

All things SATs and what's going on with study leave? This, and more...

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Before we dive into this week's results - we have a quick request from the data team at Teacher Tapp ■■■■■!

Please check that the school in your profile is up-to-date (you can do this by heading to the in-app menu -> user profile -> choose your school).

Don't worry - we don't use the school information to learn anything about you specifically. We use the information about your school's free school meal quartile and size to help understand how teachers between different schools vary - just like you see in this blog.

Now, onto results! This week we only have two topics... but they're both biggies!

1. SATs o'clock

Last week, we spoke to some of our primary Teacher Tappers and it's fair to say that their SATs week experience was similar to years gone-by ■■

Preparation for SATs week often starts way before the actual event, with a knock-on effect of borrowing staff, organising suitable spaces, and keeping the rest of the school quiet during those toilet trips!

SATs week is often felt by everyone in a primary school so bravo primary staff, bravo! ■■

SATs are controversial, though. Amongst other things, SATs are accused of being distressing to children; a poor measure of attainment; and even gamed.

But at Teacher Tapp Towers, we're not afraid to look at the challenging issues ■■

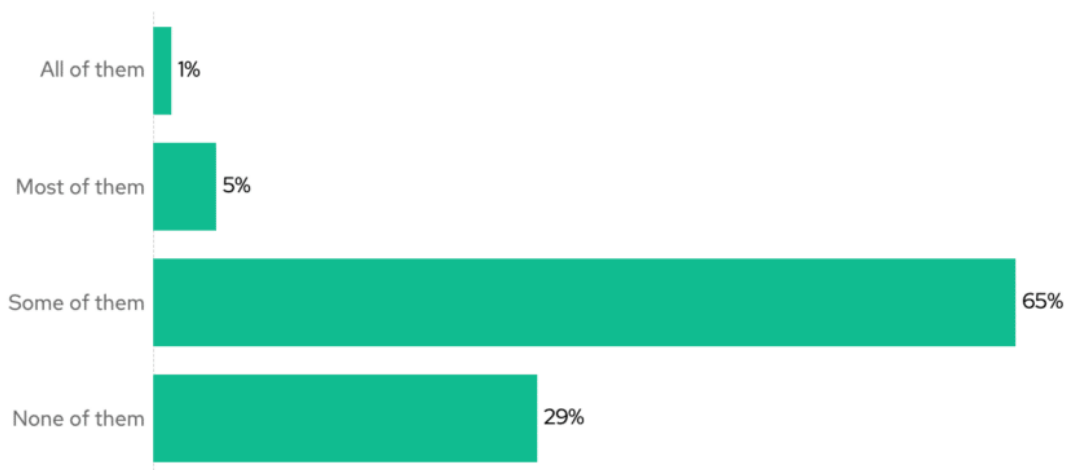
We've investigated all three of these allegations in the past week...

a. Do SATs cause distress?

Most Y6 teachers go to saintly proportions to minimise any distress that sitting a national test could cause.

Nonetheless while only 6% reported 'all' or 'most' of your Y6s showed signs of upset or distress, 65% reported that 'some' children were upset.

This week, how many of your Year 6 pupils have shown signs of upset/distress due to SATs?



