

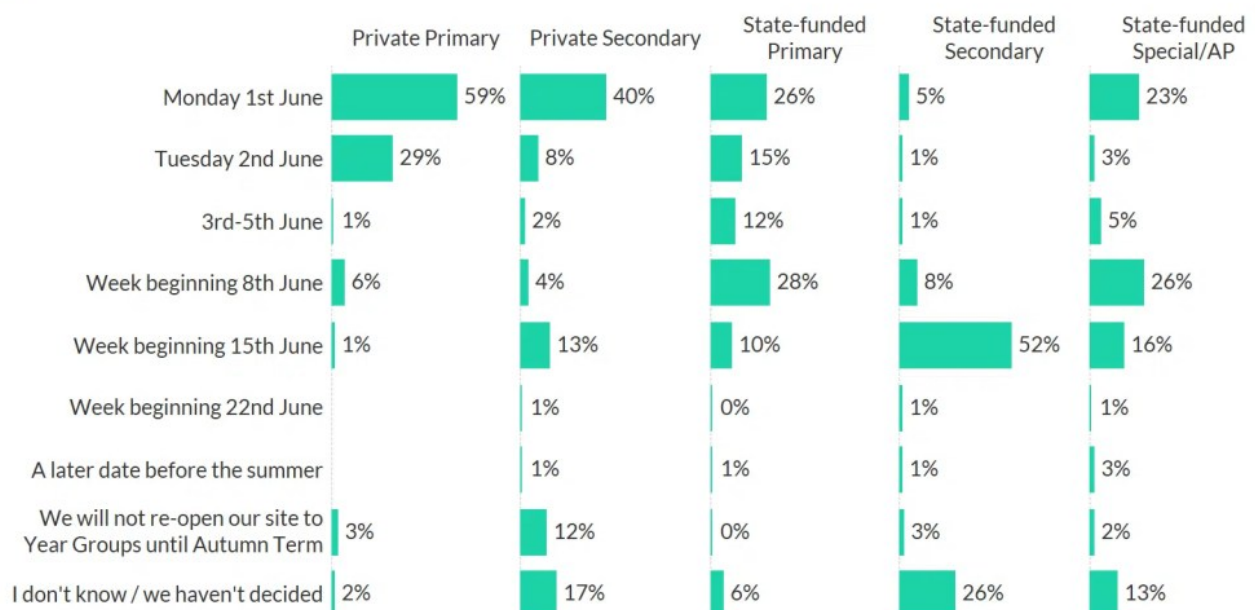
# Are primary schools really opening for more year groups today?

## 1. The Weirdest Back To School

Today (June 1st) is first day that schools are opening more widely since the education secretary closed their doors in March to everyone except keyworker and vulnerable children. Newspapers have reported that the vast majority of primary schools are coming back today - but is that right?

Your answers over the weekend suggest a more varied picture. While 59% of private primary schools are due to open today, just 26% of state primary teachers said the same. Instead, many state schools may be using at least one day this week as an INSET training day to familiarise teachers with new social distancing policies and to prepare classrooms. By the end of the week, more than half of state primaries will be open to more year groups, with a further 28% due to start next week.

**What day are the first group of students (beyond key worker/vulnerable children) returning to your school site?**



Where you live in the country makes a difference to the likelihood of your school re-opening this week. Several councils in the north-west, including Liverpool, agreed in mid-May that their schools would not be opening today. Hence, just only around 1 in 10 north-west primary schools will come back this week. Yorkshire and the North East are also taking a more cautious approach. By comparison, in the East of England, a third of primary teachers said their children were coming back today (1st June).

