

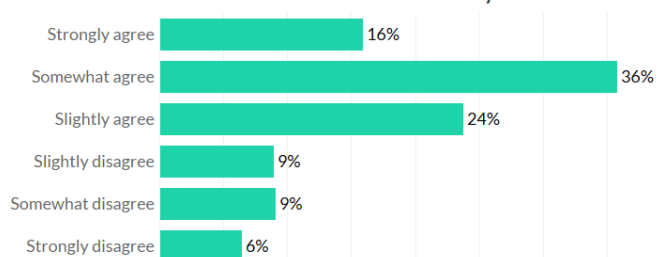
What Teacher Tapped This Week #60 – 19th November 2018

Tapp... Tapp... You are not the only ones beaver away on Teacher Tapp. Over at Tapp Towers we are putting the finishing touches to some big changes to the app which we can't wait to unveil. The update means you'll be more easily able to share results and learn even more from the data. But, until that's ready... here's this week's results!

1. National Curriculum: Beloved for 30 Years

It is thirty years since the National Curriculum was first delivered in schools – but do teachers still see the appeal? As it currently stands, the national curriculum defines what pupils should learn during 'key stages' and each subject varies in the depth of information it requires children to learn. We found that 16% of teachers are 'strongly' in favour of a curriculum that specifies what should be learned each year, and 35% 'somewhat' agreed. Only a quarter of

I think all (state) schools should deliver a National Curriculum that specifies what students should learn each year



Primary teachers were more in favour of a year-by-year approach. Given that primary classes tend to be year groups this makes intuitive sense. Just think: if every school delivered the same content for each year group it would make the sharing of resources easier across schools and mean learning could be developed in a structured way. Perhaps this is why heads in primary schools are most in favour of a year-on-year curriculum. Secondary teachers were more ambivalent. And headteachers were particularly against the idea. Secondary heads were sold academy status on the basis it 'freed' them from the curriculum. After hearing about such

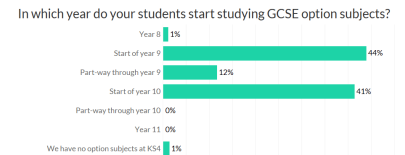
teachers disagreed with the idea.

Different subject teachers think differently about the curriculum. Scientists and primary teachers were most swayed by a year-by-year curriculum. Humanities, English, and creative arts teachers, were least enamoured. Teachers within the arts and humanities are more likely to have favoured specialisms whereas maths and science have a more consistent core of topics from which teachers tend not to diverge which might explain the difference. In history for example, if a teacher knows the 20th century well but not the 16th, then it may be considered best to go with the specialism rather than stick slavishly to a curriculum. In maths, kids are learning fractions whether their teachers are good at them or not! All this said, all

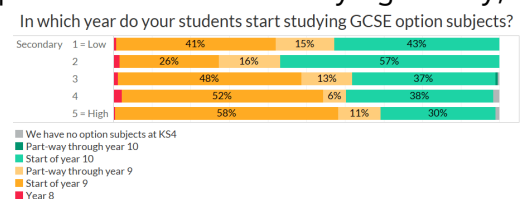
freedom for the past decade it's no surprise they would resist being told what to teach.

2. When Should GCSE Courses Begin?

Ofsted has clearly said that schools are expected to deliver the full Key Stage 3 and that starting GCSEs in Year 9 limits the time students spend on subjects such as history or art. But is anyone listening? Last year we found that most schools start GCSE courses in Year 9. This



Faced with the pressures of Progress 8, the expanded curriculum, and budget cuts, many heads have moved the GCSE course down into Year 9. A few additional things to note: Schools in the poorest areas are particularly likely to start their GCSE courses in Year 9. Many heads predicted this would happen. Schools with high numbers of pupils on free meals typically have lower achievement on entry and heads worried that pupils would not be able to cover all the material in the new GCSEs if only starting in Year 10. However, this means students are less likely to be taking all of the Key Stage 3 subjects for the expected amount of time. Or, to put it bluntly, poorer kids are less likely to spend as much time studying history,

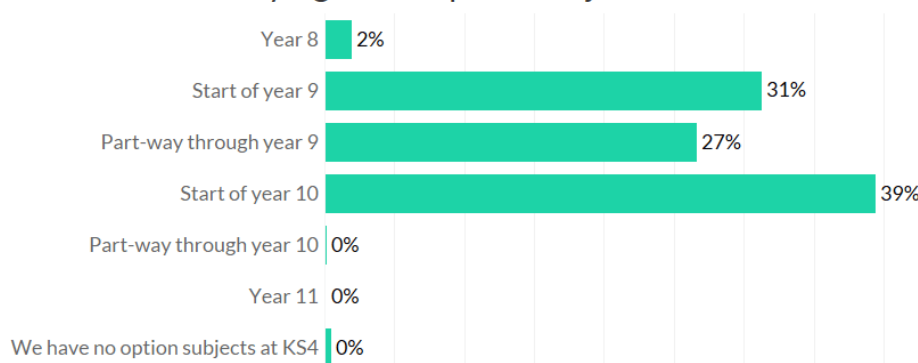


If given a free choice, 58% of teachers would start GCSE courses in Year 9 (either at the start

year, we've found the same trend. Ofsted are talking into the wind.

subjects had more teachers in favour of a year-on-year specified curriculum than against it. art, music, (etc) as their counterparts in wealthier schools.

