

Exam delays, Powerpoint use, and the Covid app: This week's findings blog!

How is term going? If you're in the rainy parts of the country, we hope you've a good umbrella, and if you're in the northern lockdown we hope you've a heap of resolve. This next term isn't going to be fun for anyone.

Before we begin...

Exciting news from Teacher Tapp Towers: we have a new version of the app! It will be released slowly over the next few weeks. The app stores will randomly select who gets it and when.

teachertapp.com

There is one big change. You will now have a choice of ways to log into Teacher Tapp, including Google and Apple log-ins, or with a password.

For the vast majority of you, this will be easy. The app will upgrade. You'll be asked which log-in you want to change to, and that's it. Everything will be as usual.

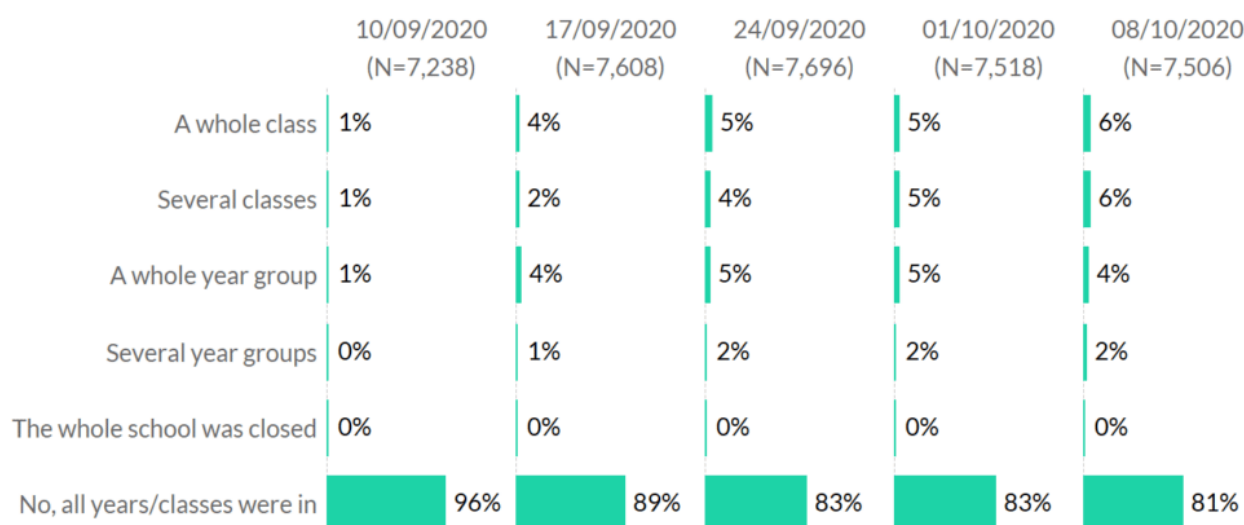
For some of you it will be more complicated. Especially if you haven't updated your Teacher Tapp app for ages, or if you get a new phone during this period. If this happens, you may struggle to sign in. In that case sign up as a new user using the same email as you previously had on Teacher Tapp. Once you're logged in, send us a message via the feedback page in the settings menu, and we will reconnect you to your streaks and badges!

Right, onto this week's findings...

1. Lost time (and exams?)

On Covid, we've now been collecting weekly figures on student stay homes every week for over a month. As the figure below shows, there has been a very gradual uptick in the number of schools with at least one class or year group at home. On any given day, the vast majority still have all large groups in – though there may still be substantial sub-groups at home.

Today in school, were any of the following groups of pupils required to stay at home for isolation?

