

Your friends at school, languages and the pandemic legacy

Golden Ticket Update

The January draw has been completed, and the lucky ticket winning £3000 is gold-parrot-59! ■■■t still hasn't been claimed, so check your app to make sure you're not missing out!

That's it for the Golden Tickets this time, but watch this space! We have more ways of saying thank you for tapping on the horizon ■■

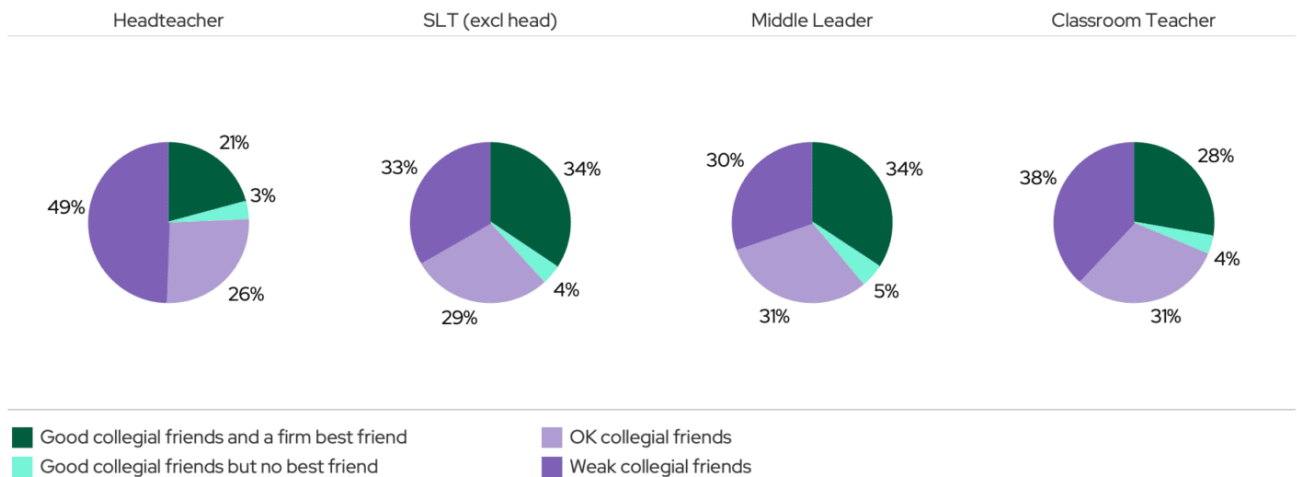
Who needs friends at school?

We've now asked you a few times about whether you have a best friend at work because research in other industries tells us that having a best friend greatly increases the chance that you'll stay in your job. After all, who wants to leave their best friend?! However, does having friends as colleagues matter more generally for wellbeing?

To answer this, we asked you two different questions about collegial friends last week. Is there someone who cares about and looks out for you, and do you have a best friend at work? For those of you who strongly feel you have colleagues who look out for you, the majority also say you have a best friend at work – it is unusual to have very strong collegial relations and yet feel you have no best friend.

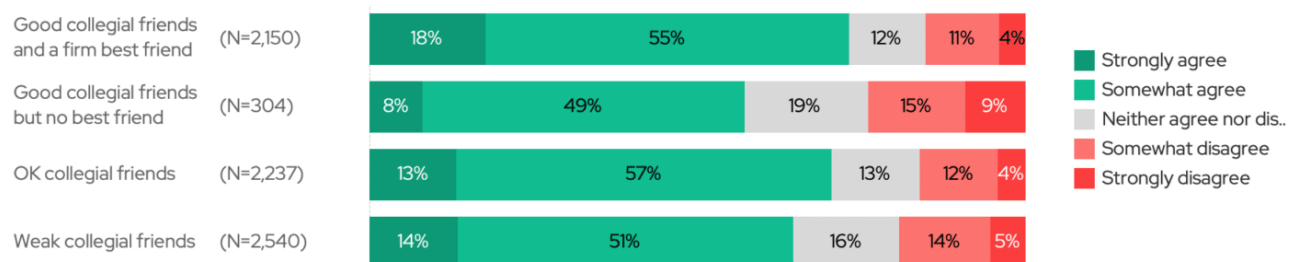
Overall, about a third of teachers told us they have colleagues who look out and care for them. We find that headteachers are least likely to say they have a colleague who looks out and cares for them. It's lonely at the top (although one-in-five lucky heads have a best friend at work).

