

What Teachers Tapped This Week #43 – 23 July 2018

Anyone else melting? We're melting. The world appears to be melting.

[via GIPHY](#)

Still, at least we've got data, right?

RIGHT! This week we've plunged into Boy-Girl Seating Plans, timetables, who counts as a 'teacher', which heads teach, and what it means if your school arranges an end-of-year social. READ ON!

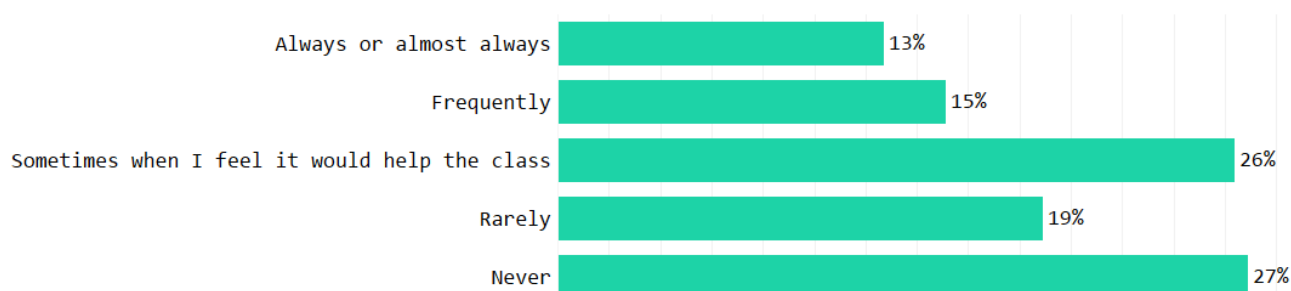
1. [Boy-Girl Seating Plans](#)

In mixed schools, many of us will have sat in a boy-girl seating arrangement in at least one class. Why? It's sometimes seen as a way of splitting up friendship groups or separating out the 'energetic' boys from 'compliant' girls (to use blunt stereotypes).

But is it still common?

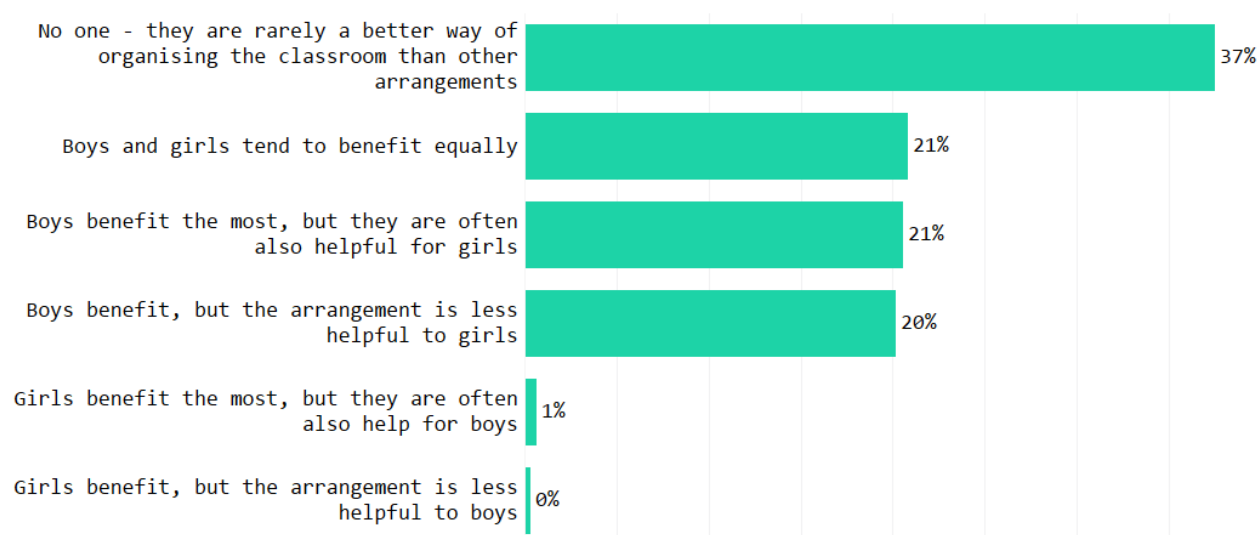
We found that 13% of teachers always, or almost always, sit children in a boy-girl arrangement. Just 27% never do.

How often do you use boy-girl seating arrangements with your own class(es)? If you teach in a secondary school, just think about KS3 and 4.



