

Pension preferences, teacher shorts and home education

Howdy Tappsters!

Happy holidays to all those who broke up last week (50% of Tappers!) and those who will ring the final bell 🔔 this week (34%), I hope your last few days in the classroom will be calm and enjoyable!

Higher salary now, or higher pension later?

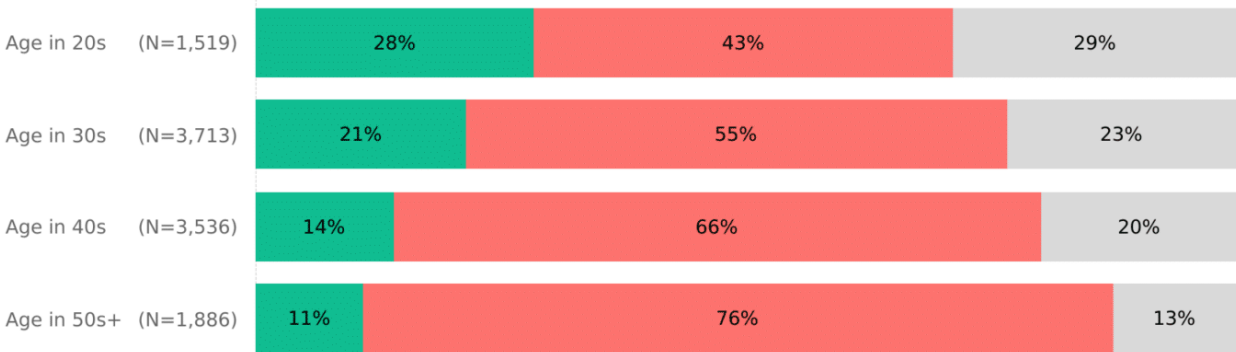
School pensions have been hitting the headlines - but how valued is a higher pension if current salaries aren't sufficient?

The answer depends on your age. Teachers in their 20s were the most likely to opt for a higher salary (28%) and the most likely to say they "don't know" (29%).

As age increases, the appetite for a smaller pension decreases. 21% of teachers in their 30s would pick a higher salary over a higher pension, and so would 14% of teachers in their 40s.

Teachers aged 50 and over were the least likely to pick salary over pension with just 11% choosing that option.

Would you prefer to have a higher salary today that would mean a lower pension in the future?



Question answered by 10,654 teachers on 16/07/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Yes No I don't know

What's next for teacher pensions? And how will changing pensions impact future pay talks? Teacher Tapp founder Professor Becky Allen has written [this blog](#) on the topic.

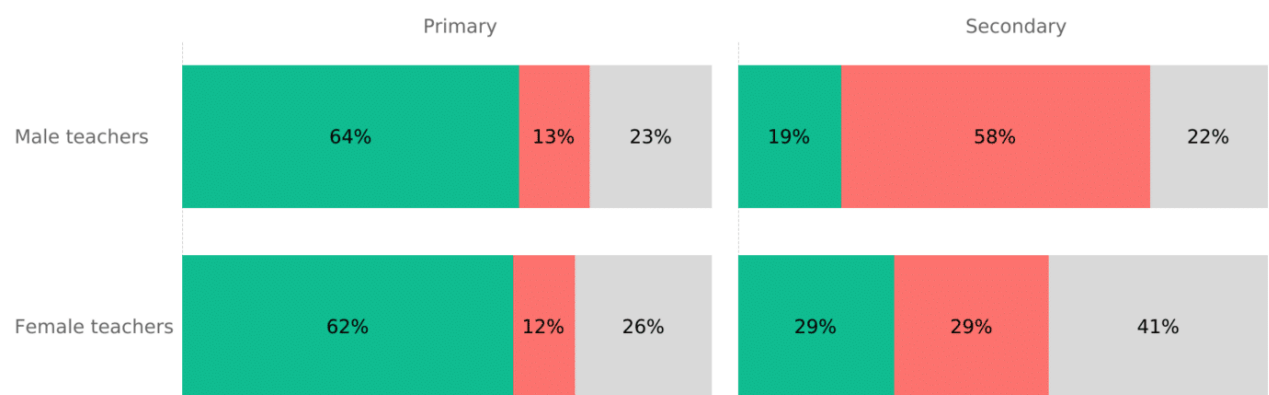
The rules on "formal shorts"

Although hot weather hasn't been an issue this year ■■■, on the rare days when the mercury in thermometers starts to climb, are formal shorts a sartorial option for teachers?

The answer appears to be: if you're primary – green light to shorts!

In primary schools, the majority of male AND female teachers are allowed to wear shorts (64% and 62%). Over in secondary, just 19% of male teachers and 29% of female teachers can have formal shorts as part of their workwear wardrobe.

