

Early Year challenges, prom, and how family-friendly is teaching?

Hey there, Tappsters!

October means darker mornings (boo) but also half-term is on its way (hooray!). Watch out for a question on when your half-term takes place. Will more schools be offering a two-week break this year? We will know for sure soon!

New competition!

Happy October! We have a new competition for Teacher Tappers.

Between Tuesday 7th October and 31st October, for every TEN questions answered Tappers will be awarded a ticket in the prize draw. On the 1st of November, TEN Teacher Tappers will be drawn and be sent £100 gift cards.

To be in with a chance to win, all you have to do is tapp! Good luck!

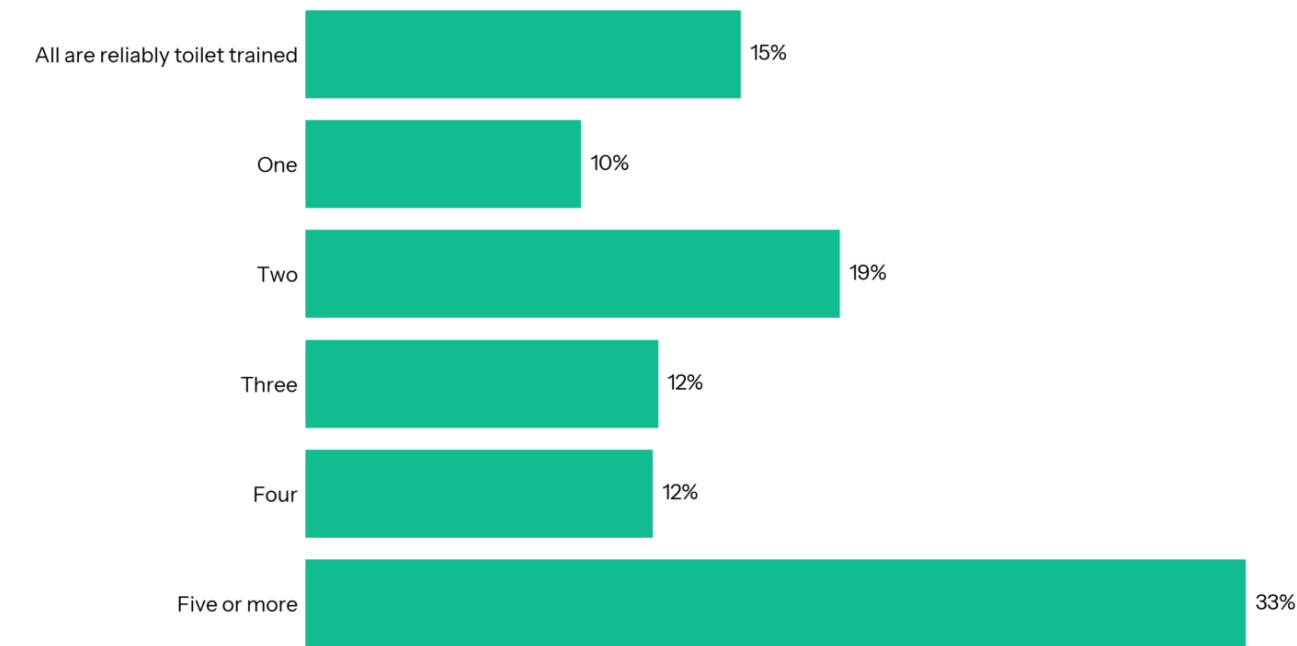
Early Year challenges

Right onto the edudata! Last month, we asked our primary tappers questions about their new intake. The BBC reported the results (and you can read about it [here](#)), but here are some more breakdowns for you...

Overall, 85% of teachers say children in their reception classes are not yet toilet-trained, and a third of teachers reported that their reception classes have five or more students who are not reliably toilet-trained.

In those schools with students still acquiring that skill, 78% disagree that they have enough staff to meet the needs of these children.

