching staff.

Figure 10: Education professionals' reported impact on their students of experiencing psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work

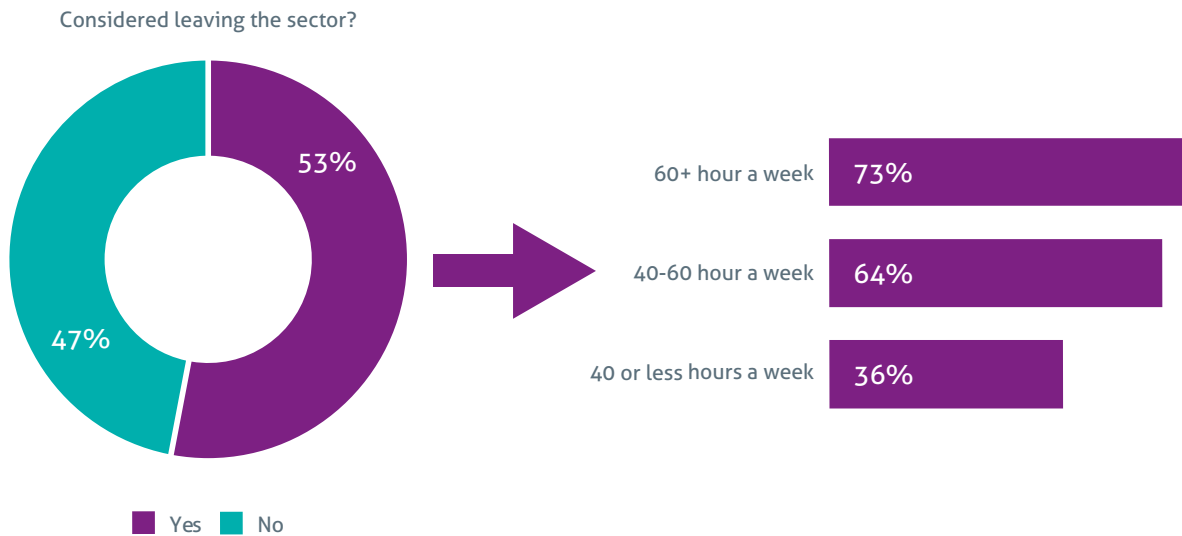


Base: All education professionals who have experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work (n=947)



"I moved to a new school as acting deputy as I felt that I needed a change and that it might refresh me. However, it just made things worse and my feelings of failure increased."

Figure 11: Education professionals' consideration of leaving the education sector as a result of health pressures



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250), those who work 40 or less hours a week (n=513), those who work 41-60 hours a week (n=571), those who work 60+ hours a week (n=166)

2.9 As figure 11 shows, the consideration of leaving the sector due to health pressures is much greater for those education professionals who work longer hours. Three quarters (73%) of those who work more than 60 hours a week have considered leaving the sector, double the proportion of those who work less than 40 hours a week (36%).

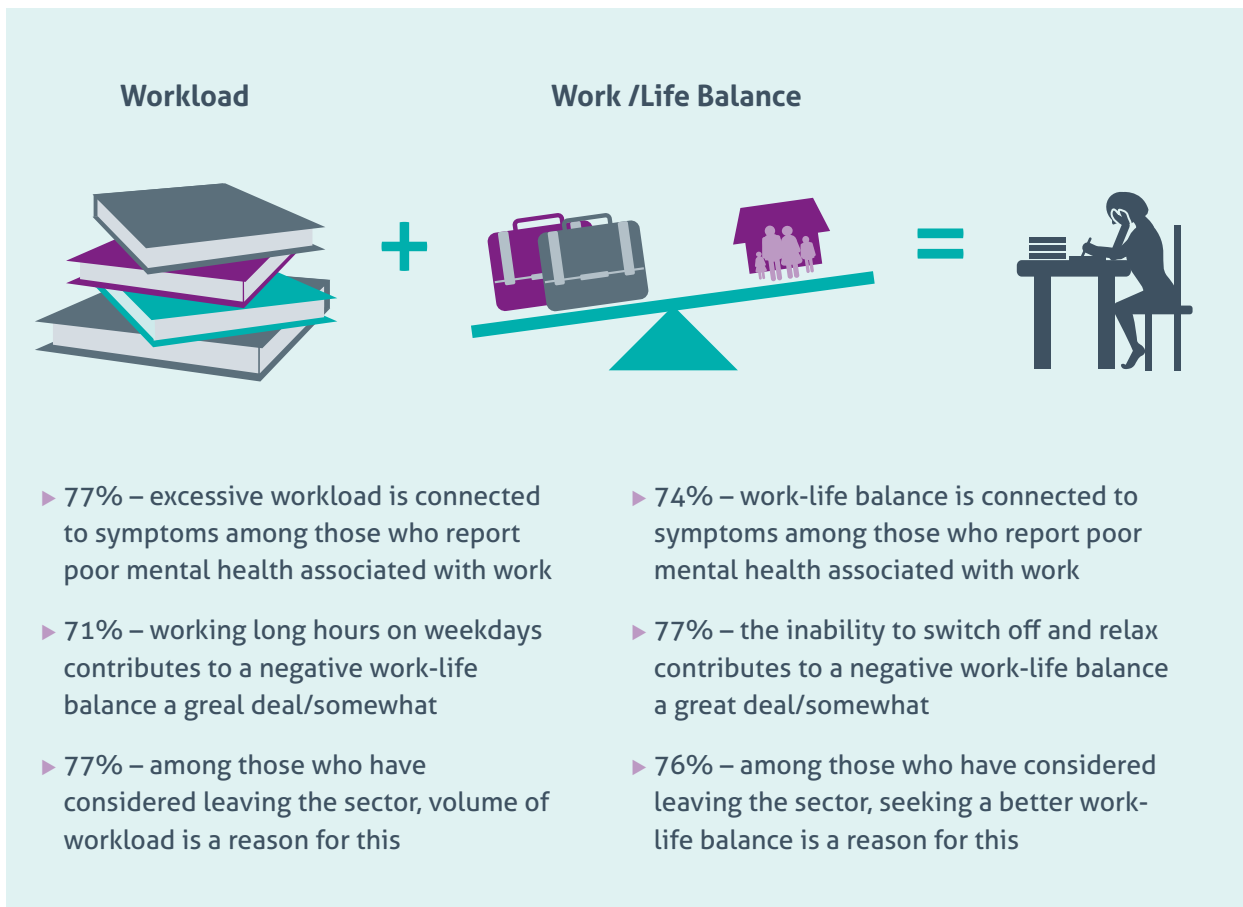
“Many tell us that unsustainable workload is the key factor for wanting to leave the profession. We offer a range of support for individuals and work with organisations to help tackle this key issue.”

www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/workload



Section 3:
Causes

In this section we explore the potential causes of mental health issues in the education profession.



