School Policy
for
School Closure
St. Bernadette's S.N.S.
March 2020
Including Addendum for School Closure January 2021

Circular 0024/2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Delay Phase Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised primary and post primary schools

As stated in Circular 0024/2020:

"The general principles to apply to the management of COVID-19 includes the safety and welfare of employees and the minimisation of the impact on teaching and learning."

The Circular further states:

"The primary focus of employees in the education sector is on continuing to deliver tuition to all pupils during the current school closures. All schools and teachers are required to continue to plan lessons and where possible, provide online resources for pupils or online lessons where schools are equipped to do so. Schools should also take into consideration pupils that may not have access to online facilities. Employers will need to consider how best to utilise employees to facilitate the delivery of educational services."

Because of school closure and in line with the above guidelines, the Principal and staff of St. Bernadette's S.N.S. communicated and worked together to devise most appropriate school policy for current circumstances.

Pooling of ideas and expertise, combined with knowledge of our pupils enabled the following policy to be agreed and presented to the BOM.

Whole-School Policy

St. Bernadette's S.N.S.

Covid-19 School Closure

Distance Learning Plan for Teachers

- **All mainstream class teachers to use Showbie account to deliver work to pupils. All pupils to have access to a login code to access their teacher's class. Teachers available Monday to Friday on Showbie, with assignments posted in the morning and feedback/correction posted later in the day.**
- **All SET team to post work through Showbie to any pupil requiring extra/differentiated work assignments.**
- **All SNAs to motivate/guide/give emotional and/or academic support to targeted pupils and those at risk through Showbie.**
- **SCP and HSCL to work together contacting targeted children individually by phone to check circumstances and support pupil and parent/guardian. This will be done on an on-going basis. Any parent/guardian who cannot be contacted to be sent a text message and receive a follow-up call. Any targeted pupil struggling with Showbie login will be talked through process and further supported by SNA to access curriculum.**
- **Deputy Principal to establish and monitor Symbaloo and Padlet page to allow teachers, pupils and the wider community easy access to most suited and appropriate learning platforms. This list is not deemed to be finite, rather it will be continually and consistently increased and improved. It is envisaged that pupils can explore the learning platforms both independently and through structured learning paths devised by teacher. Parents/guardians, pupils and teachers will benefit from mindful links for their own well-being and mental health.**
- **"Block Planning" will continue as before but more frequently.**
- **"Block Planning" with class teacher and SET will similarly continue as before, but again more frequently.**
- **SET team to meet regularly.**
- **Class teacher and SNA to meet twice weekly, where necessary. But daily contact will be made through Showbie.**

- **Senior Management Team to meet once weekly. Some of these meetings will assess the use of distance learning in St. Bernadette's S.N.S., exploring other ideas and working constantly to improve the experience for learner and teacher. Other meetings will enable current school policies to be analysed and improved.**
- **SCP and HSCL to be in regular communication with Principal and/or Deputy Principal as need arises.**
- **Principal and/or Deputy Principal to be available to all staff at all times.**
- **Principal and/or Deputy Principal to regularly update and monitor school Facebook page and website with advice for the school community.**
- **Principal to regularly communicate with parents/guardians through text-a-parent.**
- **Deputy Principal to update Aladdin with email addresses of parents as we try to expand our data base of email contacts.**
- **Principal to communicate with SENO, and other outside school agencies as required.**
- **Email, staff WhatsApp, phone calls and on-line meeting platforms to be main forms of communication.**
- **Should substitution cover be necessary, Principal will advertise for sub and Deputy Principal will inform and guide sub as to process of learning and teaching in place in school.**
- **Principal and Deputy Principal will continue to amend and add notes re pupils onto Aladdin system.**
- **Class teachers and SET will make notes on Aladdin when appropriate and helpful re learning taking place for individual pupils.**
- **Teachers will keep abreast of current webinars and CPD courses for their own personal professional development.**
- **Eimear Berry, Chairperson of the BOM will be updated weekly by Principal or more often when need dictates.**
- **Liz, School Secretary, to check email regularly and contact Principal and/or Deputy Principal when necessary.**
- **Following initial "settling-in" period of distance learning, staff will share ideas to compile a survey for parents and/or guardians. The results of the survey will be analysed by Principal and Deputy Principal with a view to further improve and inform the teaching and learning process.**
- **Similarly, teachers will be surveyed on their opinions and issues/problems with distance learning to work cohesively and confidently with current circumstances.**
- **Deputy Principal to organise interactive online quizzes with little prizes to try to encourage more engagement.**

Whole-School Policy

St. Bernadette's S.N.S.

Covid-19 School Closure

Distance Learning Plan for SNAs

SNAs work tirelessly and compassionately with their assigned pupils and indeed many other needy pupils in the classroom.

- **Over time, a bond develops between SNA and the pupils in the class. This is an anxious and worrying time for children so used to the friendly face and concern of SNA. To reassure our most needy, anxious and at-risk students, we have set up a system where pupils can continue to be in contact with SNA.**

- **The pupil who felt comfortable and safe in the school environment, despite the challenges that school brings is now in a situation where home supports might be poor or non-existent.**

- **While class teacher uses Showbie to educate and motivate, our SNAs use the system to support, maintain connections and links with the pupil and their family. Our SNAs know their assigned pupil extremely well and to that effect, they guide them to online platforms suited to their specific charge (facilitated through planning with class teacher) and support the pupil to engage with learning at his/her individual level. SNAs will join "class" of mainstream teacher and set up own "class" for additional support.**

- **Similarly, they facilitate an emotional support platform with any pupil needing extra supports.**

St. Bernadette's S.N.S. Survey of Parents to help us with distance learning in school received the following comments to our question "Have you any suggestions to improve our distance learning?"

I have a really old laptop so can't do anything that needs Adobe

Read a box every day

Maybe record some explanations to some of the subjects to facilitate understanding

We are all doing the best we can with the resources we have available

My daughter is in sixth class. Her teacher is amazing for communication with them as a class, but I as a parent would prefer to be the one he has contact with just so I know and trust the work he's giving out gets done because her app is a bit hazy

Give more variety, not just maths and English, suggest some reading

It would be easier to use school books

Ms. Finn has been amazing, fair play

More contact from teachers

It's going pretty well

My daughter is enjoying using the Showbie. She has no complaints:)

Books would be better

Printed out packs for the smaller children like a mixture of number and letters as some parents have no access to printers

Teachers giving an explanation to a wrong answer instead of just putting an x beside it

More online maths, English and Irish

Maybe more contact with parents about work at home. Many are trying too hard.

It would be amazing if I could collect what he has to do every two weeks so I know I have done the right thing. There is other schools that give out the work every week.

Maybe a bit more maths revision.

Stay at home with what I am doing

Everything is perfect

Try to post out work sometimes network down or email work

All good
It is going well and my daughter likes being in touch with everyone

Doing a brilliant job

Yous are doen great job

I find it brilliant and teachers are great at providing more work if children finish quickly and correcting their work

