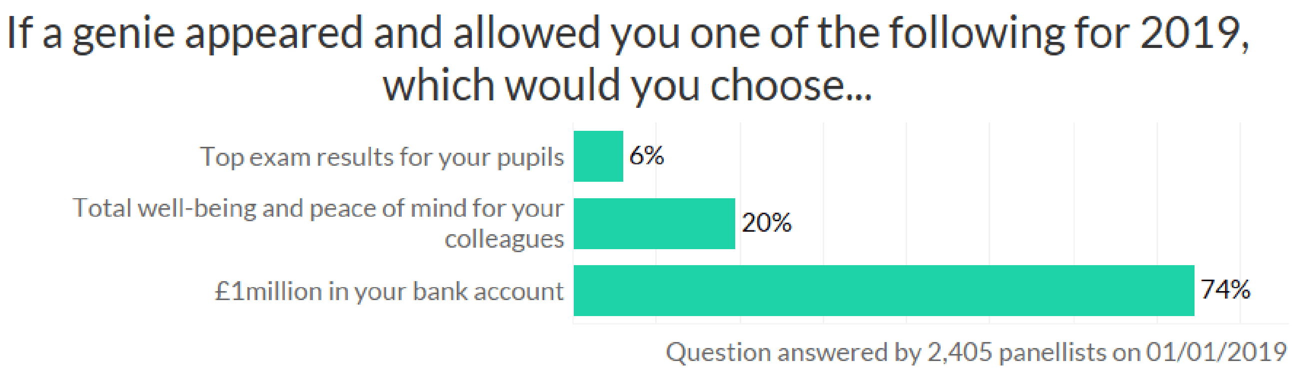
Does money matter to teachers?

Hello regular Teacher Tappers! We hope you are enjoying the new badges, streaks, and don't forget the £10 book token voucher for those of you with regular attendance. This week's Monday blog digs into the 'Genie' question we asked on New Year's Day and what we learned about the people who would trade a million pounds to get their pupils a top set of exam results. ENJOY!

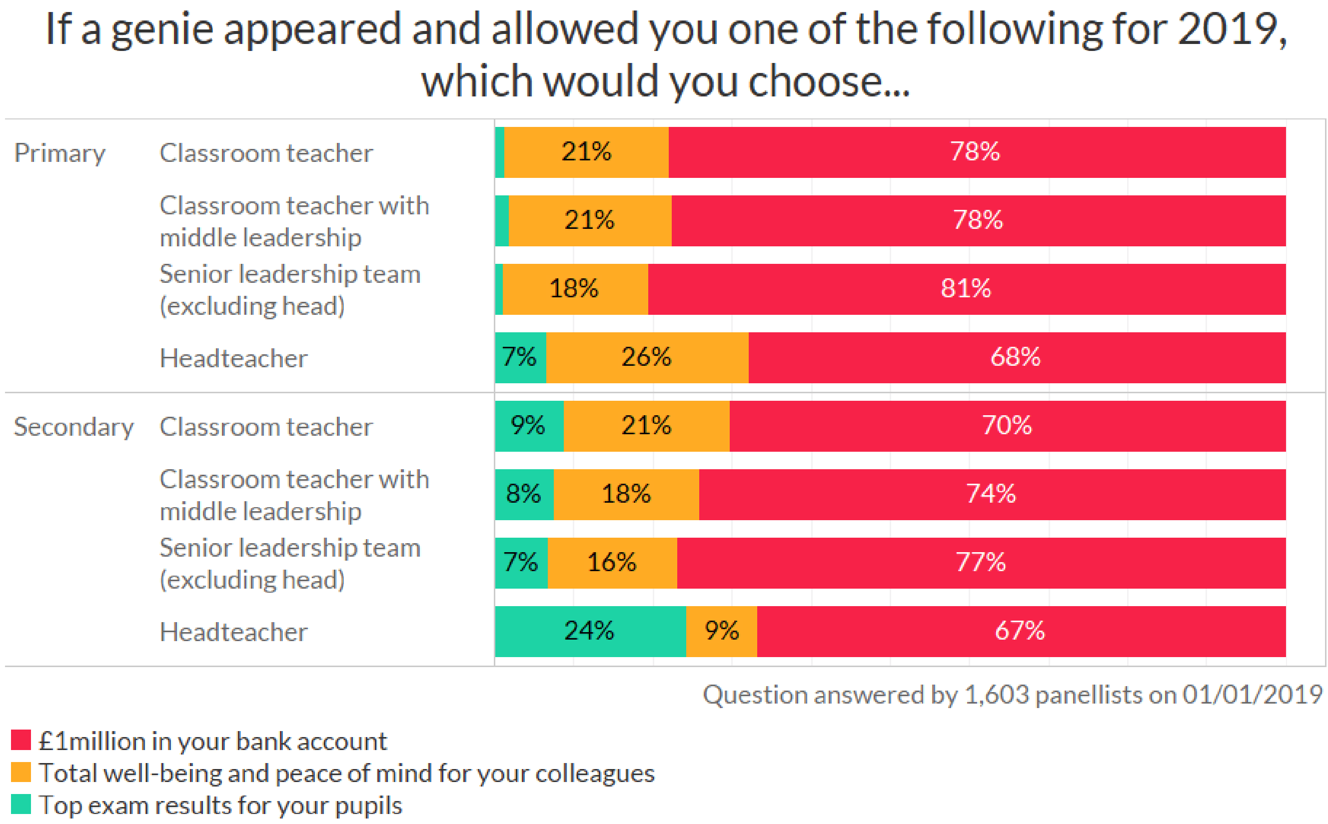
How many times have you heard the line that 'teaching is a vocation' and teachers aren't 'there for the money'? It's a nice-sounding line and it's partly true; teachers are motivated by lots of bits of the job. BUT, the money is still important. Teachers may love the thrill of teaching quadratic equations but they've also got to eat.