Work plays a strong role contributing to poor mental health and wellbeing in the education sector

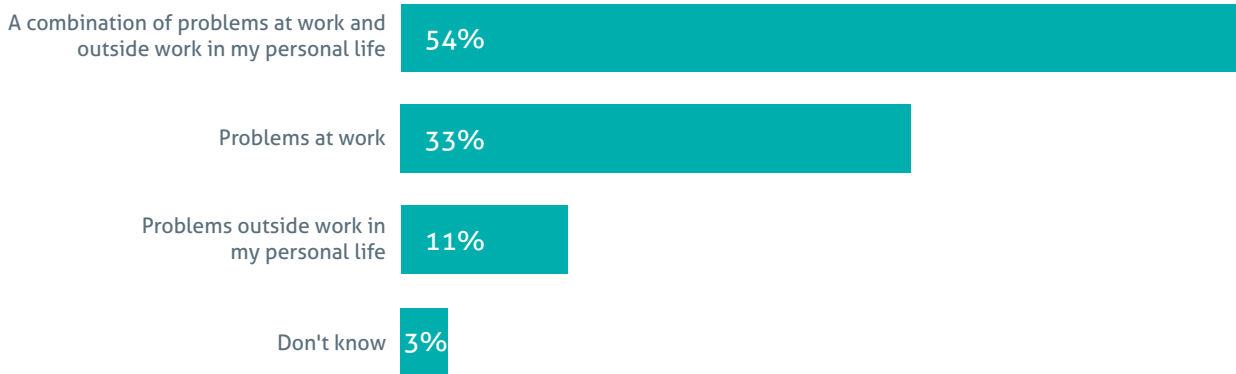
3.1 As reported previously, one in seven education professionals (14%) describe their mental health as poor at this time. Among this group, the vast majority (86%) attribute their poor mental health to problems at work, with a third (33%) linking it primarily to work and another 54% saying it is caused by a combination of problems at work and in their personal life.

3.2 Excessive workload and work–life balance emerge as the top two causes of poor mental health related to work. With both factors, roughly three quarters (77% and 74% respectively) of those who are experiencing poor mental health in connection with work say that these pressures could be a cause.

3.3 Other pressures proving to be challenging for education professionals experiencing poor mental health due to work are unreasonable demands from managers (45%) and the rapid pace of change (44%).

3.4 Relatively, education professionals who are experiencing poor mental health in connection with work are somewhat less likely to be affected by their interactions with others, such as students' behaviour (32%), bullying by colleagues (22%) and problems with students' parents (17%).

Figure 12: Reasons for having poor mental health



Base: All education professionals who describe their mental health as poor (n=168)

Figure 13: Work issues that symptoms are related to

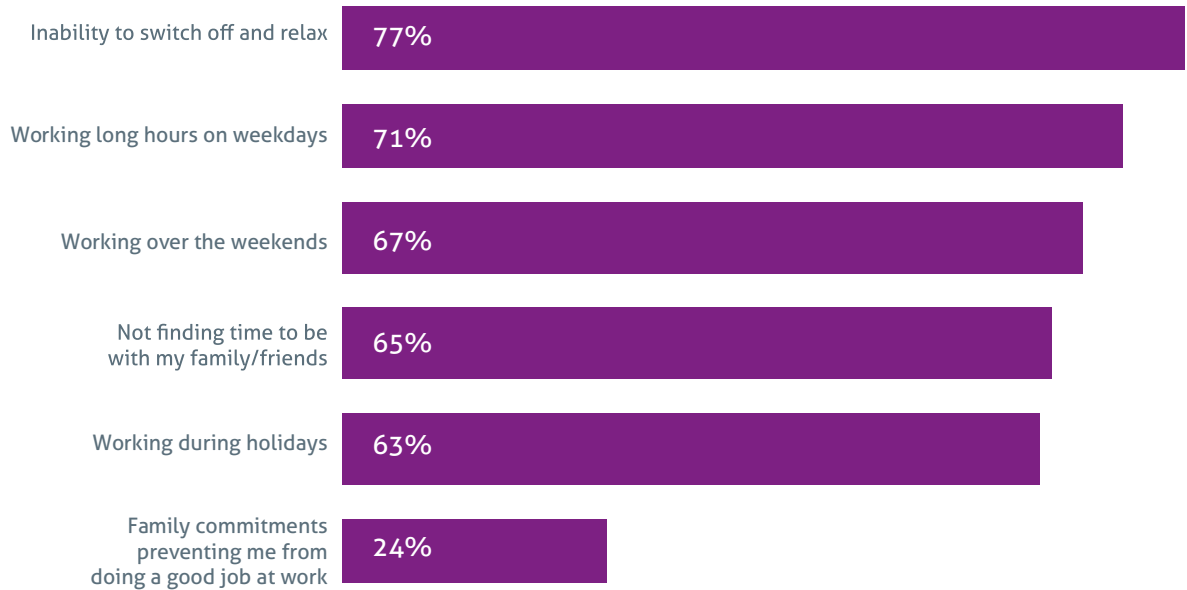


Base: All education professionals who describe their mental health as poor and say it is a result of problems at work (n=147)



"After a weekend away with my best friend I thought I would come back refreshed and reinvigorated. However, it was the start of a week of panic attacks and desperation."

Figure 14: Factors that contribute a great deal or somewhat to a negative work–life balance for themselves



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)

The culture of working long hours and not being able to switch off is strongly linked with experiencing a negative work–life balance

3.5 When asked about the extent to which various factors contribute to a negative work–life balance for themselves, education professionals most commonly indicate that the inability to switch off and relax contributes a great deal or somewhat (77%).

3.6 Working long hours on weekdays (71%) and working over the weekends (67%) are also factors contributing a great deal or somewhat to a negative work–life balance for a majority of education professionals.

