

What Teachers Tapped This Week #19 – 5th Feb 2018

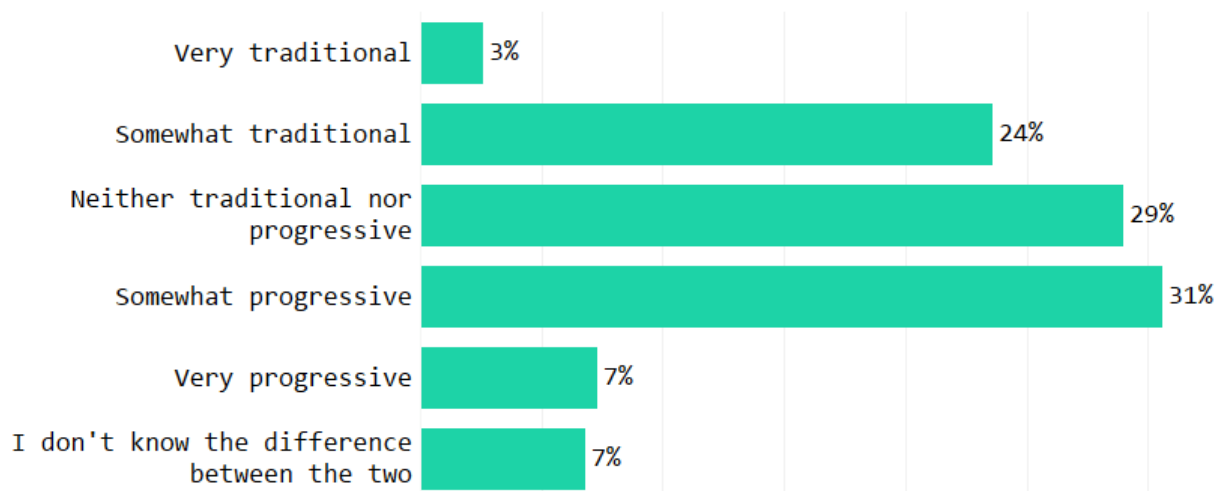
Tappsters! If you're still with us today that means you made it through two days of question mix-ups and hurdles. We salute you. New processes in the background should help reduce such issues in the future. ? Otherwise, thanks for continuing to nudge our user numbers up. We very nearly hit 1,800 users this week and each person added into the sample makes the results smarter and better. To help spread the word, here's a 1-page [black-and-white easy-print](#) sheet to share with colleagues. Right, onto the findings!

1. [The Traditionalist-Progressive Divide](#)

Teachers on social media often discuss the difference between 'progressives' and 'traditionalists', but little concrete data exists on the prevalence of each idea. (The terms are used differently by different people, but a handy [chart of differences](#) from the Independent Schools magazine covers a lot of bases. At base, traditionalists see teachers as the main source of information and authority, whereas progressives see teachers as facilitators who foster thinking via experiences). We therefore asked teachers if they considered themselves progressive, traditionalist, or neither. (Some panellists said they weren't sure if 'neither' covered a combination of the two and so they ticked 'don't know/can't answer'. This could mean 'neither' is slightly under-represented but they were a v small percentage, so it wouldn't really affect the results, as you'll see). There was also a debate over people's understanding of the labels. Ultimately, definitions vary and we weren't into debating those. We just wanted to see which way people say they lean. In future, we can examine correlates with other answers to see if people's teaching methods, for example, are consistent with their label. For now, this is just about the way people said they philosophically lean based on what they believe the definitions to be.