We therefore created THE GENIE QUESTION ?
to test which is more important to teachers: results, wellbeing, or cash.



74% of teachers chose £1m over top exam results or total well-being for their colleagues. Numerous teachers on social media were delighted the figure was so high as they'd felt guilty (if honest) when clicking to take the money.

But who are the strange 26% of teachers forgoing their £1 million?



Secondary heads are by far the most likely to swap cash for exam results (24%), while primary heads preferred well-being for colleagues (26%).

Why are heads such selfless beings? In part, heads are older and wealthier than classroom teachers and so might need the money less. It's also the case that a headteacher's identity is more wrapped up in a school's exam success, particularly at the secondary level. Individual teachers care about exam results, but it's not as central to their role as it is for headteachers. Heads may also be thinking about the perception of the school in the community, and the difference it makes to pupils' onward study, if there are great results.

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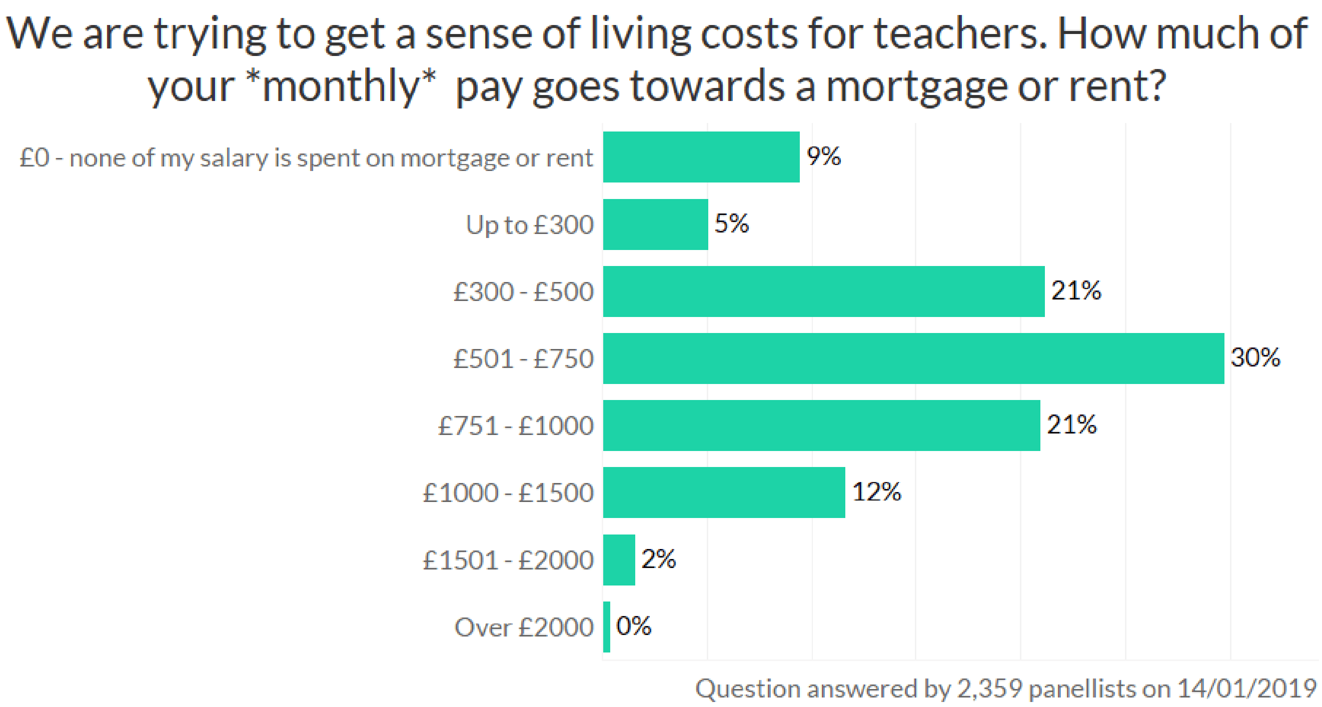
If teachers want cash, what do they want it for?

