

What Teachers Tapped This Week #39 - 25th June 2018

Psst... my co-founder Becky is going to kill us for this, but she has a new book out called '[The Teacher Gap](#)' which is absolutely brilliant and gives all the latest and most intriguing data on why teachers are leaving the profession (and how we can get them to stay). Put it on your summer reading list. Buy one for your head of department as an end-of-year thank you. Devour it, and be a better-informed individual...

Ok, I have to stop or she is going to give me mean face.

RIGHT! This week we've plunged into Ofsted ?, mobile phones, group work, and how the EEF should definitely fund a randomised controlled trial into pubs?. Onwards to the findings...

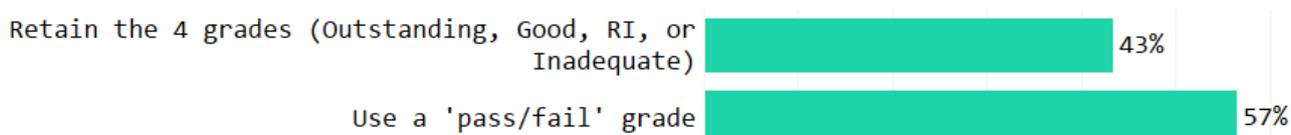
teachertapp.com

1. [Ofsted vs Tappsters](#)

At the Festival of Education last Thursday, Amanda Spielman, the Chief Inspector, said Ofsted planned to keep the 4-grade system for judging schools, in part because polls had found teachers were more in favour of this system as opposed to pass-fail grades. When asked how decisive the poll was, Spielman said she wasn't certain but that "it wasn't 48:52".

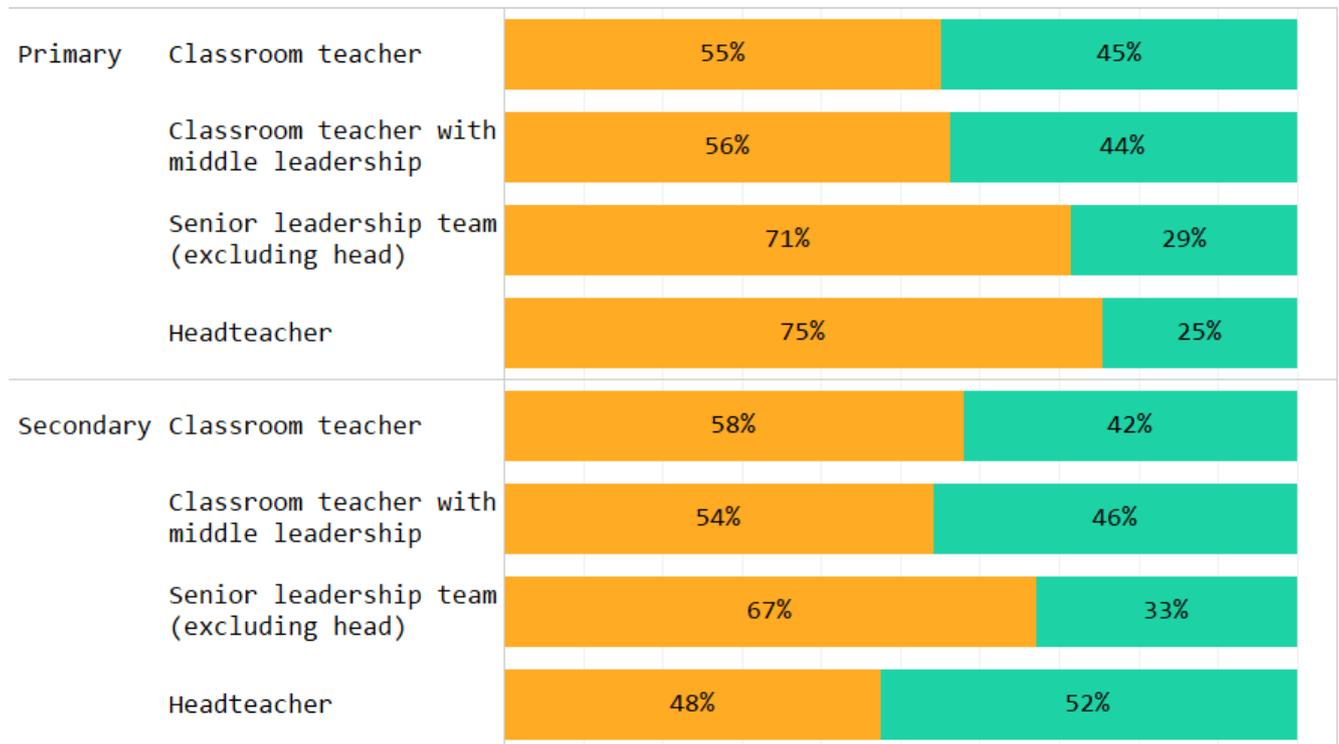
Teacher Tappers were not close on the point. But held the opposite view: 57% in favour of a 'pass/fail' system, when given a straight choice between the two.