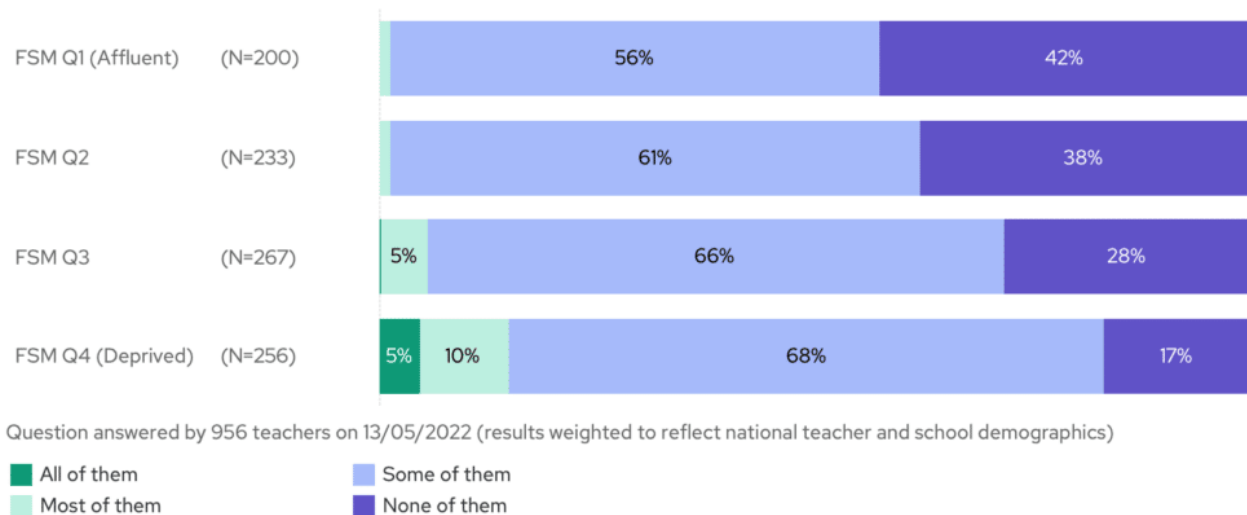
Question answered by 1,372 teachers on 13/05/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

However, the type of pupils you teach seems to have a bearing on the levels of distress witnessed...

Teachers working in schools serving the most deprived communities reported considerably more distress than their more affluent area peers. (See below).

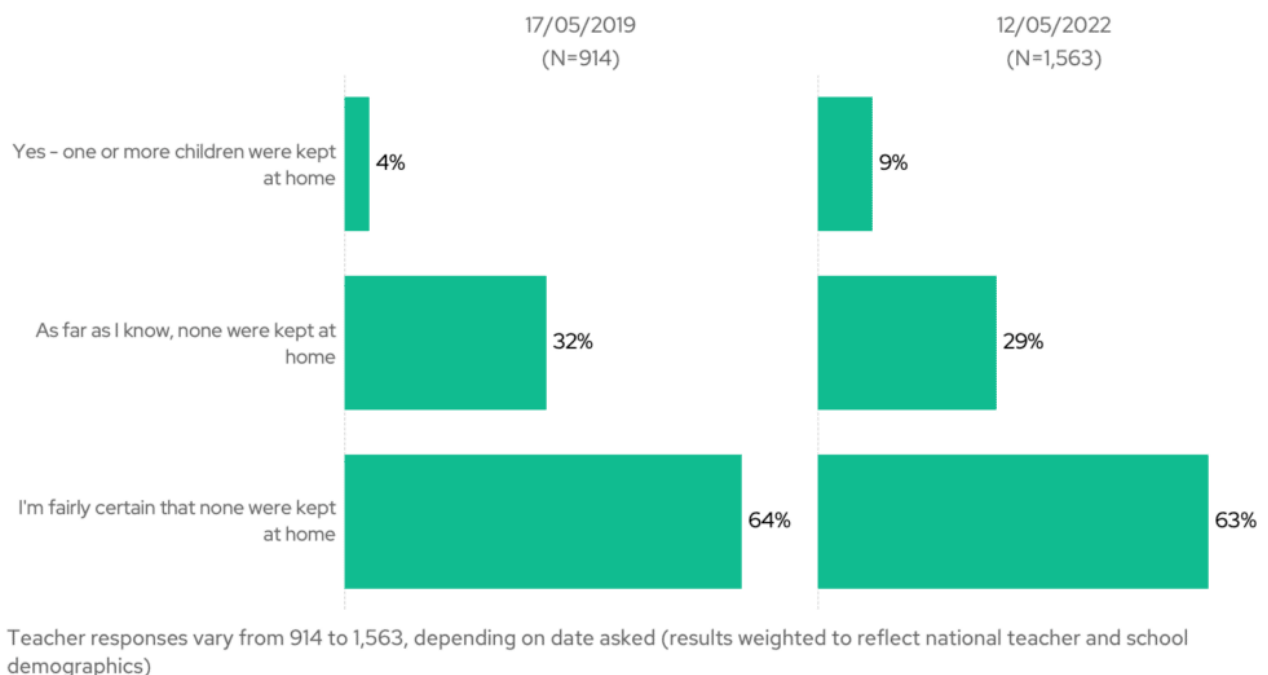
Is this an effect of having lots of tough things to deal with, or is it something else? Maslow's hierarchy of needs springs to mind ■■ Let us know in the usual places!