Half of all headteachers do not feel they have a colleague who looks out and cares for them

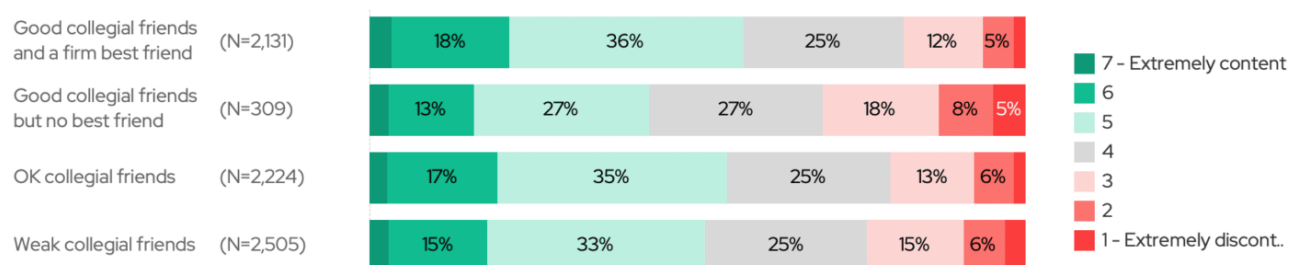


But are those with collegial friends happier at work? Surprisingly, it doesn't really seem so. Those with good collegial friends didn't really seem much more likely to say they had enjoyed working last week and also weren't much more likely to say they were content at school. So, it seems there are many different ways feel content at work - having a great friend is no guarantee of happiness!

'I enjoyed working this week'



Taking everything about life at school into consideration, I am currently...



