

Inset days, Ofsted gradings and leaders in schools

Hey Tappsters!

The new school year 2024-25 has officially begun!

For some of you, this new academic year comes with big changes: 7% have started the year in a brand new school ■■ and 9% have returned with a shiny new promotion ■■.

We hope that everyone has had a good start to their new year – and that no one was greeted by a mouldy banana in their packed lunch box ■■.

There are exciting findings coming below, but if you want something else to get excited about this month then you might like to know...

New September prize draw!

This month our prize draw will see a lucky tapper scoop their choice of either an apple iPad (10th generation) 256GB Wi-Fi OR Samsung Galaxy Tab S9 FE+ ■■

To take part, answer questions five days in a row on Teacher Tapp. You will earn a ticket visible in your app under prize draw and, if we have your permission, we'll send an email each time you get a ticket too. Collect as many as you can between 9th – 30th September. After 3:30pm on 1st of October, we'll draw a winning ticket. ■■

Note: there's no need to do anything with your tickets – they are automatically entered into the prize draw. BUT, you might like to check your tickets when we announce the winner: it has a special code on it!

We'll share the winning ticket code on our socials, and email the winner too. Full terms and conditions [here](#).

Okay, on to results...

INSET days

Whether you're the one standing at the front, getting ready to share with a room full of teachers or the teacher sitting down and gearing up for a packed day of learning—INSET days

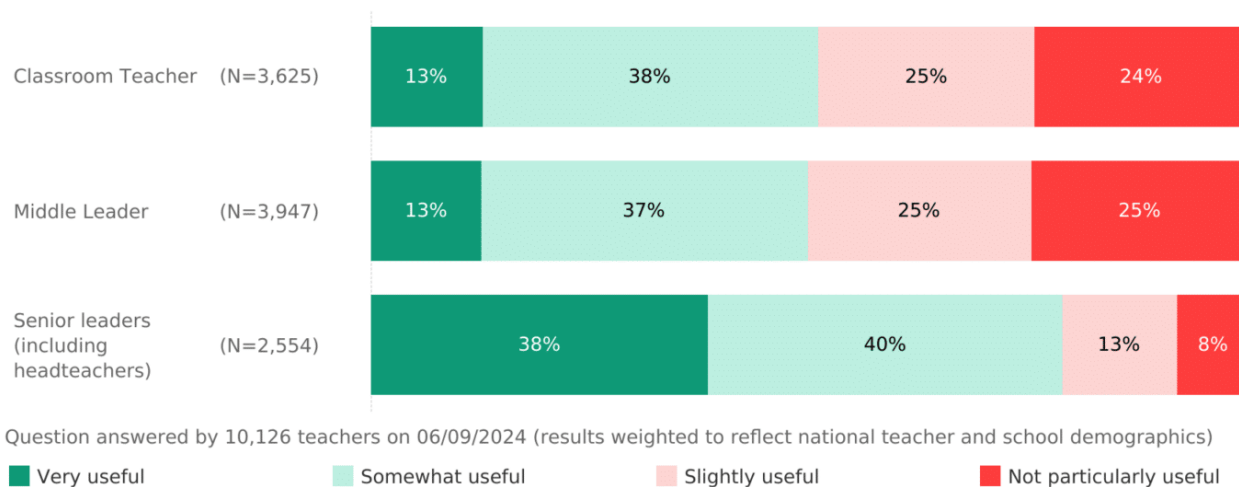
can feel pretty overwhelming!

A lot of work goes into INSET days - so it is important to know: did teachers find their INSET day useful?

The answer given depends on whether you're a classroom teacher, or a member of the senior leadership team.

Senior leaders (including headteachers) were the most likely to say it was 'very useful' (38%) whereas classroom teachers and middle leaders were matched in their more subdued enthusiasm (13%).

How useful was the last INSET day you attended?



Was this down to teachers not receiving the inset day they wanted?