This week, how many of your Year 6 pupils have shown signs of upset/distress due to SATs?



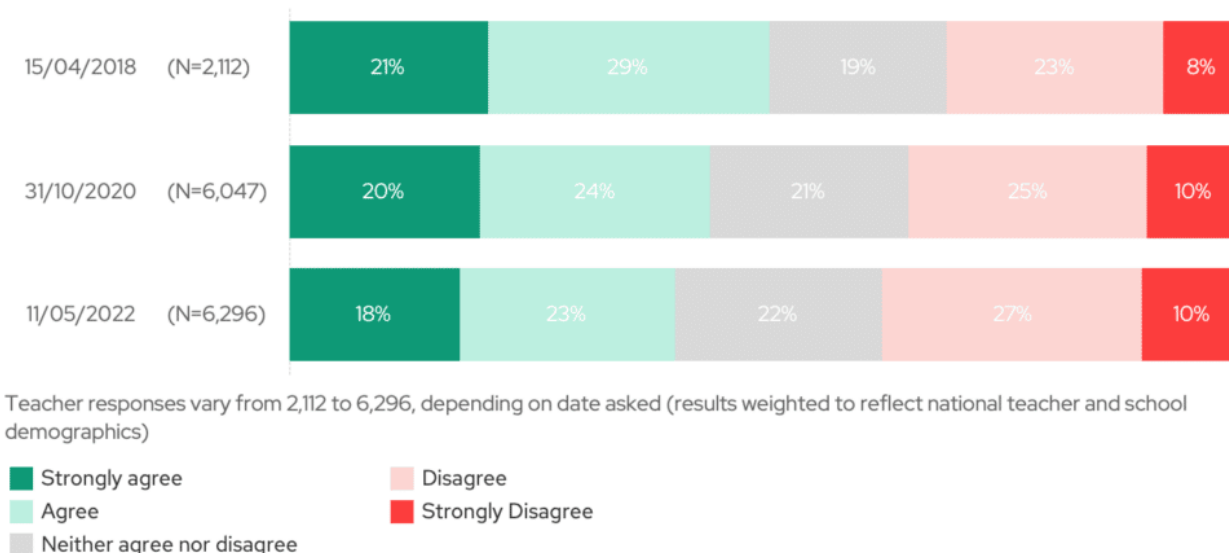
Another proxy for upset children is upset parents... so how many of you witnessed parents keeping their child at home so they didn't need to sit SATs? Nearly 1 in 10 reported that they had seen this last week, around twice as many as when we checked in 2019 ■■.

To the best of your knowledge, have any parents purposely kept their child at home this week so they didn't need to sit their SATs?



And while we're on the subject, how many of you think that parents have the right to remove their child? Although the proportion of you that agree with this is still pretty high (41% agree or strongly agree) fewer of you agree than when we first checked back in 2018.

'Parents should have the right to remove their child from the primary SATs exams'