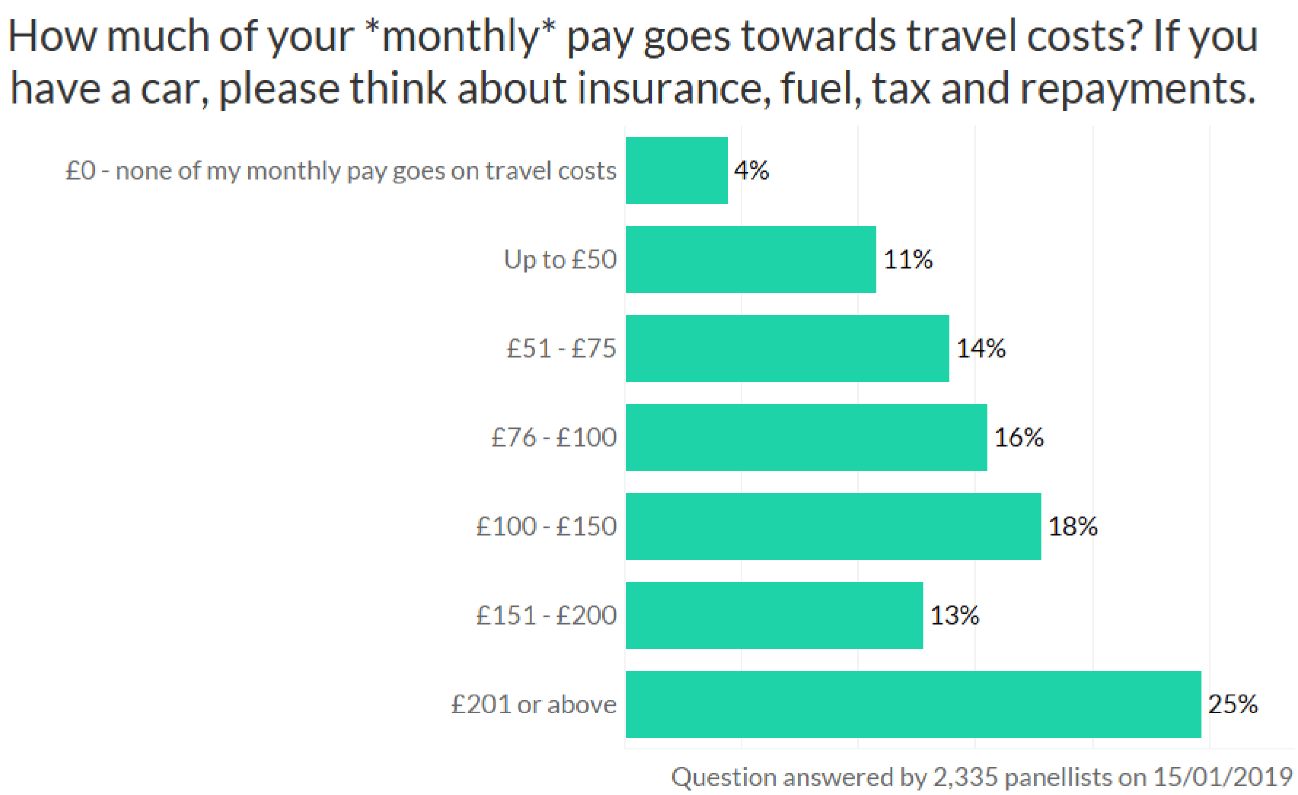
People often talk about teachers as if they are saints. But even saints live in the real world, and it's expensive. Housing, travel, eating all add up, regardless of a halo.