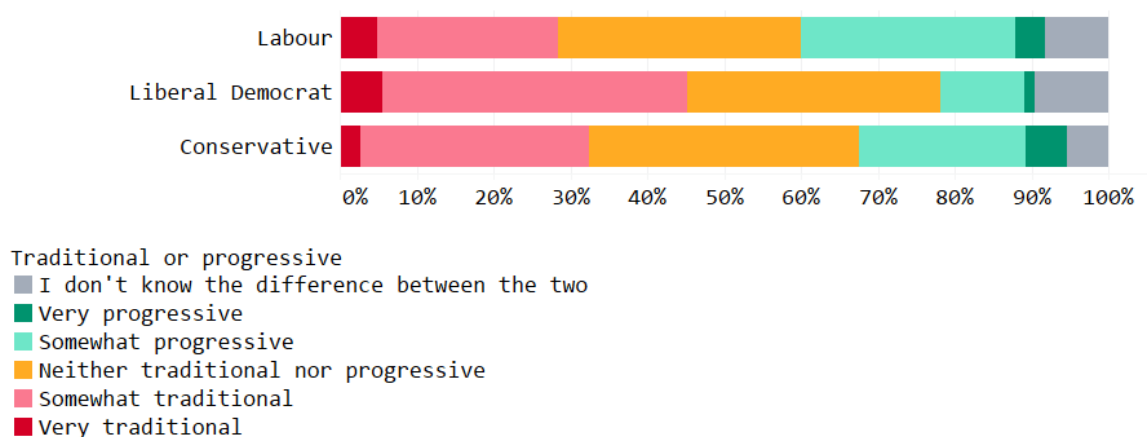
So, first finding: Teachers were more likely to label themselves as progressive (38%) than traditional (27%) or neither (29%). Only 7% of teachers said they didn't know the difference.

Do you consider yourself a traditional or progressive teacher?



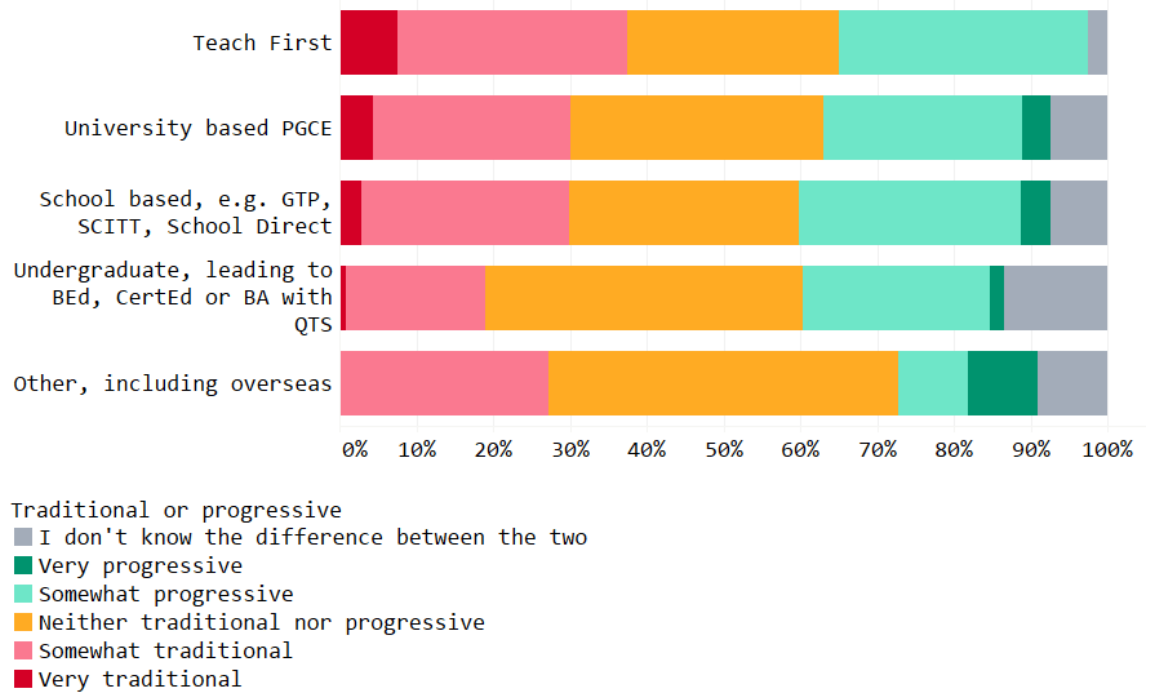
But who is a traditionalist or a progressive? The two groups are not as different as you might expect! For a start, there seems to be very little difference between Labour and Conservative voters. (The Lib Dem numbers are very small so they're a bit skewed by a few traditionalists; but the Labour and Conservative samples were big enough for their closeness to be interesting).