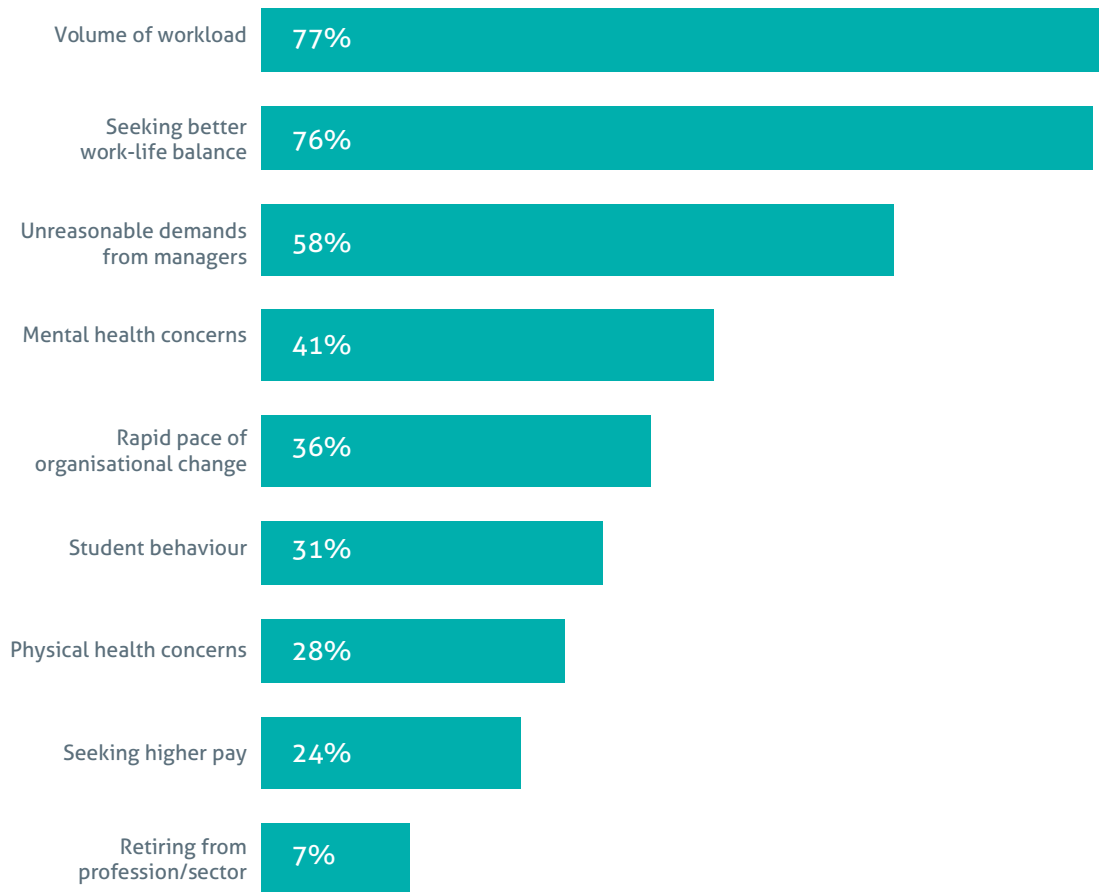
3.7 Perhaps in connection with the increased levels of stress they experience, senior leaders are significantly more likely than school teachers to indicate that the inability to switch off and relax negatively affects their work–life balance, with 86% saying it impacts it a great deal or somewhat compared with 75% of school teachers.

3.8 Senior leaders are also more likely than school teachers to say that working long hours on weekdays (90% compared with 73%) and over the weekends (83% compared with 67%) is negatively impacting their work–life balance a great deal or somewhat. In fact, they are more likely to report that all of the factors listed are having this effect, with the exception of family commitments preventing them from doing a good job at work. Heavy workloads and negative work–life balance are linked to considering leaving the sector.

“My husband, who is superbly supportive, was starting to notice that I was getting more and more miserable. I felt I was not being either a teacher or a mother properly.”

Laura, a primary school teacher.

Figure 15: Reasons pressures on their health caused them to consider leaving the education sector over the past two years



Base: All education professionals who have considered leaving the education sector over the past two years because of pressures on their health (n=680)

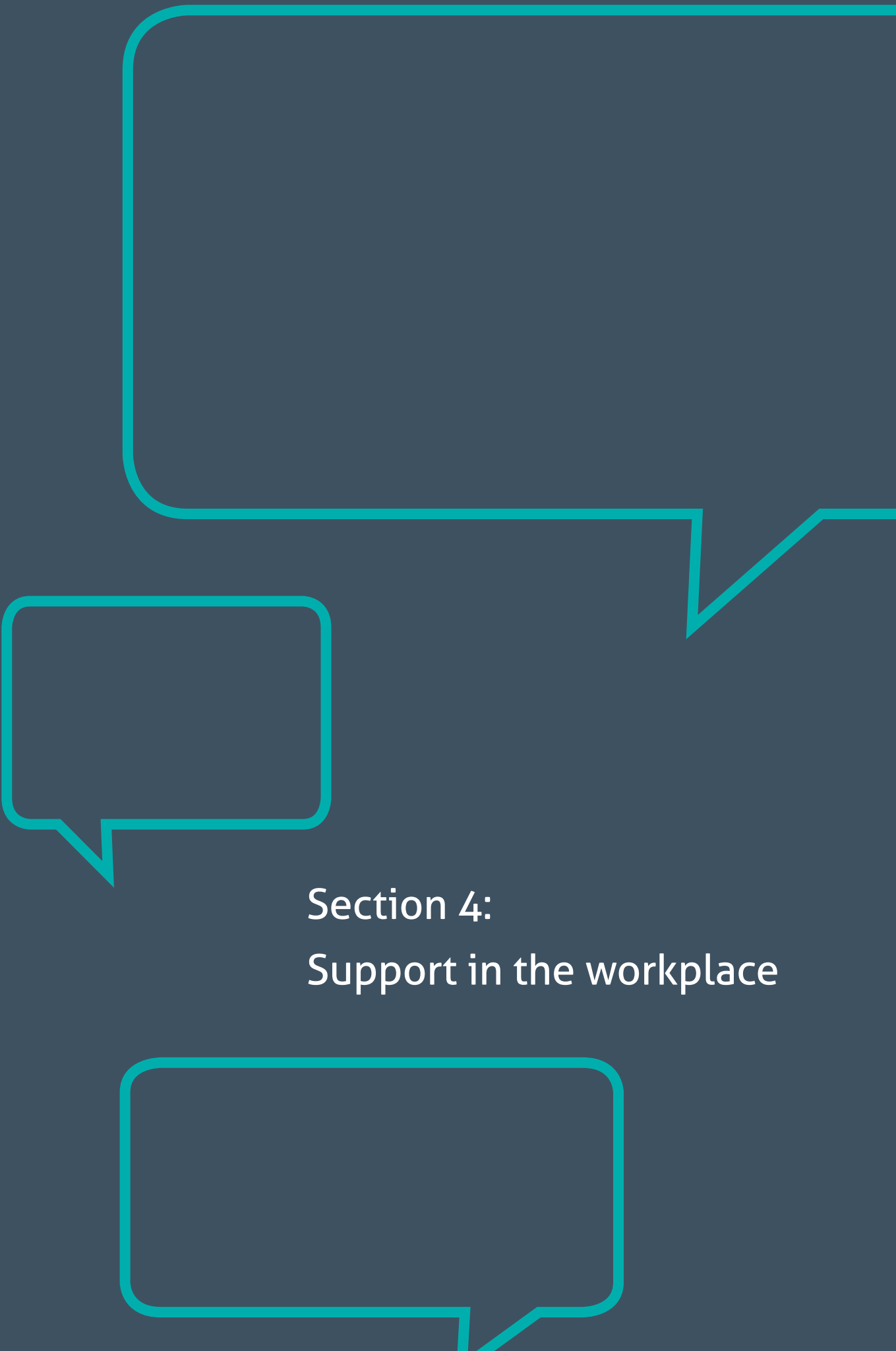
3.9 As stated earlier, more than half (53%) of education professionals say that pressures on their health have caused them to consider leaving the education sector over the past two years.

3.10 Their reasons for considering this move very much echo the top causes reported for poor mental health due to work: workload and work-life balance. Among those education professionals who have considered leaving the sector, three quarters say that the volume of workload (77%) and seeking a better work-life balance (76%) are reasons for this.