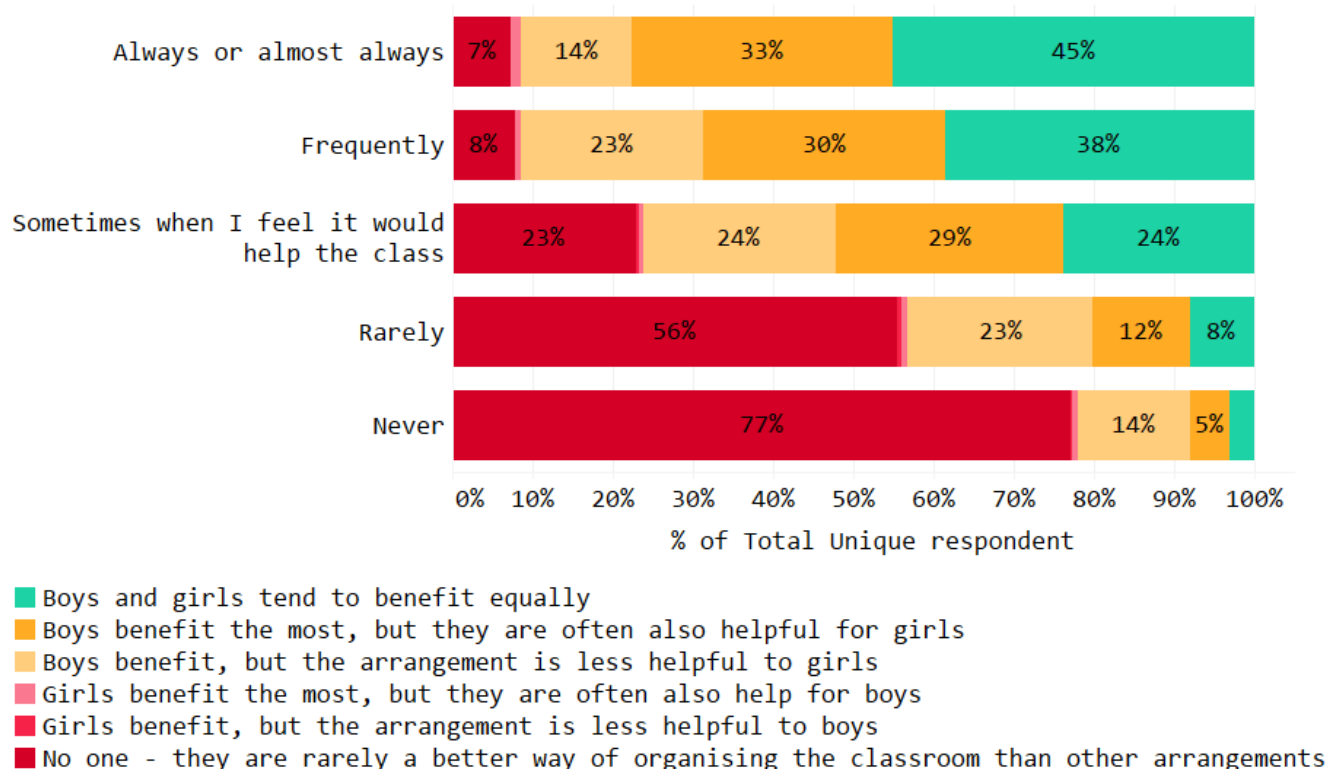
Why would people sit pupils like this? Of those who felt it helped, 21% felt boys and girls benefitted equally, while 41% said boys benefitted most. Only 1% of teachers felt it benefitted girls the most.

Many teachers like to use boy-girl seating arrangements in classes. Where they are used, who do you think benefits the most from them?



The interesting group are those teachers who think boys benefit but that girls find the arrangement unhelpful. YET these teachers go ahead and seat in boy-girl arrangements anyway. That group are shown below in the buff colour boxes. Among teachers who 'always or almost always' use boy-girl arrangements, 14% do so believing that boys will benefit but girls will find it unhelpful.

How much do you use boy-girl seating arrangements and who benefits from them?



Then there's the group who think boys benefit but that's it also helpful for girls - AND YET they never use a gendered seating plan. This group is represented in bright orange. If you look, 5% of teachers who never use a gendered seating plan still think it's good for boys and can also be helpful to girls. Boggling.

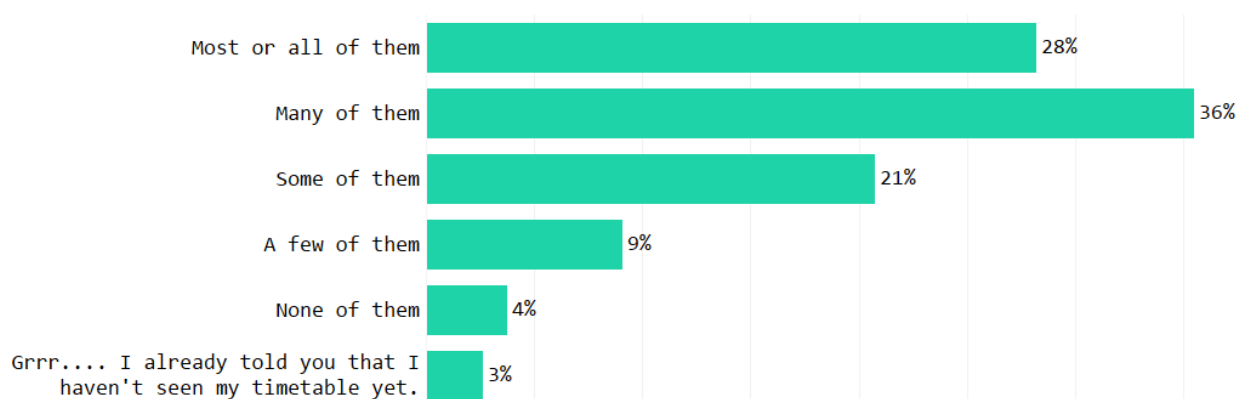
2. [A Timetable Of Planning](#)

One of the biggest workload issues for teachers is lesson planning. Over the past twenty years, as curriculum and exam changes occurred again and again, teachers have constantly had to replan. One hypothesis for why so many teachers are leaving is that planning feels never-ending.