Traditional or progressive (by vote at last election)?



Does the way you train make a difference? Those who trained via TeachFirst were most likely to be 'very traditional' but the proportion was still low, and 30% opted for 'somewhat progressive'.

Traditional or progressive (by training route)?



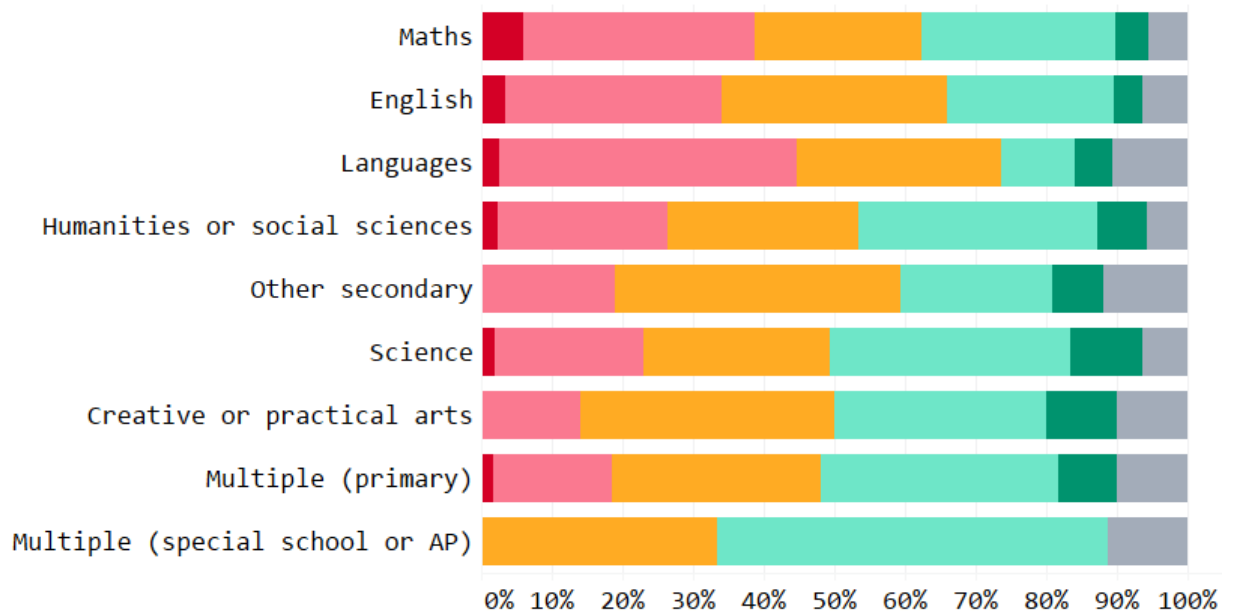
Notably, there was almost no difference between teachers who came through university-based PGCE routes and those who trained in school. One government rationale for doing more training in schools was to break 'the blob' which former education secretary Michael Gove felt was creating 'progressive' teachers whereas schools would create more traditional ones. For Teacher Tapp users, this assumption appears to be wrong.