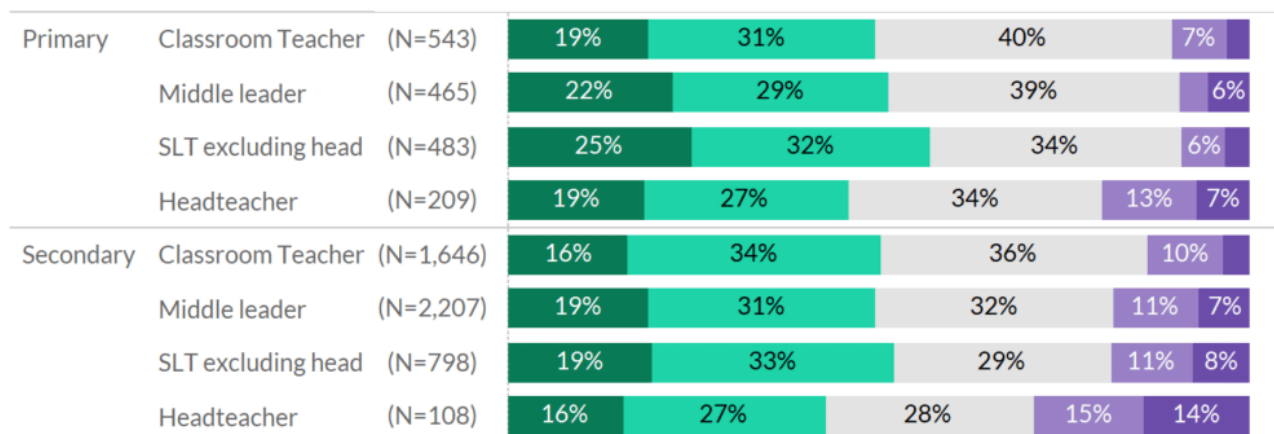


Teacher responses vary from 7,238 to 7,696, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

All of which is causing an extra problem... what should the government do about exams next year? If pupils are shuttling in and out of school because of quarantine requirements, plus the fact they missed many weeks of learning last year, how reliable can exams really be?

Ofqual have confirmed that A levels and GCSEs are to be delayed by up to 3 weeks. We didn't know if GCSEs would be included in this policy when we asked how you felt about the policy last week. But you were more in favour of the policy than against. Except for heads, who were less persuaded (if still broadly in favour).

It is expected the government will delay next year's A-level by up to 3 weeks. How would you feel about this change?



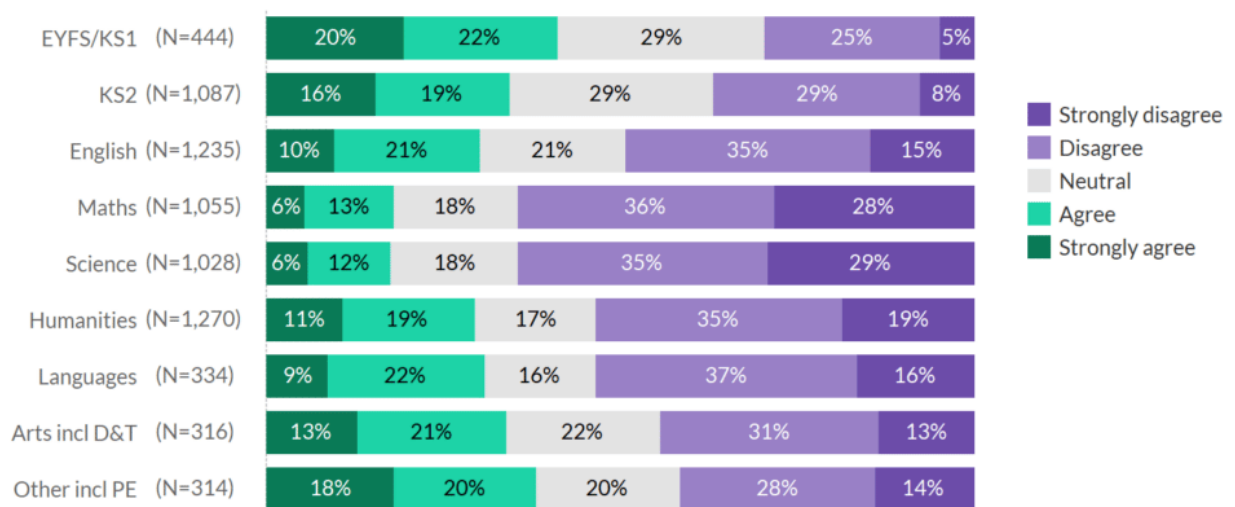
Question answered by 6,549 teachers on 03/10/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