So, how much does the average teacher spend on living?

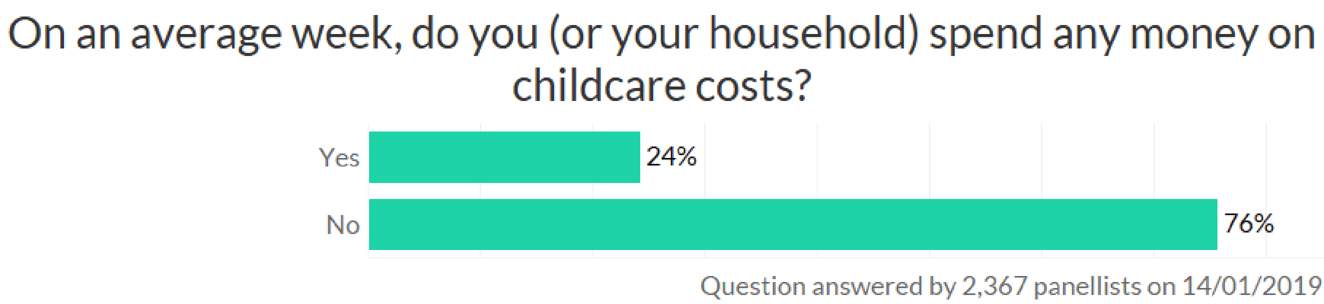
Keeping a roof over their head costs most teachers at least £500 per month.



Half of teachers pay at least £100 per month in travel. One in four pays more than £200.



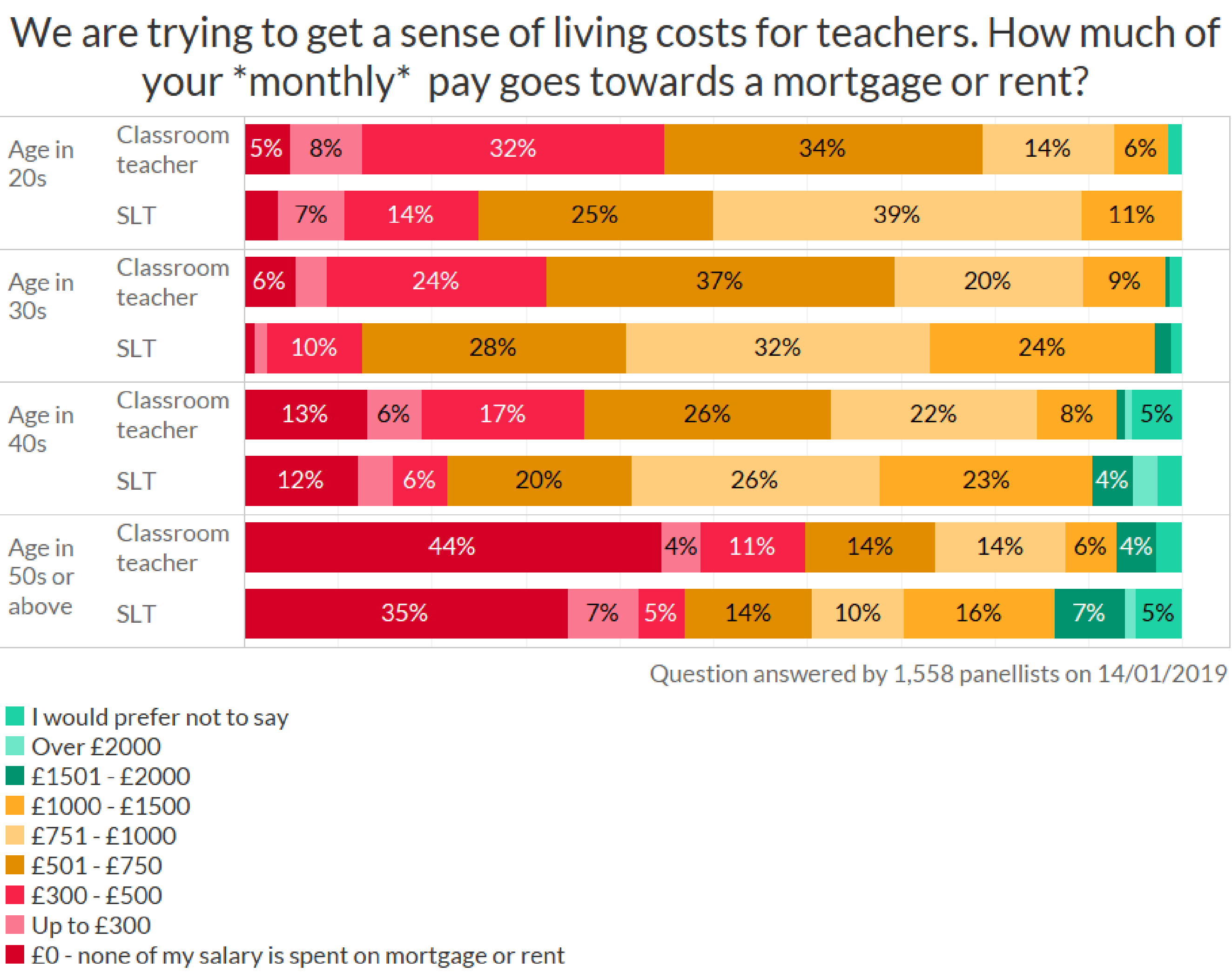
And a quarter pay for childcare. In the UK, full-time nursery care averages at £284 for full-time, or £122 part-time per week.