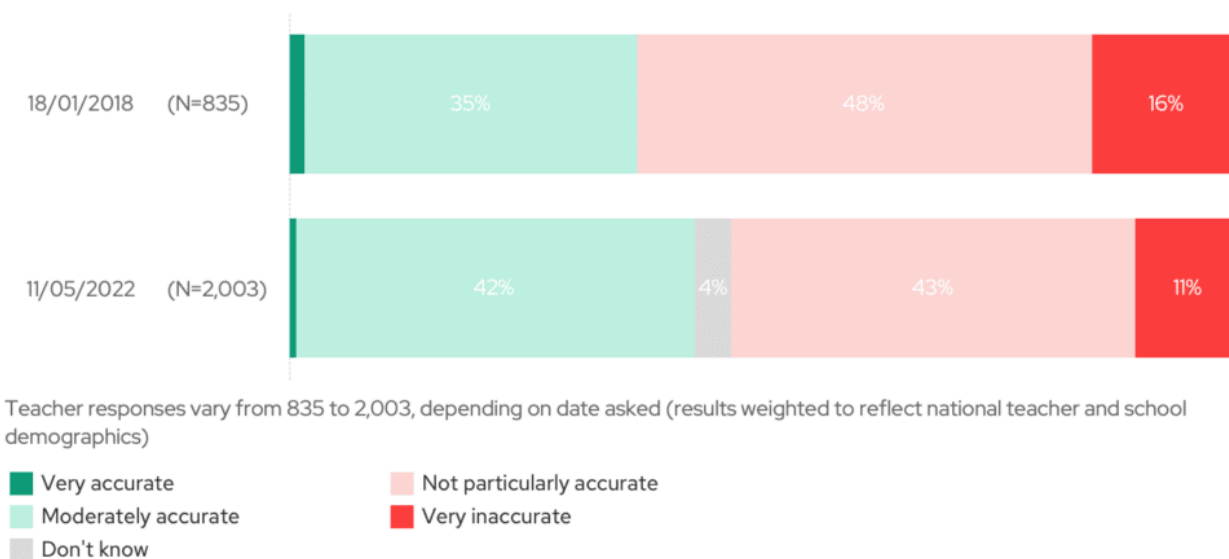
b. Are SATs reliable?

To check your opinion on SATs reliability, we asked primary and secondary teachers two slightly different questions.

First off, primary...

42% of primary teachers said that SATs are a 'moderately accurate' measure of pupil attainment. Whilst not an overwhelming vote of confidence (!) this is up 7 percentage points on 2018.

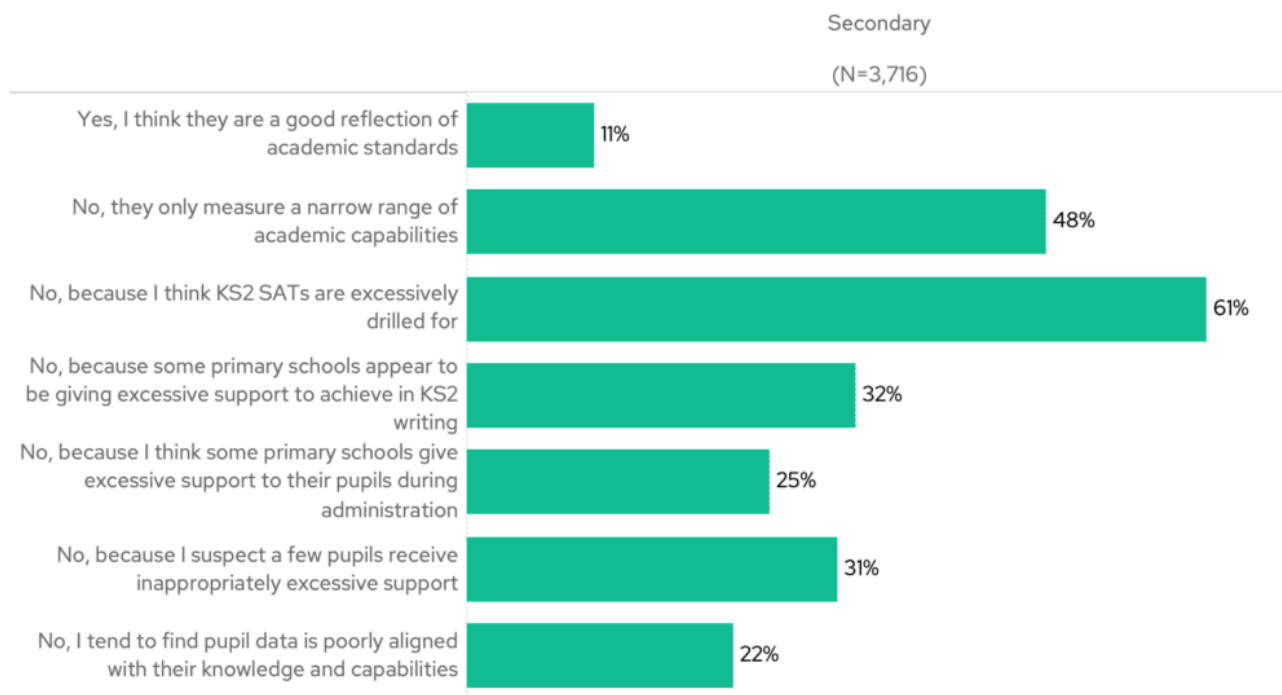
How reliable do you think the year 6 SATs are as a measure of pupil attainment?