3.11 Some of these reasons for considering leaving the education sector are particularly pronounced among senior leadership. Among those who have considered leaving the sector in the past two years, one in two (50%) report rapid pace of organisational change as a reason, compared with 34% of school teachers.

3.12 Furthermore, secondary school teachers are more likely than primary school teachers to give student behaviour as a reason for considering leaving the profession (45% compared with 31%), while primary school teachers more often attribute it to physical health concerns (31% compared with 19% of secondary school teachers).

3.13 With an understanding of what is negatively impacting education professionals' mental health and wellbeing most – workload and work-life balance – the next section of this report will go on to explore how education professionals could be best supported in the workplace.



Section 4:
Support in the workplace

This section focuses on what support education professionals who have experienced mental health issues accessed and education professionals perceptions of the wider support on offer.



What support do education professionals access?

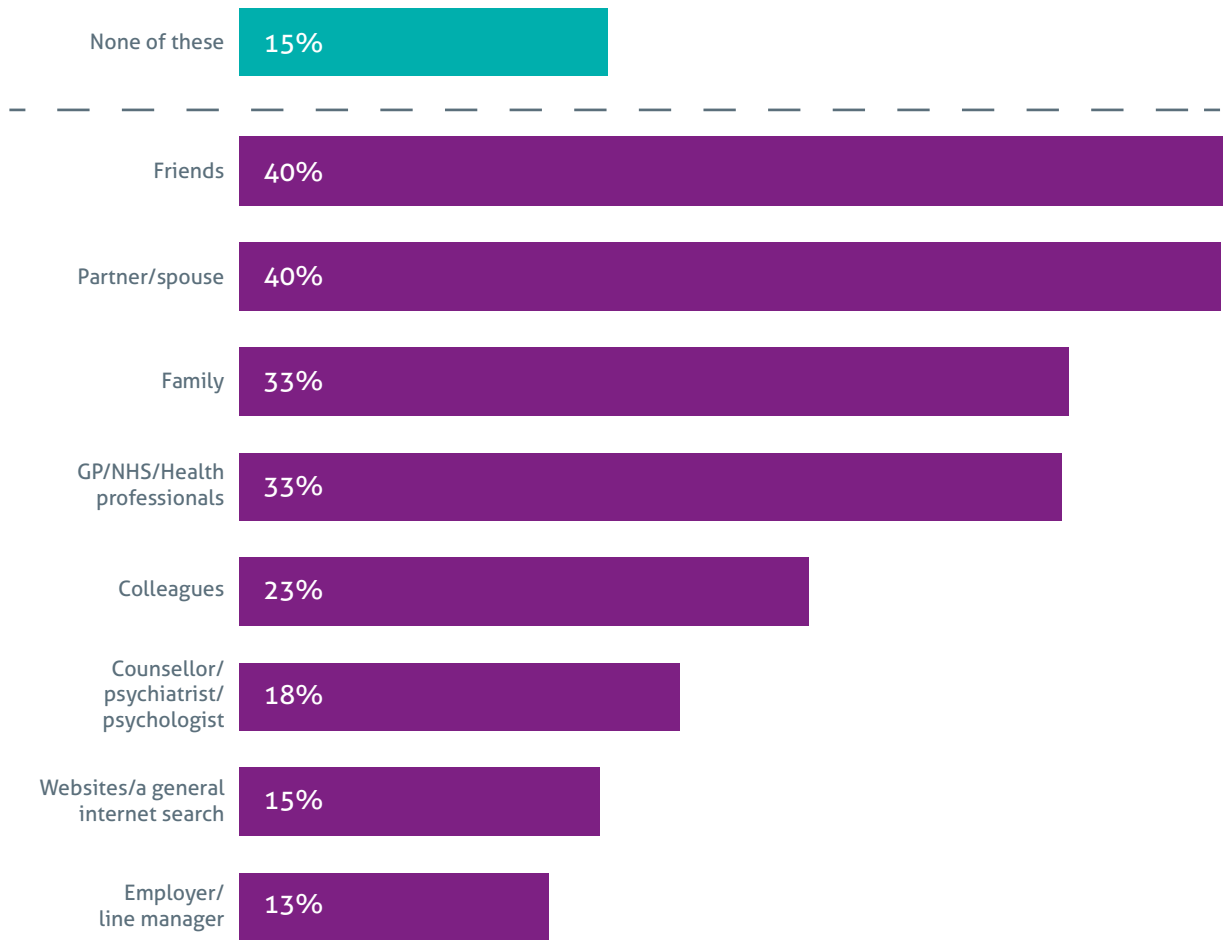
4.1 Education professionals who have experienced mental health issues where work was a contributing factor were most likely to turn to friends and their partner/ spouse for support. Other family members and health professionals were also common sources of support.

4.2 There are differences by age in who people turn to for support. Older education professionals aged 50+ years are much more likely than those aged 35-49 and 18-34 to turn to health professionals and/or counsellors or similar professionals for support. Forty five per cent of those aged 50+ sought support from a medical

professional compared with 33% of those aged 35-49 and 28% of those aged 18-34. Similarly, 27% of those aged 50+ sought support from a counsellor or similar professional compared with 18% of those aged 35-49 and 14% of those aged 18-34.

4.3 Seeking support from an employer/ line manager is much less likely to be cited. While 23% did get support from their colleagues, just 13% of education professionals who experienced mental health issues sought help from their employer. This is a consistent finding across job roles, demographics and organisation sector.

Figure 16: Sources of support accessed by those who experienced mental health issues



Base: All education professionals who have experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work (n=947)

Note: only sources with more than 10% of responses shown

Are education professionals suffering in silence?