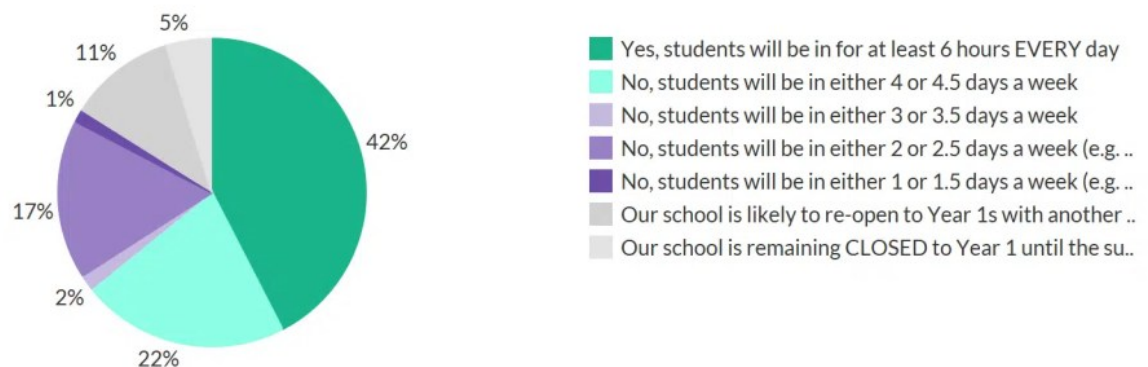
#### First day back for primary schools



Just because schools are allowing some year groups to come back, this doesn't mean everything will be as the government expects. The plan announced by Boris Johnson, and in later guidance from the Department for Education, was for all year groups to come back full-time, with rota systems specifically disallowed.

Faced with endless logistical problems, school leaders have taken matters into their own hand and the majority of primary school teachers (58%) are reporting their school will NOT be full-time for Year 1 pupils. Alternatives include 4 or 4.5 day weeks (22%), rota systems of 1-2.5 days per week (18%), or the school simply remaining closed for the rest of the year (5%).

Under your school's current plans, when Year 1 eventually return to school will they be full-time? Tick the response that most closely applies.



Over in secondary schools, the demand is for Year 10 and 12 to have "some face-to-face contact" with teachers. A late advisory note from the government told heads last week that this means there must not be more than 25% of either year group in at the same time, and that the schools should not open for these year groups before 15th June.

If you teach in a private school, you are the least likely to be prepping for this reality as 18% of you have already been told you will not be re-opening before the end of the academic year, regardless of what the government says. In the state sector, there is greater uncertainty, particularly in schools overseen by local authorities, who are also scrambling to arrange lots of other public service requirements. Multi-academy trusts are most likely to be aiming for daily or regular face-to-face contact. Trusts that specialise in secondary schools may be the most able to do so as they have larger workforces and can pool online learning resources.

As things currently stand, is your school hoping to allow Years 10 and 12 to have face-to-face contact with their teachers before the summer? Tick the response that most closely applies.



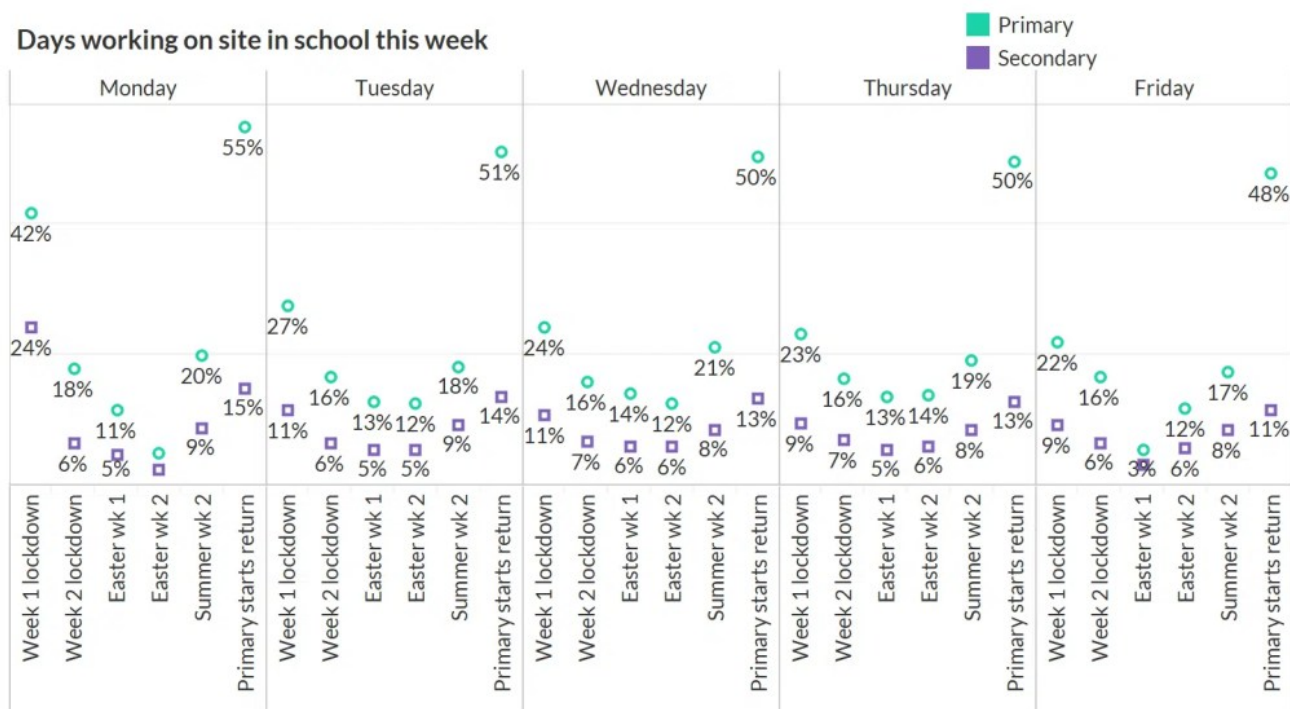
## 2. How many teachers are in school?