And how about colleagues in secondary schools, what do they think? ■■

Well, only 11% think they are a good reflection of academic standards. Many are concerned that SATs are 'excessively drilled for' (61%) and/or 'only measure a narrow range of academic capabilities' (48%).

Do you feel that KS2 SATs results are generally an accurate reflection of the academic standards of students?



Question answered by 3,716 teachers on 11/05/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

As SATs only look at English and Maths, what do these subject specialists think about it?

English teachers are amongst the most sceptical when it comes to believing SATs accurately reflect academic standards, whilst maths are amongst the least sceptical. Both however are concerned about "excessive support"

c. Are SATs gamed?

The Department for Education defines maladministration as any act that leads to outcomes that do not reflect pupils' unaided work or actual abilities. Whilst rumours abound that 'maladministration' is common, the number of reported cases each year is tiny but is it rising?

Compared to previous years, we found a small decline in teachers saying they had been encouraged to undertake such activities, although it wasn't particularly high in the first instance ■■

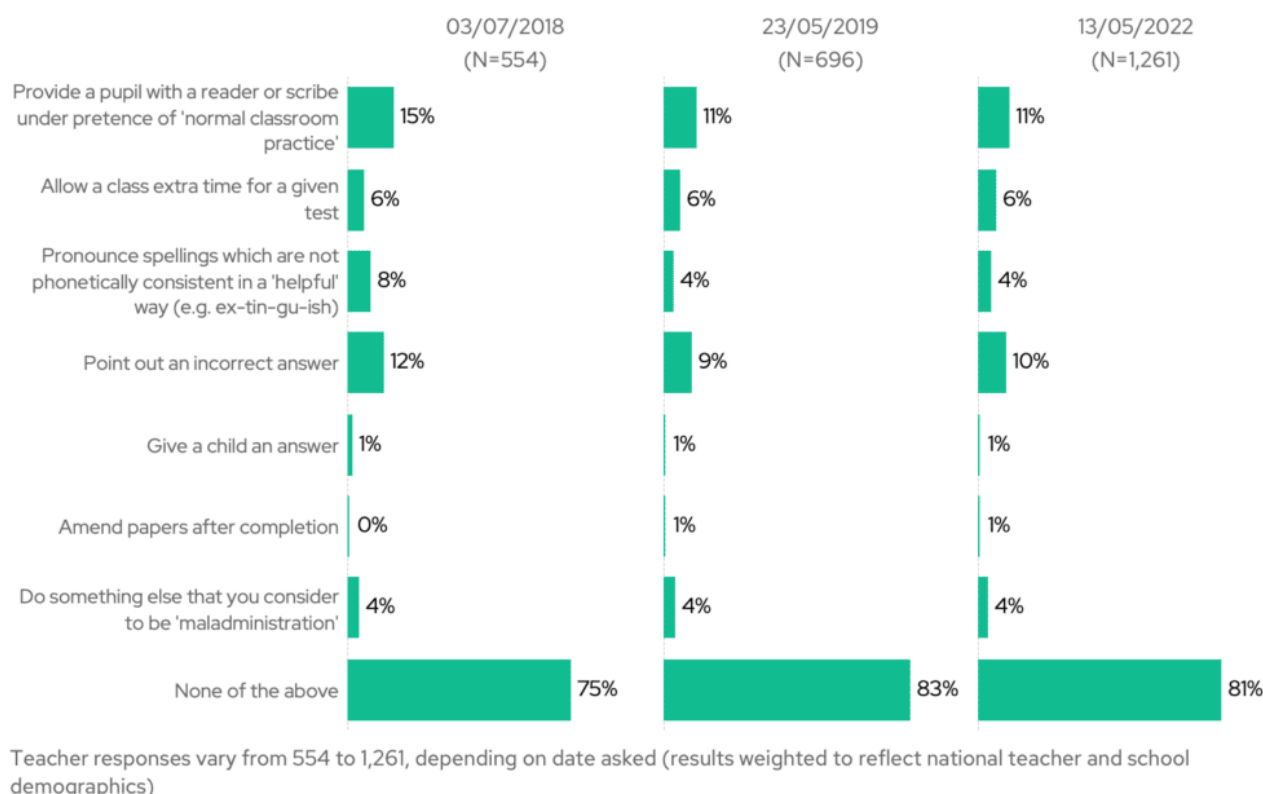
1-in-5 of our teachers who were involved in SATs say they've seen something tantamount to maladministration, compared to 1-in-4 in 2018 - although there also haven't been SATs for a