As for subjects:

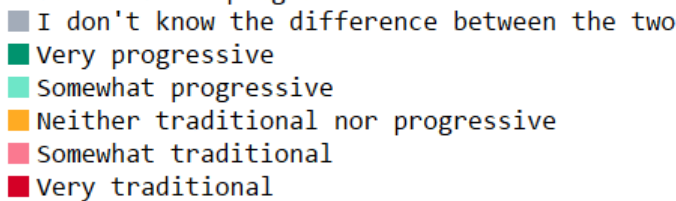
Modern language and maths teachers were the most traditional, followed by English teachers.

Science teachers came out as the most progressive. (To be honest, this surprised us. Any thoughts as to why?)

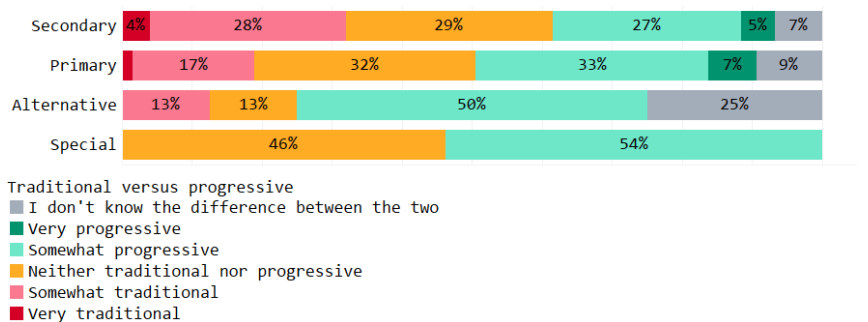
Traditional or progressive (by subject taught)?



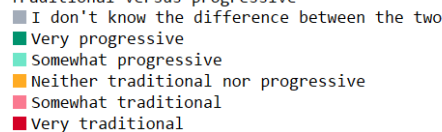
Traditional or progressive



Overall, secondary teachers are more likely to consider themselves traditional (32%) compared to primary ones (19%). Do you consider yourself a traditional or progressive teacher?

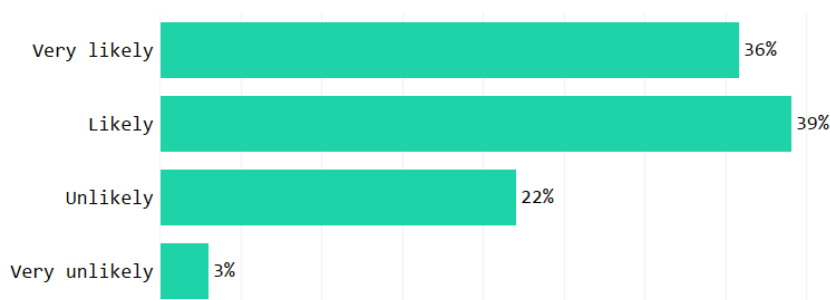


Traditional versus progressive

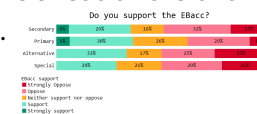


A genuine question is whether the debate 'matters'. Some teachers will tell you its core to all problems in education. Others will tell you've they've never thought about it and yet their results are great. The data can't give an answer. (Sorry!) But it shows awareness of the categories is fairly high among teachers and straightforward assumptions about who will fall on either side of the spectrum (or the route via which they can be trained) are incorrect. 2. [How important are holidays to teacher recruitment?](#) In a time of teacher shortages it helps to think about what keeps people in the profession. One perk is the 13 weeks 'holiday' time. (That is, weeks when the pupils aren't in). However, those weeks are difficult for many parents. Hence politicians sometimes like to push for more 'wraparound' care - including more [after-school provision](#) or [shorter holidays](#). If you're a politician, which priority wins? Keeping teachers, or pleasing parents? Based on this week's poll, the government definitely needs to follow teachers' wants...

If the government reduced teachers' entitlement to 13 weeks away from school down to just 8 weeks, without any additional pay, would you leave the job?