Possibly. When comparing the questions 'What did your INSET day include' and 'What would you have LIKED your INSET day to include' there were some differences:

- Although 88% of classroom teachers had headteacher briefings on issues or school policies as part of their inset, only 27% of classroom teachers wanted this to be included in their inset.
- Similarly, statutory training featured in 81% of classroom teacher inset - but when asked what they would have liked to have been included, just 22% of classroom teachers wanted this to be covered.
- And it's not just classroom teachers not getting the inset days they wanted. 25% of senior leaders including headteachers wanted leadership development included in their inset - but this only happened for 8% of SLT.

Free lunch

Since the students are off-site and the dining hall is available, many schools use inset days as a

chance to serve lunch to all staff and encourage a little post-holiday mingling.

But how many get this lunch for free?

■■■■ 64% of secondary school teachers score a free lunch on inset days, but only 26% of primaries can say the same.

Do you have a favourite INSET day lunch? Is it ALWAYS lasagne - and should this be a future Teacher Tapp question?!

Were you one of the teachers who didn't find their inset day useful? What inset day activities would you like to see the back of? Let us know over socials or via the app! ■■

Opinions of Ofsted

Ofsted has made headlines last week when the announcement came that single word judgements would be scrapped - effective immediately.

This decision appears to have been received well by teachers, with 75% believing it has been a positive change, 19% having mixed feelings and just 1% feeling it was a negative change.

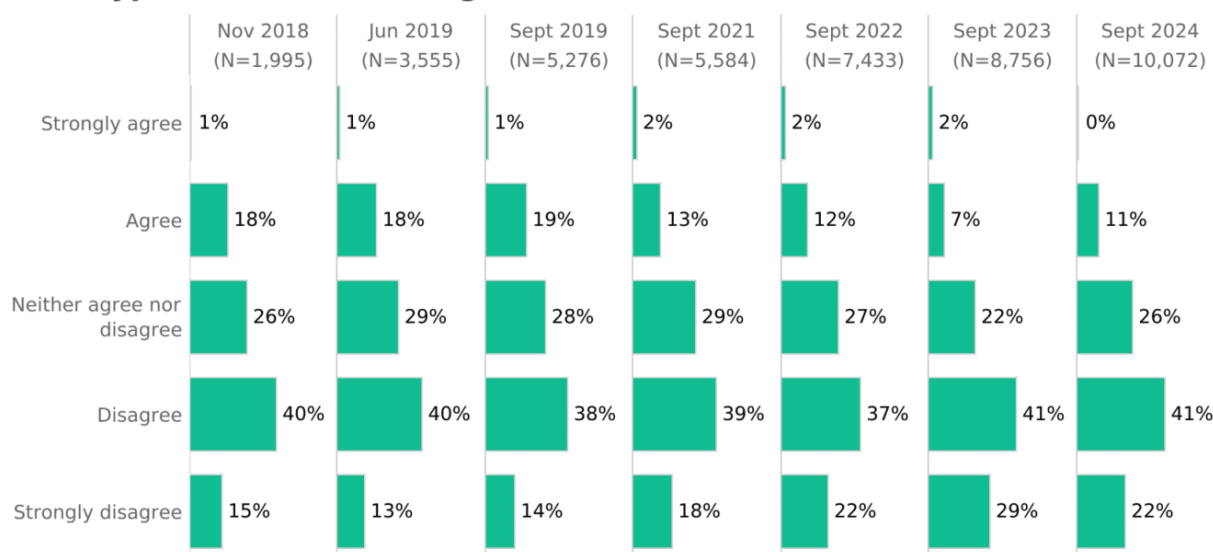
When it came to strength of support, there was a slightly different distribution of responses.

Although the majority (85%) either 'strongly' or 'somewhat' support the removal of single-word headline grades, 14% held no opinion.

Whether this tweak to reporting grades results in a difference in teachers' attitudes towards Ofsted remains to be seen - what we do know is that belief in Ofsted as a reliable and trusted arbiter of standards across all different types of schools in England has been poor for some time.

In 2019, one in five teachers (20%) agreed that Ofsted was a reliable arbiter of standards in schools, in 2024 it dropped to just over one in ten (11%) ■■.

'Ofsted acts as a reliable and trusted arbiter of standards across all different types of schools in England'



Teacher responses vary from 1,995 to 10,072, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Some teachers have got in touch to request we ask whether teachers believe it is possible for ANY external body to act as a reliable and trusted arbiter of standards. Look out for this question and the follow-up analysis in the blog in the next few weeks...