Despite schools being closed to most pupils, teachers have continued to turn up each day to look after keyworker and vulnerable children. Most weeks we've been asking about the days teachers were physically in school.

On most days during the lockdown period around 12 - 20% of primary teachers were in school. For secondary teachers the figure averaged around 8%. However, this week around 50% of primary teachers will be in school on any given day and around 11 - 15% of secondary teachers will be in.

(The green dots show primary teachers and the purple dots show secondary teachers).

### Days working on site in school this week



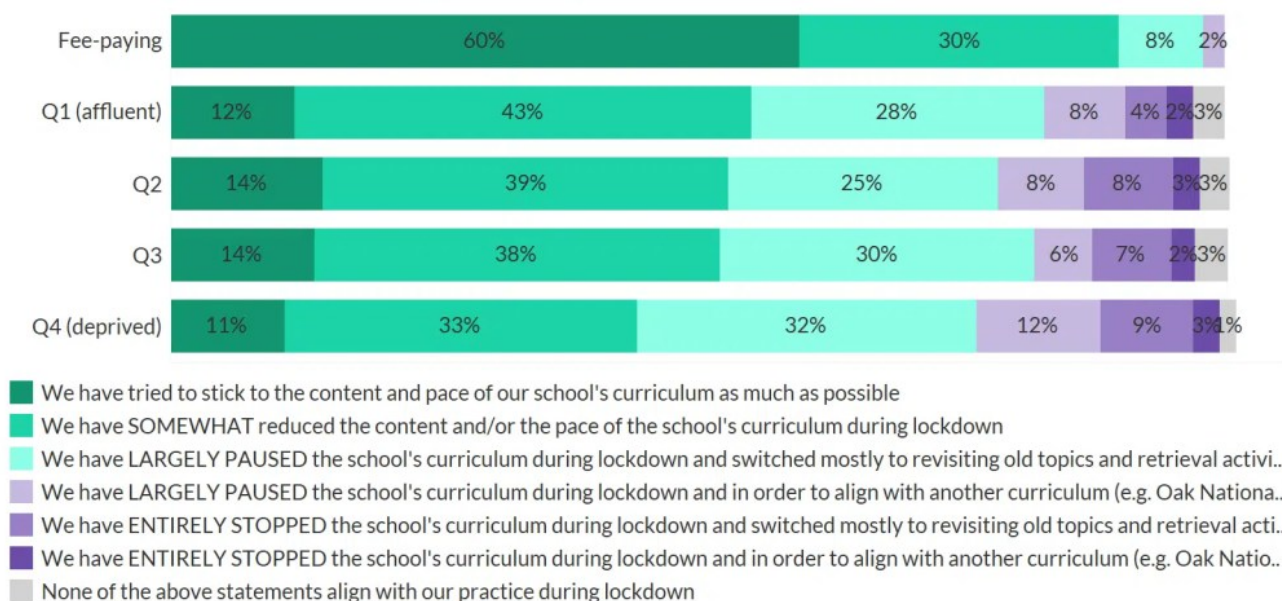
For now, around 50% of primary teachers will still be at home, likely leading on distance learning or otherwise shielding – however this will change as more schools open next week and the week after. By mid-June it seems the vast majority of primary teachers will be back in school.

### 3. Learning Under Lockdown

When primary students return today they will not be heading back into a normal summer half-term, since the planned curriculum has been considerably disrupted – especially in the most disadvantaged schools.

