



Survey of school and trust IT staff 2024



Education sector IT staff survey results

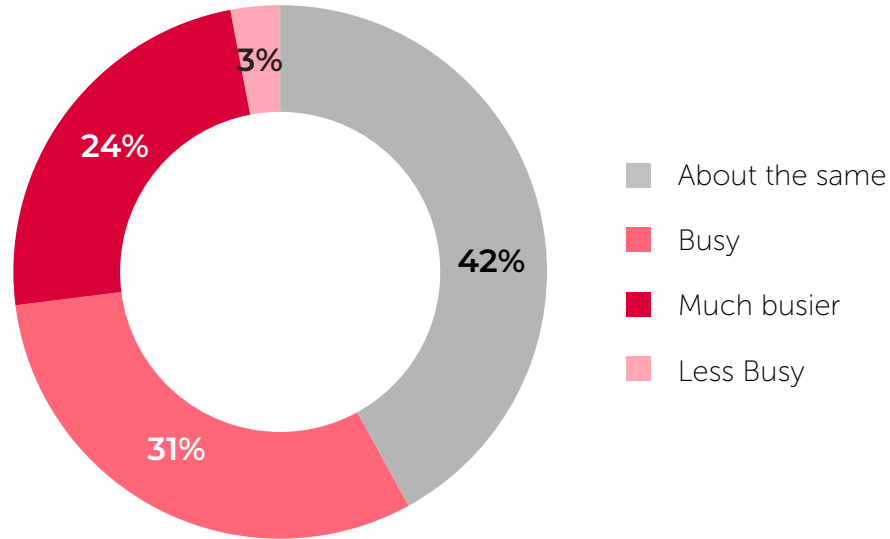
In March 2024, RM invited Network Managers and IT support staff to complete a survey about their workload and other relevant topics. Here are the main findings.

Contents

- 3** Workload
- 5** Types of work
- 8** Cyber security
- 9** Access to school systems
- 10** Ability to contribute on a strategic level
- 11** Conclusions

Workload

Just over half of respondents (55%) said that their daily workload was greater than at the same time last year. However, the increase in workload is not evenly distributed.



Only 44% of responders from secondary schools agree with their peers in MATs and primary schools who say that their workload has increased, with the remainder less busy or about the same.



Primary schools (60%)



Multi-academy trusts (62%)

More of those working in primary schools (60%) and multi-academy trusts (62%) say they are busier or much busier.

Several factors are contributing to the reported increase in workload. Among those mentioned are:

- Transfer of responsibilities from local authorities to individual schools.
- Widening of scope of the IT role to include supporting exams, conferences and data work.
- Statutory requirements such as filtering and monitoring and GDPR.
- New DfE standards that need to be met.

For those enjoying reduced workload (or no change), the main factors are:

- Improved reliability of modern hardware
- Stability of operating systems such as Windows 10
- Cloud-based solutions make the management of systems less onerous.



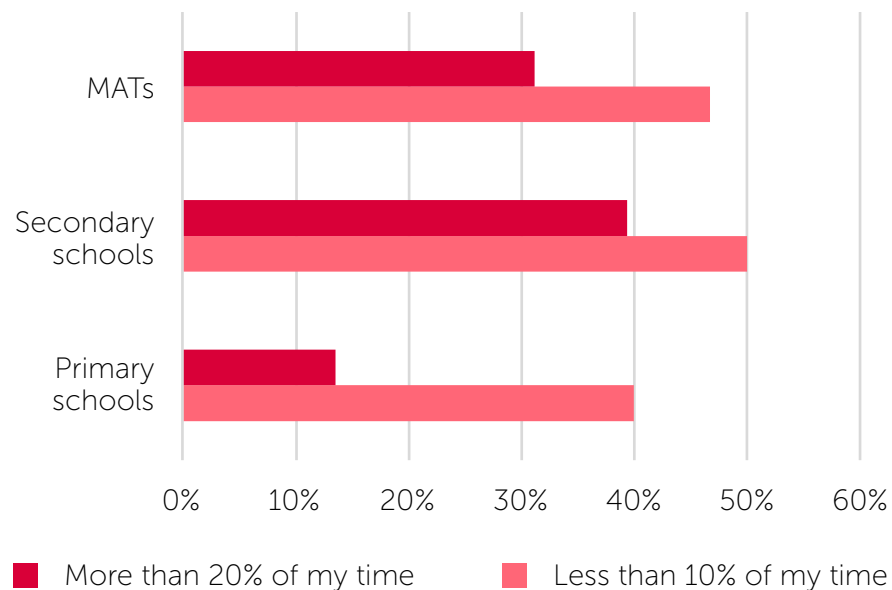
Types of work

We asked respondents to tell us how much time they spend on user management, software management, and security management.

