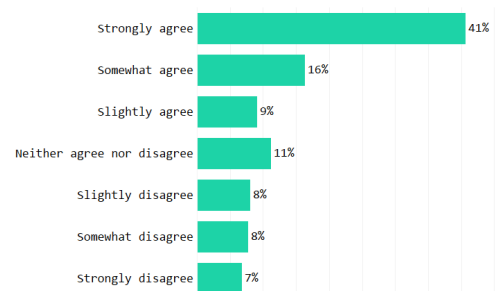


What Teachers Tapped This Week #35 - 29th May 2018

It's half-term! Though, if Teacher Tapp answers are anything to go by, only one in five of you is not doing any work this week, and around half of you will be facing the dangers of working from home... But, before you dig out those pesky exercise books, what did we discover this week?

1. Teachers think it's cruel to give standardised tests to 4-year-olds

Baseline tests are on the way because the government want a standardised measure of children's ability when entering primary school. It is likely the test will be done online, over a relatively short period of time, and the results won't be released until many years later in a bid to stop parents and schools pressuring children into worrying about the test. (To be fair, the way the accountability system works, what we'll likely see is teachers trying to reduce children's scores, but that's a separate argument). The tests have always seemed divisive. But then, so have the upcoming times tables tests. [Yet, when Teacher Tapp asked about them, teachers said they quite liked them](#). Teachers do NOT, however, appear to like the baseline tests, with 41% 'strongly agreeing' they were cruel. I think it's cruel to give children baseline tests at the age of four



But does this hold for all teachers? One suggestion we've heard is that parents are particularly tetchy about testing. [Around half of teachers are parents](#) - are they more likely to think the tests are cruel? NO! Not necessarily...

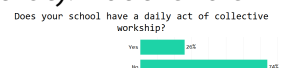
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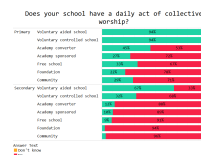
If you look carefully, primary teachers with children are the LEAST likely to agree the baseline tests are CRUEL. At secondary, this position changes. Secondary teachers with children have the strongest levels of disagreement with the tests. One reason for this could be gender. There are far more female teachers in primary, are women more in favour of tests? The evidence from the multiplication check goes against this idea. For the timestable check women were half as likely as men to agree with the checks. It really does seem as though being a primary teacher and having children combines in a way that means someone is less likely to believe the baseline tests are cruel. Could it be that they have more experience of how hardy children are? ? [In other news: for a great read [on why progress measures are not all they cracked up to be](#), it's well worth reading co-founder Becky's [latest blog](#)].

2. How We Discovered That 74% Of Schools Are Breaking The Law

A weird quirk of English law is that each school is required to undertake a "daily act of collective worship". Note: it doesn't need to be religious worship. Schools can get a 'determination' to have secular daily worship (yeah, get your head around that). But the rule remains nonetheless. Unfortunately, 74% of schools appear not to care.



Who are the biggest offenders? We split the results by phase and school type:

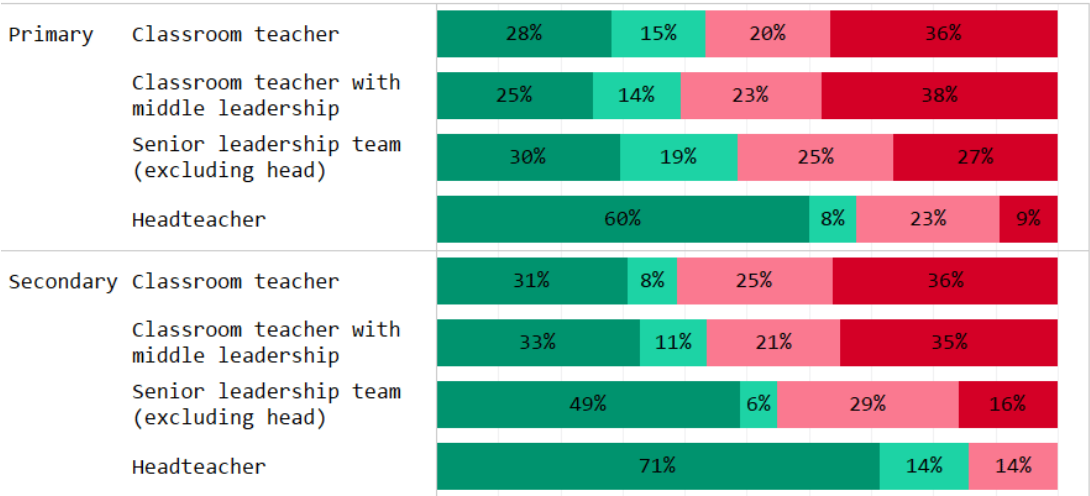


Voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools make up most of the 'religious' schools in Britain – and are by far the most likely to have collective daily worship. Although once pupils hit secondary school, even these figures drop substantially in the voluntary schools. The British Humanists have been calling for the rule to be dropped for about 10 years. Given these results, should we all continue turning a blind eye – or is it finally time to change (or enforce) the rule?

3. Heads know best on GDPR. But is that enough?

Happy GDPR! Last Friday's introduction of new data laws led to a slew of emails asking for permissions. Schools now face the (very remote) possibility of fines if they screw up and lose pupil data. Headteachers seem pretty confident they know what is going on – with the majority having attended at least one course to get training on the new rules. BUT teachers are a lot less confident. Over a third said they had no training and they didn't know much about the rules.

If you haven't noticed from the many emails you've already received: new data laws are on the way!
So, today we want to know, have you received any training this academic year to prepare you for the introduction of the new GDPR laws?

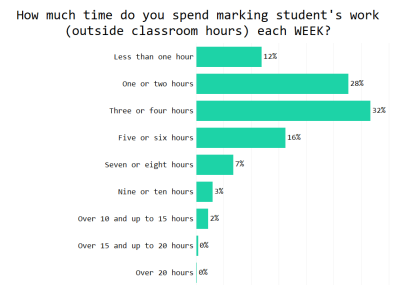


Answer Text

- No - and I don't understand the new requirements
- Yes - but I still don't feel I understand the new requirements
- No - but I already know lots about the new requirements
- Yes - and I feel I now understand the new requirements

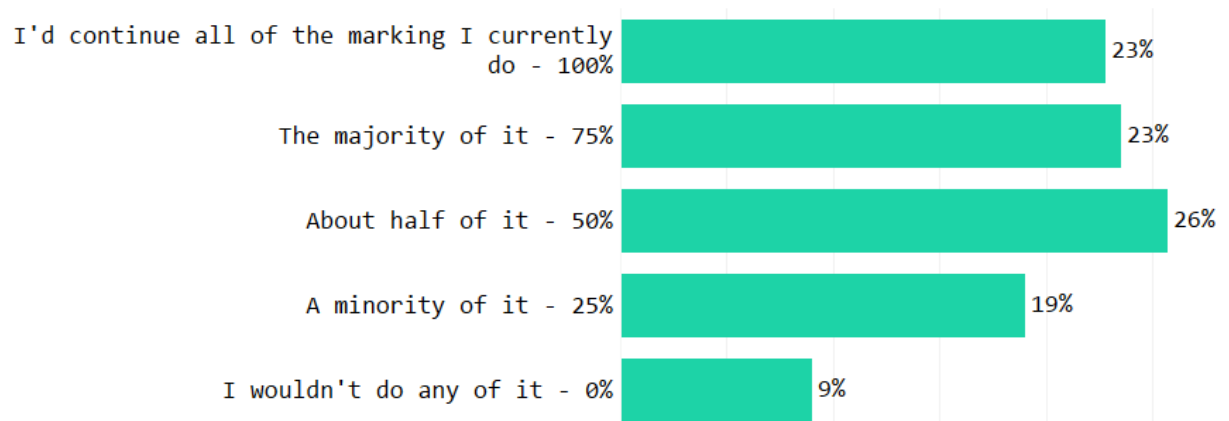
Teachers have a lot on, so we can see why senior managers may think that only they need to understand GDPR. But teachers are also handling data on a regular basis, and may be signing up to online software packages without any understanding of what this means for data. No one needs to go crazy over GDPR, and schools don't need to spend a fortune, but a quick briefing for staff on the basic 'dos and don'ts' is a good idea!