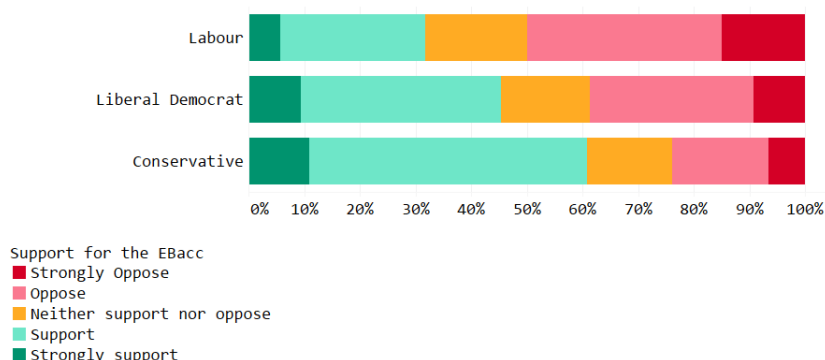
LOTS of people said they would be likely to leave if holidays dropped. Just 25% of users said they would be unlikely to go. Yet, here's a strange thing. When we poll teachers about marking or lesson planning at weekends, around half will say they took part in a few hours of each. If teachers do just 3 hours of work each weekend on the 39 weeks of term – that's equivalent to 14.5 FULL-TIME DAYS. If teachers do 5 hours each weekend, that's almost 25 days. Or the equivalent of dropping from 13 weeks to 8 weeks holiday a year, for no pay. 3. [What do teachers think of the English Baccalaureate?](#) After looking at issues of SATs we went a little more secondary-focussed this week and investigated the EBacc. First introduced back in 2010, the EBacc subjects – English, maths, science, languages, and history/geography – now have prominence in secondary school performance measures. However the take-up of the language and history/geography options haven't been quite as large as the government hoped. Teachers of arts subjects also say the take-up of arts GCSEs has been negatively affected (although [debate rages](#)). Perhaps counter-intuitively, primary school teachers are slightly more in favour of the EBacc policy than secondary school teachers.



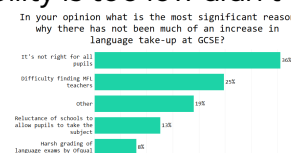
But this masks huge discrepancies in feelings about the issue among secondary teachers. Teachers whose subjects are in the EBacc tend to be more in favour, while those who are left out (creative, and some social science/humanities) are far less happy about it. Teachers in special and alternative provision schools were also particularly opposed to the EBacc.

When it comes to politics, the policy was most popular among Conservatives and least popular among Labour supporters.

Support for the EBacc by vote at last election



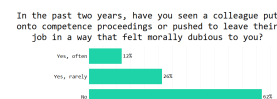
Encouraging the take-up of modern languages was a main reason for introducing the EBacc. But take-up is now lagging (and universities are really struggling to get people onto language degrees, threatening their departments with closure). Teachers said they felt this was mostly down to the subject not being "right" for all pupils, although 25% also pointed to the difficulty of finding MFL teachers. The theory that schools are reluctant to let pupils take the subject because it is more harshly graded than other subjects or because pupil ability is too low didn't really bear out, with fewer than 13% of people agreeing with these points.



Ultimately, this shows the EBacc is still divisive – with language teachers whose take-up is benefitting tending to like the policy, arts teachers who feel their subject is denigrated tend not to like it. And any moves to make languages a stricter part of the EBacc measure are likely to be met with cries about the difficulty of finding MFL teachers.