Forced choice: Would you rather Ofsted retained the 4 grade system or move to a 'pass/fail' grade?



Spielman said she had been petitioned by heads to keep the outstanding grade. Secondary heads on Teacher Tapp do appear to be the most in favour of keeping it (52%) compared to their groups, but heads in primary schools were the opposite (75% favoured 'pass/fail').

Forced choice: Would you rather Ofsted retained the 4 grade system or move to a 'pass/fail' grade?

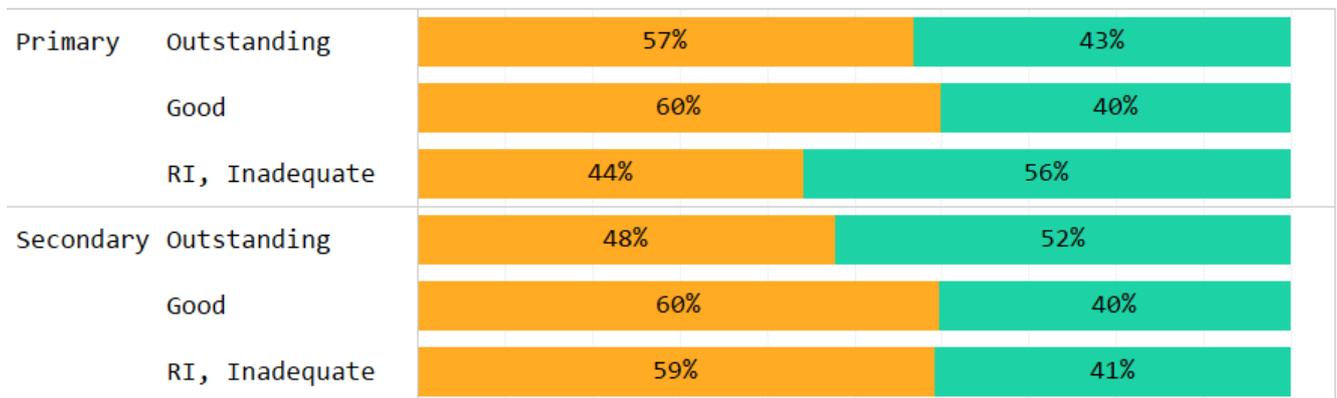


Answer Text

- Retain the 4 grades (Outstanding, Good, RI, or Inadequate)
- Use a 'pass/fail' grade

Teachers on social media suggested that teachers in favour of the 'outstanding' grades were likely those already in outstanding schools. However, the pattern isn't straightforward, so one's own school's grade doesn't matter too much.

Forced choice: Would you rather Ofsted retained the 4 grade system or move to a 'pass/fail' grade?

