

# The meaning of education, Olympic sports and chisel vs bullet

Howdy Tappsters!

While many of you are still mid-holiday, spare a thought for the year 13 students nervously awaiting their results this week...and their teachers also crossing their fingers for their pupils!

## The meaning of education

A quick google of "what is the purpose of schools?" will result in hundreds of blogs, Ted talks and research papers.

But there has been no definitive answer...until today.

To produce a ranked order of the most important functions of schools, we asked you to prioritise from a list of seven different possible functions, using a method called 'discrete choice' (more on this later).

Here is the overall priority:

# The function of schools

## Ranked by teachers

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- 1 To provide basic skills (like numeracy and literacy)
- 2 To develop students' independence
- 3 To help students form good relationships
- 4 To prepare students for the world of work
- 5 To give children an enjoyable childhood
- 6 To help children pass exams
- 7 To provide childcare so parents can work

In number one spot was 'To provide basic skills (like numeracy and literacy)'. In fact, this remained the number one option even when filtered for primary vs secondary, state vs private, SLT vs non-SLT. Everyone agreed - basic skills came above everything else.

And just as certain was the bottom function: providing childcare. Without exception, this was ranked bottom for every demographic of teachers - including teachers who are parents themselves.

How do you feel about the list? What you expect, or not the order you would have picked? Let us know your thoughts!

The science: how we created the model

To create the rankings we ran an experiment which asked you to choose the more important

function when presented with just two of them.

For example: Which of these do you consider to be a more important function of schools?:

- To provide childcare so parents can work
- OR
- To help children pass exams

We wanted to rank 7 functions in total, which meant there were 21 questions to ask! Fortunately, because there are a lot of you – we didn't have to ask everyone all 21 (although by the sounds of it some of you might have liked that!).

Because there are a lot of Teacher Tappers, we could randomise which pairs you got, so that each of you got 3 pairs each, with each pair receiving around 1,300 responses.

We then applied the usual mathematical wizardry (or, as our data team calls it: 'just maths') to rank the policies.

## Riots and teaching

Violence in towns and cities across England and Northern Ireland has led to 39% of teachers being generally concerned for their pupils and families and 16% of teachers being concerned pupils in their school will be directly impacted.

This increases when looking at schools in the most disadvantaged areas. 30% of teachers in schools with the highest levels of FSM are worried pupils at their school will be directly impacted, compared to just 9% in the most affluent schools.

Have you made plans for how to speak about the violence when you return to school? Share your thoughts on socials or by emailing us on [england@teachertapp.co.uk](mailto:england@teachertapp.co.uk).

## Arise, King Bullet tip ■■

The bullet tips and chisel tips have gone to battle once again, fighting to win the crown for most favoured board pen.

The bullet tips have been victorious, holding onto an unbeaten seven-year reign.

What makes the chisel tip so beloved? Primary or secondary, maths teacher or art teacher, teacher of five years or twenty-five years...everyone loves bullet tip.

The final scores are:

■■■ Bullet tip 68%

■■■ Chisel tip 32%

Does anything else divide a room like a board marker? Get in touch on socials and tell us your

staffroom debates! ■■.

## Teachers who love the Olympics

For the last two weeks, the world's top athletes have been competing in Paris.

But how many of you have been glued to your screens watching the events?

■■ 74% have been watching the games.

■■■■■■■ 12% have been inspired to be more active.

■■ 12% have found assembly ideas or have been inspired to do more with pupils.

### The sporting divide

How many Olympic sports are offered in state schools? And how does it compare to fee-paying schools?

The sports with the biggest differences include...

■■ Hockey (41% vs 75%)

■■ Horse riding (3% vs 20%)