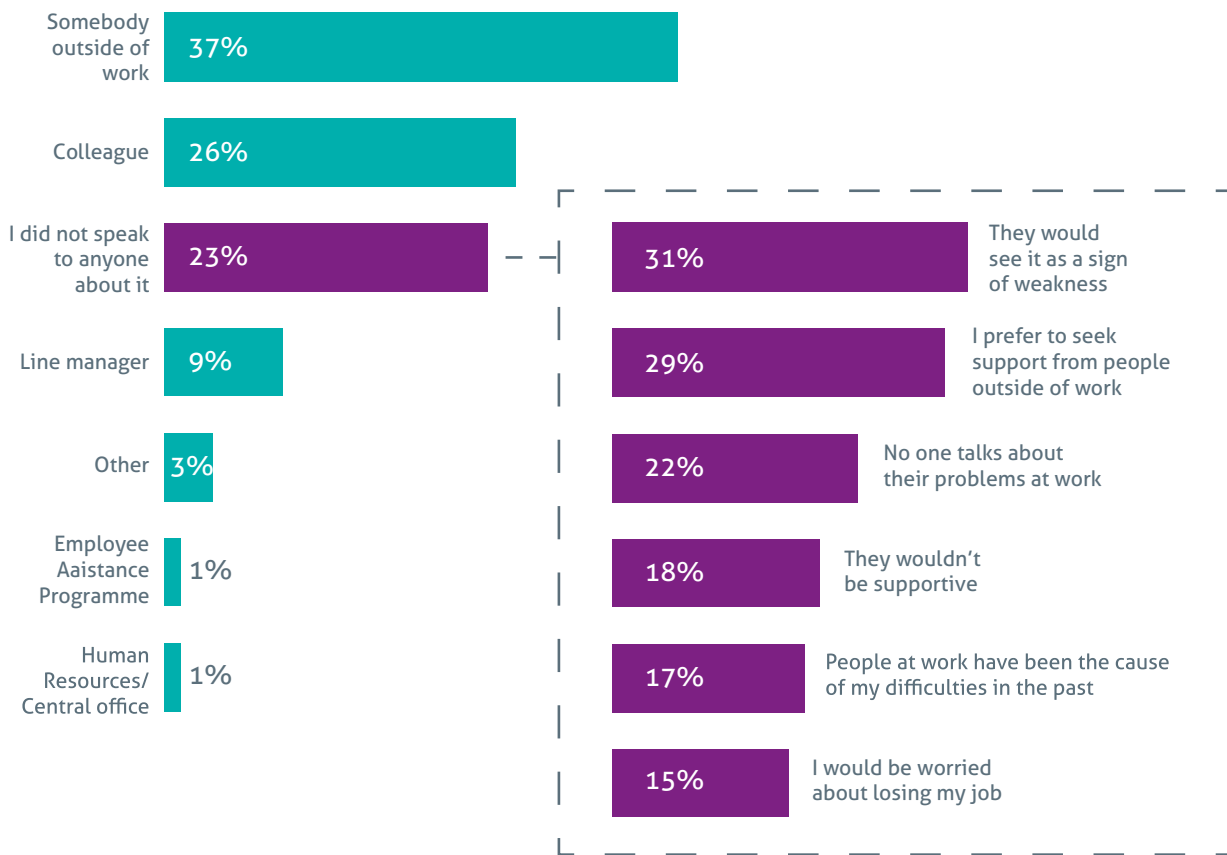
4.4 The role of the employer in supporting people who have experienced mental health issues and the culture that exists can also be explored by who the educational professional spoke to when they experienced issues.

4.5 Most commonly, people who experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work spoke to somebody outside of work (37%). Around a quarter of education professionals (26%) spoke first to a colleague and just 9% spoke first to their line manager.

4.6 However, a fifth of education professionals who have experienced these psychological, physical or behavioural problems did not speak to anyone about it. The main reasons given for not speaking to someone at work about these issues was that it would be seen as a sign of weakness (31%) and that they have a preference to seek support from people outside of work (29%).

4.7 In some workplaces there also may be a cultural issue, with 22% reporting that they didn't speak to anyone at work as no-one speaks about their problems at work.

Figure 17: Who education professionals who experienced mental health issues spoke to first and why they didn't speak to anyone



Base: All education professionals who have experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work (n=947)

Base: All education professionals who have experienced psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work and didn't speak to anyone at work about it (n=227)

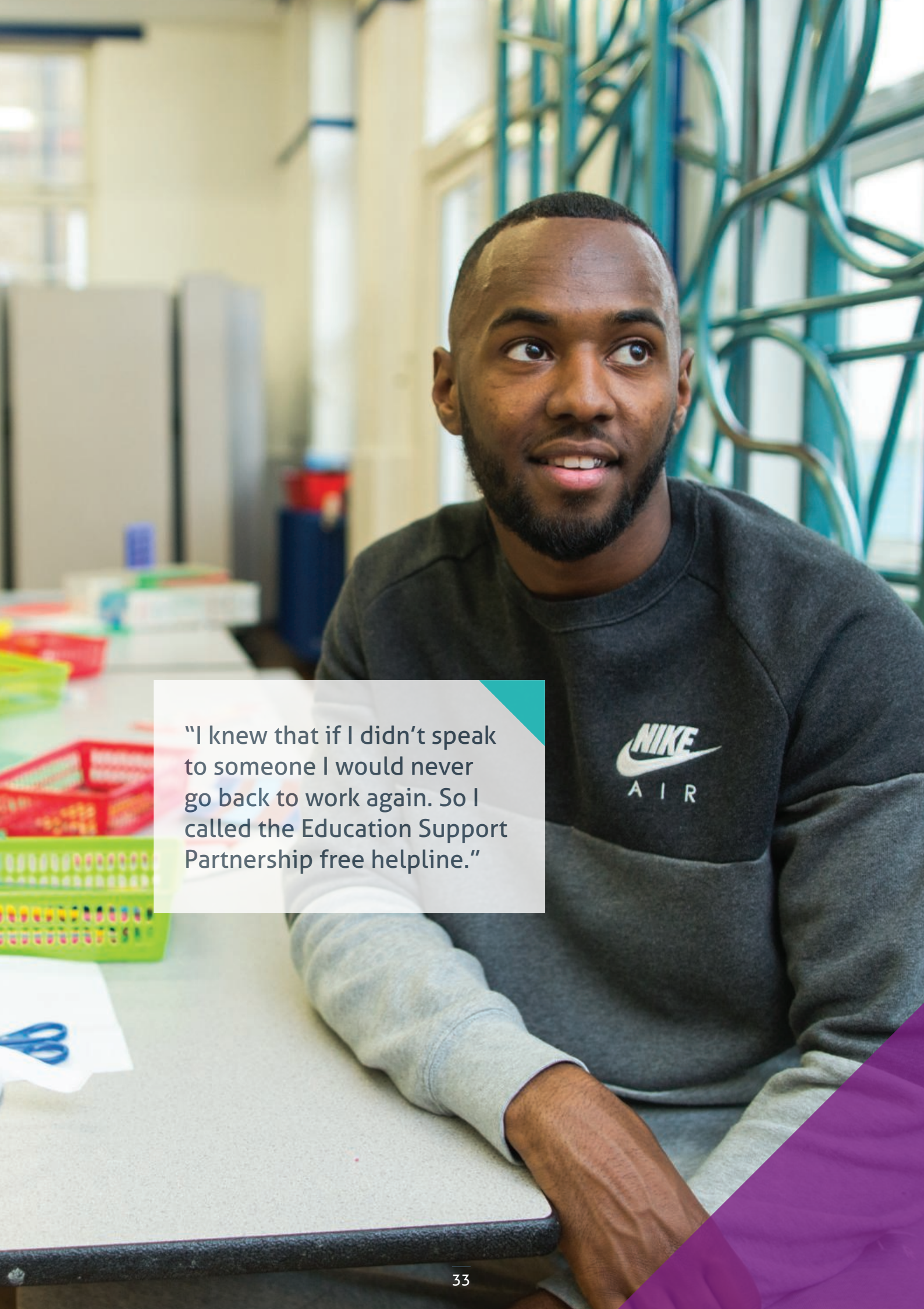
Education professionals are not confident in disclosing issues to their employer

4.8 Overall, a majority of education professionals would not be confident in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health problems to their employer – with 64% stating they would not be confident in doing so and 32% that they would be.