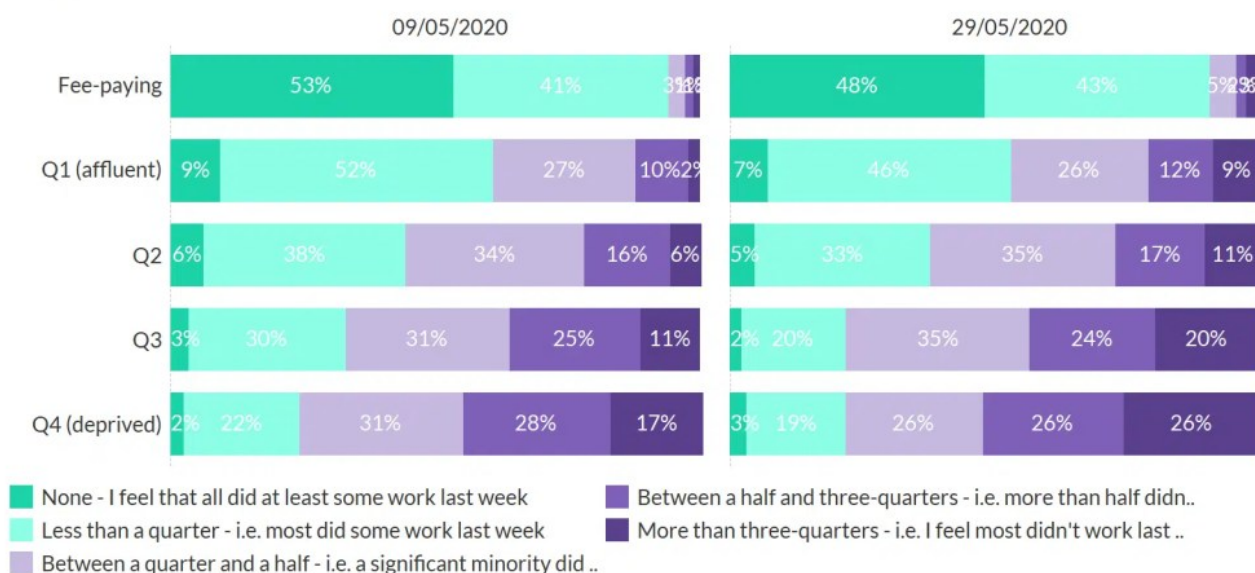


Thinking about the work you set for your class during lockdown, how much did you try to stick to your school's pre-existing curriculum? Tick the response that most closely applies.



Not only is learning disrupted, but the amount of work completed by students varies by deprivation level - and has got worse over time. The graph below compares the start of May (left) with the final week before half-term (right). This continues a trend from across the lockdown period of waning enthusiasm for work, particularly in the most deprived areas.

Approximately what proportion of all the students you teach (EXCLUDING Yrs 11 & 13) do you feel did \*NO\* work last week (e.g. you received nothing you asked for or cannot see work on apps/websites you can monitor)?