Most teachers now have their timetable for next year so we asked how many resources they are expecting to be able to reuse.

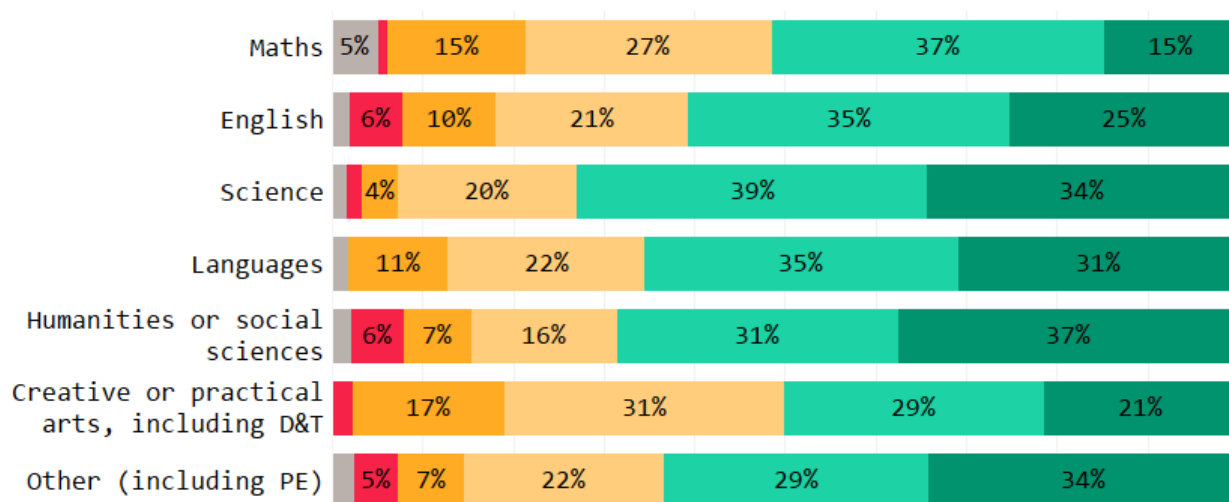
For 64% of teachers, they will be able to re-use many or most of their resources and plans. This will be a substantial reduction in workload for them.

One more timetable question... what proportion of the plans and resources you've used this year will you be able to use again with your classes next year?



But not all teachers are in the same spot. Maths, English and Creative Arts teachers are the least likely to say they can re-use materials.

One more timetable question... what proportion of the plans and resources you've used this year will you be able to use again with your classes next year?



Answer Text

Most or all of them

Many of them

Some of them

A few of them

None of them

Grrr.... I already told you that I haven't seen my timetable yet.

This is unexpected. The new maths and English GCSE are in their third year of teaching. That's longer than the other subjects. So one might guess the materials would be embedded by now. Unfortunately, these subjects also tend to be ones where schools switch exam boards if they

feel there's mileage in trying a different specification. Plus, English and maths teachers typically teach a smaller number of groups over their work compared to other subjects so they may not have taught a whole year group previously which is now on their timetable for next year.

What we need to dig into is whether this affects morale, turnover, and other aspects of workload. One for us to keep an eye on as we get a second year's worth of data coming through.

3. [Who Counts As A 'Teacher'?](#)

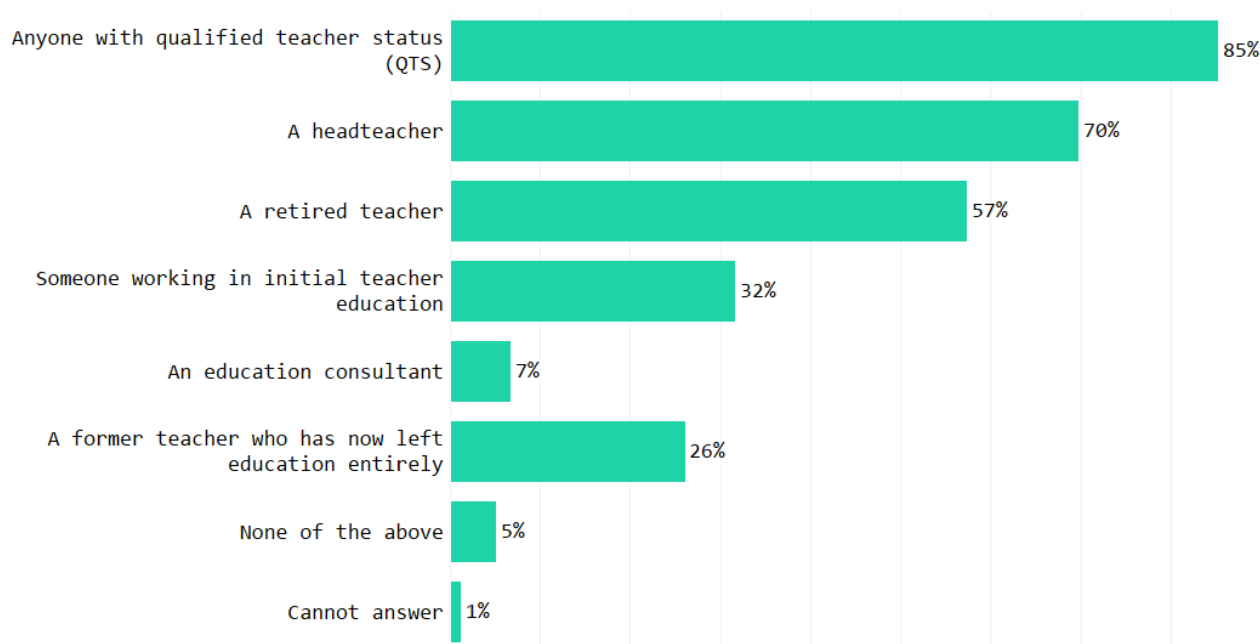
When the new [Chartered College of Teaching](#) was founded, a central debating point was who counted as a 'teacher', for the purpose of membership? Full membership requires people to be employed in a school or college teaching children between 0 and 19. For affiliate membership, you need to be employed 'working alongside' teachers - and that can be done in a school, university, non-profit organisation, and so on.