User management

User management seems to be a relatively minor drain on IT staff's time across all phases of education. However, where it is time-consuming, it's very time consuming.

How much of your time do you spend on user management?



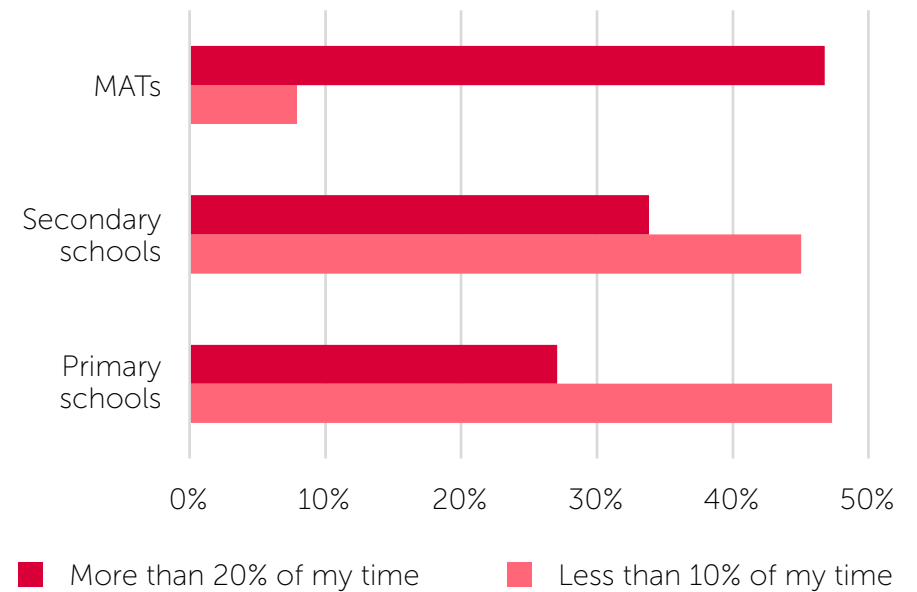
One-third of respondents stated that user management took up more than half their day, increasing to 40% in secondary schools.



Security management

Perhaps surprisingly, given the level of concern about vulnerability to cyber attacks (see page 8), only 31% of responders spend more than 20% of their time on security management. Staff in MATs spend the most time on this area. Only 8% say it occupies less than 10% of their time, and almost half (46%) say it takes up more than 20% of their time.

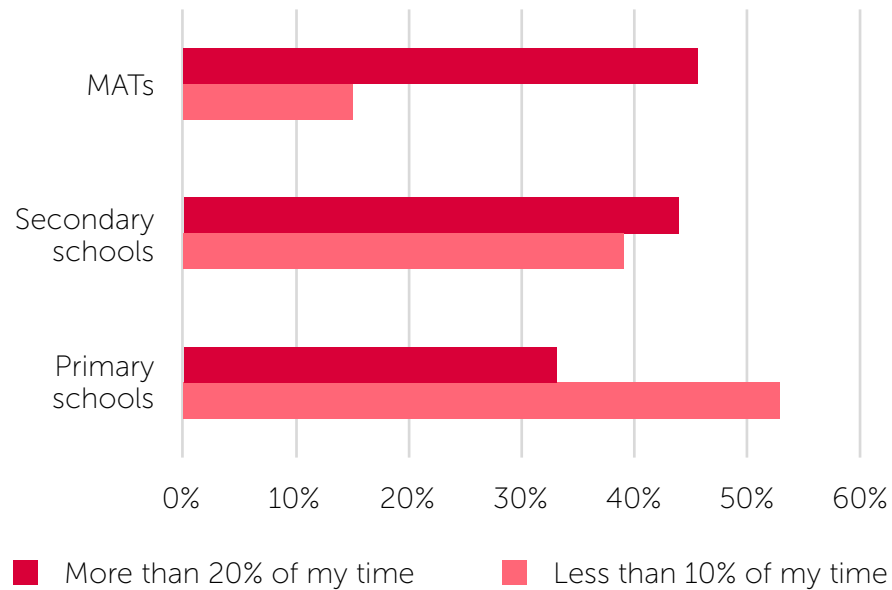
How much of your time do you spend on security management?