4. Mark Like No One Is Watching - Part 2 Teachers spend a lot of time marking. The most common response is 3-4 hours per week. Over a year, this adds up to around 14 work days.



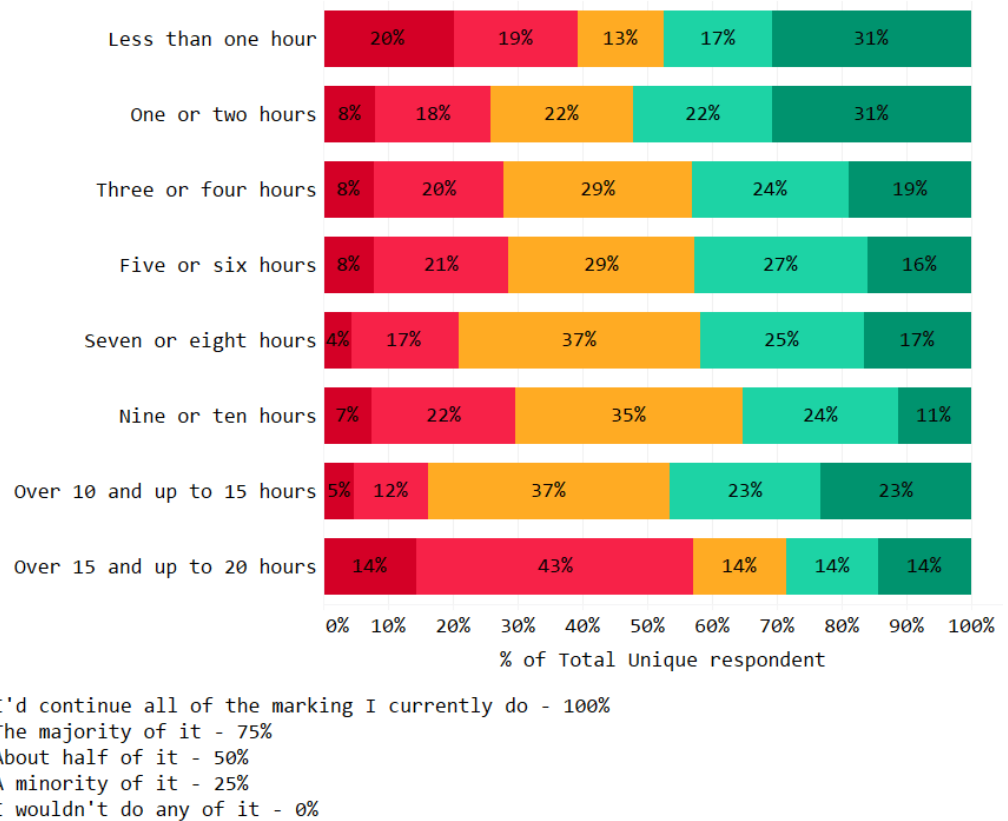
But how much of this marking is done for the sake of meeting an arbitrary standard, rather than something important? A few days after we asked about marking estimates, we asked how much people would reduce their marking if no one (parents, Ofsted, SLT - no one) would find out. Half of teachers said they would continue with all their marking, or only reduce by 25%.