■ Strongly agree ■ Neutral ■ Strongly disagree
■ Agree ■ Disagree

Delays are one thing. What about exam cancellation? On this, teachers are more undecided. Those in primary schools and subjects that have more coursework are the most in favour – but, even then, it's fewer than half who are up for it.

Maths and science teachers are most against the idea of cancellation. We rarely see maths and science teachers in this much alignment. They are often very different from one another in their opinions. Coursework can be challenging in these subjects, however, and the additional need for science teachers to grade holistically across biology, physics and chemistry can be particularly fraught.

'The government should cancel GCSEs and A-levels next year'



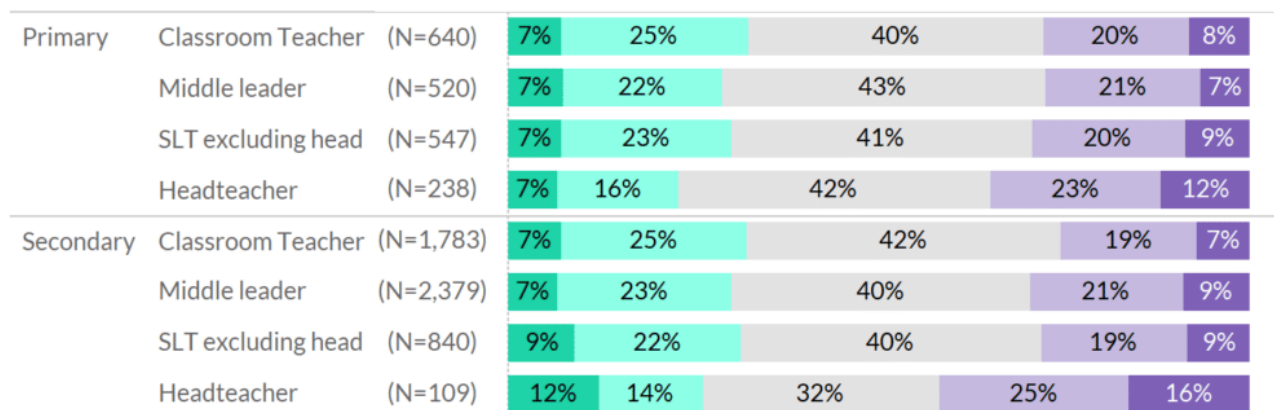
2. The bright and the behind

Last week, at the Conservative conference, the Prime Minister announced his intention to keep 1:1 tuition programmes for students who are 'exceptional' – either because their attainment is much higher or lower than the norm.

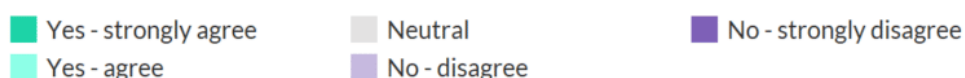
The National Tutoring Programme is already in motion for this year. But do you think an extension for such pupils would be a good idea?

The results showed considerable ambivalence toward the idea, but with slightly more support from classroom teachers but slightly less support from heads. Why is that? Could it be that heads feel it will be a hassle to organise? Or are they concerned that the focus on the bright and the behind doesn't help the school overall?!

Boris Johnson has said the government will be looking at extending 1:1 tuition programmes, specifically focused on high and low attainers. Do you think this is a good idea?