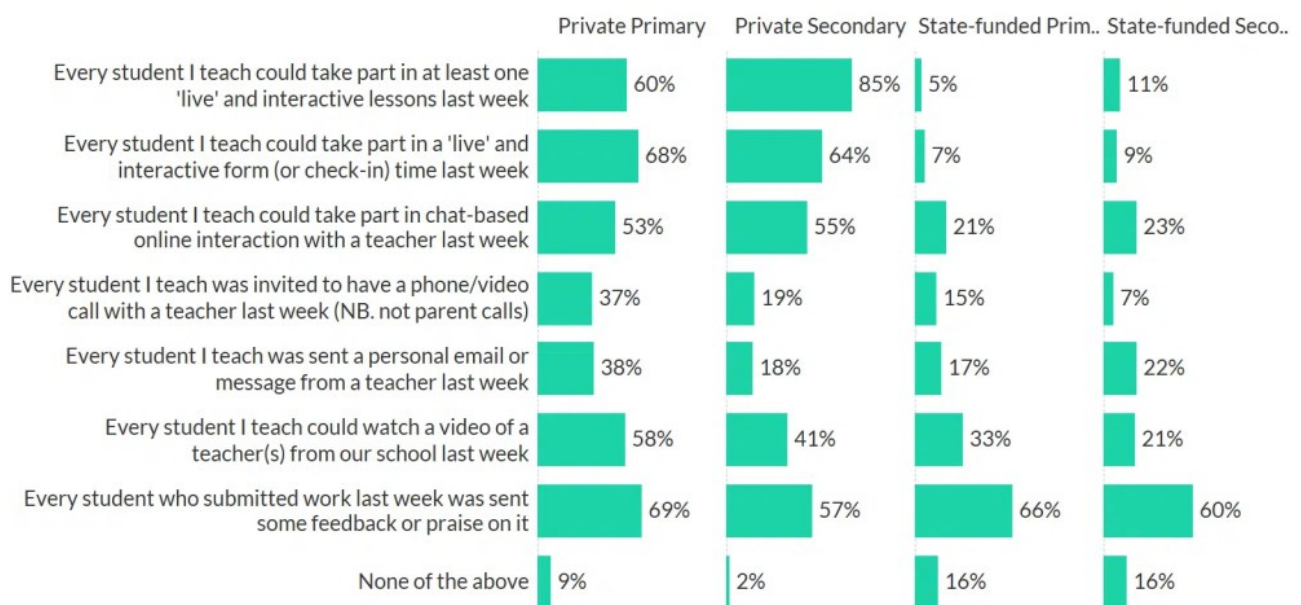


## 4. It's Good To Talk

Speaking with parents over the past few months it's clear that a major source of concern has been a lack of conversation between pupils and their teachers. Although schools have rallied admirably to ensure that vulnerable children were well-supported, with regular calls and interactions, this wasn't always happening for other children. This doesn't mean teachers weren't doing anything. In many cases they were building online learning hubs, writing activities, and sending and marking work (especially via email). But we wanted to see if there was any truth to the common complaint that "my child has received almost no interaction".

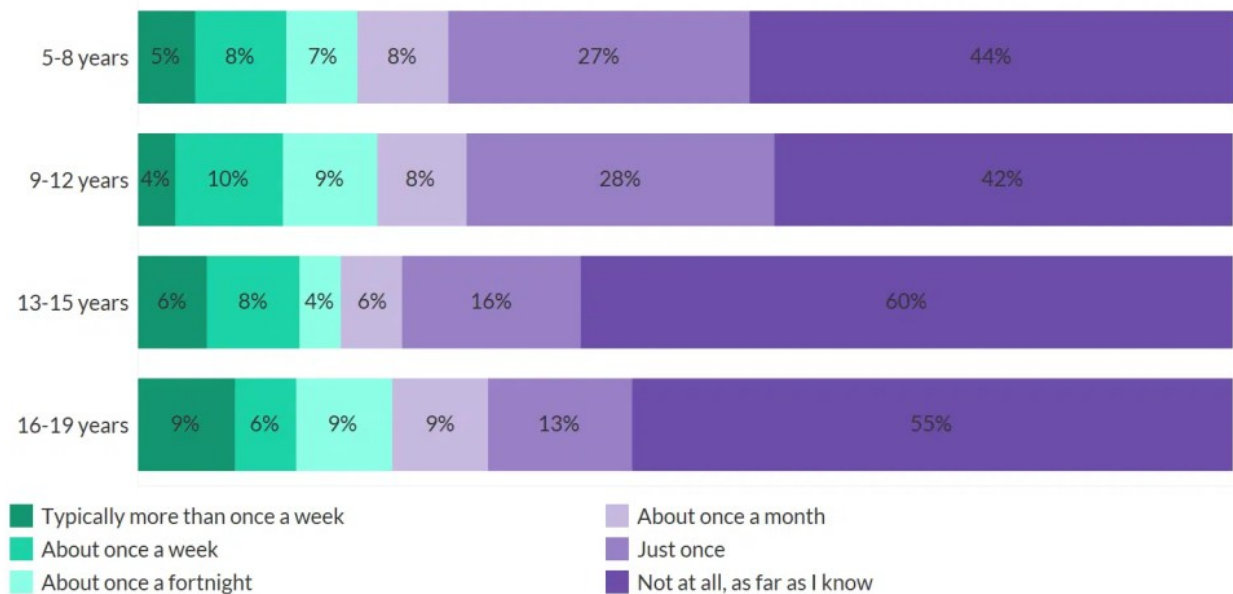
The graph below shows that while the majority of teachers were offering feedback on work, the opportunities for online chats, videos, or phone calls was much more limited in the state sector.