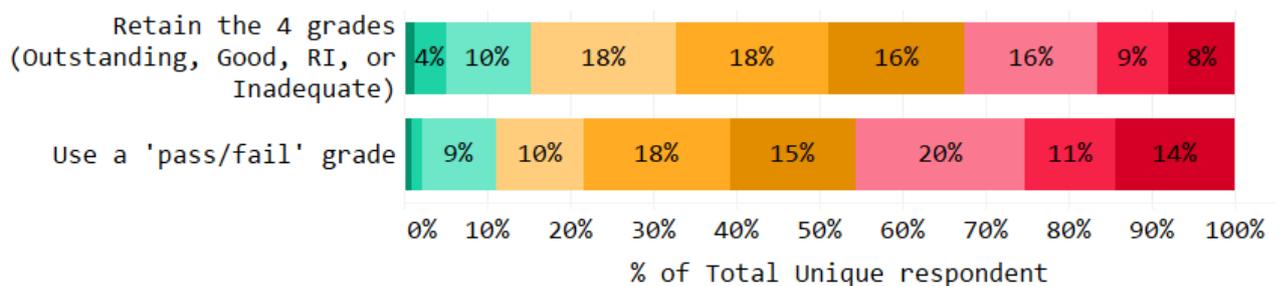


Answer Text

- Retain the 4 grades (Outstanding, Good, RI, or Inadequate)
- Use a 'pass/fail' grade

Recently we also asked Tappsters to rate Ofsted on a 9-point scale. One was most negative score, nine was the most positive. In the graph below, the red boxes represent the percentage of people who dislike Ofsted, whereas greens reflect those who are more positive, and you can see that teachers who were more negative about Ofsted were more likely to prefer the 'pass/fail' approach. But there was a full spread of feelings across both groups, showing this result is about more than just sticking one in Ofsted's eye!

Should Ofsted drop it's 4 grades, by feelings about Ofsted generally



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

Ofsted has said it will release its polling and research when it does its consultation in the

autumn, so it'll be interesting to see how the two polls came to such different conclusions.

<https://twitter.com/LukeTryl/status/1010249578363273216>

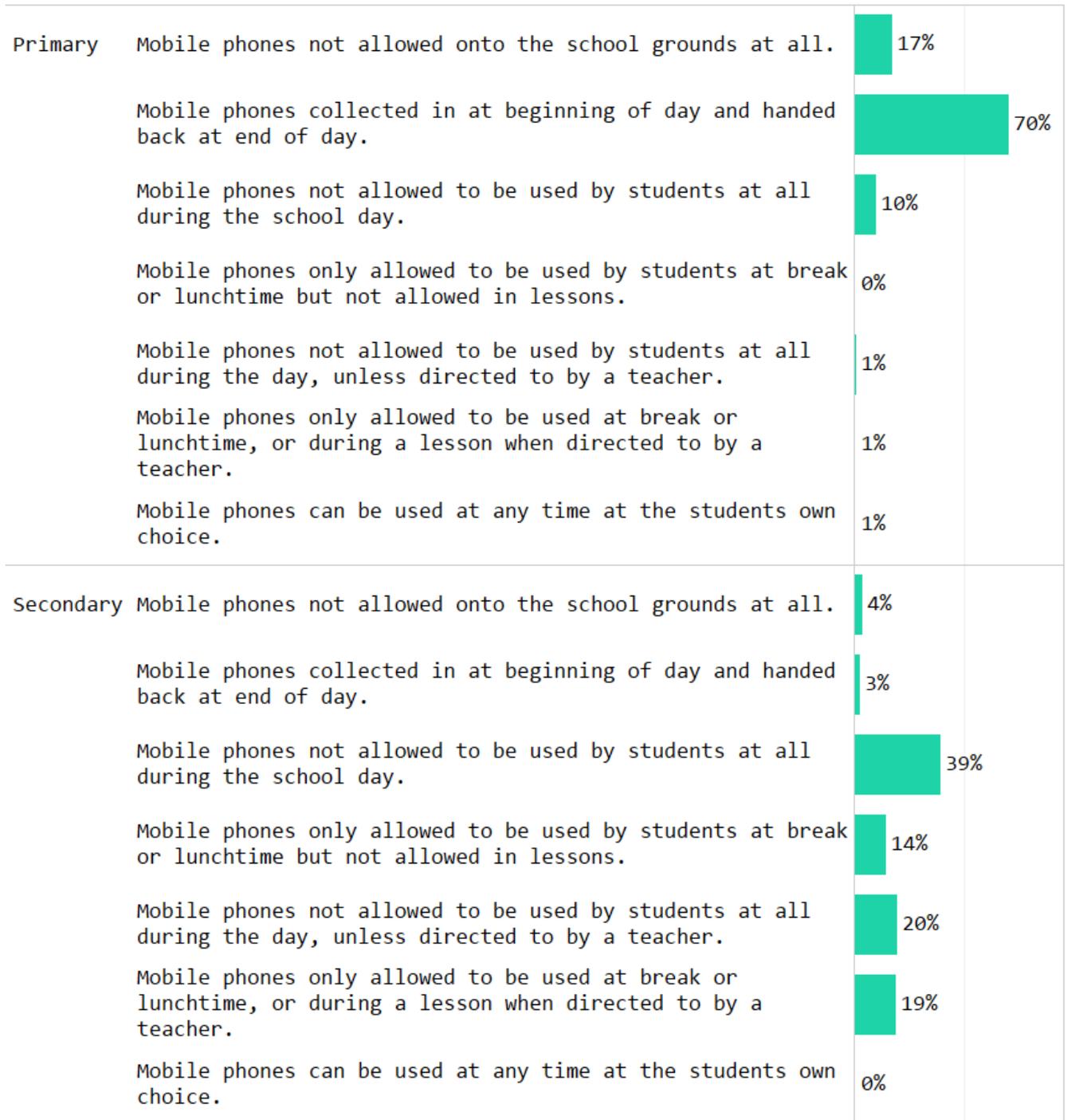
2. Brrring... Brrrring... ? I'M IN A CLASSROOM!