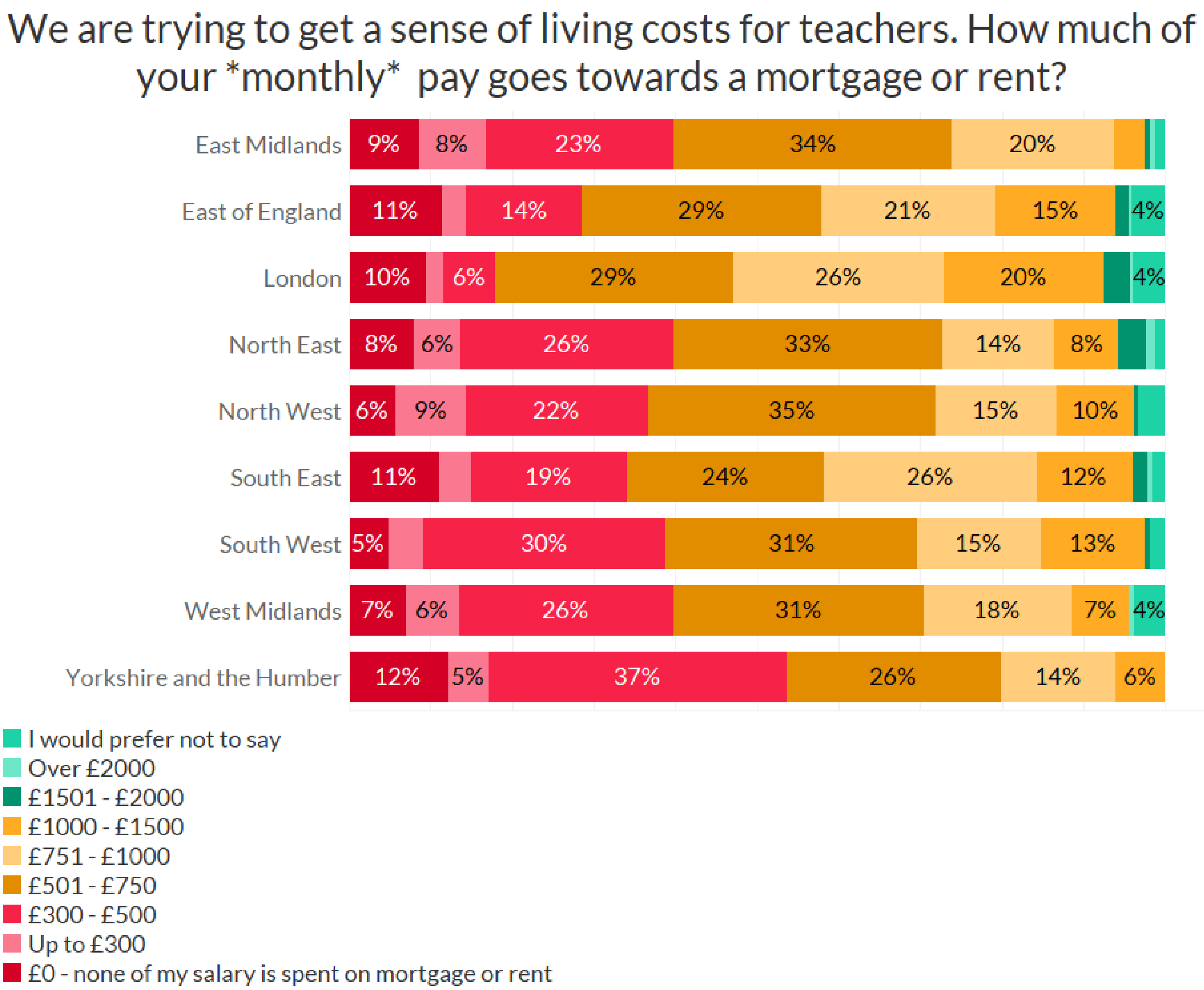
With just average rent, average travel, and full-time childcare the outgoings for a teacher are over £1,700 per month. Once student loan and pensions are taken into account, a teacher needs to be earning £27,500 just to cover these three outlays. If the government is wondering why women in their thirties leave teaching at the highest rates, it could well be that they can't afford to stay.