If YOU ran a secondary school, when would you have students start studying GCSE option subjects?



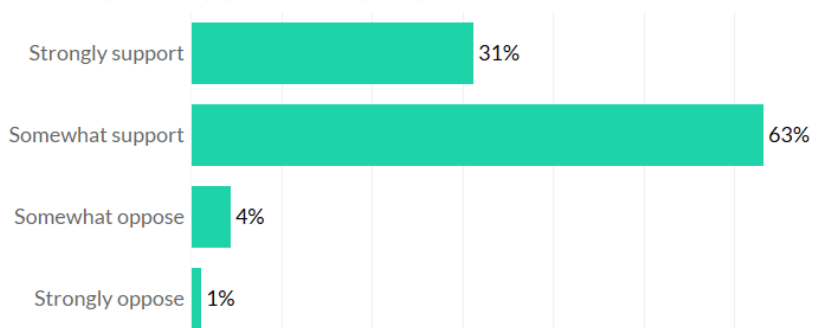
Ofsted can therefore stamp its feet about Key Stage 3. But when they're up against teacher's personal views and an accountability system that looks heavily at GCSE scores, they are going to lose out. Year 9 is the new Year 10.

3. Can Ofsted actually inspect the curriculum?

While we are on the topic of Ofsted and curriculum, how popular is their new plan to inspect a school's curriculum 'intent' - i.e., the curriculum design, coverage and appropriateness? Very popular! A remarkable 94% of teachers support Ofsted's plan to inspect curriculum intentions. Given Ofsted policies routinely get some of the lowest marks in our polls, this is an

Ofsted have proposed that they will inspect a school's curriculum 'intent' - i.e. curriculum design, coverage and appropriateness. Do you support this proposal?

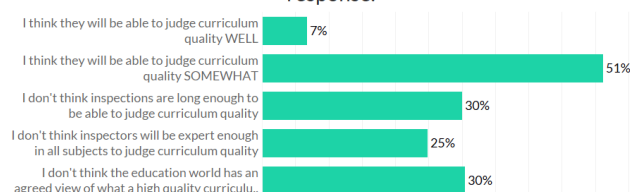
or partway through



AND YET... when we asked if teachers thought it was possible to judge curriculum quality around a third of teachers had serious reservations and just 7% of teachers think Ofsted are

amazing statistic.

Do you think it will be possible for an Ofsted inspector to judge the quality of a school's curriculum? You may tick more than one response.



What is going on? The view that Ofsted should inspect curriculum was reasonably consistent, though experienced teachers were more in favour of curriculum inspection than less experienced ones. English and creative arts teachers were also most in favour. Primary and science teachers were the least convinced (around 7% disagreement). When it comes to Ofsted's ability to judge curriculum there are some interesting subject/phase differences. For example, 35% of primary teaches don't believe the education world has an agreed view on what a high quality curriculum looks like, whereas this view was only held by 18% of creative arts teachers. Primary teachers were also more worried about the length of inspections. Given they may only be observed teaching one or two subjects at a specific time of year, this concern makes sense. In secondary schools it is a lesser concern as subjects have department leads, there will be lots of lessons on the go in that subject, and inspectors are more able to