Amanda Spielman last week also said [she backed a ban on mobile phones in schools](#). But what does a "ban" even mean? As edu-tweeter Mike Cameron pointed out, there are many different ways for a ban to operate. So which are most common?

Cameron was surprised when our results found that a lot of schools collected phones in at the beginning of the day. But there are critical differences between primary and secondary schools.

Most primary schools (top half of the graph) either ban phones completely (17%) or collect them in (70%). Given teachers typically only have one class, and pupils will uniformly discard bags and coats when they come in each day, this seems sensible.

There are a number of ways that schools operate mobile phone “bans” for students. Which one most closely applies to your school?



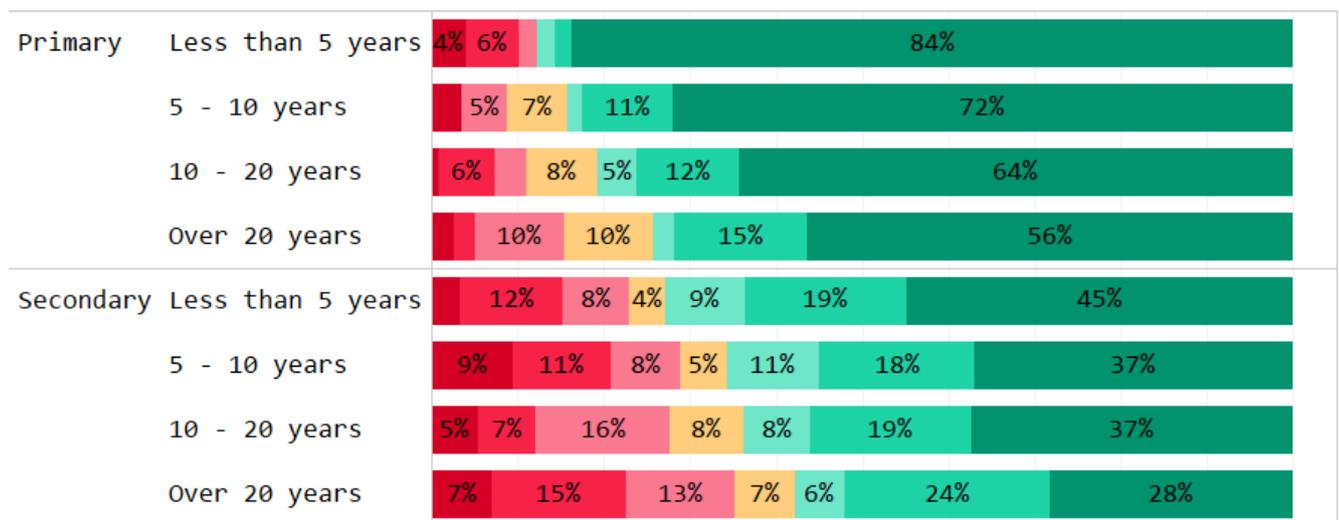
Secondary schools are more varied in their mobile phone policies. Only 4% of schools ban them completely. Given older pupils will typically travel to school on their own, and may be going on to after-school activities (including picking up siblings, or to sports/drama clubs), this also makes sense.

