

## Student difficulties identified by teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate the proportion of their students they believed were experiencing specific difficulties. The response choices were percentage brackets: '0%–20%', '21%–40%', '41%–60%', '61%–80%', or '81%–100%'. Percentage brackets were used so that teachers could more easily report how many students were experiencing difficulties, but they are broad groups. All responses in these percentage brackets were combined and used to calculate averages that could show more detail than, for example, '0–20%'.

These average proportions of students that teachers considered were showing signs of difficulties are shown in Table TT2.5 by grade level.

Table TT2.5

### Average percentage of students affected by various difficulties as identified by teachers

Issues	Grade 3	Grade 5
Lack of basic knowledge or skills	32% (2.1)	37% (2.1)
Reading impaired	34% (2.5)	32% (2.2)
Poor health	24% (2.2)	23% (1.8)
Absenteeism	35% (2.0)	36% (2.6)
Hunger	26% (2.1)	25% (1.9)
Lack of sleep	21% (1.7)	24% (1.8)
Behavioural issues	39% (2.5)	41% (2.7)
Difficulty focusing attention & concentrating	41% (2.4)	41% (2.6)

Average percentage of students affected by various difficulties as identified by teachers, PNG, PILNA 2021

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

The two most common difficulties identified by teachers for both grade levels were behavioural issues (grade three, 39%; grade five, 41%) and difficulty focusing attention and concentrating (grade three, 41%; grade five, 41%). On average, teachers reported about four out of ten students across both grade levels experiencing these difficulties.

Teachers also reported that, on average, more than three out of ten of their students demonstrated a lack of basic knowledge and skills (grade three, 32%; grade five, 37%), absenteeism (grade three, 35%; grade five, 36%), or reading impairment, such as dyslexia (grade three, 34%; grade five, 32%).

The least reported difficulties were related to well-being – poor health, hunger and lack of sleep – with between 21% and 26% of students showing signs of these issues across both grade levels. This still represents more than one in five students.