Not everyone is happy about this. There are all kinds of views on who should be classified as a 'teacher'. But which views are common?

The most popular answer was that anyone with Qualified Teacher Status counts as a teacher. And yet, several of the categories with fewer people agreeing to them would also have people with QTS in them. Most headteachers will have QTS. As will retired teachers. As will former teachers.

So why the difference in the numbers?

Which of the following would you class as a teacher? Tick as many as apply.



These answers show how complex the description of a 'teacher' can be. For example, retired

teachers will have QTS but only 57% think they count as 'teachers' - even though 85% of people said anyone with QTS counts. It suggests there's something about being 'currently in the classroom' that matters to some tappers on top of the qualified teacher status.

The fact headteachers got a slightly lower score also suggests that a small proportion of people think teachers are only those who are unpromoted - or delivering a significant number of lessons. On the other hand, 26% of people still felt that a teacher who has entirely left still counts - presumably because they still have QTS.

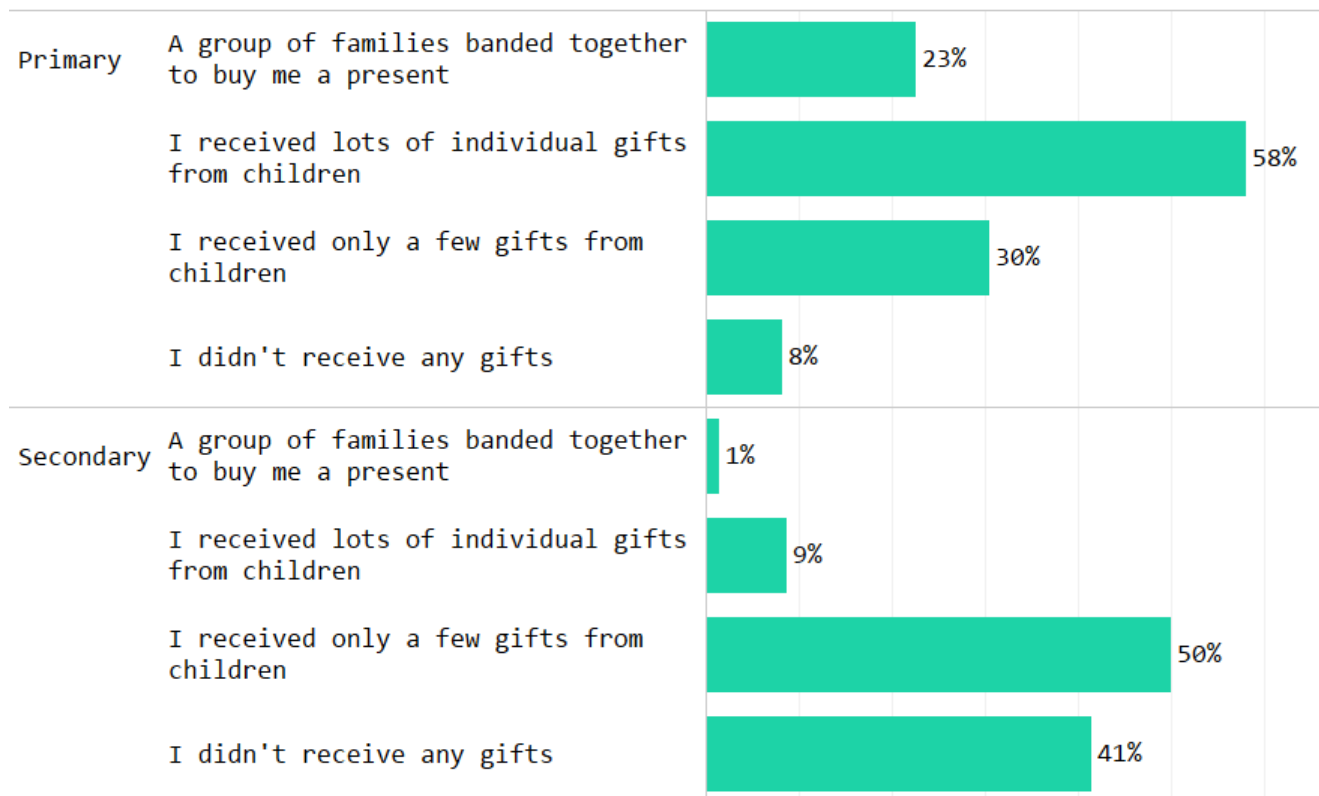
All of this goes to show that the definition of 'teacher' isn't as clear as we may think, but if you want a popular answer then 'has QTS' appears to be it.