0% of schools allow mobile phones to be used whenever students choose; but 33% (a third) did allow pupils to use them at break and lunchtimes.

Note, also, that only 3% of secondaries collect in phones, despite this working in primary schools.

A potentially counter-intuitive finding for those who think millennials are all psychologically attached to their phones is that newer (and therefore usually younger) teachers are LESS permissive towards phones than more experienced ones.

I don't think students should be able to use mobile phones in lessons



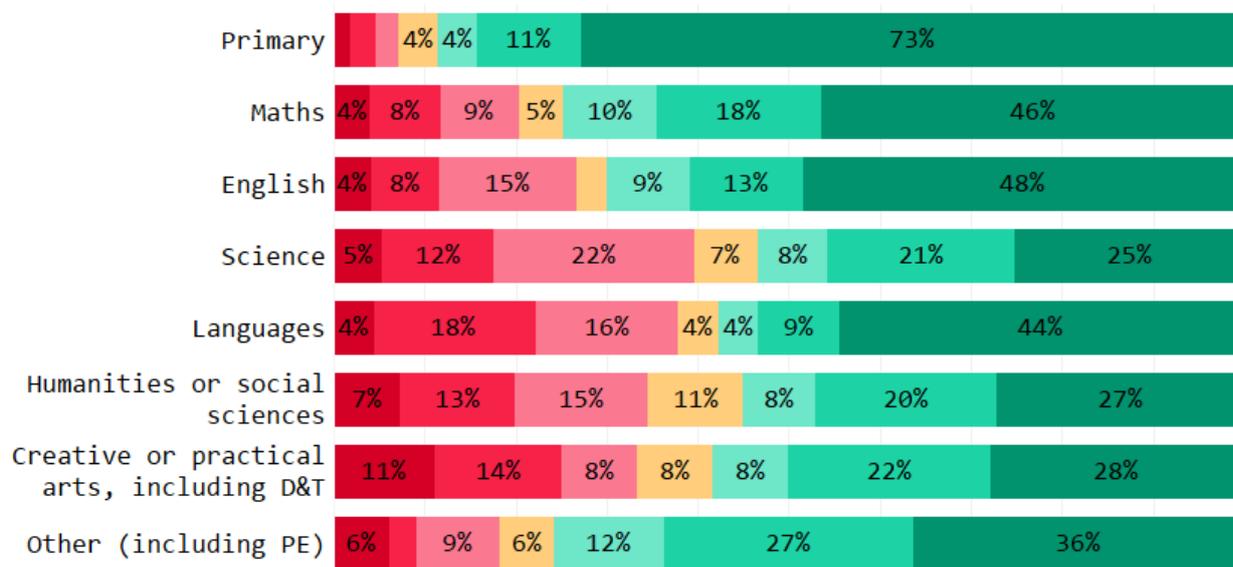
Answer Text

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Newer teachers tend to struggle more with low-level disruption and behaviour problems, which might account for the difference.

We did not find any great difference in attitudes depending on the FSM intake of pupils, but we did find that primary, maths, english and languages teachers were those who least felt students should use mobile phones. Science, humanities, and arts teachers were more relaxed - continuing a pattern we have seen over and over again on Teacher Tapp!

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In conclusion: there's more than one way to ban a phone!