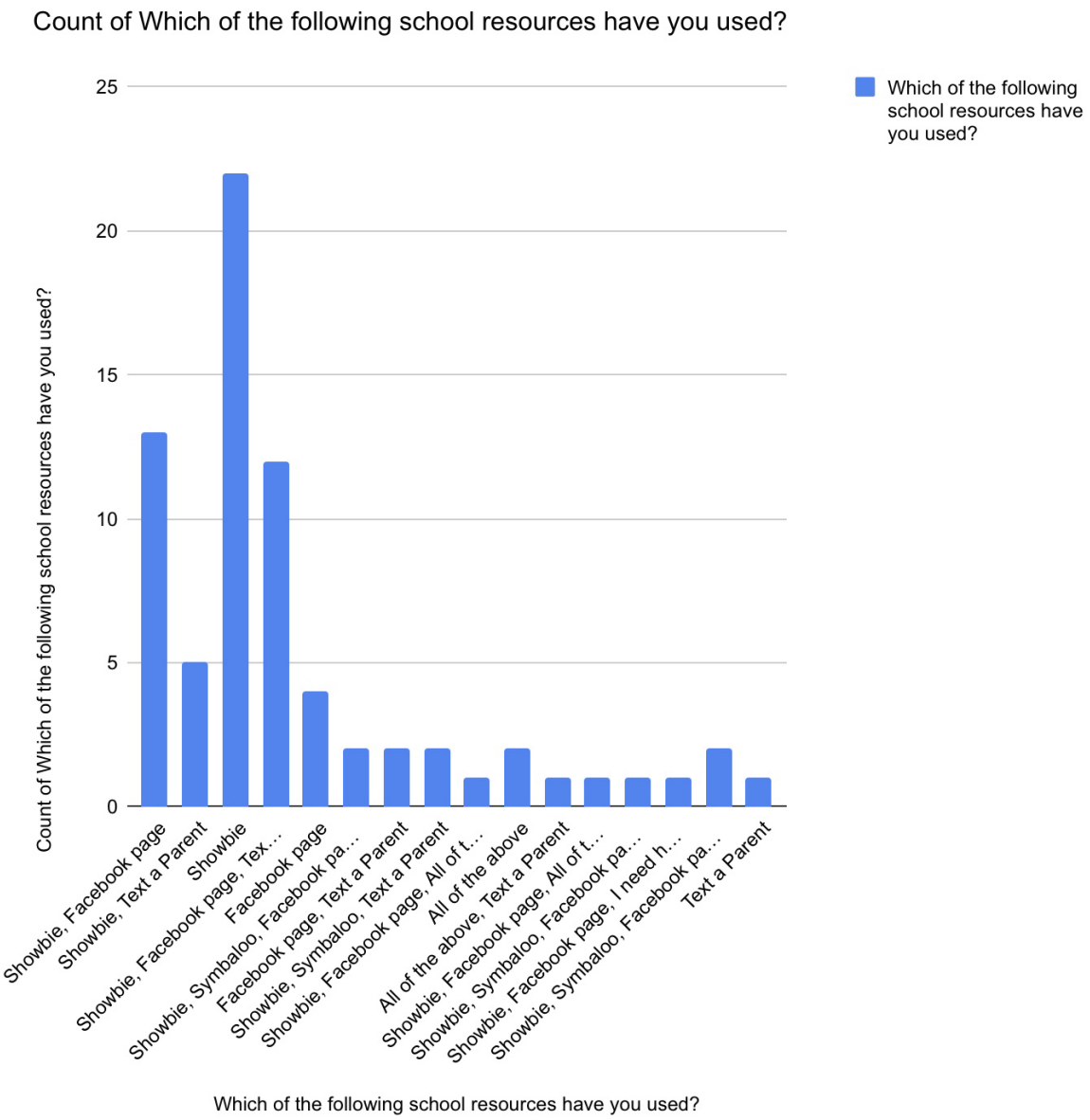
We have worked hard to deal with any issues that arose here.

Email is being used to connect with parents. All staff have a bernadettes.ie address for communication with parents. Many parents connect through Showbie platform also.

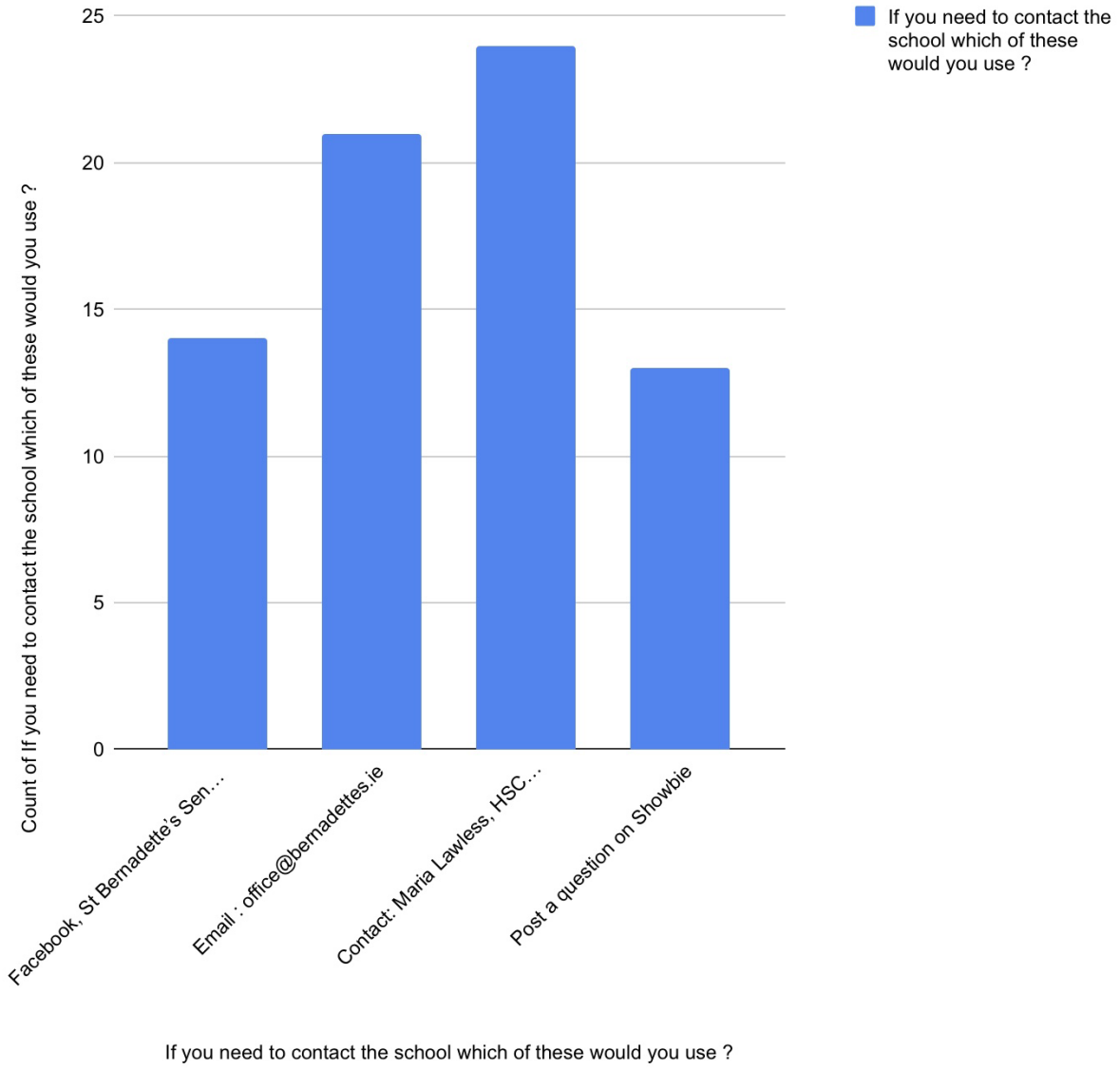
Pupils struggling to engage are receiving learning packs from HSCL and/or SCP.

Variety has been addressed with both Symbaloo and (new and visually appealing) Padlet pages with a myriad of resources for all.

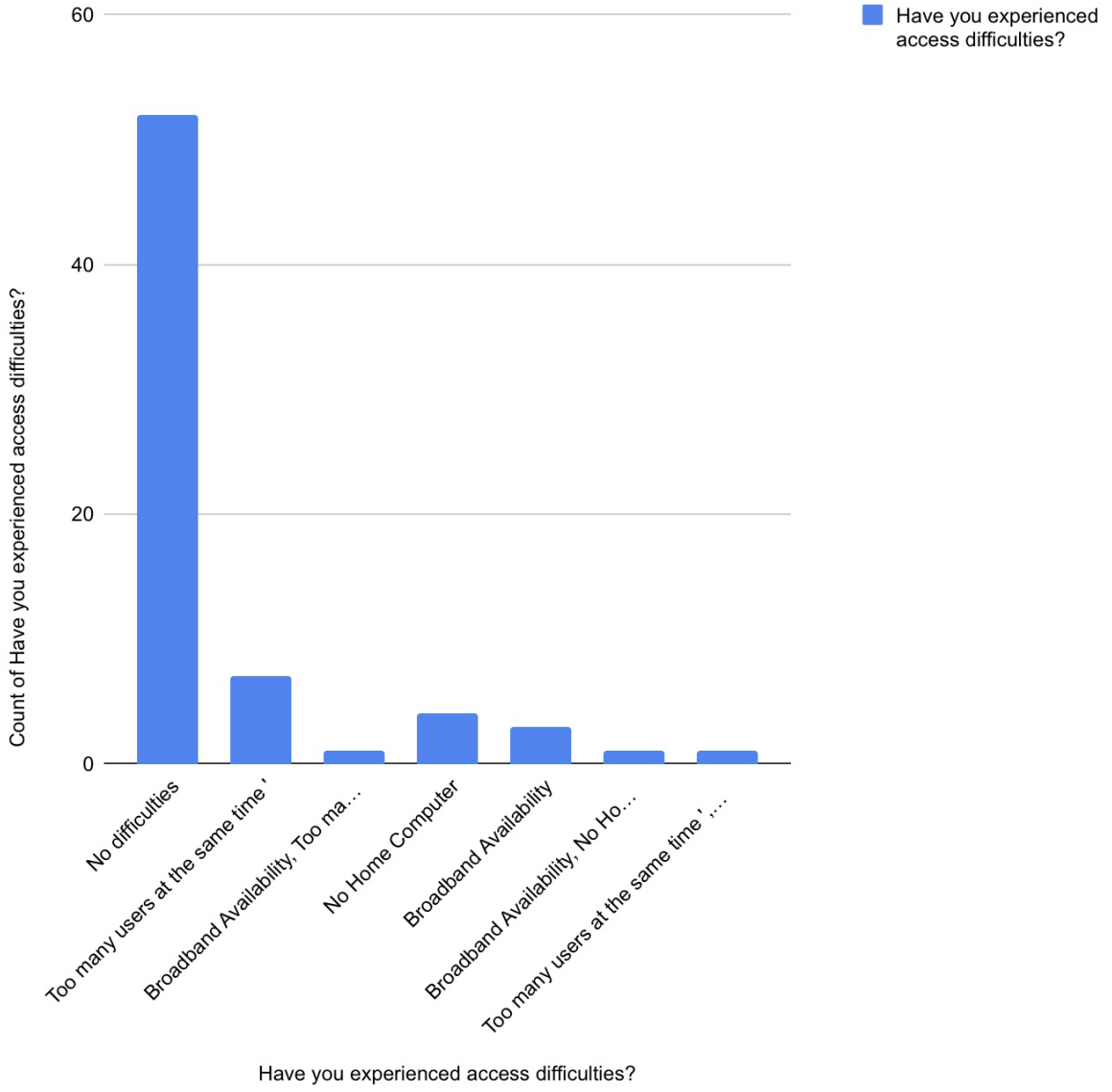
Parents and pupils have been made aware that school books are free and available online.