Not every teacher is equally hit by costs...

A large chunk of teachers in their 50s are already mortgage-free. Of those with higher rental payments more are senior leaders or headteachers (this is true in younger age groups too). However, there is a group of classroom teachers in this group who also have a substantial mortgage and may have been hit by the lower payrise for teachers in the profession longer than six years.



Region also makes a big difference. If Yorkshire & Humber wants to run a campaign for getting more teachers, it might want to point out the lower housing costs.



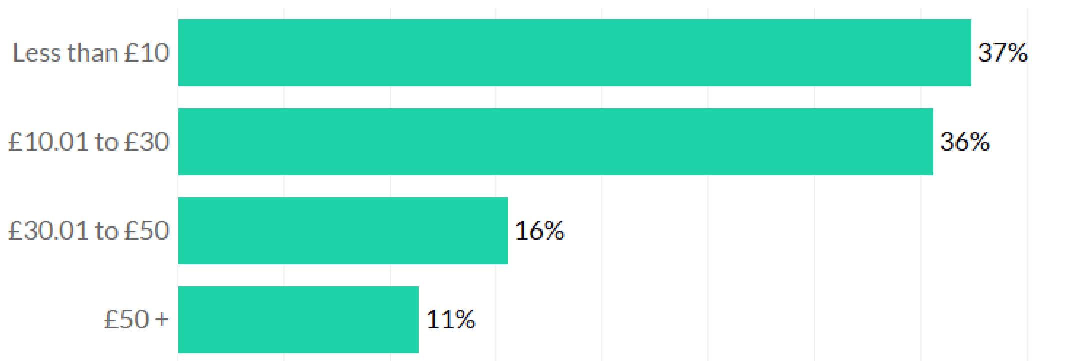
The downside is that Yorkshire & Humber teachers have higher travel costs. London, on the other hand, is much cheaper for getting around (something teachers in the capital often forget).

How much of your *monthly* pay goes towards travel costs? If you have a car, please think about insurance, fuel, tax and repayments.

Teachers also spend lots of money on resources

Want glue sticks for your classroom? Or a cool historical source to bring alive WWII? Often it's quicker to buy the item from one's own pocket than go through lengthy form-filling only to find out the school doesn't have the cash anyway.
Hence,teachers regularly spend their own cash on school items.