4. [If You Want Gifts, Be A Primary Teacher](#)

As it's the end of year, and only a few schools are still clinging on this week, we asked about end-of-year gifts.

As expected, primary teachers are showered in end-of-year gifts, while secondary teachers receive a few bits from their charges. Ah well secondary colleagues, it's the love of teenagers that keeps you going - right?

Have you received any end of year gifts from pupils?
Tick as many boxes as relevant.

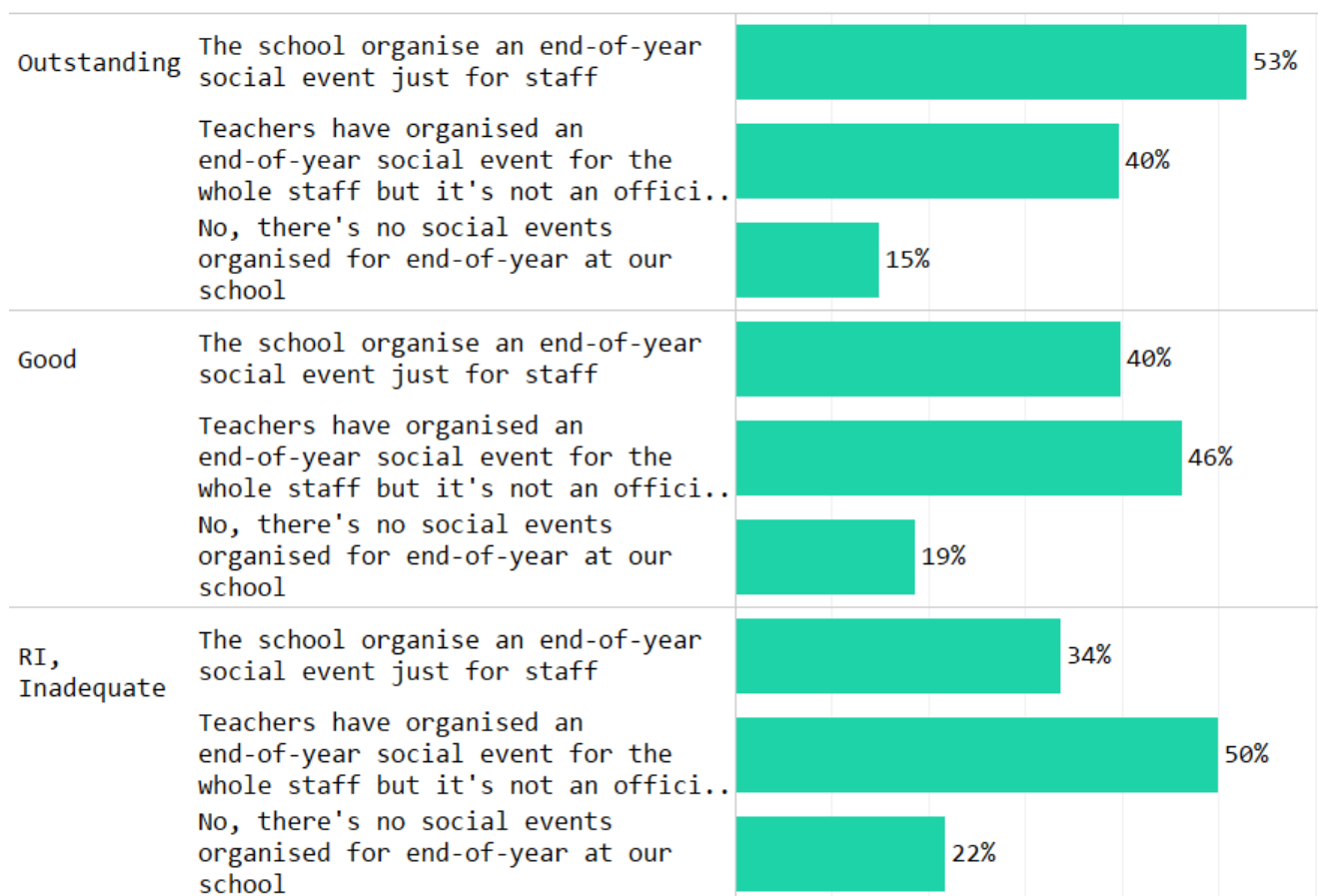


As part of our continued commitment to finding out if social events matter for teacher morale

and pupil outcomes, we also asked about end-of-year celebration events.

Outstanding schools tend to organise end-of-year events for their staff, whereas those rated requires improvement & inadequate tend not to. Boo! Never fear, however, it seems the staff in those schools take it upon themselves to organise something anyway. You total troopers: we applaud you ???.

Does your school organise an end-of-year social/celebration for staff? (Tick all that apply)

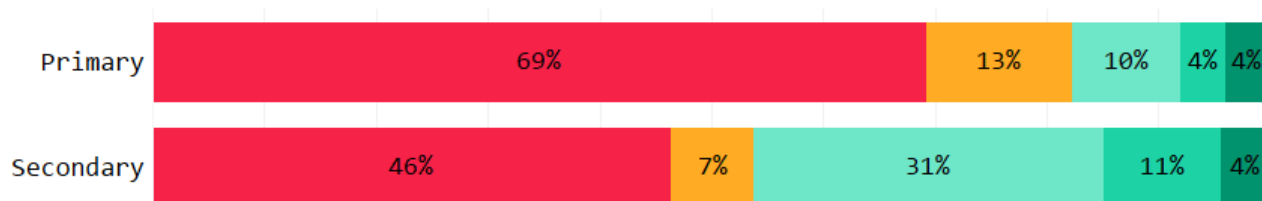


5. Heads Who Teach

Given the whole question of whether or not headteachers are still teachers, we decided to find out how often they are in front of classrooms.