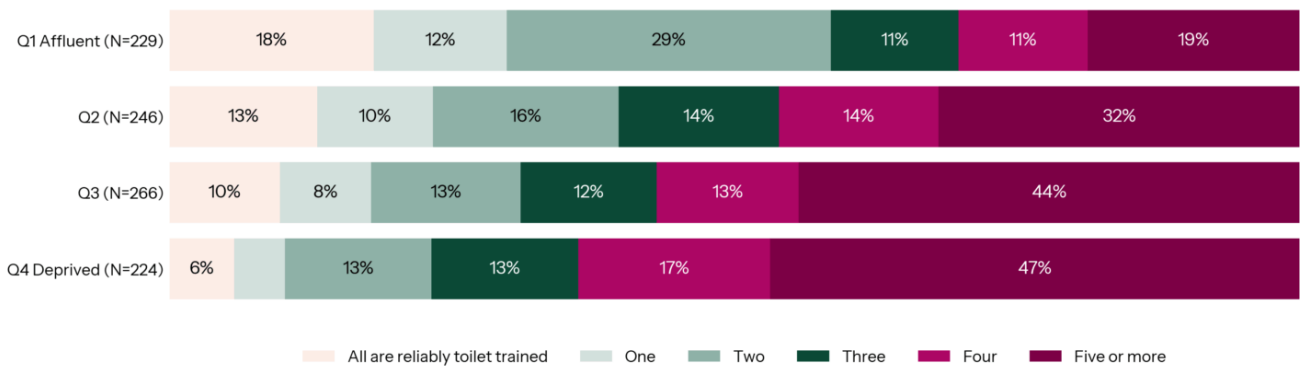
How many children in your reception/foundation class are not reliably toilet-trained?



Question answered by 1,132 teachers on 8th September 2025 (results weighted to reflect teacher and school demographics).

However, the challenge facing schools is certainly not uniform across all settings. Schools with the highest deprivation are THREE TIMES more likely to have students with toileting needs compared to schools in the most affluent areas. 18% of teachers in the most affluent schools reported all children were toilet trained, compared to 6% in the most deprived areas.

How many children in your reception/foundation class are not reliably toilet-trained?



Question answered by 965 teachers on 8th September 2025 (results weighted to reflect teacher and school demographics).

As well as toileting challenges, primary schools are also reporting a rise in the number of children presenting with speech and language difficulties, with 92% of teachers reporting an increase in the number requiring support in the last two years.

The current 2025/26 reception intake was born between 2020/21. A time when maternity support was dramatically reduced due to the restrictions in place to control the spread of the coronavirus. Limited access to playgroups, health visitors and early intervention support might

explain some of these challenges schools are now facing.

What else should Teacher Tapp find out about primary schools? Do write in your question suggestions: england@teachertapp.co.uk.

Time off for children?

A Teacher Tapper got in touch to ask how many teachers are given paid time off to attend events at their own child's school or nursery. After all, schools often invite parents in for plays, assemblies, and other events – parent engagement matters for building strong relationships. But do schools make it easy for teachers who are parents themselves to take part in those moments?

26% have NEVER asked for time off (more on this later) but among those who did:

It's good news, 82% have been given the time off paid, 11% were allowed the time unpaid, and 7% had their request turned down.

But before we start celebrating too soon – let's look at how things change depending on the role you hold in the school...

More senior leaders were given the time paid compared to teaching staff (95% vs 79%) and teaching staff were FOUR TIMES more likely to have their requests turned down (2% vs 8%).

Not only that, but teaching staff were TWICE more likely than senior leaders to just not ask! (13% vs 26%).

How might these experiences be impacting staff wellbeing? Well, we checked and those teachers who had their requests turned down (unsurprisingly) reported much lower contentedness scores (10% vs 2% scored 1 'extremely discontent').