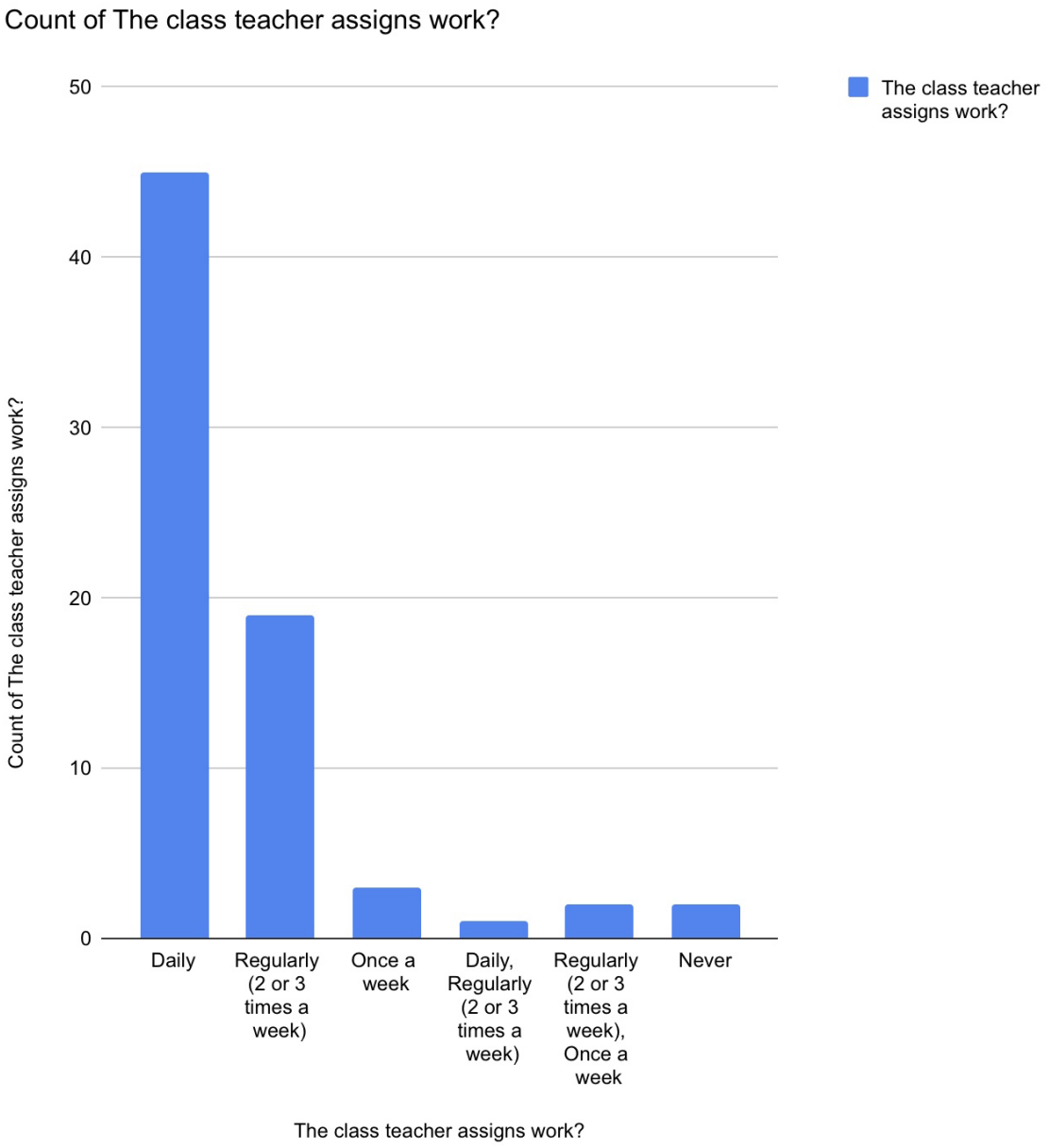

Count of Which of the following school resources have you used?
Which of the following school resources have you used?
25
20
15
10
5
0
Count of Which of the following school resources have you used?
Showbie, Facebook page
Showbie, Text a Parent
Showbie
Showbie, Facebook page, Tex...
Facebook page
Showbie, Symbaloo, Facebook pa...
Facebook page, Text a Parent
Showbie, Symbaloo, Text a Parent
Showbie, Facebook page, All of t...
All of the above
All of the above, Text a Parent
Showbie, Facebook page, All of t...
Showbie, Symbaloo, Facebook pa...
Showbie, Facebook page, I need h...
Showbie, Symbaloo, Facebook pa...
Text a Parent
Which of the following school resources have you used?

Count of If you need to contact the school which of these would you use ?