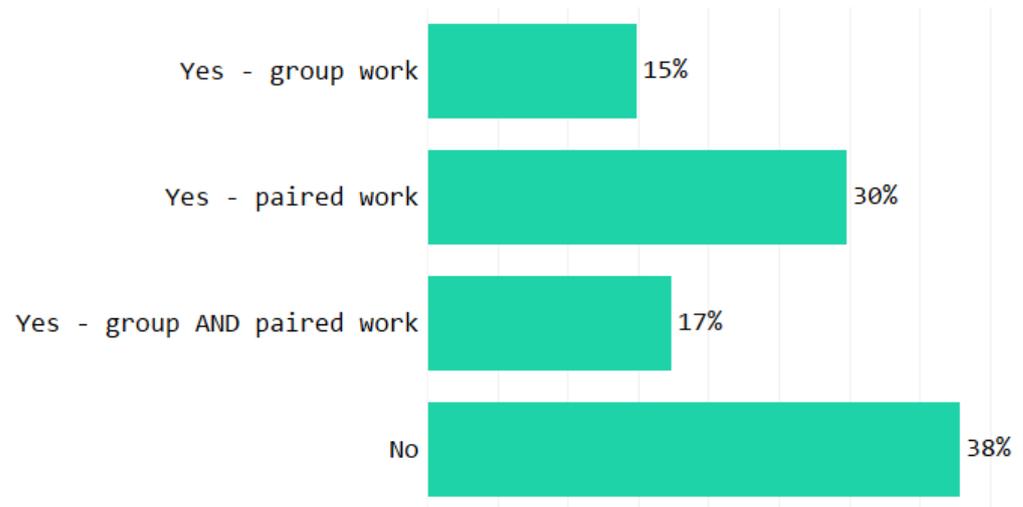
3. [At 10am, what were your pupils doing?](#)

One benefit of Teacher Tapp is that we can ask very pointed questions about exactly what was going on in a teacher's classroom on any given day.

The schools minister Nick Gibb has said in several speeches that he worries teachers are told that 'group work' is necessarily the best way to teach, regardless of the subject or level of expertise among the pupils. And the 2013 TALIS survey found that 53% of teachers in England said they used group work in 'all or almost all' lessons.

If true, we would expect around half of lessons in England at any one time to include group work, right? Hence, we asked teachers to think about the class they had been in front of, that day, at 10am. Did that class do any group work?

Think about the lesson you were teaching around 10am today (or next one if you weren't teaching then). Did your students do any activities that involved group or paired work during the lesson?

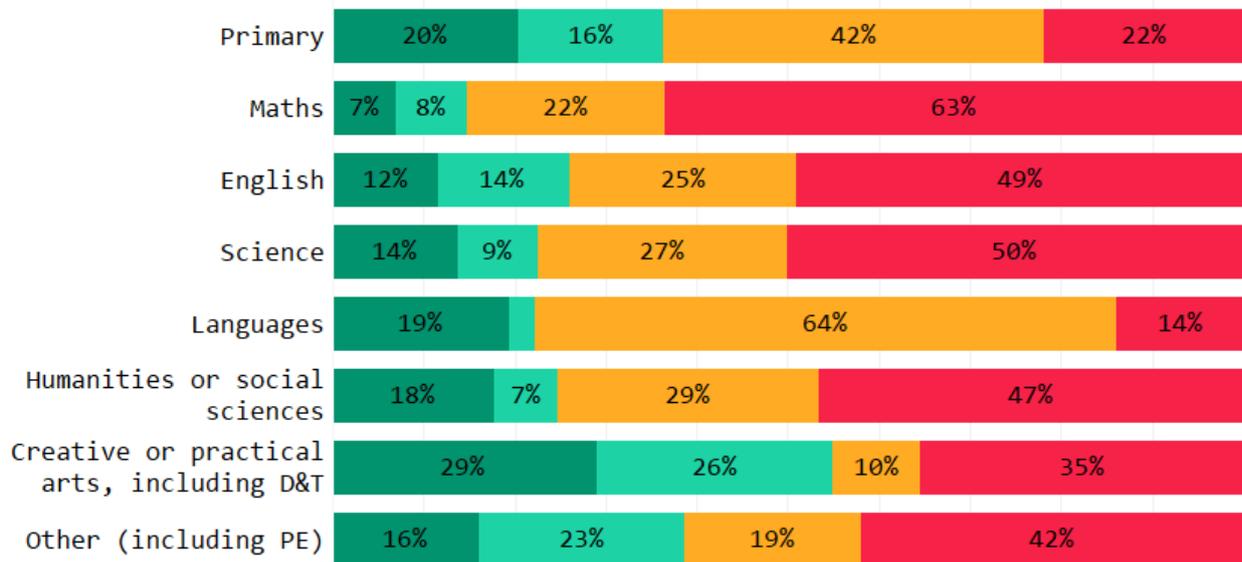


Answer? It depends whether you count 'paired work' as 'group work'. In total we found 32% of teachers used group work at some point in their lesson; 30% used paired work, but no group work; and 38% used neither.