Software management

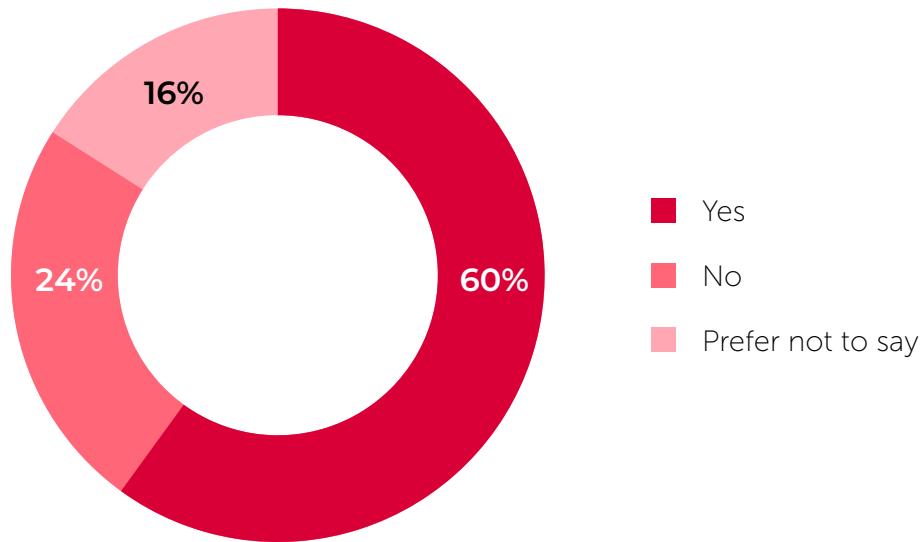
Responders from MATs and secondary schools spend more than 20% of their time on software management (defined as deployment, access control, and management) in 46% and 44% of cases, respectively. This is consistent with the fact that both categories reported high numbers of applications being used – 72% of secondary schools and 69% of MATs said that up to 50 apps were used in their institutions, while only 27% of primary school respondents were in that category.

How much of your time do you spend on software management?



Cyber security

Stories of schools or trusts falling victim to cyber attacks, particularly ransomware, are increasingly common. Overall, 60% of respondents have concerns that their school or trust may be vulnerable to cyber attacks.



Factors such as staff resistance to multi-factor authentication, lack of time and budget and unwillingness or inability on the part of senior leadership to appreciate the risks mean that many schools remain vulnerable.

To tackle cyber threats, some schools are working to achieve Cyber Essentials accreditation, using multi-factor authentication and investing time and money in staff training.

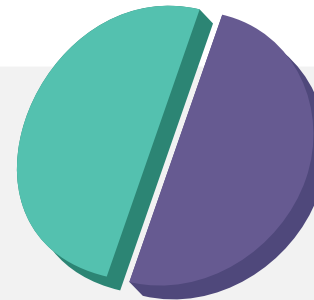


Secondary schools (78%)



Multi-academy trusts (69%)

Concern is more prevalent in secondary schools (78%) and multi-academy trusts (69%).