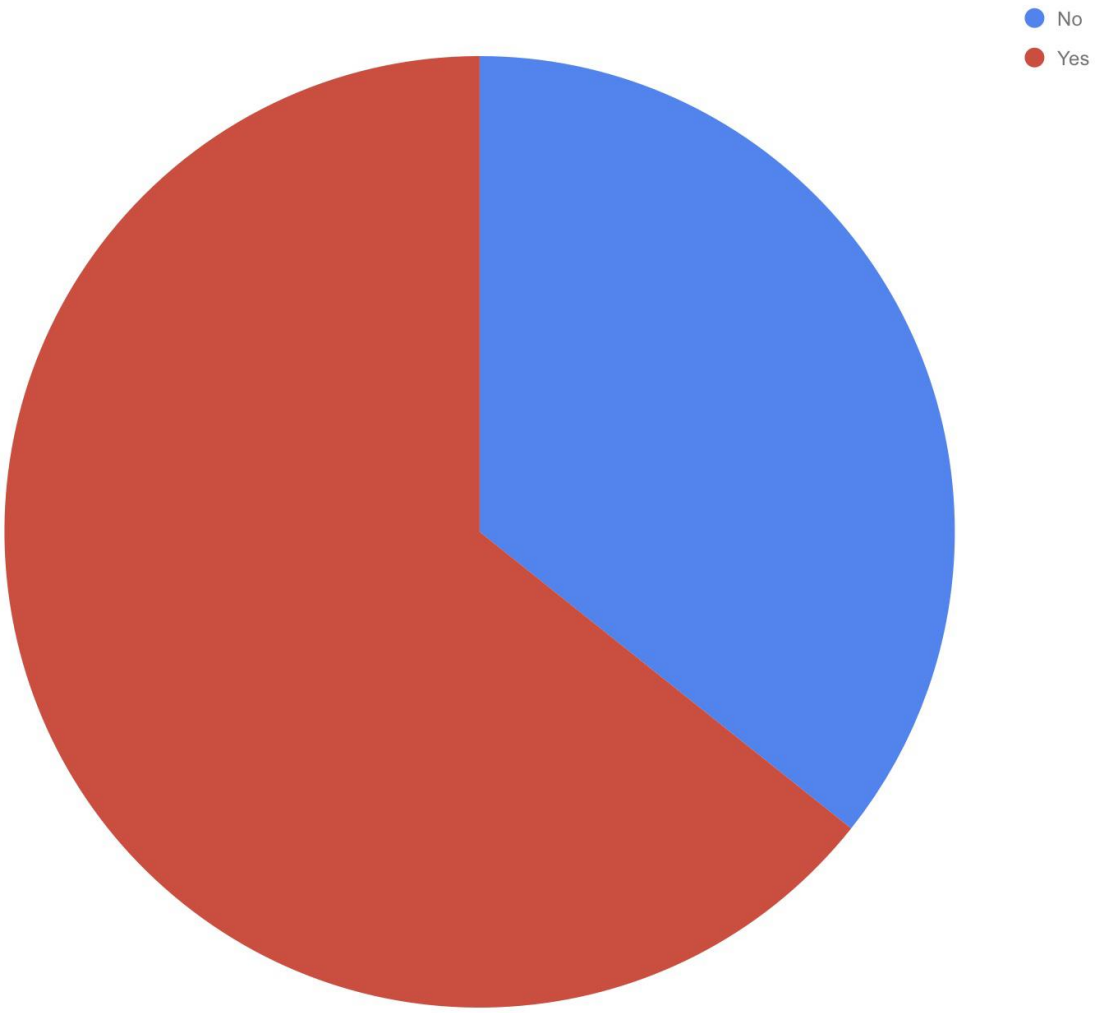


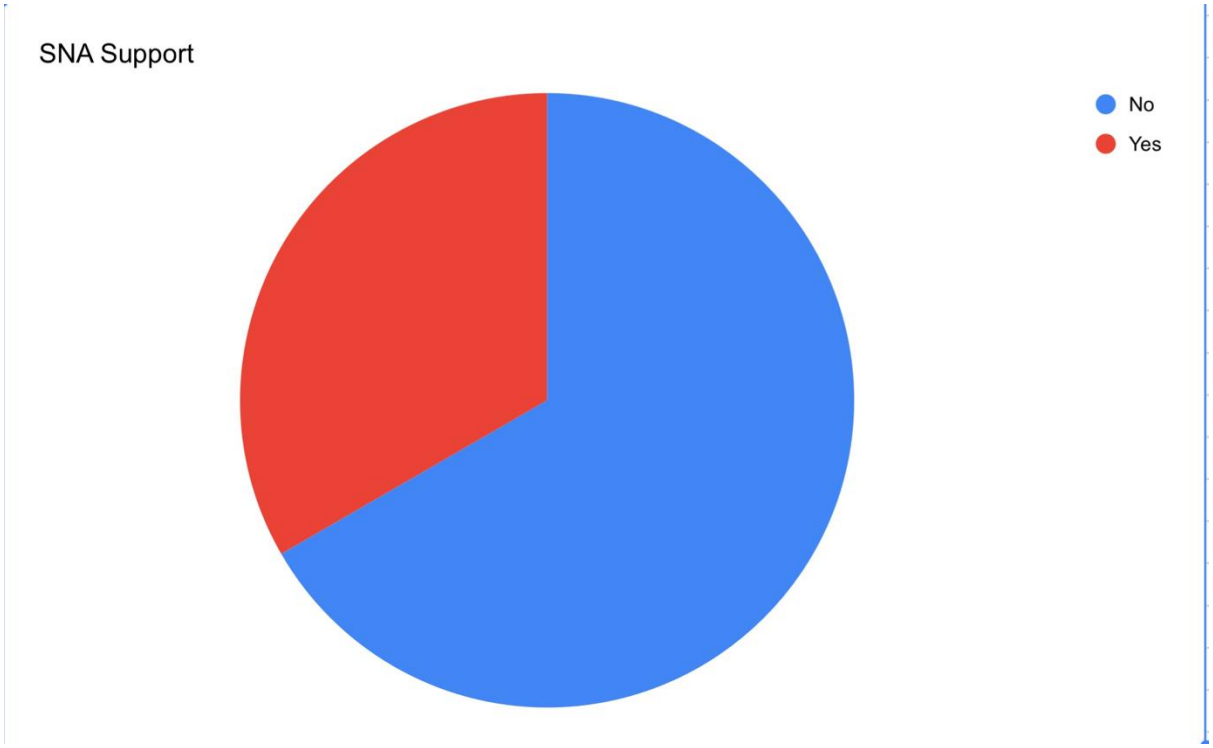
Count of Have you experienced access difficulties?