**Thinking about ALL the students in your classes, what sorts of interactions with a teacher were they offered last week? Please tick all that apply.**



Since teachers are the kind of parents whose children are likely to be of low concern, we also asked those of you with school-aged children how much your own children's school had rung home. Among those of you with primary-aged children, 43% said your child hadn't received a single call. For secondary children this was much higher (60% for 13-15 year olds and 55% for 16-19 year olds). As mentioned above, we are aware that a LOT of communication has been emailed or online platform based. However parents and children do seem to highly value individual conversations - and around third of schools are managing to provide these at least once per fortnight. It isn't an easy system to set up, but with many months before some children are expected back to school it could become a vital touchpoint.

Thinking of your youngest child of school age, how frequently has their own school called (by phone or video call) your house to speak to a parent or child during lockdown? Tick the response that most closely applies.



## 5. Is lockdown over?

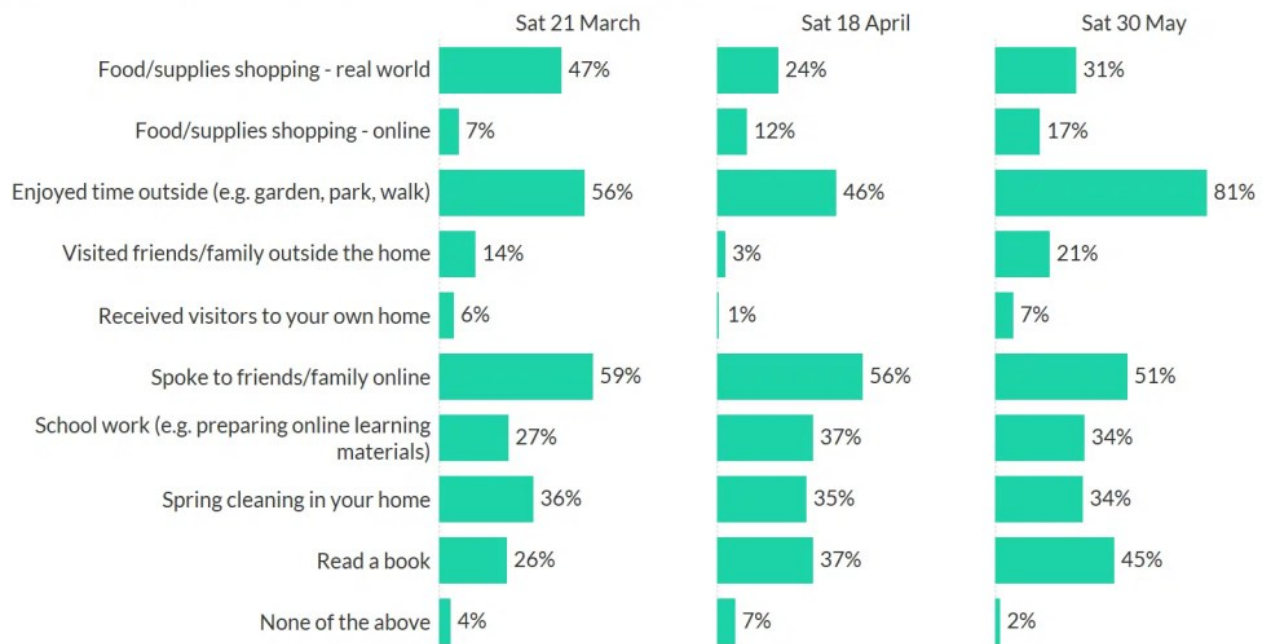
After a hot weekend in which parks and beaches were packed out, there's a sense that people are easing back to normal life as the government begins easing the lockdown rules. Does teacher behaviour at the weekend concord?

Saturday 21st March (left) was the final day before official lockdown began (i.e. when Boris Johnson went on telly and said 'YOU MUST STAY HOME'). The April date (middle) was 3 weeks into lockdown, and the final chart (right) is this Saturday.

Far more people spent time outside this weekend - unsurprising, given that the weather has been lovely and we are now allowed to spend as much time outside as we wish yet little else is open! More people visited friends/family than at any point in this period (even before lockdown) and you have continued taking to online shopping - possibly because it's now possible to get a click and collect slot.



### Which of the following have you done today? (Tick all that apply)



Finally, we know you love the daily reads so here are this week's tips:

- [How do kids feel about distance learning?](#)
- [How schools should update their communication](#)
- [Making retrieval practice more effective](#)
- [3 ways to plan for returning classes](#)
- [3 education trends you don't need to worry about](#)
- [Should the crisis change education forever?](#)