What makes a good leader?

Although it is easy to list the qualities of a bad leader (micromanaging, uninformed, overbearing, boarish...) the qualities of a good leader might give you some pause for thought.

When we asked you about the best leaders you had worked with and what made them good at their job, an amazing 5,000 of you replied 🙌. Common themes that came up included: honest feedback, compassion for the people working with them and leading by example.

The replies you gave certainly provided some useful insights - both for leaders and those who aspire to be leaders! Keep an eye out for a future Wisdom Wednesday showcasing your thoughts.

For now - here is a little taster...

The leader who could be underestimated

"He led rather than managed. He was kind and understanding and some people took this for weakness but he wasn't weak and stood up for what was right."

The leader who values relationships

"Listens actively. Treats me like a person. Says thank you. Is realistic. Appreciates ideas and thoughts. Works hard. Knows her stuff."

The leader who puts people before data

"Clear expectations and vision. Recognizing good work. Genuinely cared about staff well-being over data and results. Actively sought ways to reduce workload and focused on things that made a real impact for students."

■ Time before you lead

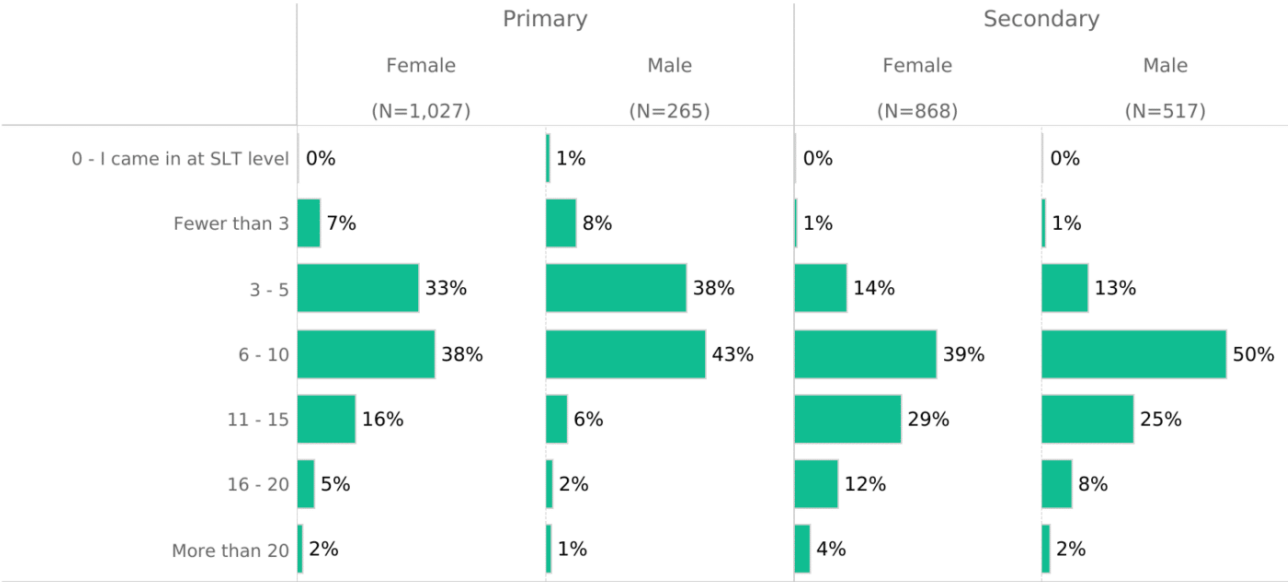
Many of the replies for what made a good leader mentioned experience and good knowledge of the classroom. But how long does a leader need to teach before they're ready to lead?

Last month we asked how long you think someone should teach before they take on a leadership position (and you can check the results of that poll [here](#)). This week, we asked senior leaders and headteachers how long they taught for before taking on their first leadership position.

Overall, the most common response was 6-10 years (41%) and the second most common was 3-5 years (26%), and this is very similar to when the question was first asked in 2022, and again last year.

However, when the results are split into primary and secondary, and then filtered by male and female, there are differences in the speed of progression: primary teachers move into headship quicker, and men move up the ranks quicker than women.