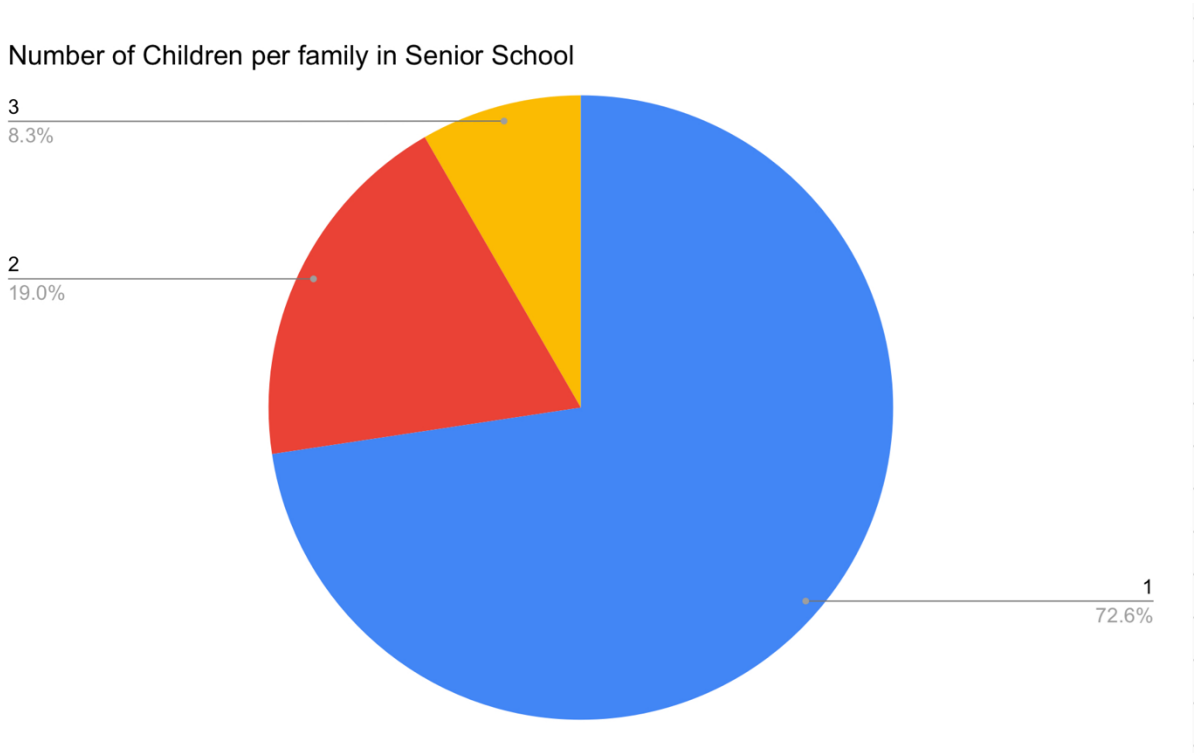


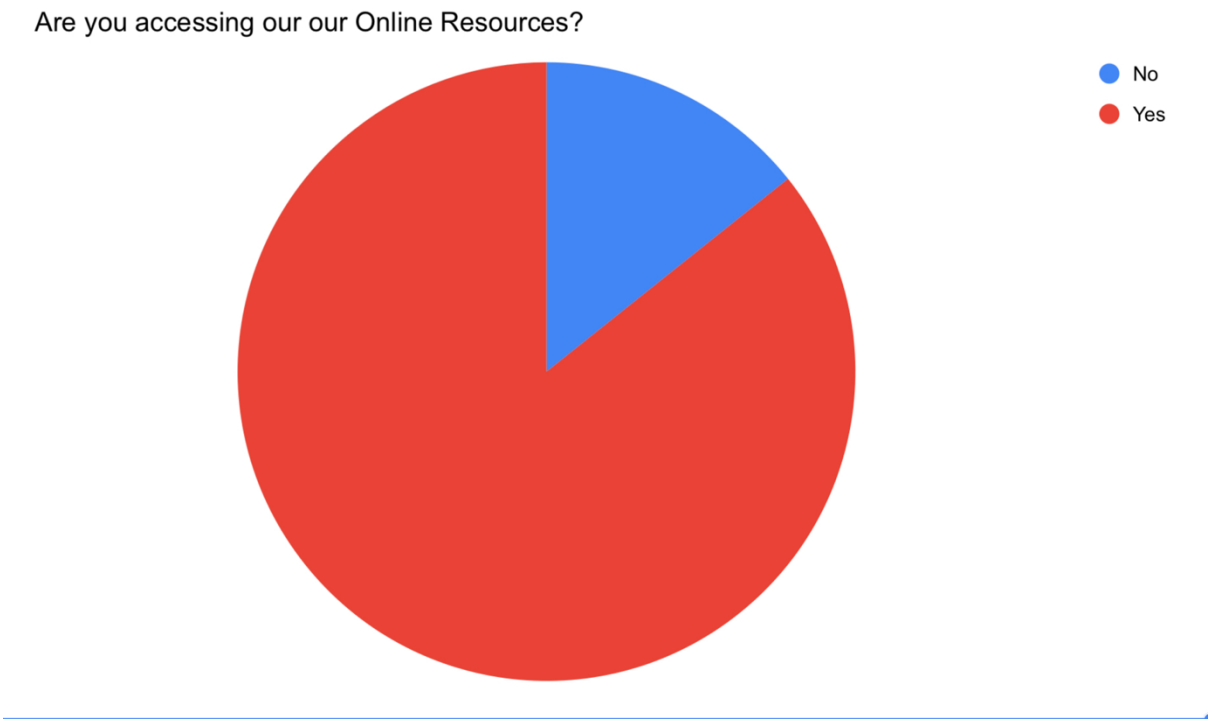

Count of The class teacher assigns work?
The class teacher assigns work?
50
40
30
20
10
0
Count of The class teacher assigns work?
Daily
Regularly (2 or 3 times a week)
Once a week
Daily, Regularly (2 or 3 times a week)
Regularly (2 or 3 times a week), Once a week
Never
The class teacher assigns work?

Do your children watch RTE School Hub?