4.9 While there are no major differences across type of institution, within the schools sector those working in the secondary phase (70%) are more likely to not be confident disclosing a mental health issue than those in the primary sector (59%).

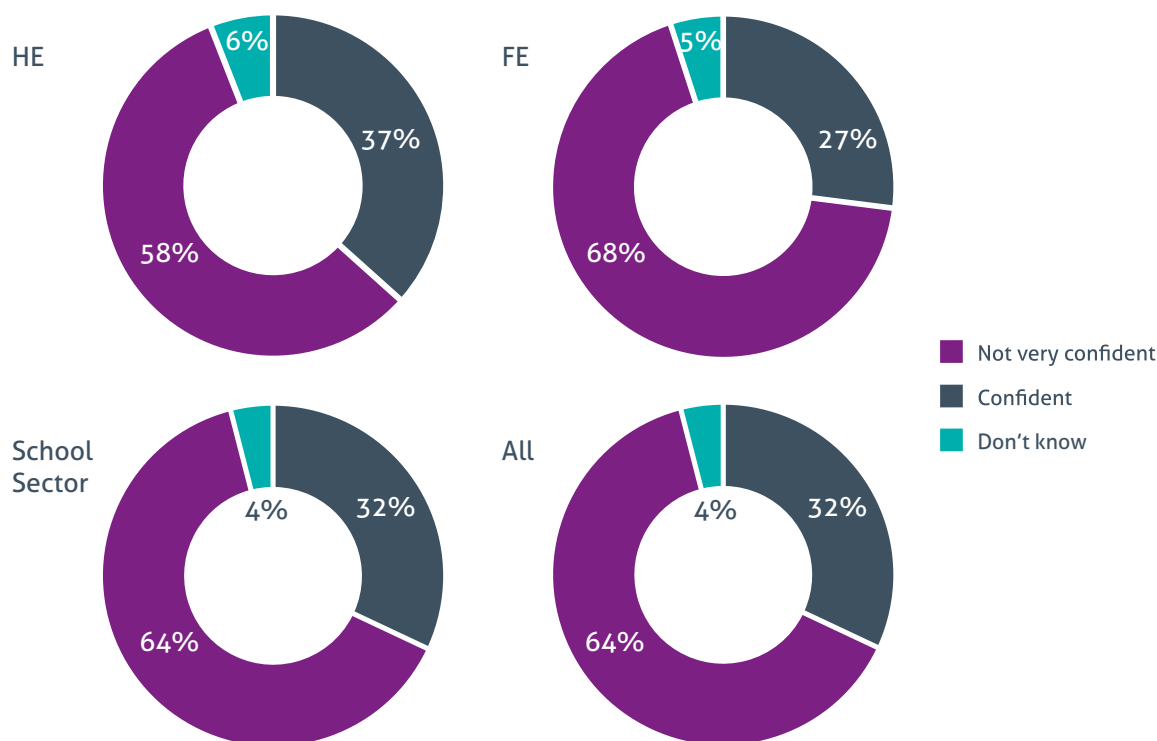
“ In comparison with national statistics, the proportion of education professionals who don't feel confident in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health problems to their employer is higher than for the workforce as a whole. For all employees, 44% would be not confident in disclosing a mental health issue and for those who work in the public sector the proportion is 42%.”

Source: CIPD (2017)
Employee Outlook Spring 2017

A man with a beard and short hair is sitting at a table in what appears to be a classroom or office. He is wearing a dark grey Nike Air sweatshirt. He is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background shows a desk with various items like a red basket, a green basket, and some papers. There are blue metal structures in the background, possibly part of a playground or gym equipment.

"I knew that if I didn't speak to someone I would never go back to work again. So I called the Education Support Partnership free helpline."

Figure 18: How confident education professionals are in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health problems to their employer



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250); HE (n=205); FE (n=119); School sector (n=880)

Education professionals feel they need more support on mental health and wellbeing issues

4.10 Education professionals provide mixed feelings about how well their organisation supports people who experience mental health problems. Close to four out of ten (36%) professionals feel their organisation supports people well, but close to five out of ten (45%) feel that their organisation does not support people who experience mental health problems well.

4.11 These views are consistent across HE, FE and the school sector. However, within the schools sector those professionals who responded to the survey from the secondary phase are more likely than those from the primary phase to feel their organisation does not support employees who experience mental health problems well – 51% of those in the secondary phase feel this compared with 41% in the primary phase.

4.12 As figure 19 shows, the majority of education professionals do not feel that they receive sufficient guidance about their health and wellbeing at work. Seven out of ten (72%) professionals report this, indicating the need for greater information and guidance on health and wellbeing across the sector.

“To put these figures in context, the proportion of education professionals who feel their organisation supports employees with mental health issues well is on par with national statistics. For all employees, 40% feel that their organisation supports employees who experience mental health problems well.”

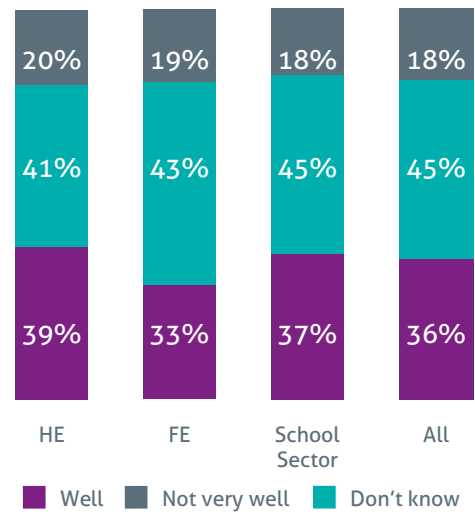
Source: *Bitc (2016) Mental Health at Work*

4.13 With regards to support and guidance that employees receive we find that those who rate their own mental health as poor or have experienced significant pressures are more likely feel their organisation does not support people well or receive sufficient guidance on health and wellbeing issues. This can be seen from the following statistics:

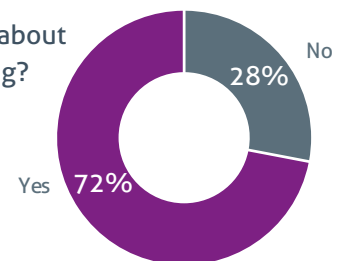
“ Although it isn’t to say that some don’t get good support from their employer. I started at a new school in September and was clear with them about my health and experiences over the last year. I feel they are completely supportive and have a positive focus on staff wellbeing which in turn makes me feel valued and confident in my ability to deal with the stresses of the job. ”

Figure 19: Education professional’s perceptions on how their organisation supports employees and provides guidance on mental health and wellbeing

How well do educational professional feel their organisations supports employees who experience mental health problems?



Employer provides sufficient guidance about health and wellbeing?