Are teachers allowed to wear formal shorts to school?



Question answered by 5,151 to 5,390 teachers on 17/07/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

However, turn the clock back to 2019 when we last asked about shorts, and it was a different story.

In 2019, just 38% of male primary teachers were allowed to rock a pair of shorts to school – that means there has been an increase of 26 percentage points!

Similarly in secondaries shorts have moved from fringe to mainstream(ish). Previously only 5% said male teachers were allowed to wear shorts in their secondary school – meaning the 2024 result is an increase of 14 percentage points.

Where do you stand on the formal shorts debate? Should they be on the "unsuitable for a workplace" list, or a staple wardrobe option? And if more schools are allowing teachers to wear shorts, could they become a feature on school uniform lists in secondaries too?

Send us your thoughts through the app, on socials or by emailing hello@teachertapp.co.uk.

How much say do teachers want over lesson plans?

If Goldilocks swapped porridge bowls for lesson plans, what would be the "just right" for how much freedom teachers should be given over their classroom content?

Total freedom was NOT the most popular choice (17% primary and 19% secondary). This was too hot.

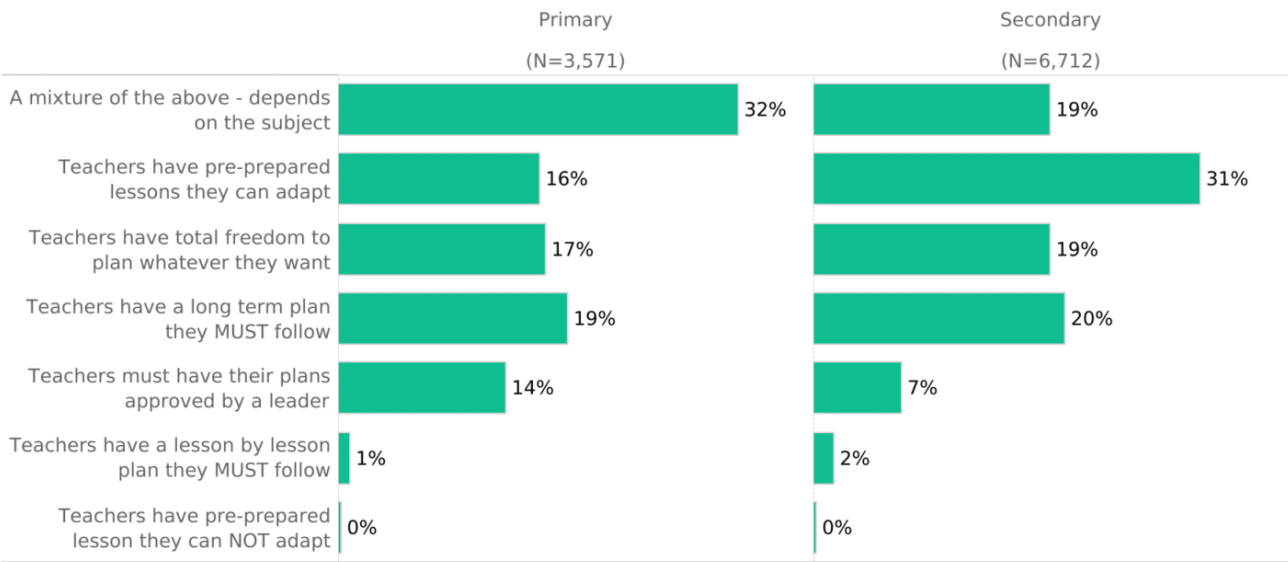
At the other end of the scale, no one wanted pre-prepared lessons that couldn't be adapted. This was too cold.

Where can we find the 'just right'?

The most popular option for secondary teachers was pre-planned adaptable lessons (31%), followed by fixed long term plans (20%).

Primaries prefer a mixed approach (32%) and then long-term plans (19%).

Imagine you can choose your school (primary) or department (secondary) policy on lesson planning. Which option would you choose?



Question answered by 10,283 teachers on 18/07/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Does that 'just right' level change with your job role? Only a little. Classroom teachers were more likely to say total freedom compared to senior leaders (including headteachers) in both primary and secondary (20% vs 10% in primary and 22% vs 15% in secondary). Apart from this, responses were broadly similar.

The idea for this question was sent in by a teacher. Did you know you can send in question suggestions directly from the app? Go to settings > contact us and then tell us the questions you would love to ask!