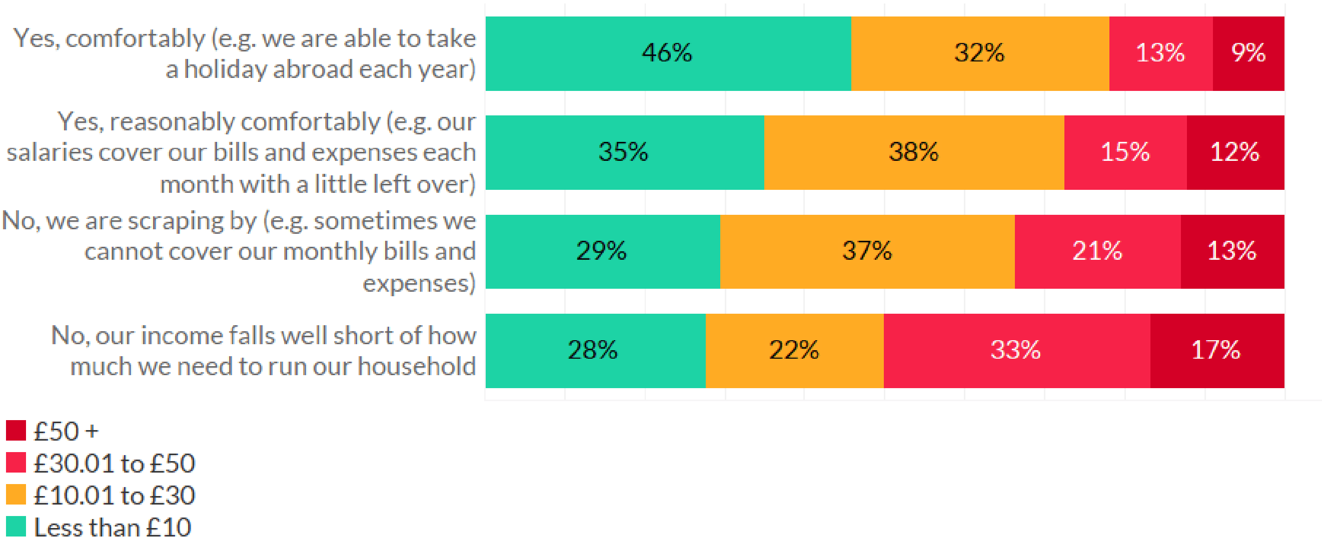
How much of your own money have you spent over the past month on school items?



Question answered by 2,369 panellists on 17/01/2019

And, more astonishingly, it is teachers who are struggling most for the cash who report spending the most personal cash on school resources.

Monthly spending on school resources, grouped by household income sufficiency

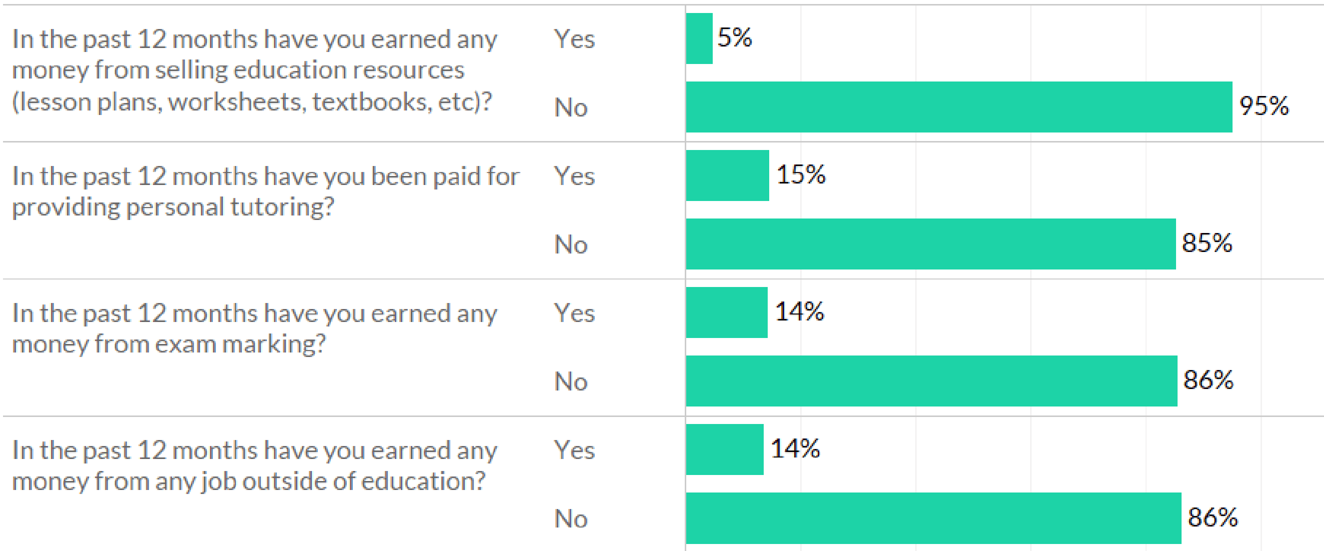


Is there any good news on teacher salaries?