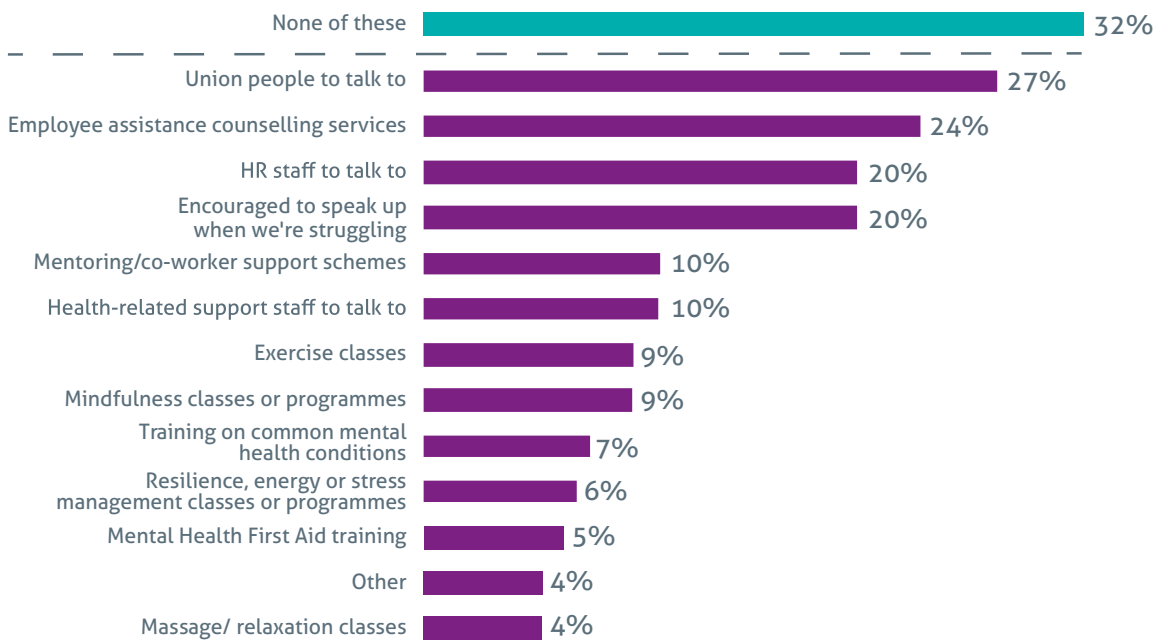


Base: All education professionals (n=1,250); HE (n=205); FE (n=119); School sector (n=880)

	Poor mental health (n=168)	Good mental health (=781)	Stressed (n=838)	Not stressed (n=404)	Experienced a mental health issue (n=947)	Not experienced a mental health issue (n=287)
Do NOT receive sufficient guidance about health and wellbeing at work	88%	66%	79%	58%	77%	57%
Organisation does NOT support people with mental health problems well	72%	38%	53%	30%	52%	25%

Figure 20: Comparison between different groups in the workforce on how well organisations support employees with mental health issues and if sufficient guidance is provided

Figure 21: Different types of mental health support that education professionals report are available to them



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)

4.14 Supporting perceptions of a lack of support that their organisation provides to employees, 32% of education professionals report that they don't have any mental health support where they work (figure 21). The lack of support is more prevalent in the school sector than it is for those working in FE or HE – 40% of those in the school sector report they have no support compared with just 16% in HE and 26% in FE.

4.15 Where support is available, education professionals are most likely to report that they have access to union people that they can talk to (27%), employee assistance counselling services (24%), HR staff to talk to (20%) and encouragement to speak up when they are struggling (20%).

4.16 A number of support services that may be available in other sectors are not available to education professionals. For example just 4% of education professionals report they have access to massage/ relaxation classes, 6% report having resilience, energy or stress management classes available to them and 9% mindfulness classes or programmes.

Implementation of health and wellbeing policies is inconsistent

4.17 Considering more formal policies, four out of ten education professionals (42%) report that the organisation they work for has a health and wellbeing policy. A similar proportion (45%) are unsure and don't know whether their organisation has a policy in place – indicating issues with the promotion of activities under the policy, if in fact they exist.

14.18 As figure 22 shows, half (48%) of education professionals do feel that the health and wellbeing policy in their organisation is properly implemented always or most of the time.

4.19 There is more concern from some, with three out of ten (30%) stating they never feel that the health and wellbeing policy is properly implemented – with higher levels of concern in secondary schools (34%) than primary schools (22%).

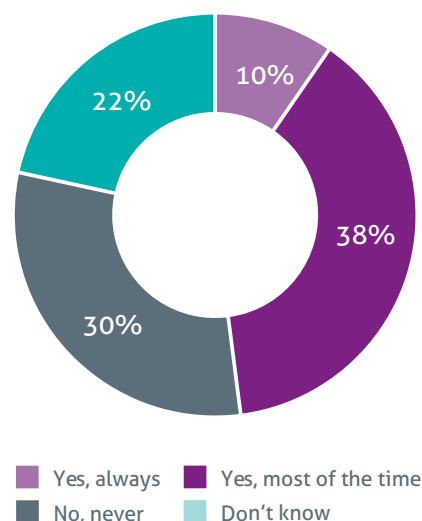
What do education professionals feel would be most beneficial in improving the overall mental health of the workforce?

4.20 Linked to earlier findings on the causes of stress and issues in the workforce, education professionals feel that managers working with their staff to reduce workloads is the thing that would be most beneficial in improving mental health – with over half (54%) of all education professionals reporting this.

4.21 Other factors that education professionals feel would improve mental health in the workforce are related to the role of leadership and the organisation’s policies. Three out of ten education professionals feel that changes being better communicated to staff (31%) and the leadership being more approachable (30%) would improve overall mental health.

4.22 In addition, their organisation having to meet high standards of health and wellbeing provision that is regulated by an independent body (29%) and implementing a structured programme of support (27%) are two other things education professionals feel it is important for their organisation to do.

Figure 22: Do education professionals feel that staff health and wellbeing policy is properly implemented?