Below: red equals emergency only, orange is cover when needed, and the greens represent scheduled classes (less than a day, a day, and more than a day).

How often does your headteacher teach?



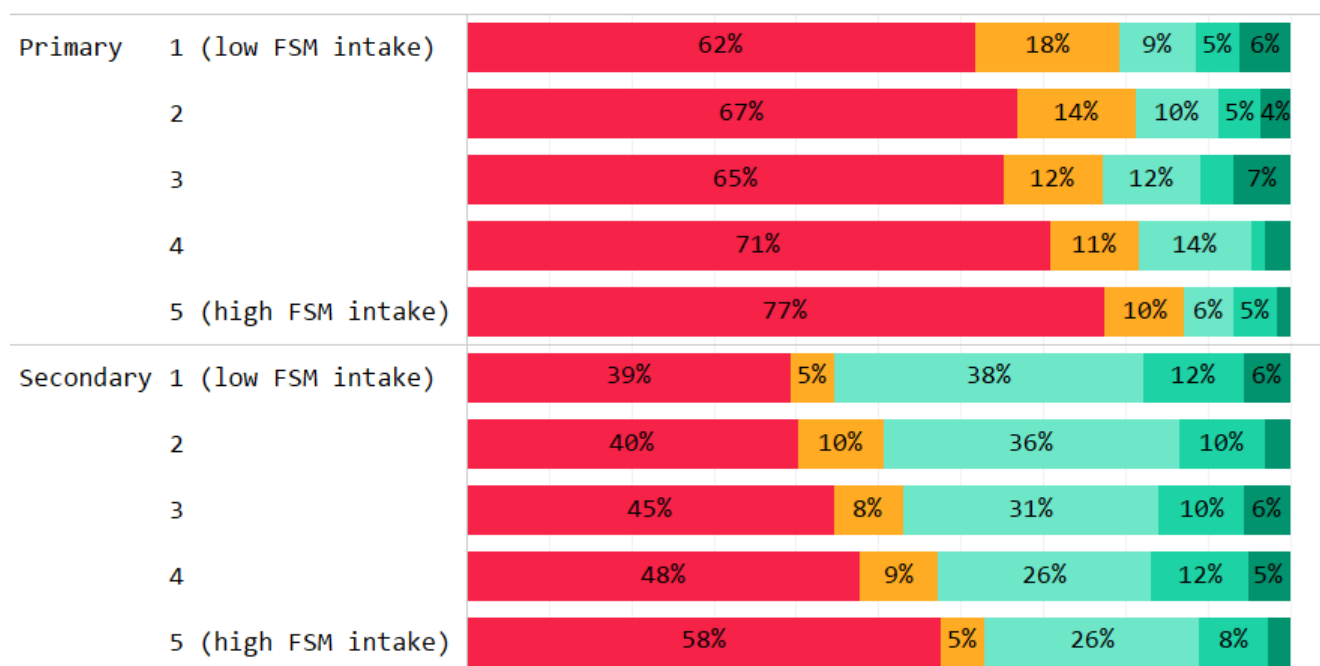
Answer Text

- More than a day per week (i.e. more than about five hours a week)
- One day per week (i.e. about five hours - not necessarily all together)
- At regular times amounting to less than five hours a week
- As cover when needed
- Only in 'emergencies'

The thing that surprises everyone is that secondary headteachers appear to teach more than primary ones. Perceived wisdom is that primary heads do more, but this may be because of the way an emergency cover for a primary teacher could mean covering someone for a whole day, whereas secondary it tends to only be individual lessons.

We also found the pupil intake makes a difference. The more pupils a school has on free meals, the less likely the head is to teach.

How often does your headteacher teach?