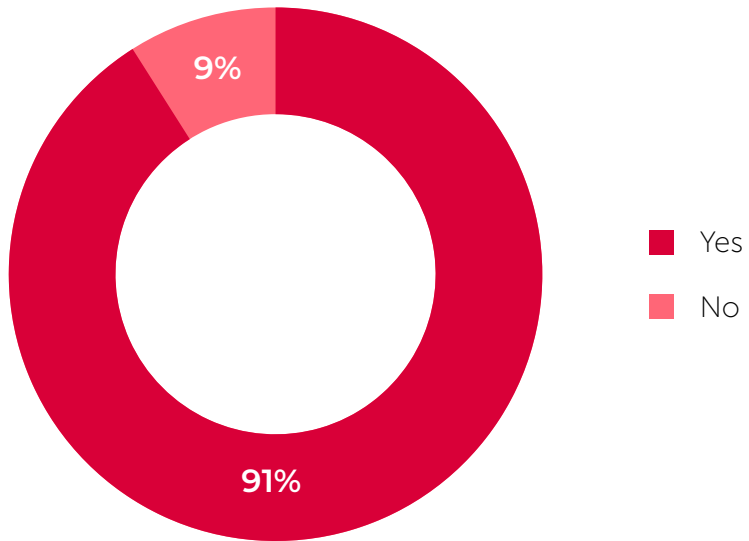


Primary schools divide evenly 'yes' 47% and 'no' 47%

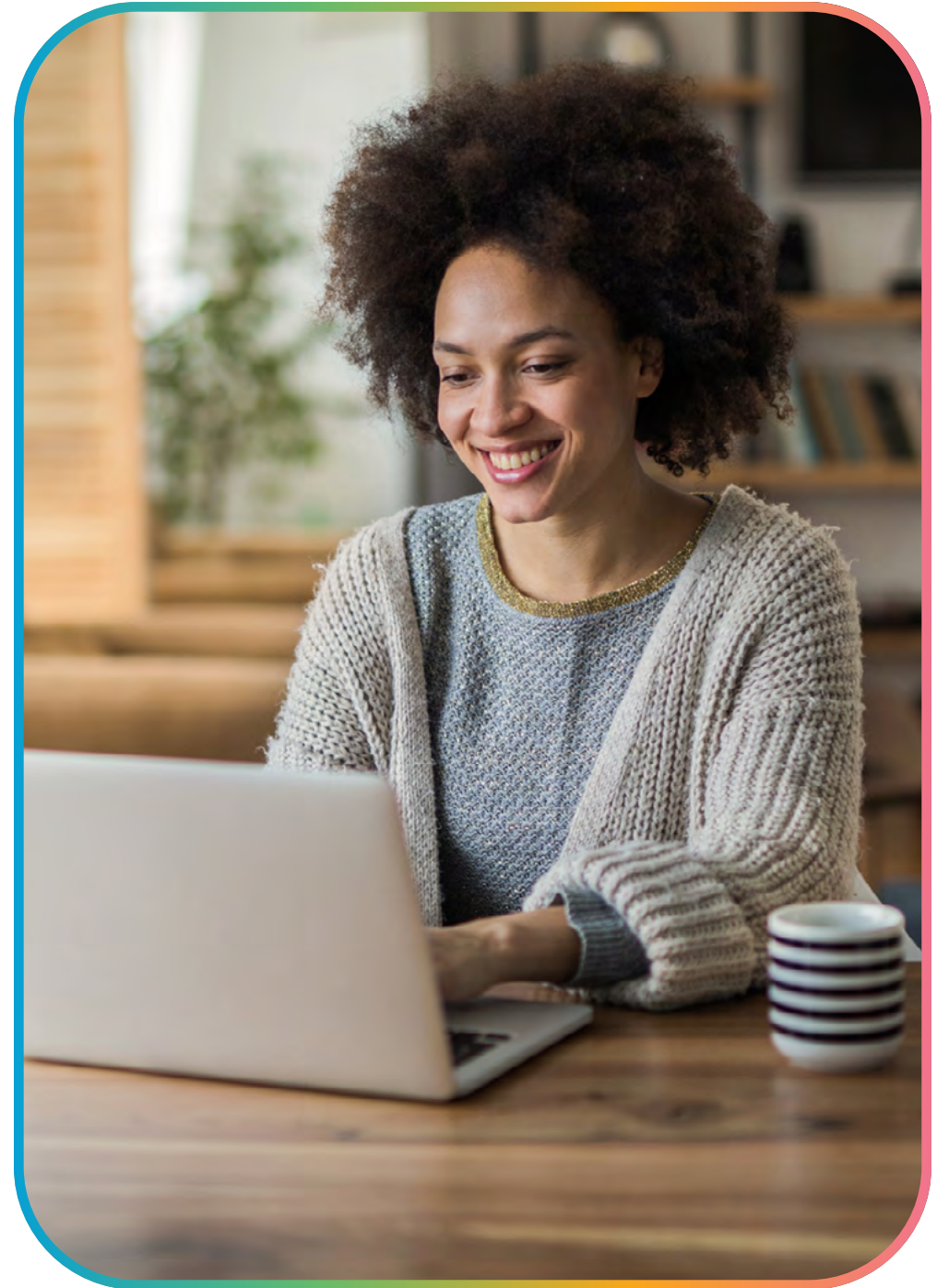


Access to school systems

Users being able to access their school resources remotely is now practically the default, with 91% of respondents saying that they provide this capability.