Question answered by 7,167 teachers on 11/10/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

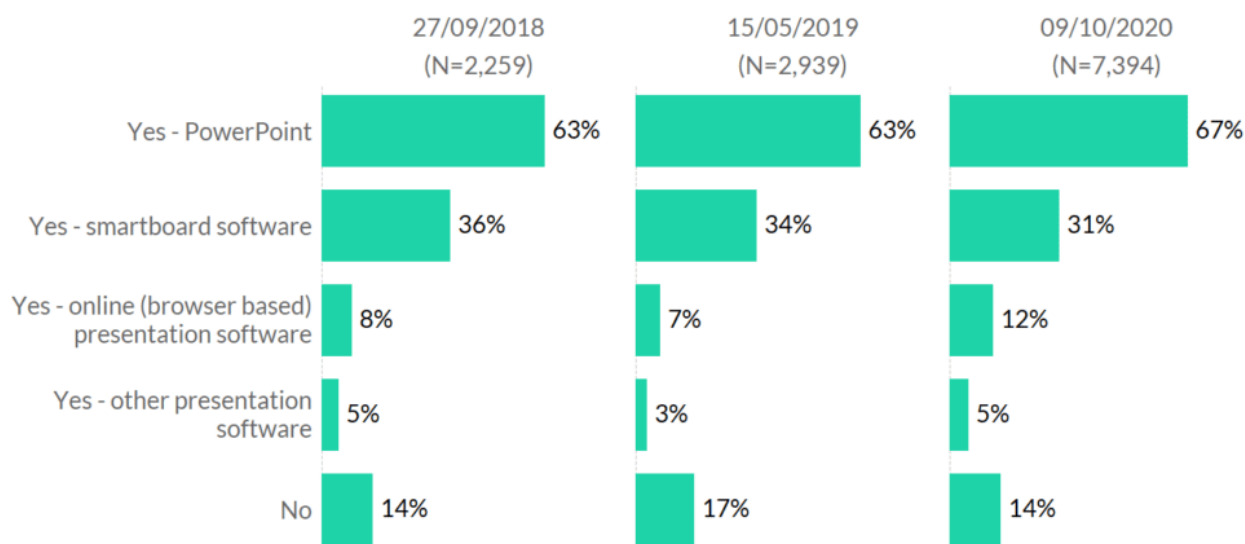


3. Technology changes everything? Err...

If you spend any time talking to futurologists or edtech organisations, many of them are very excited about the idea that schools will be different from now on. Teachers just spent months learning how to use new technologies for remote learning. How can things ever be the same again?!

Yet, looking at what's happening in classrooms right now, their view seems... optimistic at best. Take the question below. For three years we've been asking about the use of PowerPoint in classrooms. Some people think slides are now out-of-date, but the data would suggest otherwise. More people were using it this week than ever before, whereas Smartboard software use has gone backwards in the same period.