Yes. There are two bits of good news:

1. Teachers have numerous ways to make cash outside of school, and
2. Most teachers are not struggling with their current cashflow.

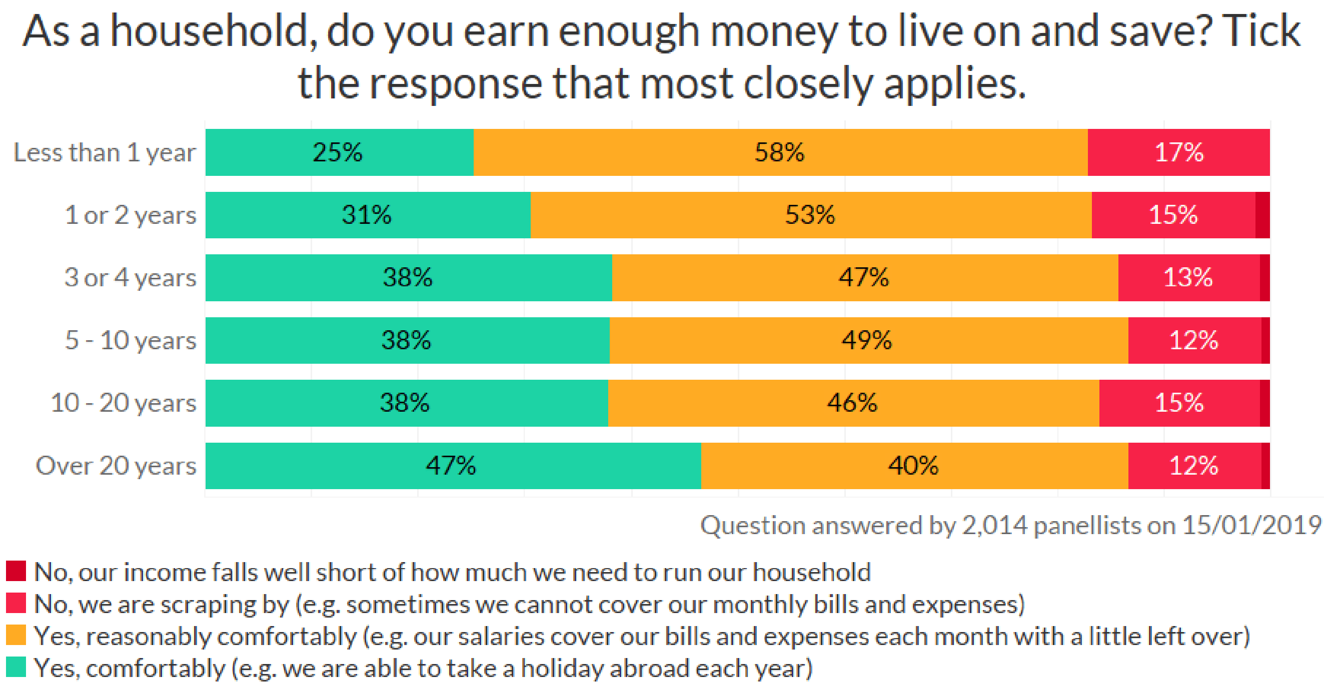
How do we know?
Well, teachers are earning cash from selling resources, private tutoring, exam marking, and other jobs.



Secondary tutors are way ahead on each of these – with 26% doing exam marking, 7% selling resources, and 24% providing personal tuition.

11% of primary teachers are doing personal tutoring on the side, but almost none are exam marking or selling resources, leading to fewer additional income opportunities. (Which might explain why they were the most likely to take the million quid).

All this said… most teachers are comfortable on their wages, with years of experience making t he comfort even greater.



When it comes to daily life, teachers are therefore typically okay about their salary but (a) childcare costs are huge, and (b) if a genie comes your way with a million quid, the chances are you and everyone you know would take it (unless they're a headteacher).

Finally, this week's tips…

[To remember the brain must forget]

[What do we mean by knowledge-rich curriculum, anyway?]

['Messy' planning (without powerpoint)]

[Coping with bereavement in schools]

[The importance of music in the curriculum]

[What every teacher needs to know about assessment (EBE)]