A lesson for school leaders here might be bringing in a clear, open policy about requesting time off, or openly sharing under what circumstances a request would be approved. If a process feels fair, then it is less likely to result in staff harbouring resentment.

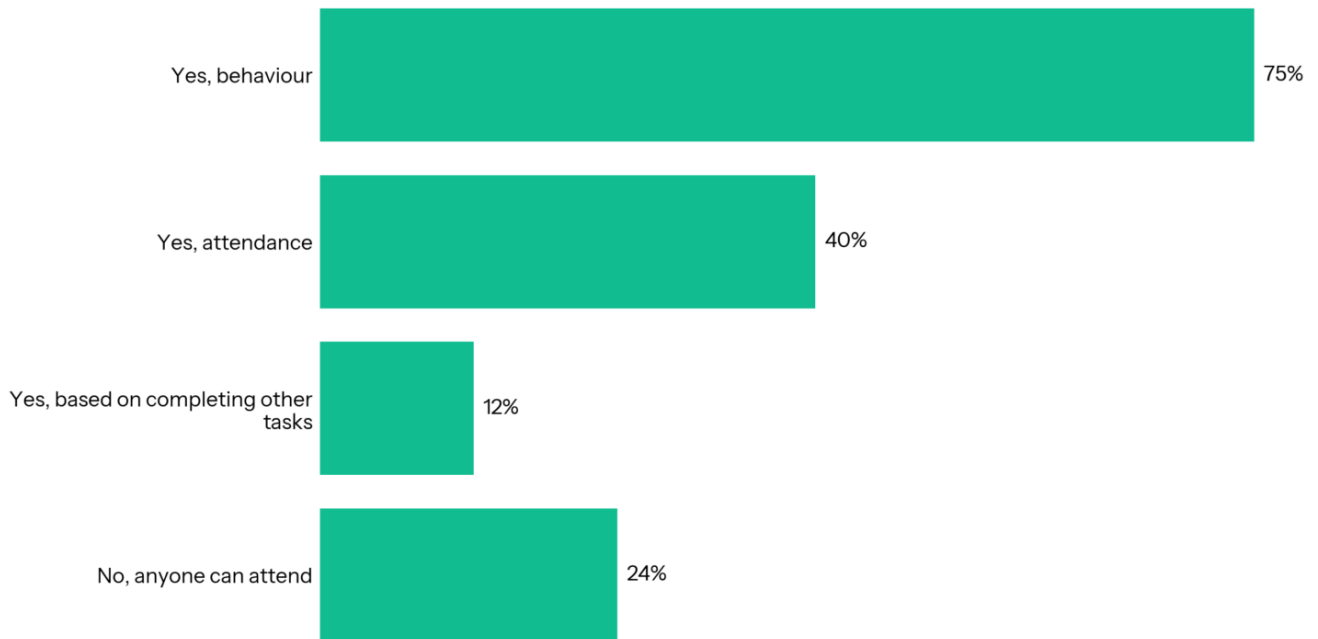
Passports to prom?

Most schools hold some sort of celebration to mark students leaving and going on to their next education stage – but is that prom open to everyone, or are "prom passports" the standard in schools?

More than one in ten teachers report their school has done away with proms altogether (one senior leader commented to the Teacher Tapp team at the Pixl conference this week, "it's become too complicated to make it worthwhile").

Among those schools still holding celebrations, three-quarters of teachers say their school has conditions for entry, with 75% citing behaviour, 40% attendance, and 12% reporting that there are other tasks that have to be completed before students are allowed to go to prom.

Does your school place any conditions on who can attend prom?



Question answered by 4,757 teachers on 2nd October 2025 (results weighted to reflect teacher and school demographics).

+ BONUS gym time!