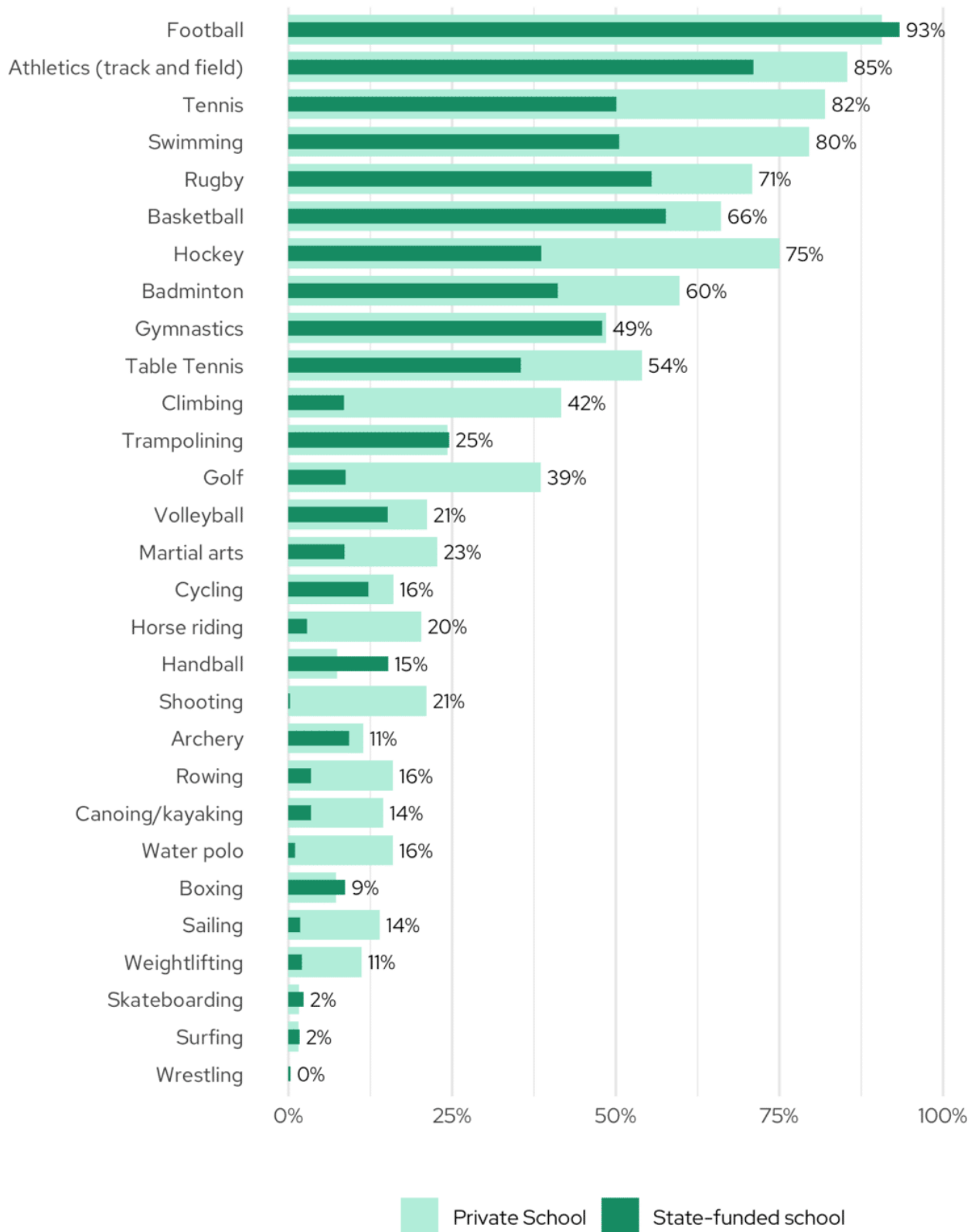
■■ Climbing (8% vs 42%)

■■ Tennis (49% vs 82%)

■■ Golf (8% vs 39%)

■■ Swimming (51% vs 80%) and at secondary the gap is even bigger (21% vs 71%)

## Which, if any, sports do you offer your pupils?



Question answered by 9,717 teachers on 11/08/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

## Top events

This week's top event is from [Phil Naylor](#): Teacher like a Champion.

This is a podcast, but we also have in-person events to sign up for too.

If you want to know what edu-events are coming up then [check the app](#) and filter for your phase and subject.

## Ups and Downs

On the rise ■■

Headteachers with pension statement errors - The number of headteachers with mistakes in their pension statements has shot up since 2020 to 52% from 36%.

Heading down ■■

Teachers seeking training on parent relationships - Compared to August 2023, the number of teachers who would like more training on parental engagement fell from 44% to 34%.

## Daily Reads

This week we had joint winners for our most read daily read! [Fidget spinners](#) and [Performance Related Pay \(PRP\)](#)

If you would like to read the rest you can find them here ■■

- [Cradle to Career Curriculum](#)
- [Books that make you laugh](#)
- [After the riots](#)
- [Sports in schools](#)