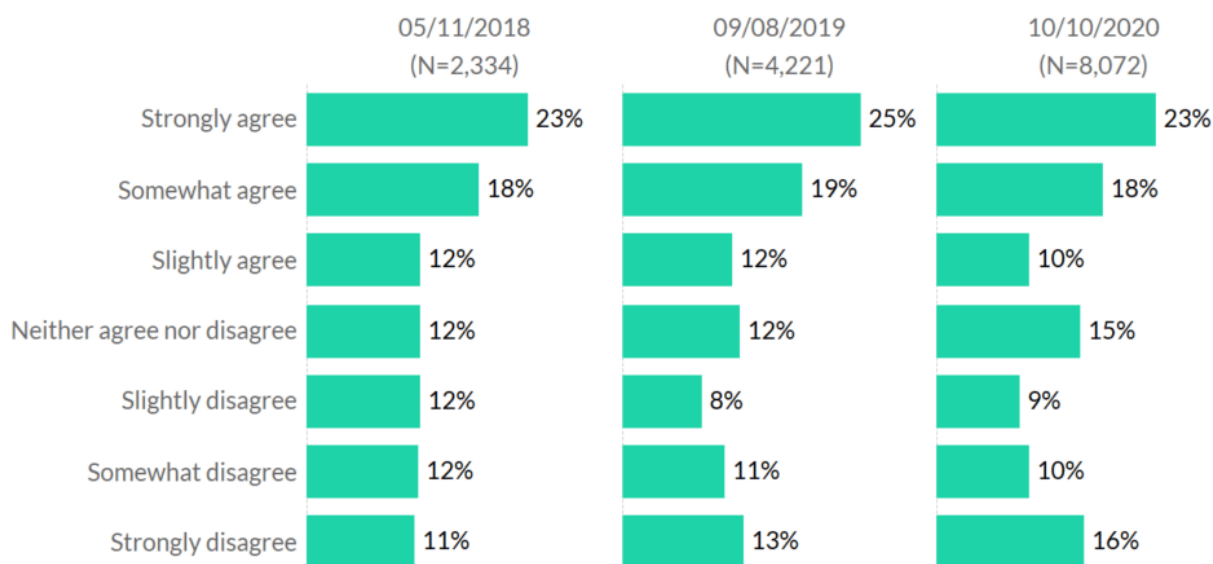
Did you use PowerPoint (or similar presentation software) in your lessons at all today?



Teacher responses vary from 2,259 to 7,394, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

That said, teachers aren't growing in their love of more traditional classroom options either. We already know that many more of you have desks laid out in rows this year, due to the Covid restrictions. Does it mean that you like it? The results below suggest a very similar view to previous years – though more of you strongly disagree with rows than before. Is that the influence of being forced to do it more often this year?!

In my classroom, I'd ideally like the students to sit in rows facing the front

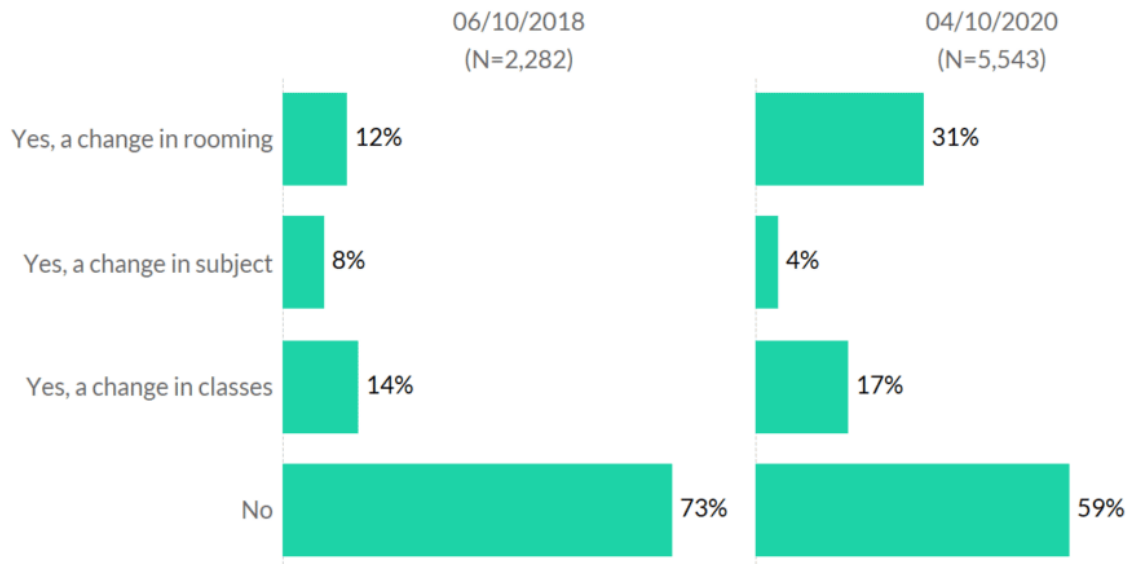


Teacher responses vary from 2,334 to 8,072, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

What has been disrupted this year is your timetable! One in three of you have had a room

change since the start of term – that's about three times higher than this time last year. Although that seems minor, changing rooms can be really unsettling for pupils who are getting used to seating plans and the way that rules operate in a classroom. On the upside, fewer of you have had a change in subject – so at least you won't suddenly be planning a whole new set of unexpected lessons!