Answer Text

- More than a day per week (i.e. more than about five hours a week)
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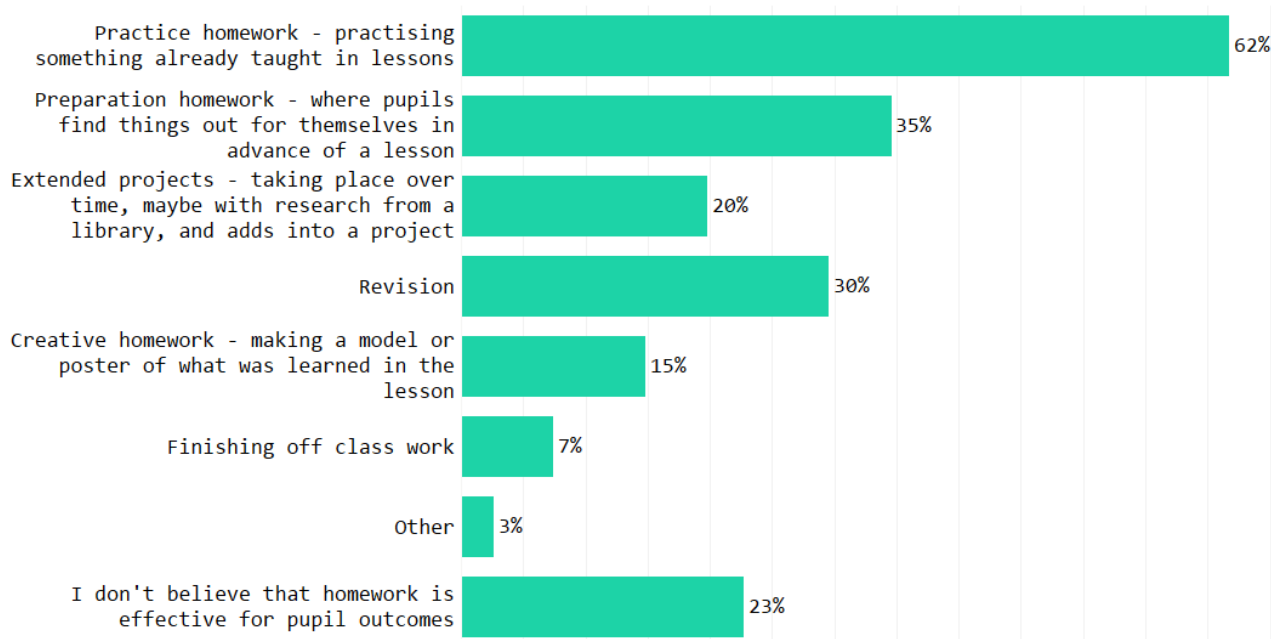
Why would this be the case? Simple. Schools with higher free meal intakes tend to have more complex issues – be that safeguarding, police matters, more children in care, and so on. Heads may feel there are more demands on their time and so they opt not to teach because they don't want to be running out every five minutes to deal with an issue. Or, to put it another way, the heads don't teach so they can deal with interruptions meaning everyone else can get on with their teaching.

6. How Do You Homework?

Homework is a thorny issue because it's the place where two worlds collide: home and school. Research on homework is also sometimes conflicting. Should you load pupils up with it, or not?

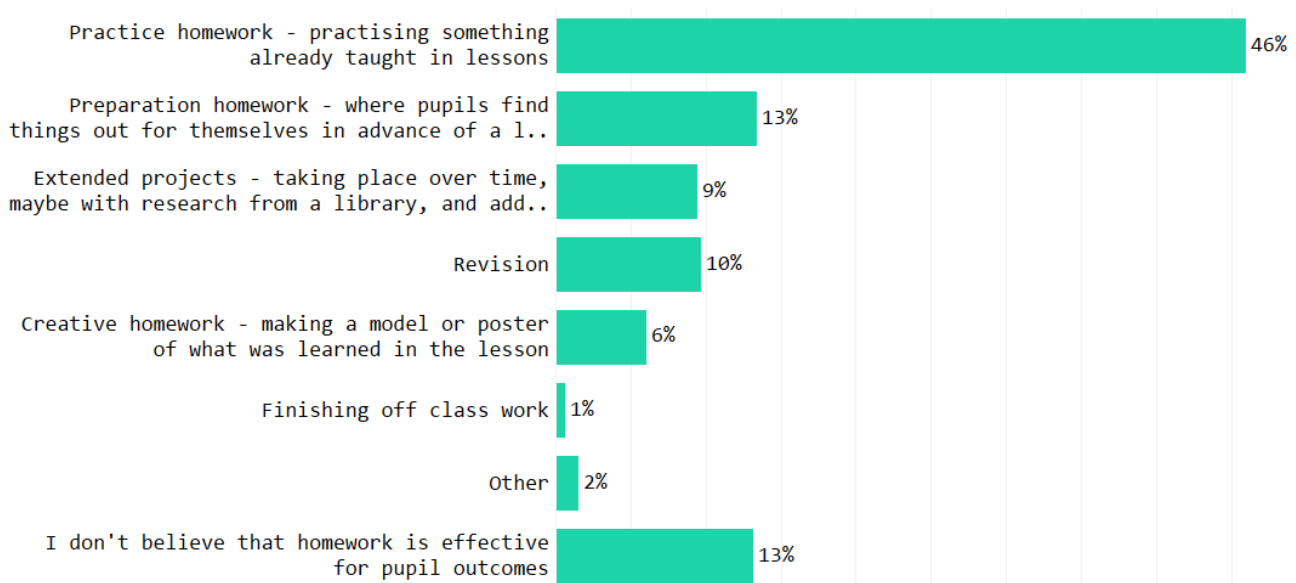
A teacher is doing a project on homework and so asked us to see how often people use types of homework, and for how long their tasks last.