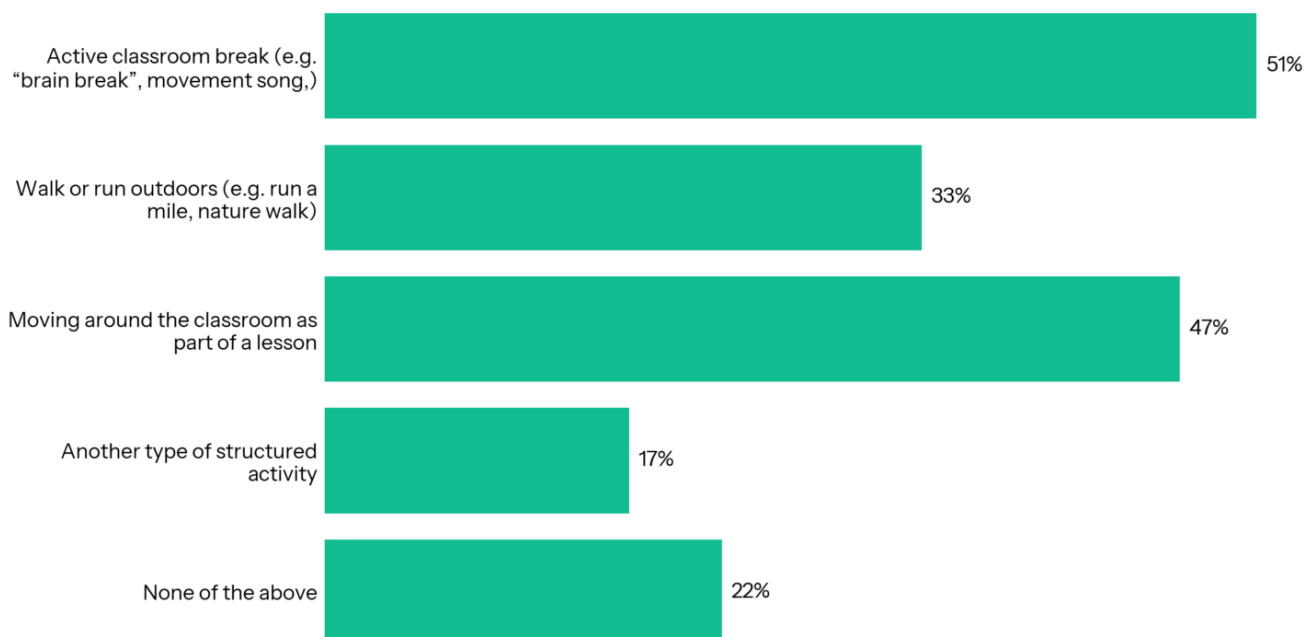
Lots of teachers returned to school with the best of intentions to carry on with your healthy summer habits...but how many teachers are keeping their promises?

One way to fit in a workout into your day is to make use of the exercise equipment at your school. 50% of secondary teachers work in a school with a gym that teachers can use. And of those with a gym they can use, 9% have made use of it already this year, with a further 14% saying they plan to soon ■■.

At the start of the year, a conversation with primary teachers at the ResearchED conference prompted us to pop this question for primary school teachers: What physical movement do you include in your lessons?

Lessons are looking pretty active: 51% gave their students a movement break, a third went outside for a Daily Mile-style run or walk, and 47% moved around the classroom as part of a lesson. Just 22% didn't do any non-PE physical activity.

Apart from PE lessons, did your pupils do any of these physical activities today?



Question answered by 3,096 teachers on 1st October 2025 (results weighted to reflect teacher and school demographics).

Digging a little deeper, it is KS2 who are less likely to engage in non-PE physical movement, with 31% reporting no physical activities, compared to 9% in EYFS/KS1.

If you have a question you would like to ask, then drop us a message and let us know!
england@teachertapp.co.uk.

Daily Reads

This week, Adam Boxer was the author of the most-read blog, all about [knowing where to start when beginning school improvement](#). More than one in ten Teacher Tappers read his piece and got their daily dose of bite-size CPD!

Got a blog you think we should feature? Email us at england@teachertapp.co.uk and we will check it out!