Has your timetable changed since the start of term?



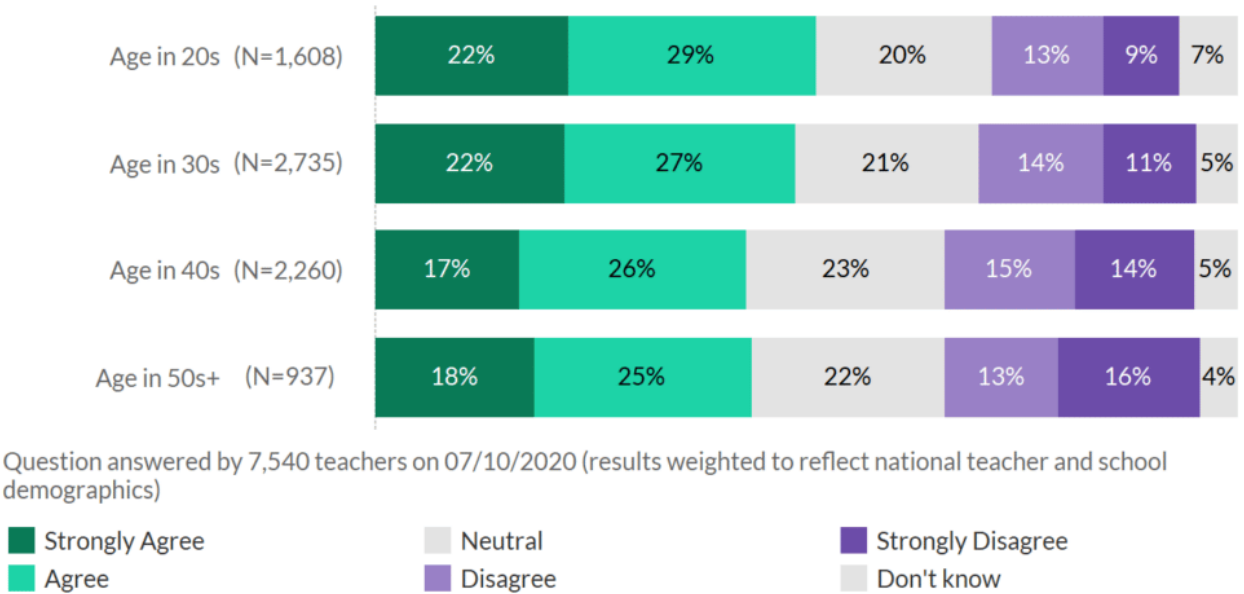
Teacher responses vary from 2,282 to 5,543, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

4. Pushing another app...

Finally, a Teacher Tapp user asked us to find out if teachers felt it should be compulsory for everyone in a school to be on the new NHS Covid App if they are 16 or above.

Again, you were quite divided on the matter but teachers who were in their 40s and 50s were the most likely to disagree and feel that it should NOT be a requirement to be on the app. This finding was a surprise. Typically we've seen more Covid anxiety among teachers in the 50+ category, due to increased risks of the illness as people get older.

The NHS Covid App is now launched. To what extent do you agree that all teachers and pupils aged 16 or above should be required to download and use the app at school and home?



Finally, we know that you love the daily reads, so here are last week's!

- [A curriculum that promotes remembering](#)
- [Should we ability group students in maths?](#)
- [Overloading students with graphics](#)
- [Unseen poetry without the stress](#)
- [Poverty is not destiny - lessons from PISA](#)
- [The transfer of learning](#)
- [Ofsted find remote learning not aligned to curriculum](#)
- [Cultural Capital - what does it mean?](#)