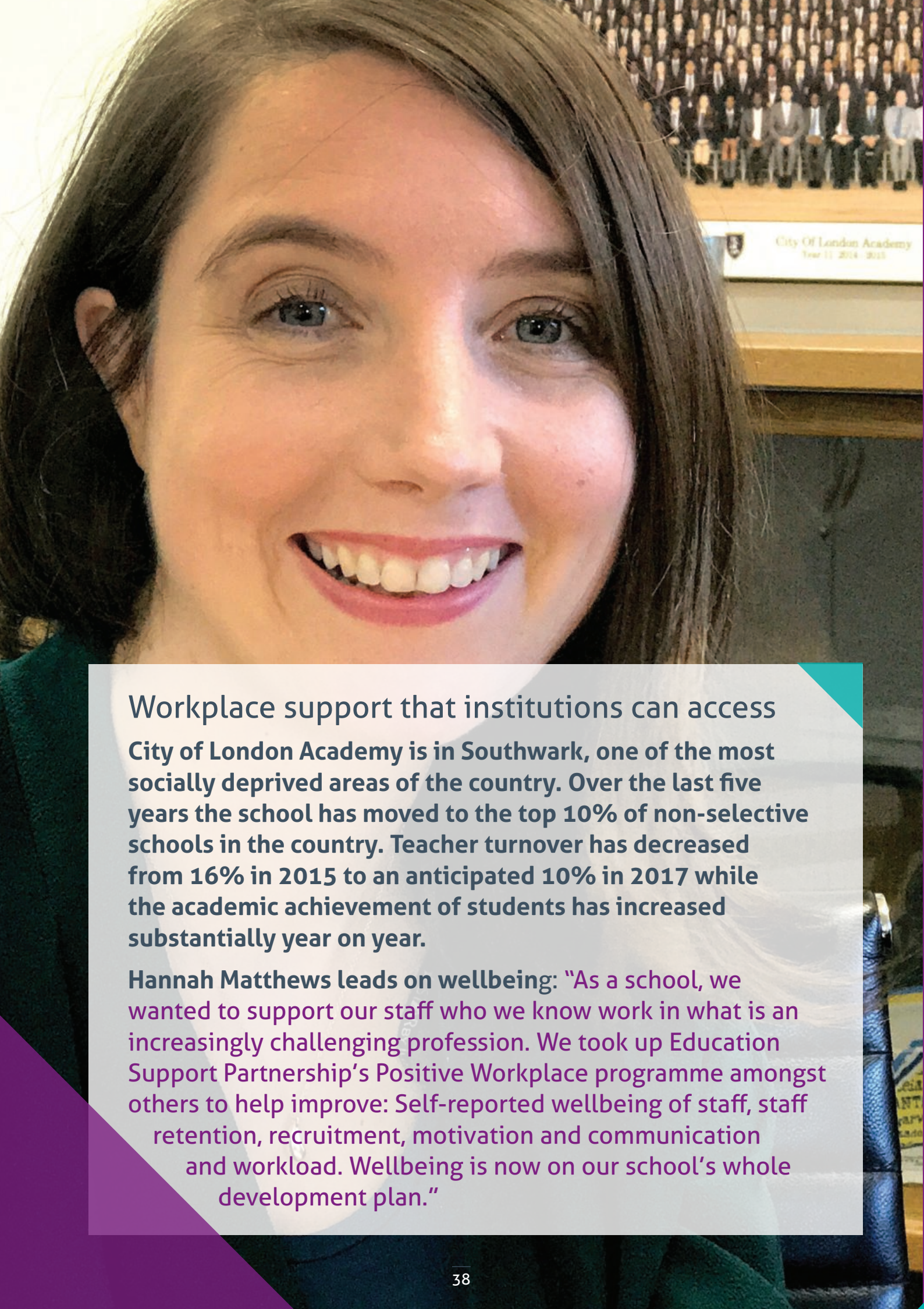


Base: All education professionals who work in an organisation with a health and wellbeing policy (n=493)

Figure 23: Top five things that would improve the overall mental health of the workforce



Base: All education professionals (n=1,250)



Workplace support that institutions can access
City of London Academy is in Southwark, one of the most socially deprived areas of the country. Over the last five years the school has moved to the top 10% of non-selective schools in the country. Teacher turnover has decreased from 16% in 2015 to an anticipated 10% in 2017 while the academic achievement of students has increased substantially year on year.

Hannah Matthews leads on wellbeing: "As a school, we wanted to support our staff who we know work in what is an increasingly challenging profession. We took up Education Support Partnership's Positive Workplace programme amongst others to help improve: Self-reported wellbeing of staff, staff retention, recruitment, motivation and communication and workload. Wellbeing is now on our school's whole development plan."

The image features a solid purple background. A large, thin teal circle is positioned in the upper left quadrant. A diagonal teal line runs from the bottom left towards the top right, crossing the large circle. In the lower right area, there is a partial view of another teal circle. The text 'Conclusions and recommendations' is written in white, sans-serif font, centered vertically between the two main teal shapes.

Conclusions and recommendations

It is important to recognise the encouraging signs in this report. Also, more experienced staff are more likely to have found ways to manage the daily challenges. But that said, overall these findings present an overwhelmingly bleak picture of mental health and wellbeing across the sector.

That three quarters (75%) have disclosed physical or mental health issues, and have experienced a range of symptoms where work was a contributing factor, is shocking. Panic attacks, insomnia and higher levels of work-related stress than the wider workforce should serve as a wake-up call to government and policy makers that urgent action is needed.

What Education Support Partnership want to see:

A measurable health and wellbeing policy introduced in every education organisation. These are critically important in helping to find ways to manage workplace stress and strains. These policies should be 'live', reviewed and checked for progress at regular points every year.

Training standards toughened and tightened up so that all new staff are properly prepared for key teaching challenges including managing workload as a key source of work-related physical and mental health problems.

An accountability framework that supports and empowers the profession. Inspections and regulation should inspire and help promote a healthier culture. School leaders need to check that their institution is not unnecessarily imposing bureaucratic requirements for inspection and foster a supportive environment with colleagues.

Our teachers and education professionals across the board must be supported if they are to stay healthy and able to perform. If we are to retain our latest generation of talented teachers, leaders and others we must work together to make their mental health and wellbeing a priority. Only then can we expect them to 'lead by example' to demonstrate and encourage good habits to future generations.

62%

of education professionals... describe their mental health as good or very good

75%

have disclosed physical or mental health issues

Appendix A

Method

5.1 This report presents the findings of a substantial quantitative survey into the working life of people in the education sector in the UK. This is the first time such a large scale piece of research has been carried out with the education profession to understand their mental health and well-being.

Sample profile

5.6 A total of 1,250 responses were received to the survey. All respondents were drawn from the YouGov panel of people that have signed up to undertake research with YouGov. The data has been weighted to be representative of the education sector by phase (school sector, FE and HE). The table below provides a summary of the achieved sample profile by key demographics.

Figure 24: Summary of the achieved sample profile

ROLE	NUMBER	PROPORTION
Senior leader	254	20%
School teacher	595	48%
Lecturer/ Professor	189	15%
Other teaching role	57	5%
Other roles	58	5%
Teaching assistant	97	8%

PHASE	NUMBER	PROPORTION
Early years	51	4%
Primary	358	29%
Secondary	471	38%
FE/ vocational	119	10%
Higher education	205	16%
Other	46	4%

GENDER	NUMBER	PROPORTION
Male	438	35%
Female	812	65%

REGION	NUMBER	PROPORTION
North East	53	4%
North West	126	10%
Yorkshire and the Humber	122	10%
East of England	98	8%
West Midlands	111	9%
East Midlands	99	8%
London	149	12%
South East	191	15%
South West	116	9%
Wales	56	4%
Scotland	108	9%
Northern Ireland	21	2%

If we are to retain our latest generation of talented teachers, leaders and others we must work together to make their mental health and wellbeing a priority.

You can learn more about our work at edsupport.org.uk or by calling 0207 697 2750



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