How many years did you teach before taking your first SLT role?



Question answered by 2,678 teachers on 08/09/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Uniform shorts

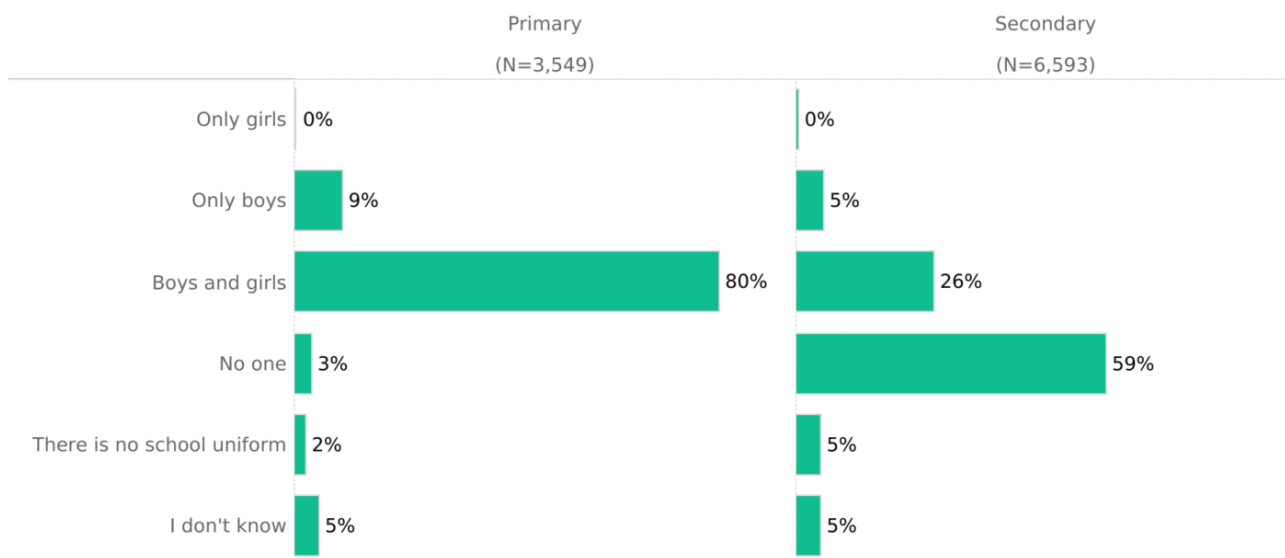
Something that can take up an inordinate amount of time for school leaders is uniform. As children head back to school the 'crackdown' on uniforms often marks the start of the year.

But do smart formal shorts feature on your school uniform list?

Shorts get a big tick in primary schools, where the most common response was 'boys and girls' (80%).

However, once students reach secondary school, formal shorts are out, and trousers or skirts are in – the most common response was 'no one' (59%).

Are students allowed to wear smart shorts as part of their uniform at your school?



Question answered by 10,142 teachers on 04/09/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Fee-paying primary schools were more likely to restrict shorts to boys only when compared to state schools (39% vs 6%).

Previously we have asked about staff shorts (you can read the results [here](#)) and have been able to track the results over time. This is the first time we have asked about students and shorts – so we'll be checking in again next year to see if attitudes towards shorts have changed in the same way as they have about ties (you can read those results [here!](#)).

Top events

■ Our top event this week has retained the crown from last week: [The Day](#) Classroom 2.0: AI In Education.

This is an online event – but we have a mixture of in-person, online and on-demand events in our app for you to peruse!

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 ■■

Schools not requiring lesson plans - Great news! Since 2017, there has been an increase in the number of schools that don't ask teachers to supply copies of their lesson plans (88% up from 74%).

Heading down ■■

Board markers on tap - Fewer teachers have unlimited access to board markers compared to 2021 (43% down from 52%).

Daily Reads

This week our most-read blog was about [ontogeny](#) - a special read for our KS1/EYFS teachers!

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

- [Autism-friendly classrooms](#)
- [Coming back to the classroom](#)
- [Priorities for new terms](#)
- [What I wish I knew when I started teaching](#)