4. Excluded teachers?

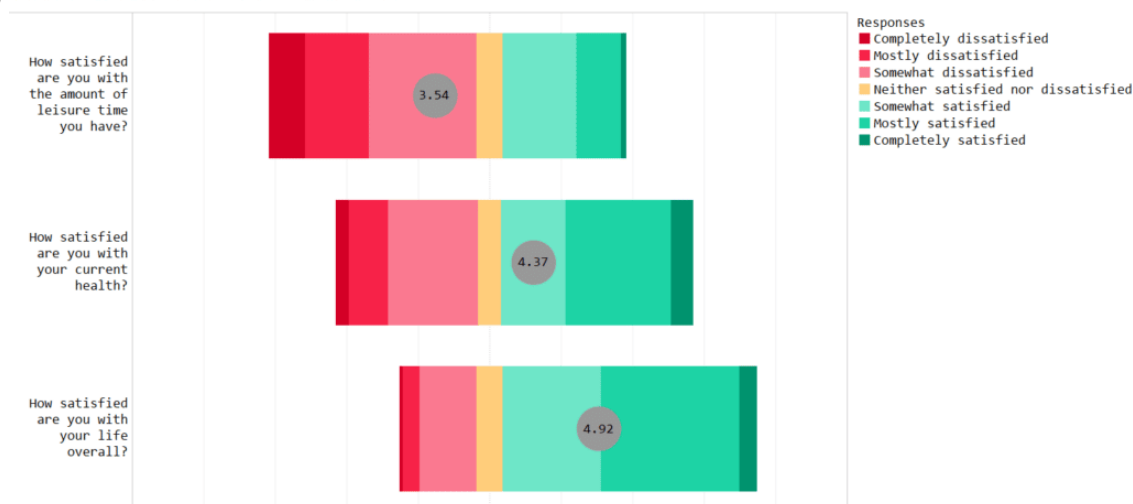
You've probably heard of pupils [pushed out of schools](#) if their results are likely to be too low. But what about teachers? A Teacher Tapp user got in touch concerned about the prevalence of teachers pushed out in ways that felt immoral. Anyone working in school will regularly hear whispers about colleagues who were 'pushed out' of somewhere (if not their own school, then one down the road). But what's the spread of these stories? With Teacher Tapp questions we try to ask for things in recent memory (because it's better than allowing people to think back over a long spell) and for things that people have specifically experienced.



Phrased in this (two years, specifically a colleague, and 'felt morally dubious') we found that 38% of teachers had seen someone put on competence or pushed out in a way that didn't seem right. This is a high number. We have more analysis to do to establish where this might happen more. And also to triangulate with some other information. At present, it could be the way that we have asked is contributing to an inflated number (or even an under-representative number). For now, however, the proportion of teachers seeing this happen to at least one colleague is 38%. And 12% say they have seen it happen 'often'.

5. I can get SOME satisfaction!

Work and life satisfaction are two metrics that psychologists love and have spent a long time trying to measure. In the end, the simplest way to measure satisfaction is simply to ask! Over the past weeks we've asked about leisure, health and work satisfaction on a 7-point scale, where 1 is 'completely dissatisfied' and 7 is 'completely satisfied'. (The middle is 4). On average, we found teachers are somewhat dissatisfied with their leisure time (3.54), somewhat satisfied with their health (4.37), and edging into mostly satisfied with their life overall (4.92)



Hence, teaching might take away leisure time and impede a touch on health, but it seems overall life satisfaction manages to rise above it all somehow. (Anyone else think we should call this the 'Eureka effect' – after the fact that a kid finally grasping a difficult topic can make up for a really terrible day?!)

6. Finally, as ever, we learned that you really love our daily tips, so here are the links for last week:

[Building automaticity in handwriting](#) [Solving the marking workload problem](#) [Cold calling in Africa for equitable teaching](#) [Great explanations - Gary Neville example](#) [Dunlosky's 55 pager on improving learning](#) [Ed Tech that's embracing learning science](#)

Right folks – over and out for another week...

In the meantime, please keep sharing what we are doing. Here's the [powerpoint slide \(with](#)

[script](#)), a [PDF](#), and a [black-and-white one-pager](#) to help out with that. ** Enjoyed this post and want to join our Teacher Tapp panel? Sign up via the [iPhone App Store](#) or the [Android App Store](#). You can also check out more at www.teachertapp.com