If the paired work had counted as group work then we'd be at 62% vs 38%, and the TALIS survey would look like an under-estimate. Without pair work, however, the percentage went down greatly.

The age of pupils also made a difference, as did the subject:

Think about the lesson you were teaching around 10am today (or next one if you weren't teaching then). Did your students do any activities that involved group or paired work during the lesson?



Answer Text

- No
- Yes - paired work
- Yes - group work
- Yes - group AND paired work

Primary and MFL teachers were least likely to have pupils work on their own all the way through a lesson. Creative and practical arts teachers were most likely to have pupils work in groups.

All of which goes to the point that 'teaching' sounds like a homogeneous activity, but it's really not. And while 'groupwork' sounds like it might involve pupils doing lots of discovery learning, it could easily encompass two pupils practising their french past tense, or a team putting on a play together.

What we didn't find evidence for is the idea that around half of lessons include 'group work' - we did find that most lessons include either group or paired work, although around a third don't.

This is one we will seek to repeat a few more times to check on variation.

4. [Discovery gaps](#)

Seeing as discovery learning came up in the last finding, now is a good time to do some of our

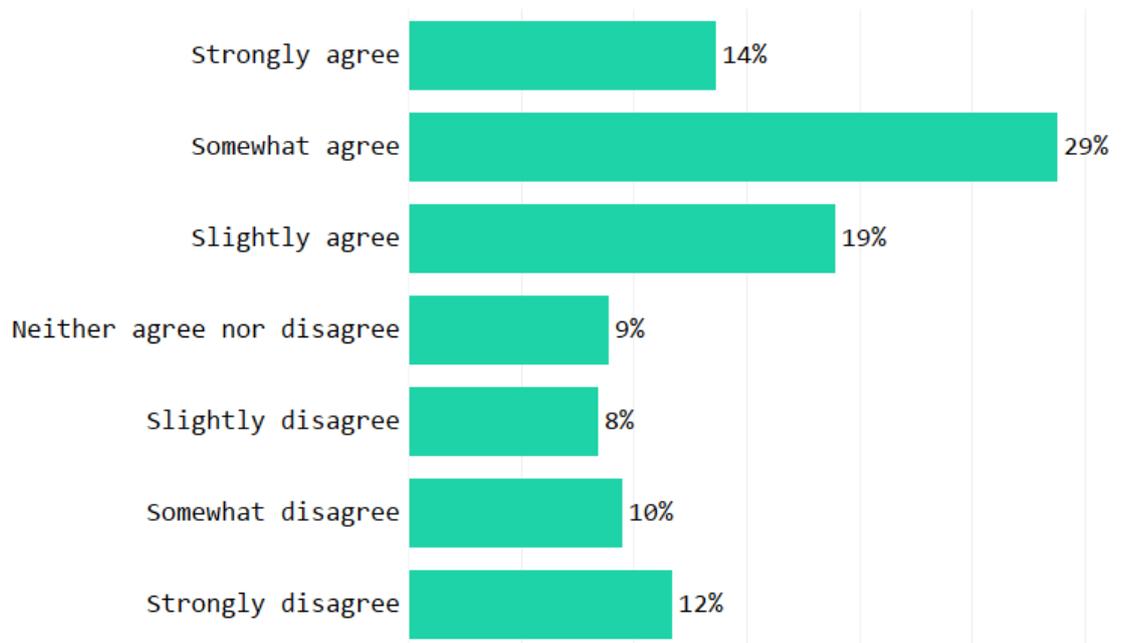
own!

Below are two graphs. The first shows the percentage of teachers that agreed with a sentence about pupils 'discovering things for themselves'. The second splits the percentages by phase and by gender.

Here's your discovery task: what do you notice?

Graph One

Students learn best when they discover things for themselves



Graph Two

Students learn best when they discover things for themselves



Answer Text

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Send us a tweet (@TeacherTapp) with your thoughts...

5. [Pubs: Revisited \(*hic*\)](#)?

Arguably the best finding we've had on Teacher Tapp so far is that [teachers who drink together, achieve together](#) - based on the higher reports of Friday after-work pub attendance from colleagues in Outstanding schools.