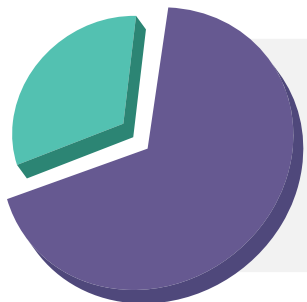
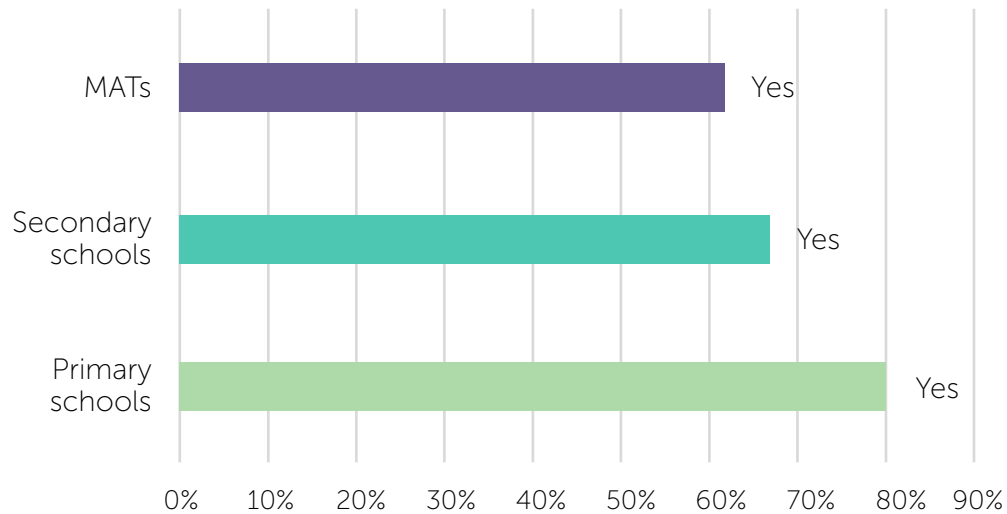
The demands of the pandemic turbo-charged the initial impetus for remote access. The desire to improve work/life balance for staff has continued the trend.



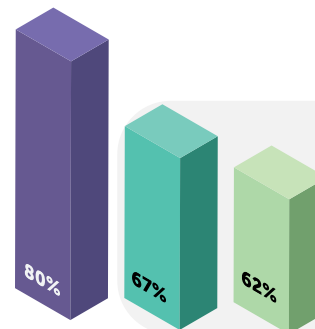
Ability to contribute on a strategic level

Besides the day to day tasks of ensuring a school's IT works for pupils and staff, the changing technology landscape means that devising a strategy to meet future needs is critical.

Are you able to spend time helping their school or trust achieve its IT strategy or recommending new solutions?



Almost three-quarters of respondents (73%) felt that they could spend time helping their school or trust achieve its IT strategy or recommending new solutions.



However, this ability was markedly more prevalent among those working in primary schools (80%) than in secondary schools (67%) and MATs (62%).

Conclusions

Cyber security

The main message from the survey is that concern about cyber security is widespread. However, IT staff are not always equipped to deal with cyber threats. Some face unwillingness or inability by senior leaders in their institutions to engage with the problem sufficiently.

Tackling this challenge:

Internal IT resources may lack the expertise or time to address this topic. Existing arrangements with third-party suppliers for IT support often do not cover what's needed to improve cyber security.

RM's NX-Gen IT services portfolio allows you to select the options that meet your school or trust's specific needs.

Schools can take different approaches to improving cyber security. Our Cyber Essentials consultancy service helps schools and trusts achieve this government-backed certification. RM's expertise can help senior leaders decide the best route for their school or trust based on a comprehensive assessment of their current cyber security situation.

Workload

Increasing workload is the other standout finding. This is unsurprising as technology becomes increasingly embedded in more aspects of school life. This trend will likely grow as more local authorities focus on core functions and stop providing services such as connectivity and IT support for education. At the same time,

initiatives from central government, such as published technology standards and greater regulatory requirements such as GDPR and KCSiE lead to increased demands on IT staff.

Tackling this challenge:

Responders to our survey stated that implementing cloud-based systems for the various elements of their jobs can reduce the time required to manage those responsibilities.

RM can help your school or trust implement cloud-based solutions that enhance collaboration and communication between staff and improve data storage, backup, network management, user and access management, content filtering, and monitoring.

As some local authorities step back from providing technology support services to schools, RM can work as an extension of your team to make your school's technology fit for purpose and allow your teachers to deliver exceptional teaching and learning.

RM has been working in the education sector for more than 50 years. Contact us for more details or an audit of your needs, [get in touch](#) today.



Head office:

142B Park Drive, Milton Park, Milton, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 4SE

T: 01235 645 316 W: www.rm.com