few years, so there's been less chance to see it too.

1 in 10 of those directly involved in administering the tests reported providing (or being encouraged to provide) a pupil with a scribe or reader when they don't normally have one, and a similar proportion had (or were encouraged to) point out an incorrect answer to a pupil.

Furthermore, teachers identifying any act of maladministration were, on average, ticking 2 items from our list, suggesting that when these practices take place, they occur in a number of ways.

If you have been directly involved in administering Year 6 SATs - either in your current school or in an earlier school - have you ever done or been encouraged to do any of the following practices?



For more on this topic, here's a [long series on what we found about SATs gaming last time they took place](#).

2. Study Leave

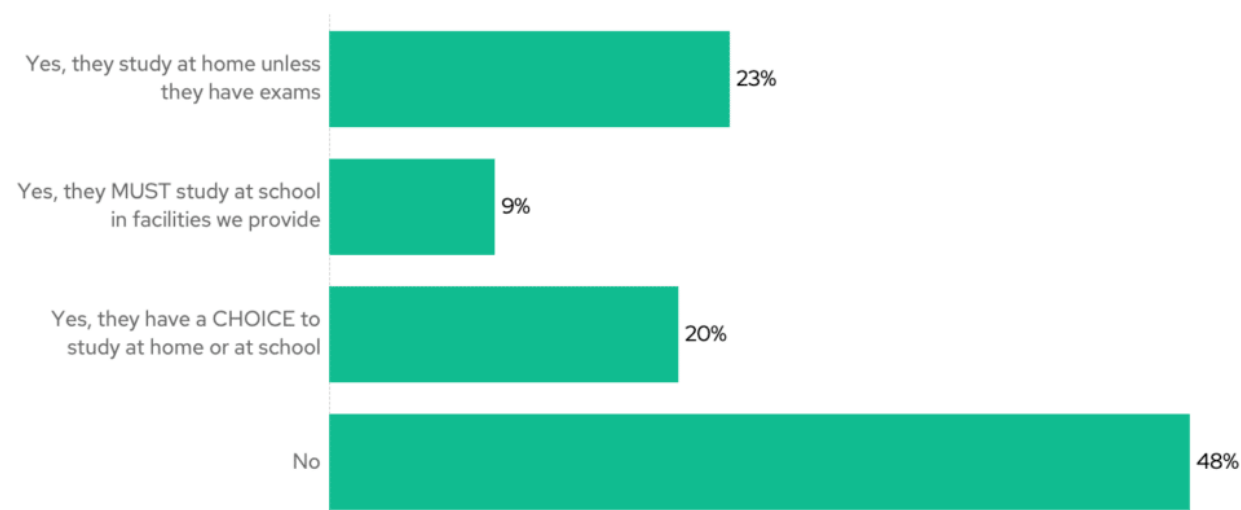
Over in secondary schools, exams are also front and centre of your mind!

One of the most asked questions we've had on Twitter recently is to check how common study leave is, and your wish is our command ■■■■■

Overall, nearly half of you report that study leave is being completely dropped at your school, with fewer than a quarter of you are offering the 'traditional' home study unless the student

has exams.