Work experience

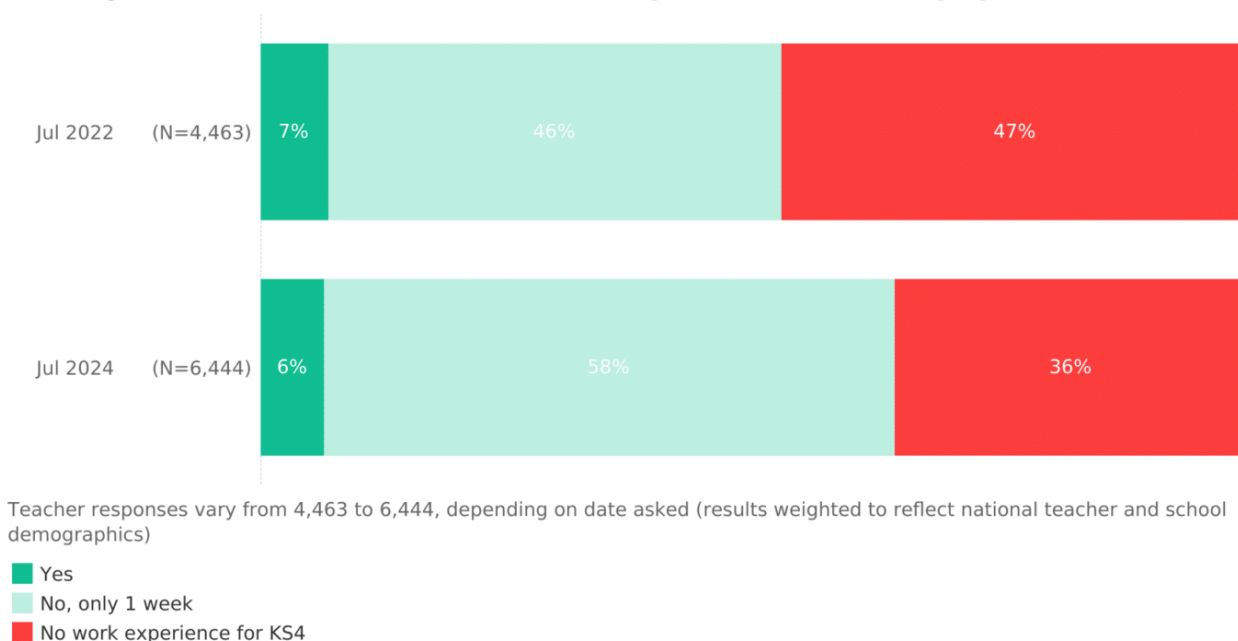
In the run up to the general election, [Bridget Phillipson said](#): "We will train 1,000 new careers

advisers and deliver two weeks' worth of high-quality work experience for every young person at secondary school to boost opportunity."

Now Mrs Phillipson is our education secretary, will she find the two-week work experience an easy promise to deliver? Currently, just 6% of schools offer this to their KS4 pupils, suggesting rolling it out to all secondaries could pose a significant challenge.

However, there is clearly a growing appetite in schools for work experience, as the number offering one-week placements has grown since 2022 (58% from 46%).

Does your school do a 2-week work experience for KS4 pupils?



Home education: leaving and returning

How many children are leaving school for home education? And how many are joining school following a period of learning at home?

■ Last year 10% of primary teachers had one or more children leave for home education, this year that rose to 17%.

■ Secondary teachers report a similar pattern. In 2023 25% had one or more children leave school to be educated at home rising to 35% this year.

Children returning to school following being home-educated is also on the rise.

■ In 2023 12% of primary teachers had one or more children join having previously been home-educated, this year that increased to 16%.

■ Similarly, in secondary schools, between 2023 and 2024 there was an increase in the teachers who have had one or more children joining school who have previously been learning

at home (24% to 32%).

Whether these patterns continue or not, we will have to wait and see. In the meantime, how have schools been supporting these leavers and joiners? Let us know your thoughts via socials or on the app ■■.

Top events

This week's top event is Mr Barton Maths Podcast: [How to observe a lesson with Adam Boxer](#).

This is an on-demand event, but we also have in-person events to sign up for too.

If you want to know what edu-events are coming up then [check the app](#) and filter for your phase and subject.

Ups and Downs

On the rise ■■

Supervised playgrounds – Every teacher knows you need enough supervision at lunchtime and breaktime if you want a smooth transition to lessons when the bell rings. That's why it's great news to see an increase in those saying you have enough staff to manage breaktime and lunchtime (58% up from 49% in October 2023).

Heading down ■■

School trips – Compared to last summer, fewer primary schools have taken end-of-year trips. Only 30% are out of school in 2024, compared to 38% last year.

Daily Reads

Our most read daily read this week was all about inspections: [What did Ofsted want schools to improve in 2023-24?](#)

If you would like to read the rest you can find them here ■■

- [Too much detail](#)
- [Advice for ECTs](#)
- [Understanding ADHD](#)
- [Suspension data](#)
- [Pension data](#)