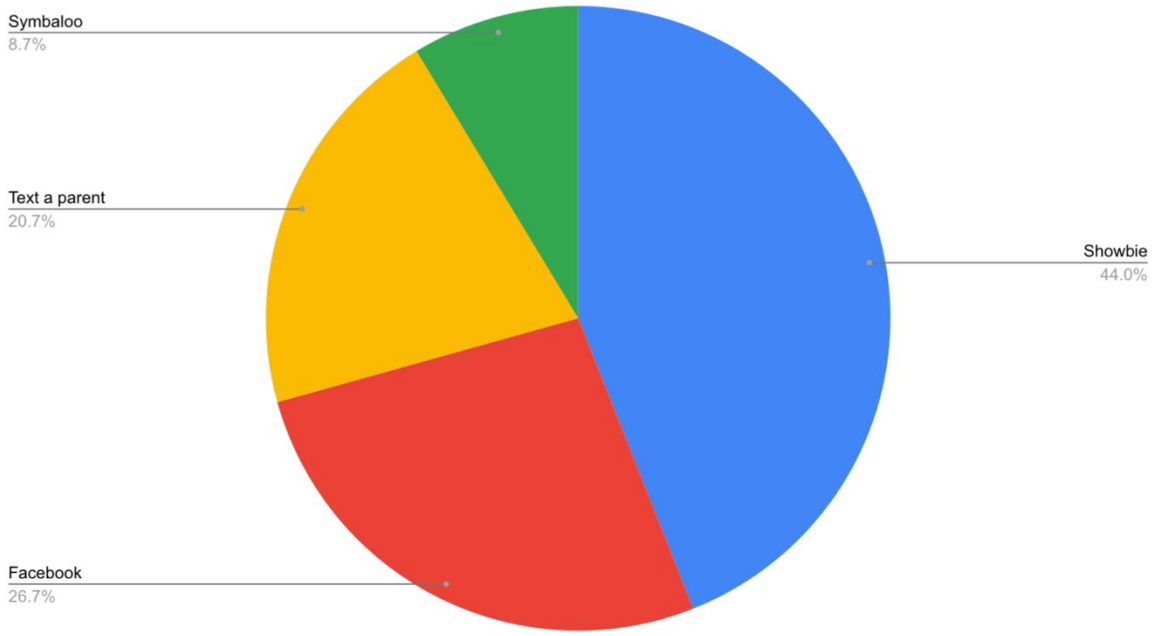



SNA Support
No
Yes

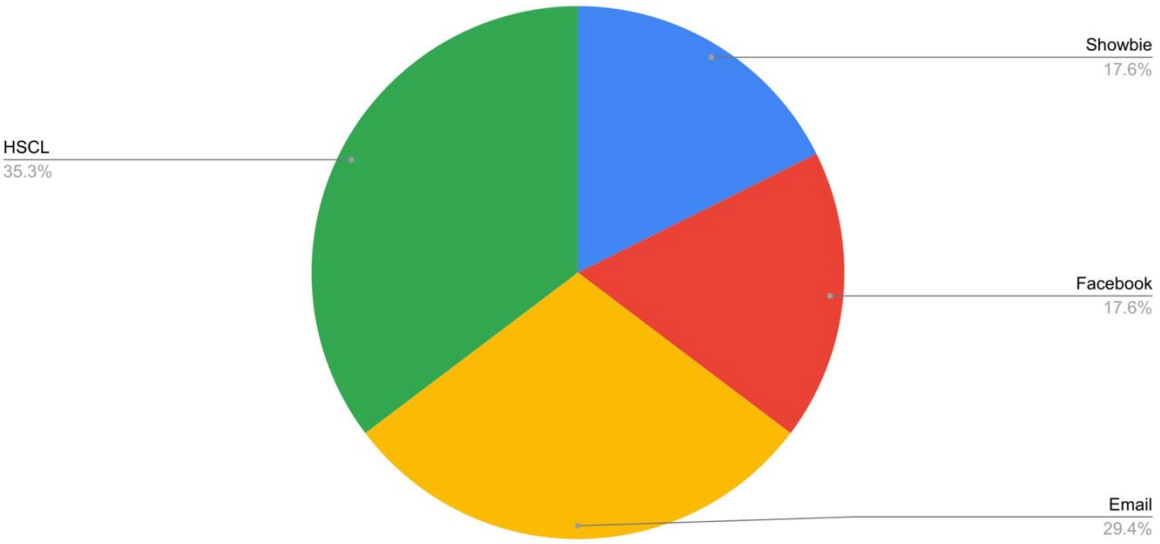

Number of Children per family in Senior School
3
8.3%
2
19.0%
1
72.6%

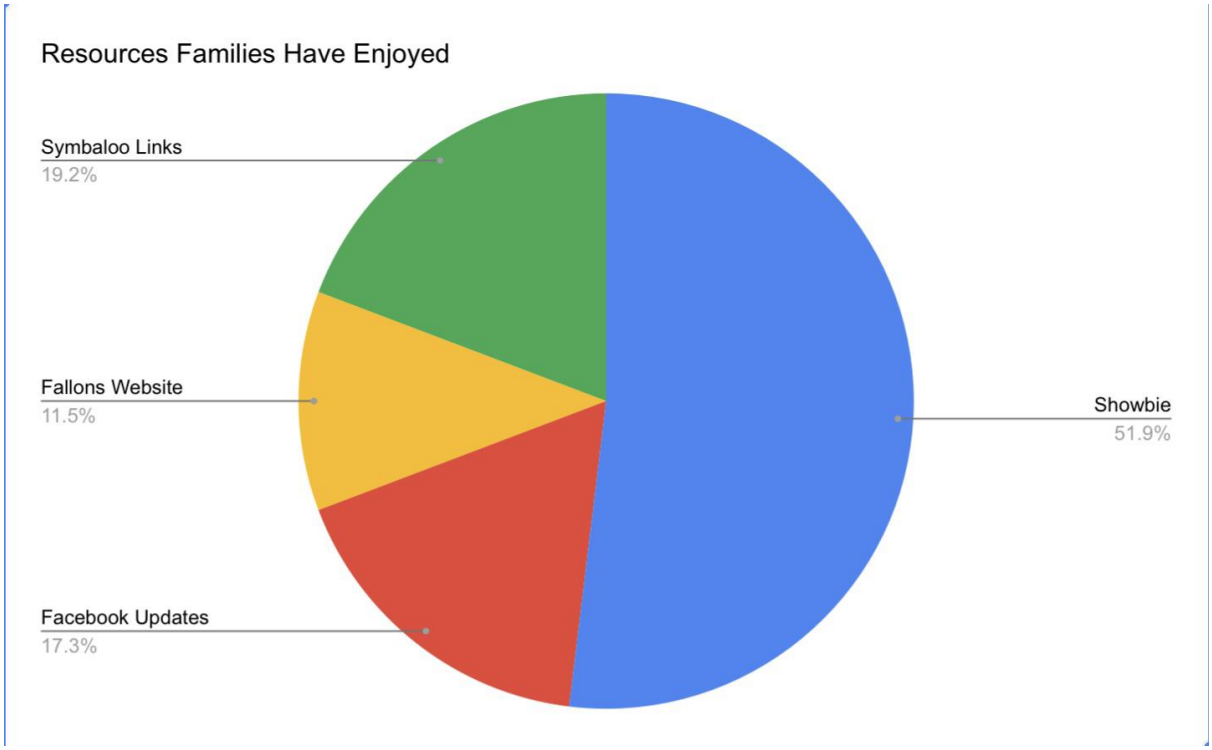

Are you accessing our our Online Resources?
No
Yes

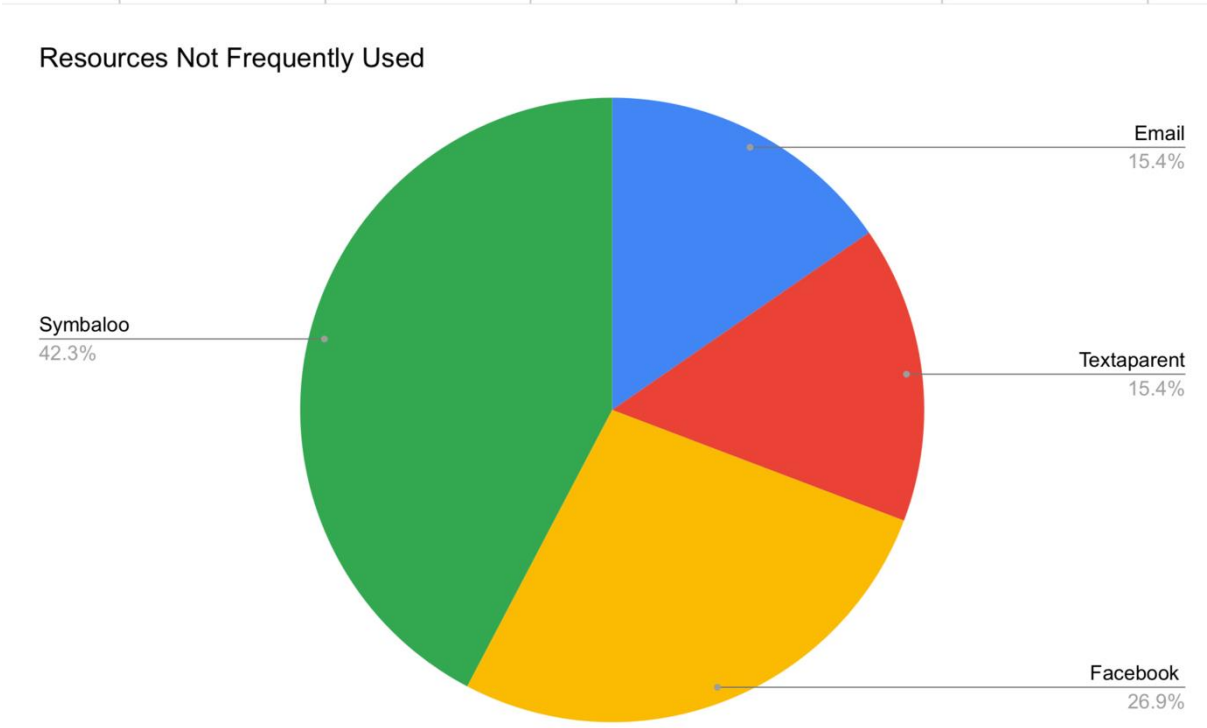
School Resources Being Accessed

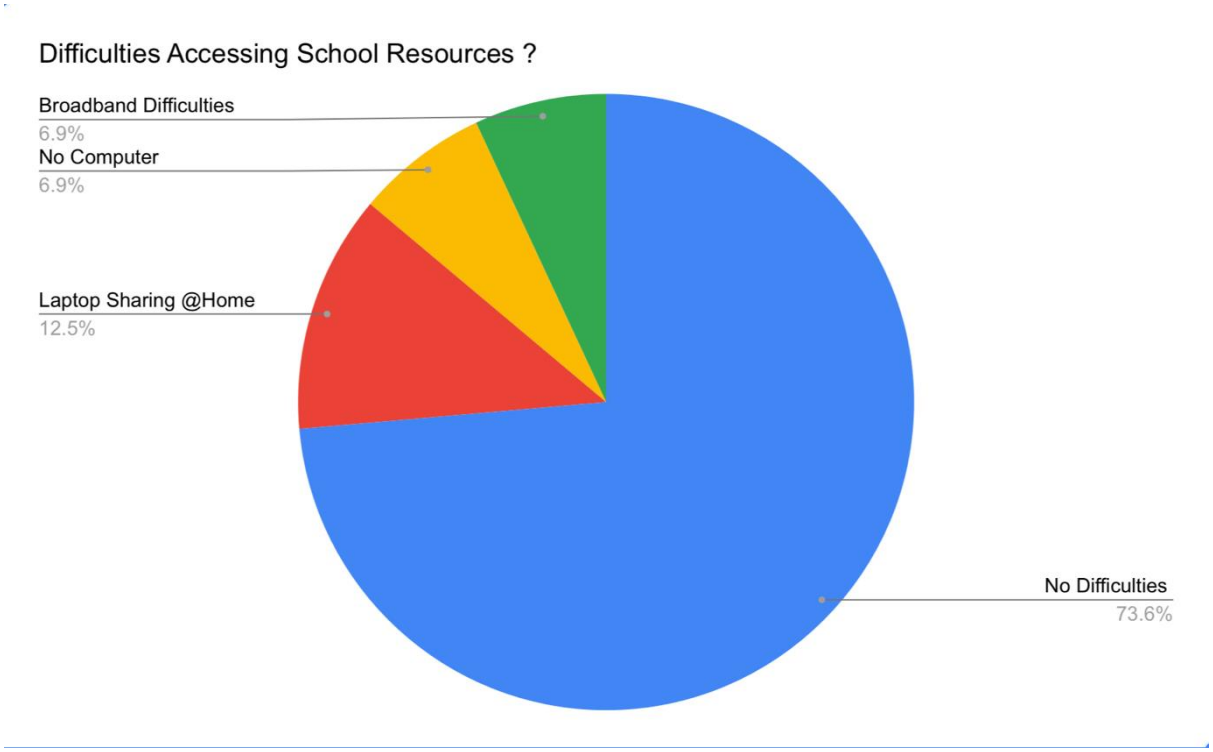


Preferred Method to Contact School

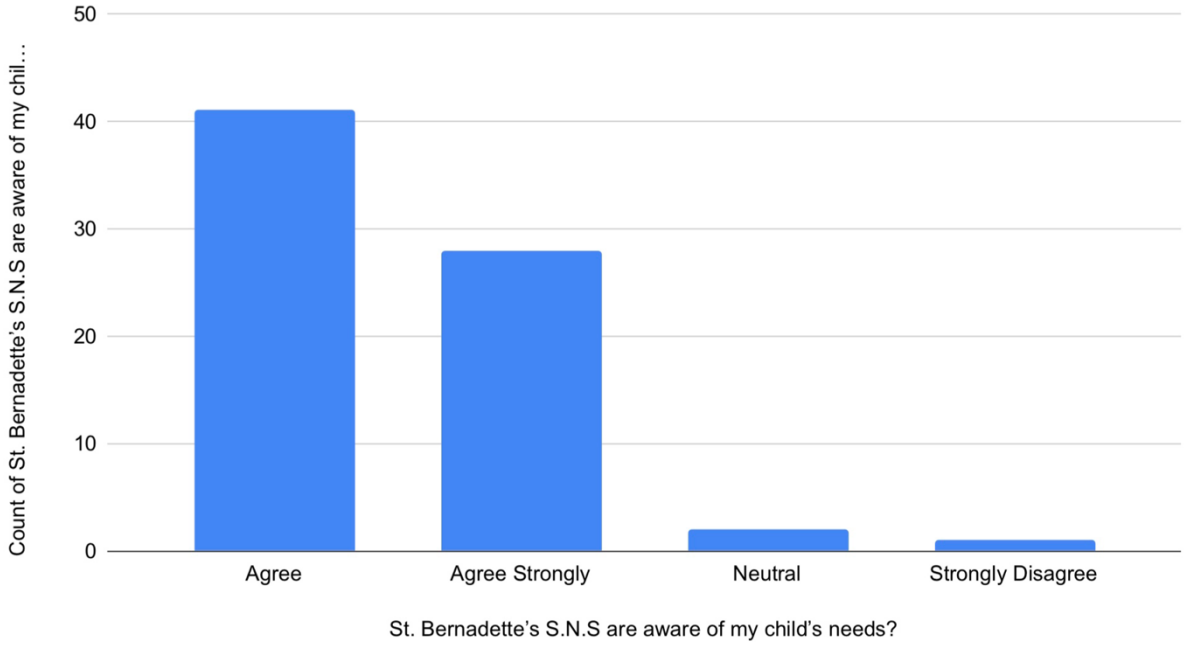



Resources Families Have Enjoyed
Symbaloo Links
19.2%
Fallons Website
11.5%
Facebook Updates
17.3%
Showbie
51.9%


Resources Not Frequently Used
Email
15.4%
Textaparent
15.4%
Facebook
26.9%
Symbaloo
42.3%


Difficulties Accessing School Resources ?
Broadband Difficulties
6.9%
No Computer
6.9%
Laptop Sharing @Home
12.5%
No Difficulties
73.6%

St. Bernadette’s S.N.S are aware of my child’s needs?