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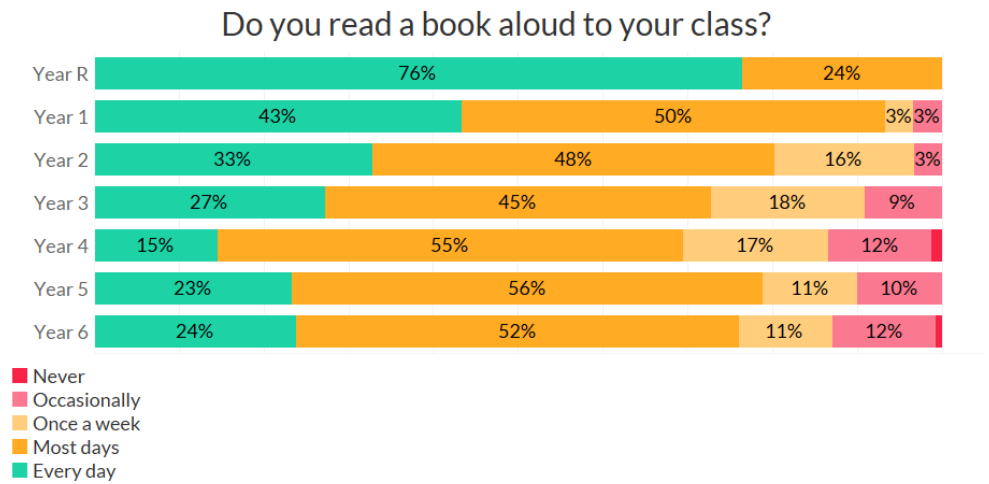
	I think they will be able to judge curriculum quality WELL	I think they will be able to judge curriculum quality SOMEWHAT	I don't think inspections are long enough to be able to judge curriculum quality	I don't think inspectors will be expert enough in all subjects to judge curriculum quality	I don't think the education world has an agreed view of what a high quality curriculum looks like
WELL able to judge curriculum c					
Primary	6%	48%	33%	23%	35%
English	6%	54%	30%	27%	31%
Maths	6%	55%	27%	28%	30%
Science	5%	56%	27%	25%	29%
Humanities or social sci..	6%	51%	30%	26%	30%
Languages	9%	46%	24%	29%	30%
Creative or practical art..	12%	51%	23%	19%	18%
Other (including PE)	16%	56%	29%	19%	16%

Ofsted is therefore in a funny place. Teachers really want Ofsted to inspect curriculum intentions and yet they don't have faith that the inspectorate can deliver on it! A tough tightrope to walk.

4. For Reading Out Loud

A sometime lamentation from parents is that their children don't get read aloud to anymore in school. But is it true? Actually, it appears that most teachers reckon they read a book aloud to

see the curriculum in full action.



Every day commitments get lower after Reception, although around a quarter of Year 5/6 teachers still read to children every single day. Parents should despair less!

5. Show Me The Money: Do teachers ever speak to the school finance team?

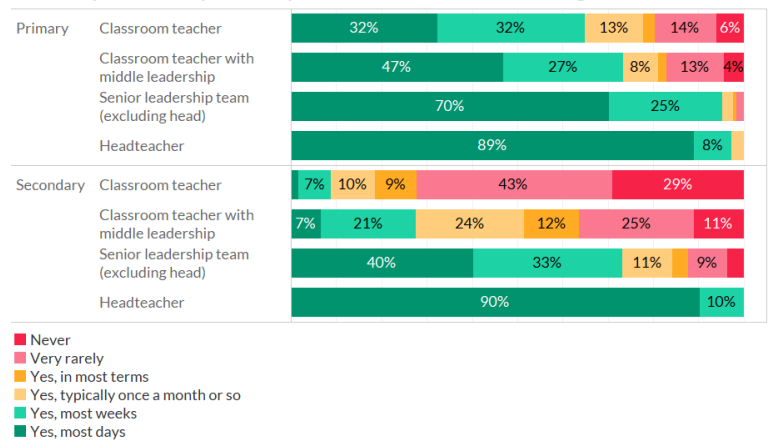
A question that regularly comes up among businesses selling to schools is the extent to which individual teachers have access to additional funds. After all, even if a teacher is desperate for a resource, if they don't have access to the person with the purse strings then it's going to be a tough sell. One way to test this as to think about teacher relationships with school business managers. Although departments/phases may be given a budget at the start of the year, we wanted to track the ability for teachers to influence business managers above and beyond the usual situation. In any given week, you told us that around half of you will speak with your



Primary teachers had more access than secondary teachers, and heads had the greatest access of all (obviously). At secondary level the vast majority (72%) of classroom teachers

school business manager. But a further 32% of you rarely/never speak to them.

Do you ever speak to your school business manager or bursar?



For secondary teachers this means the ability to access funding is likely constrained by a head of department (though around a third of these appear to have rare/no interactions with business managers). Laura was recently told the tale by one headteacher of how he discovered the schools' marking policy, which required teachers to mark in green pen, wasn't being fulfilled because the system for any individual teacher to get green pens required a complicated trail through department budgets and stationery orders. He has since instituted a central policy for accessing green pens – and all is much better with the policy! Hence, while buying controls are important for budget management, it's worth remembering how far most classroom teachers are from budgetary decisions, which can affect feelings of autonomy and the ability to do a good job. *

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

[What is neurodiversity?](#) [One schools' experience of whole-school marking](#) [Lessons that misfire](#) [Failure for learning](#) [The human side of EAL](#) [What makes someone into an 'expert' teacher?](#)

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! 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 [with the business manager](#).