A London teacher wants you to think about all the marking you typically do each week (outside classroom time). How much would you do if you knew that no one - no heads, line managers, other teachers, parents - would be monitoring and if all that mattered was balancing pupil learning and your workload?



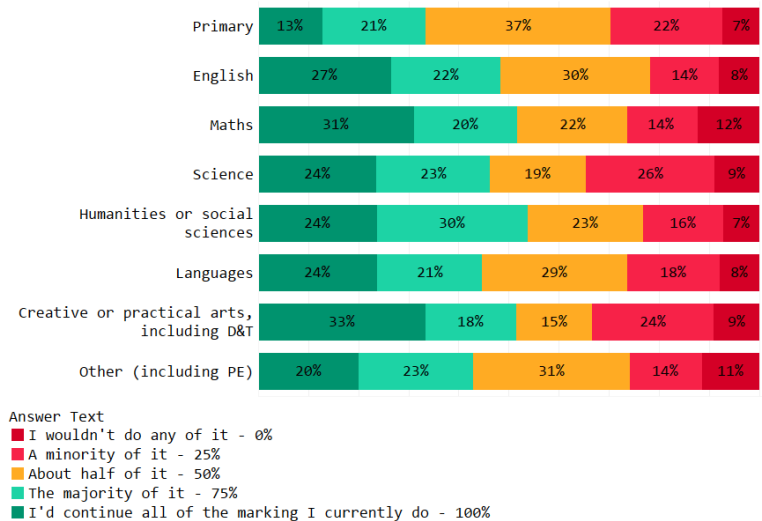
This is consistent with what we've found on this before, But does it matter how many hours you mark? Surely people with HUGE marking loads most want to reduce their marking? Actually, not quite...

Current marking levels vs amount you would drop



Teachers who said they had marked for 10 to 15 hours in the past week were among the LEAST likely to want to reduce their marking. Or, to put it another way, a lot of teachers are marking for hours and hours because they feel it is fundamental to the job, and not because external watchdogs (such as Ofsted or headteachers) are making them do so. That said, only a small proportion (between 20 and 35%) of teachers say they would continue doing ALL of their marking. Hence, some marking is happening because of external expectation. Are certain types of teachers more prone to marking because it pleases others? Science, primary, and creative arts teachers were the most likely to say they'd reduce their markload significantly if given the chance. But lots of creative arts teachers also wanted to continue with all of their marking! What's that about? Primary teachers were particularly likely to say they wanted to reduce their marking. Only 13% of primary teachers said they would continue with all of their current marking if no one else would find out. This suggests primary teachers feel most under pressure to mark for the purpose of 'showing' others - and feel it at much higher rates than their secondary colleagues.

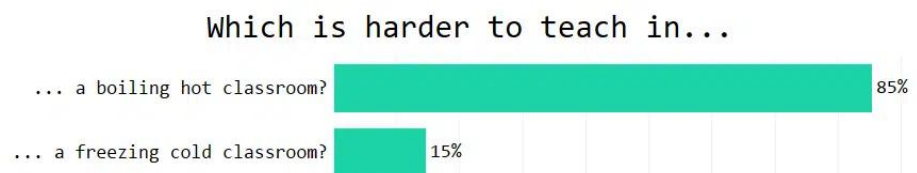
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We've discussed before on this blog that 'teaching' can sound like a single career, but the experience is very different for teachers of different ages and subjects. This is a great example of that.

5. [It's Getting Hot In Here](#)

If you ask teachers during the summer months if it is worse to teach in a boiling hot or freezing cold classroom, guess what? They pick the boiling hot one! Will this change in winter months? We'll have to wait and see!