Teachers' Survey Results:

- **Engagement with Showbie per class is 41-90%. A great start.**
- **Number of students completing assignments drops a bit (but not a huge amount) 16-72%.**
- **7 teachers are posting daily, others either 2-3 times or weekly.**
- **Only 5 teachers have students posting daily.**
- **2 teachers have used voice notes**
- **2 teachers have pupils using voice notes function.**
- **7 teachers find disengagement of students stressful.**
- **7 teachers addressed the issue of broadband/lack of laptop.**
- **2 teachers addressed issue of differentiation.**
- **Limited functionality of Showbie was mentioned.**
- **9 teachers have used Symbaloo**
- **3 teachers have sent pupils on a virtual tour**

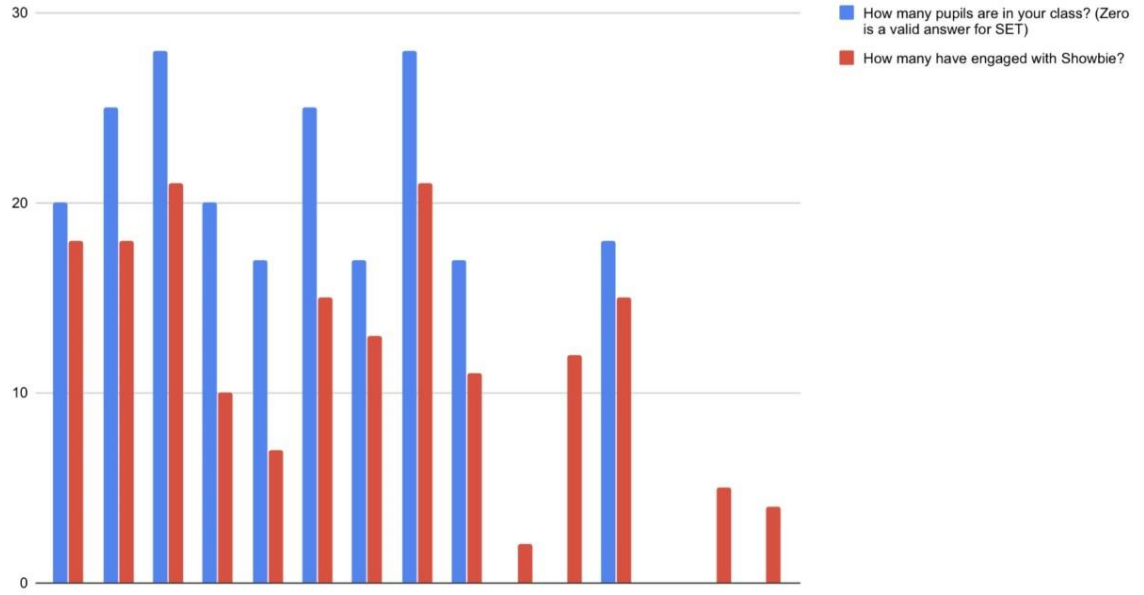
Since this survey, we have introduced email addresses with a bernadettes.ie email address for all staff. This email address is being used for staff and teacher/parent communication.

Showbie is now used to post green cards, Pupil of the Week certificates, birthday cards and school shop vouchers for quiz winners weekly.

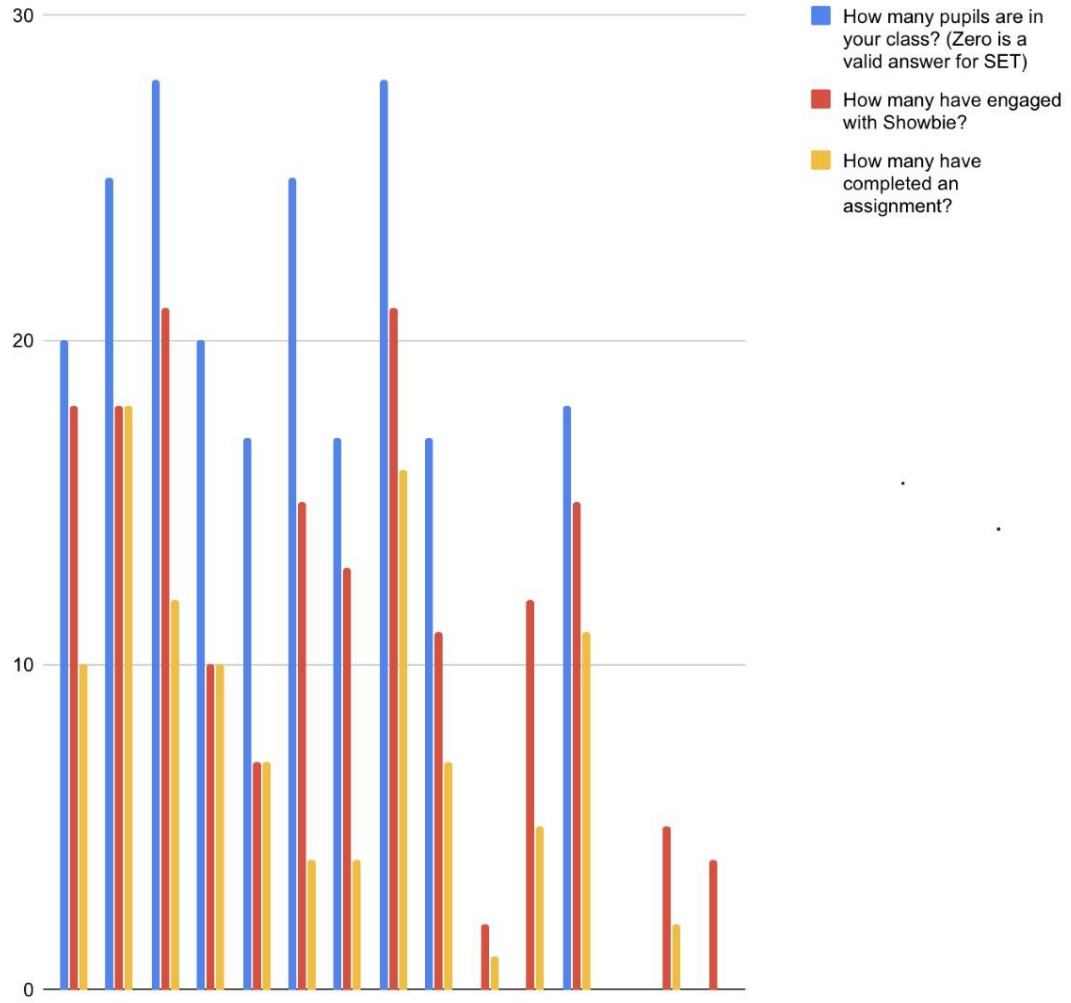
Five Showbie Pro licences have been activated to those teachers with most engagement.

SET and SNAs are more visible on Showbie Pro platforms in discussion forum.