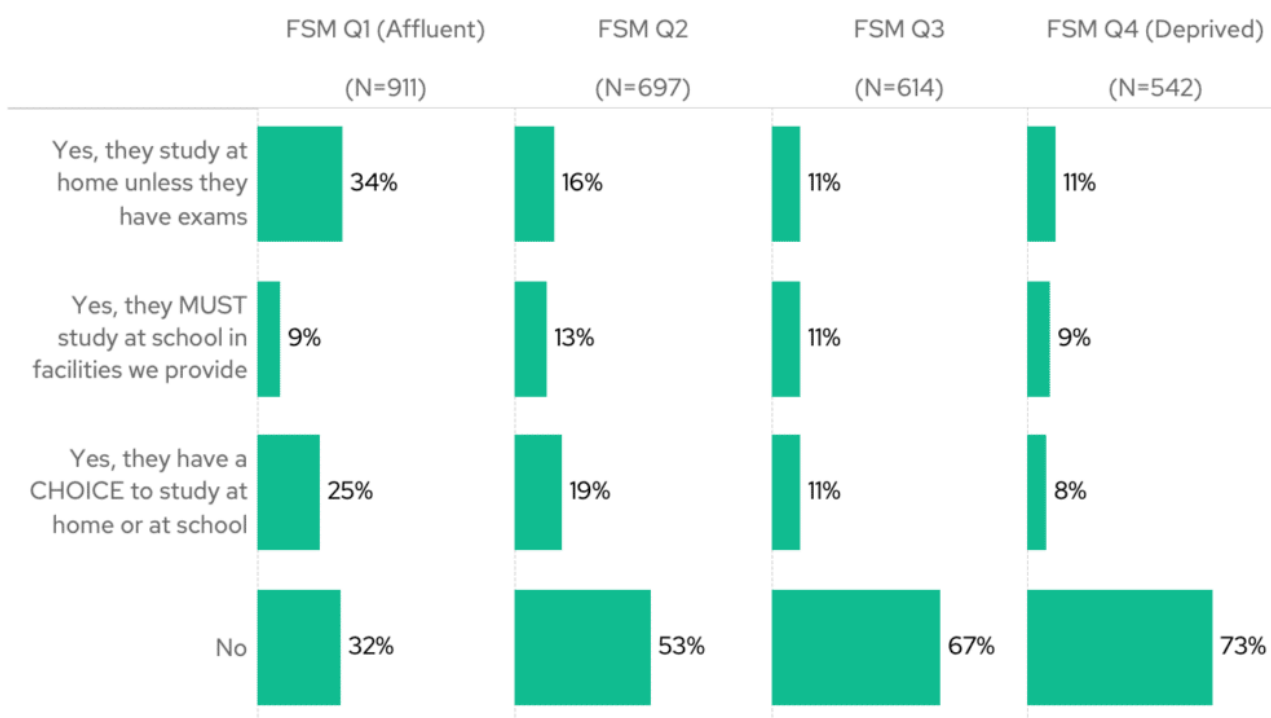
Are your Year 11s getting study leave this year?



Question answered by 4,136 teachers on 12/05/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Study leave seems to depend on the composition of your school. Those of you teaching in schools with the most affluent intakes are far more likely to permit students to have the choice of where they study, compared to those with the most deprived intakes, 73% of whom are not offering any study leave at all.

Are your Year 11s getting study leave this year?



Question answered by 4,136 teachers on 12/05/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

How does this impact on gain time we hear you cry ■■ We'll take a look in the coming weeks ■■

In the meantime, DON'T FORGET TO CHECK WE HAVE THE RIGHT SCHOOL FOR YOU IN YOUR PROFILE SETTINGS!

Finally... we know you love the daily read, so here are the ones from last week

The most read tip from the past week was: [When quality assurance goes wrong](#)

And here are the rest for your reference:

- [Is 'tracking the speaker' effective? ■■](#)
- [Implementing a hands-down approach to questioning in the classroom](#)
- [When 'take a deep breath' can be bad advice](#)
- [Navigating teaching and the pursuit of happiness ■■](#)
- [The first steps towards a whole-school approach to writing ■■](#)