Alas, it may not be correct! ?

When we last asked, our sample was much smaller (around 600). In the past few weeks we've been repeating some of the early questions and, most of the time, we get similar answers. Buuuut... It didn't replicate this time for secondary colleagues!

Do you go to the pub with colleagues after work on a Friday or another day?



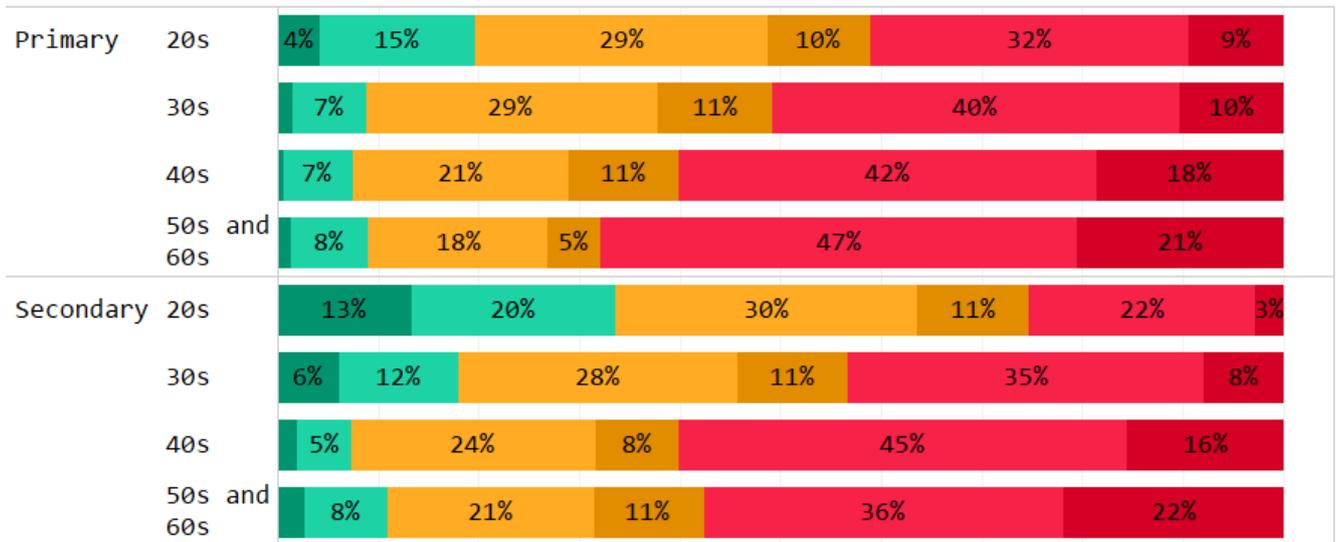
Answer Text

- This is something I would never do
- Not so far this academic year
- Yes, but only once since September
- Yes, but very infrequently
- Yes, sometimes
- Yes, every (or almost every) week

All of which got us to thinking. One of the issues with the pub metric, is that it requires a pub for people to go to, which may be easier in places with higher density (eg cities) than in rural areas. If so, then colleagues from urban areas may be more likely to go the pub BUT they are also more likely to be in schools with lower Ofsted ratings.

Also, there are age variables. Younger colleagues are way more likely to go to the pub on a Friday, especially in secondary schools. Do you know where young people are also more likely to work? You've guessed it... in challenging secondary schools!

Do you go to the pub with colleagues after work on a Friday or another day?



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We also found that headteachers are much less likely to drink with colleagues than people in other job roles. So if your head snubs your invite: don't be offended. It's normal.

Does this mean the pub finding is debunked? It certainly appears more research is needed. Surely it's worth an EEF randomised controlled trial? Just to check? ?

**

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

[School relationships are everything](#)

[What sales reps can teach about altering behaviour](#)

[Getting across the transition gap](#)

[Why maths teachers don't like knowledge organisers](#)

[How to deal with defiant behaviour](#)

*

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

In the meantime, keep sharing what we are doing. Here's a [powerpoint slide \(with script\)](#), a [PDF](#), and a [black-and-white one-pager](#) to help.

Remember, we need more of you before we can do the really exciting and detailed analysis!

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