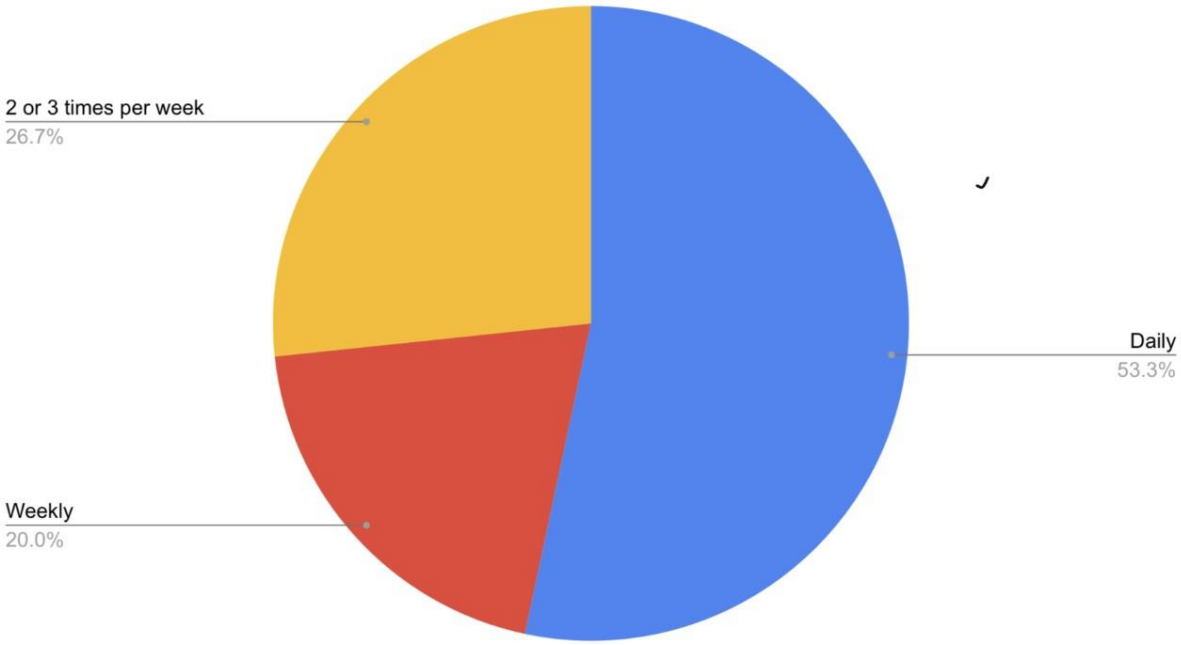
How many pupils are in your class? (Zero is a valid answer for SET) and How many have engaged with Showbie?



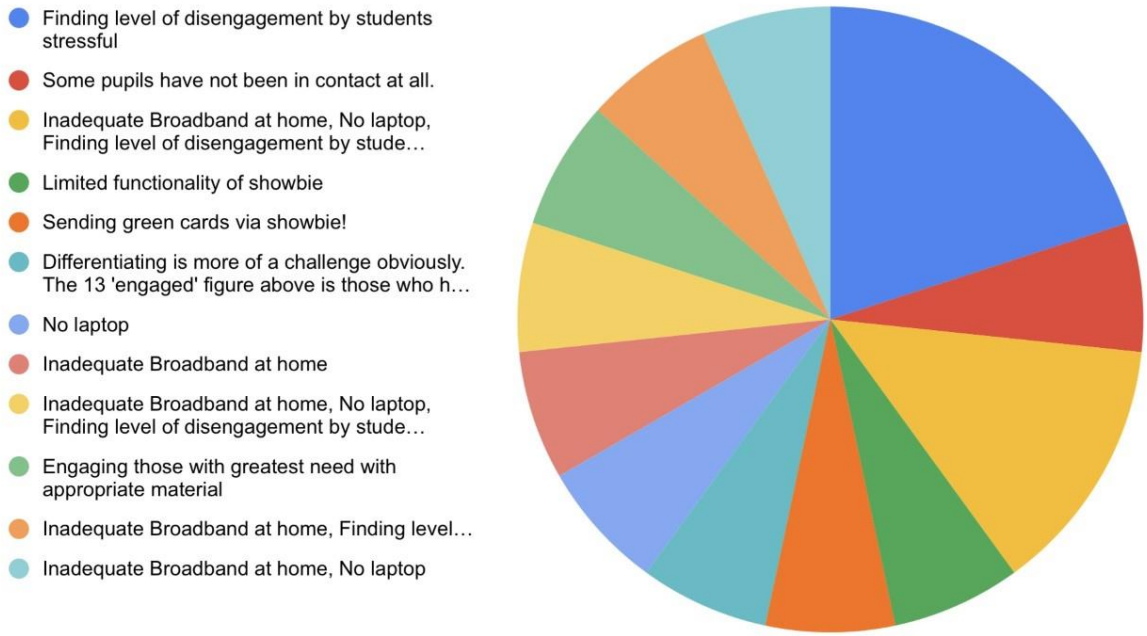
How many pupils are in your class? (Zero is a valid answer for SET) and How many have completed an assignment?



Count of How often do you post work to Showbie ?



Concerns or Suggestions



Addendum – School Closure January 6th

When St. Bernadette's S.N.S. reopened on August 27th, a Covid-19 policy was in place. This policy was formed by Principal and Deputy Principal during the Summer Break. The policy was then shared with all staff members for editing, suggestions and approval. Policy was subsequently ratified by BOM.

Research from WHO, Lancet Journal, current articles pertaining to schools, Government Guidelines, IPPN Advice, international best practice in schools and colleges, INTO, Inspectorate, NEPS was all thoroughly and rigorously examined and combined with subjective knowledge of our own school to create a changed environment within our school to enable in-class teaching and learning to take place as safely as possible.

(c.f. Covid Policy – St. Bernadette's S.N.S.)

Within the framework of our safe reopening, preparation was made should school closure reoccur.

All teachers used Showbie platform for homework purposes once weekly. Pupils were made familiar with Padlet. School website, facebook & twitter were recommended for use by parents and pupils. Third and sixth class pupils were given an opportunity to use chromebooks purchased by school to address issue of lack of devices as a reason for not engaging with Showbie.

Parents of pupils who were adept with chromebooks and Padlet in 3rd class were phoned to see if using chromebook at home would benefit pupil. Parents were invited to collect chromebook in school and sign for chromebook in line with AUP and recognising chromebook remains property of the school at all times.

Many parents felt that pupils not having text books in previous closure was a disadvantage. This issue was addressed 14/01/2020 when parents were given an opportunity to collect pupils' individual workbooks in the school hall. All parents received an email including links to online text books.

More vulnerable pupils academically and those with SEN collected individual learning packs from the school with workbooks.

More vulnerable pupils academically and emotionally and those with SEN will receive remote communication through regular phonecalls, Showbie access to SET, mainstream teacher and SNA to support pupil and family unit.

Online quiz is continuing once weekly with notifications on school social media. Prizes of vouchers for school shop will continue as per previous school closure. Email report of child's performance in quiz continues to be sent to parents with suggested quizzes that their child might enjoy.

School lunches will be collected once fortnightly as before, facilitated by SNAs.

Aladdin system has been improved to include names of those availing of school lunches.

All current IPPN advice and Government guidelines continue to be shared with whole staff.

Padlet and Symbaloo pages are continually updated, revised and shared with whole staff.

Staff meetings, collaboration and cooperation continue as previous closure.

This policy is a working policy and subject to further input as circumstances or current advice dictates.

It is to be shared with all staff members and subject to ratification by BOM.

Attached email received by parents

Dear parents/guardians,

As you are aware, under current Govt guidelines our school will be closed until 01/02/2020.

To facilitate collection of pupils' individual books and workbooks, St. Bernadette's S.N.S. will be open from 11.00 a.m. until 12.20p.m. this Thursday (14th January).

BOOK COLLECTION BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS - Thursday morning, 14th January 2021

The school main gates and side gates will open at 11 o'clock and close at 12.20 p.m.

To stagger the numbers coming up we will space out collection times:

3rd classes	***11.00 – 11.20***
4th classes	***11.20 – 11.40***
5th classes	***11.40 – 12.00***
6th classes	***12.00 – 12.20***

When coming up:

- ***Please bring a strong shopping bag or school bag to carry books home.***
- ***One adult per family to keep numbers down.***
- ***Please wear a mask.***
- ***Please do not bring any children up to the school.***
- ***Please observe social distancing.***

All books will be ready for collection in the hall. Where a parent/guardian has more than one child in the school, all school books for collection will be in a pile under youngest child's collection point.

So for parents of children in third and fifth, for example: both childrens' books will be at the third class collection area.

There will be four areas with books – 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th.

The books for your child's class will be separated into two sections – boys' books for collection and girls' books for collection.

We ask that when you have collected the books, you exit the school through the third class door.

School gates will close at 12.20 p.m. sharp.

The links below will allow you free digital access to school textbooks:
https://educateplus.ie/homestudy-primary

https://my.cjfallon.ie/

https://www.folens.ie/books-and-programmes/accessing-our-ebooks-digital-resources
https://www.librariesireland.ie/news/online-services-during-coronavirus

Link to Survey of Parents

https://forms.gle/2qMFu8e1JRhPbijQ7

Link to Teacher Survey

https://forms.gle/4hE1yE3s6sYtU2AT6