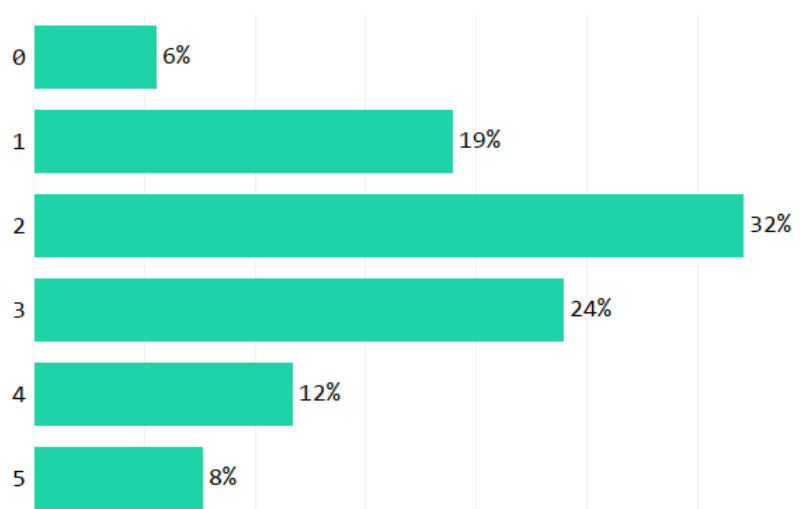


Interesting point in the meantime: there is a legal minimum temperature for schools, but not a maximum. The Workplace Regulations 1992 states that classrooms should be at least 18 degrees (64.4F). However classrooms can be any temperature and you can be expected to stagger on. The World Health Organisation recommends 24 degrees at the upper limits, and 26 degrees is the point of no return, but no one ever listens to that!

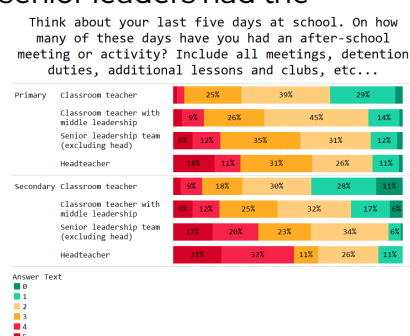
6. [A Further Thought On the Mystery Of Meetings](#)

One finding that constantly surprises audiences is that 50% of teachers on any given week attend 3 or more after-school meetings or activities. Senior leaders tend only to count activities mandated by the school (eg specified meetings and open evenings) and forget that teachers may generate other activities (eg meeting parents or their colleagues). Last week we asked the question again and found 44% of teachers said they had 3 or more activities after school that week. And this was a half-term week with a bank holiday at the end of the week!

Think about your last five days at school. On how many of these days have you had an after-school meeting or activity? Include all meetings, detention duties, additional lessons and clubs, etc...



But not all teachers are equally caught up in these activities. Classroom teachers were actually the least affected by after-school meetings. Middle and senior leaders had the greater number, and headteachers crept up to the highest rates.



All of which may explain why the senior leaders are sometimes surprised! It is not the case that all teachers are doing 3 or more activities after school. In fact, most classroom teachers are not doing this. But those with middle and senior leadership responsibilities definitely do, but those groups may not think of themselves when presented with data about 'teachers'. Checking data in multiple ways like this is helping us get a more nuanced picture of what is happening in schools. One final check we need to do is look at these numbers again when it's not an end of half-term.

7. [Finally, a word about FOUR questions...](#)

Teacher Tapp asks THREE questions each day. That's our schtick. On occasion, however, it's useful for us to have people answer if they haven't answered it before. One example is age. Sometimes we want to check answers against age. But we might only already asked half the current users this question already. Instead of asking everyone again, we've added a new skill to Teacher Tapp where it will ask the age question just to those people who have not answered it before, and THEN it will ask the normal three questions. This means we can do better analysis and should mean we can stop asking you for your age over and over again. **

8. Finally, finally as ever, we learned that you really love our

daily tips, so here are the links for last week:

[Horrible lesson observation](#) [Social media and teachers](#) [The risky teen brain](#) [How to like a class you dislike](#) [Improving powerpoints](#) [GDPR for schools](#) *

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! Enjoy the rest of the week... 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