Which type of homework do you think best help pupil outcomes?
(Tick all that apply)



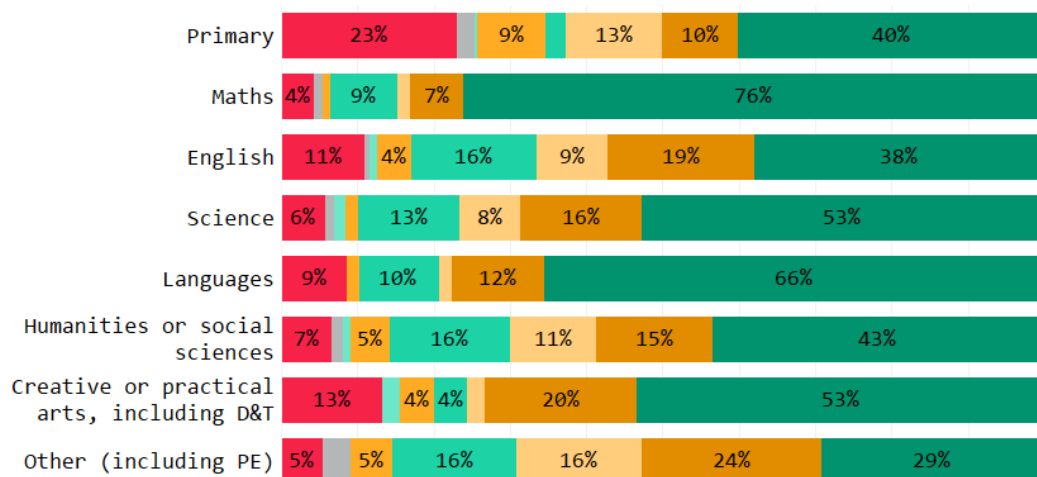
Practising something already taught in class seems to be the most popular homework type – although, if they could only choose one for the next month, 9% of teachers said they would pick extended projects and 6% picked creative activities such as modelling or poster creation.

If you could only do one type of homework with your pupils for a month, which ONE would you select?



The groups most likely to go for projects and creative work were primary teachers and humanities teachers. (Creative teachers were less likely to pick creative homeworks than humanities teachers).

If you could only do one type of homework with your pupils for a month, which ONE would you select?



Answer Text

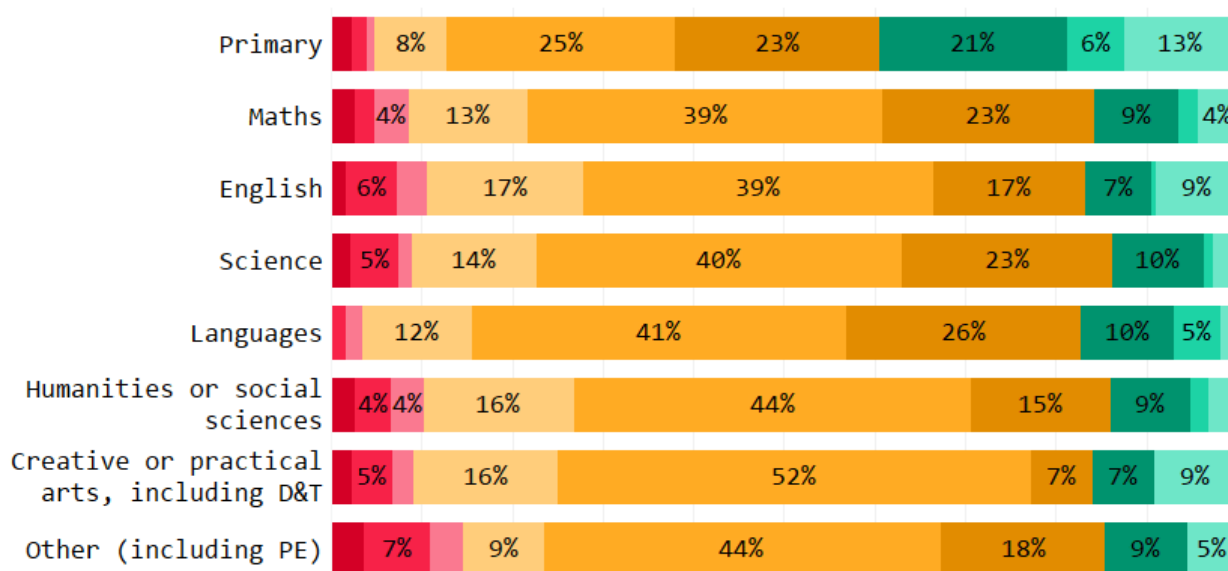
- Practice homework - practising something already taught in lessons
- Preparation homework - where pupils find things out for themselves in advance of a lesson
- Extended projects - taking place over time, maybe with research from a library, and adds into a project
- Revision
- Creative homework - making a model or poster of what was learned in the lesson
- Finishing off class work
- Other
- I don't believe that homework is effective for pupil outcomes

Practice varied enormously as a favoured homework type - with a substantial majority (76%) of maths teachers in favour of it, but just over a third of English teachers in favour (35%).

Is this because of inherent differences in the subjects? Or in the benefits of types of homeworks for those subjects? Or is it down to deeply-held beliefs that have no basis in research? Thoughts on this welcome. (We don't know! We're still learning...)

What we do know is that when it comes to time spent on homework, there is some variation between subjects and phase. Are you unusual among your teaching peers?

On average, how long would a fully-concentrating pupil take to complete the homework tasks you set?



Answer Text

- I don't set homework
- Up to 10 minutes
- 10 to 15 minutes
- 16 to 20 minutes
- 21 to 30 minutes
- 31 to 40 minutes
- 41 to 50 minutes
- 51 minutes to one hour
- Over an hour

And, crucially, on what basis do you make your decision? Research, or long-held belief? (Or school policy?!)

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

[Willingham and future of teacher training](#)

[How to convince someone when facts fail](#)

[The split-attention effect](#)

[Six routines for school leaders](#)

[What maternity leave teaches about corner cutting](#)

[The conversation gap is more important than the word gap](#)

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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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