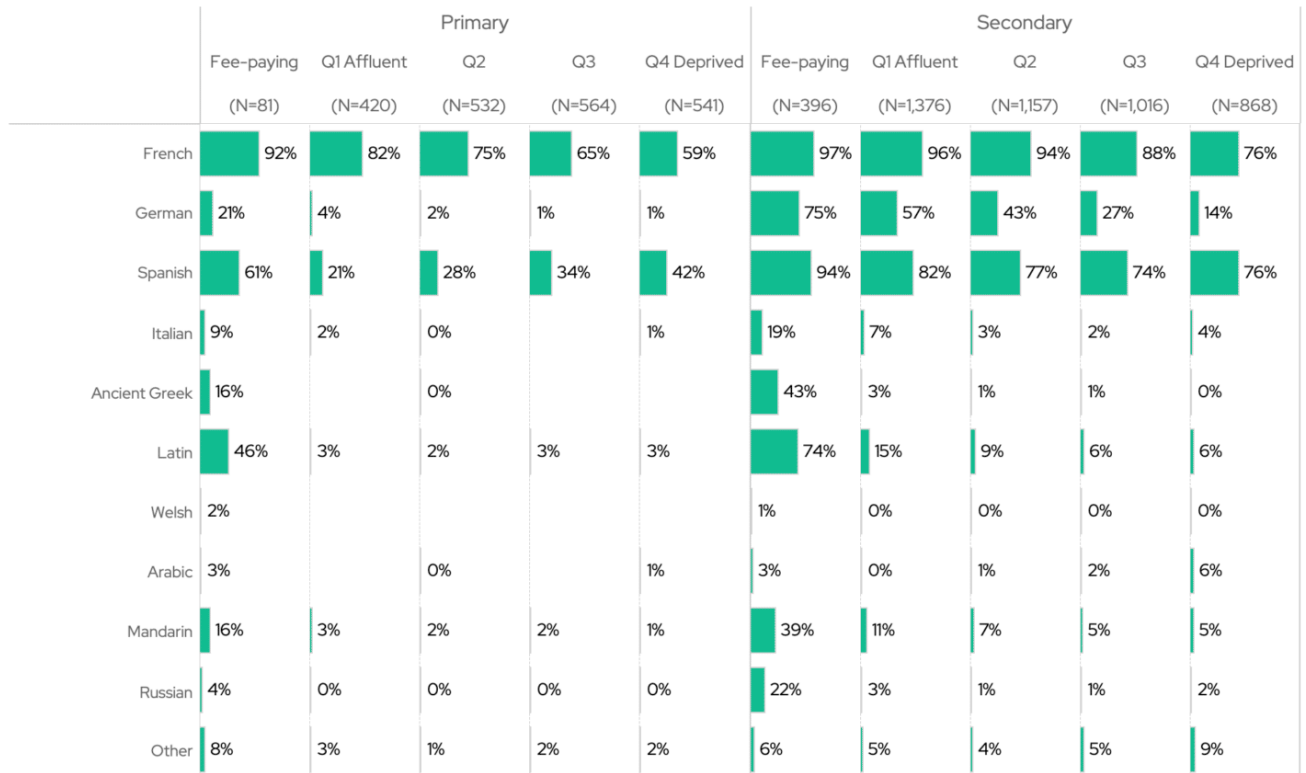
Learning languages

Language learning in schools is a frequent topic of policy debate so here's a quick update on where we stand. French remains the most common language in state primary schools, but

Spanish is gaining in popularity, particularly in higher FSM schools.

In the secondary phase, French and Spanish are now the dominant languages. German teaching is still common in the private sector and in more affluent state secondaries but is rare in high FSM schools now. The fee-paying sector offers a very wide range of language instruction, which frequently includes Latin and Ancient Greek.

Which of the following languages can students study in your school?

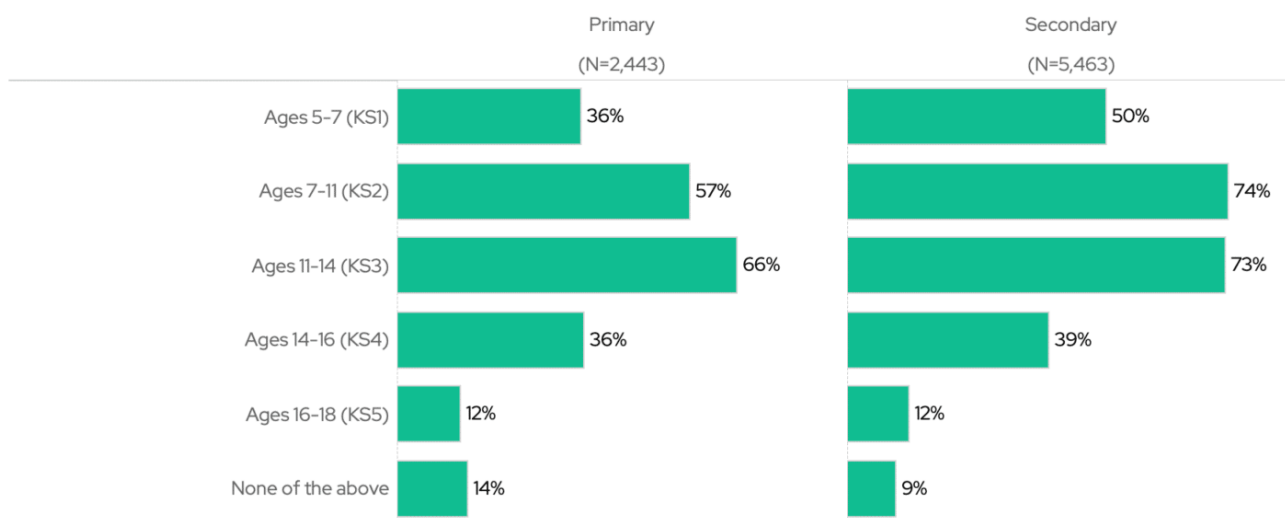


Question answered by 7,858 teachers on 14/01/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Despite the difficulties in teaching languages within the system, most teachers feel that students should be spending more time studying them. Many teachers feel there should be more language instruction at KS2, but it is the secondary teachers (who won't have to teach it) who are most likely to say they want to see more primary language instruction.

A massive three-quarters of secondary teachers feel there should be more time for language instruction at KS3. This is interesting - what do you think students should be spending less time studying to make room for this? Perhaps we'll ask you in coming weeks!

In which of these age groups do you think ***ALL*** students should spend more time studying foreign languages at school?



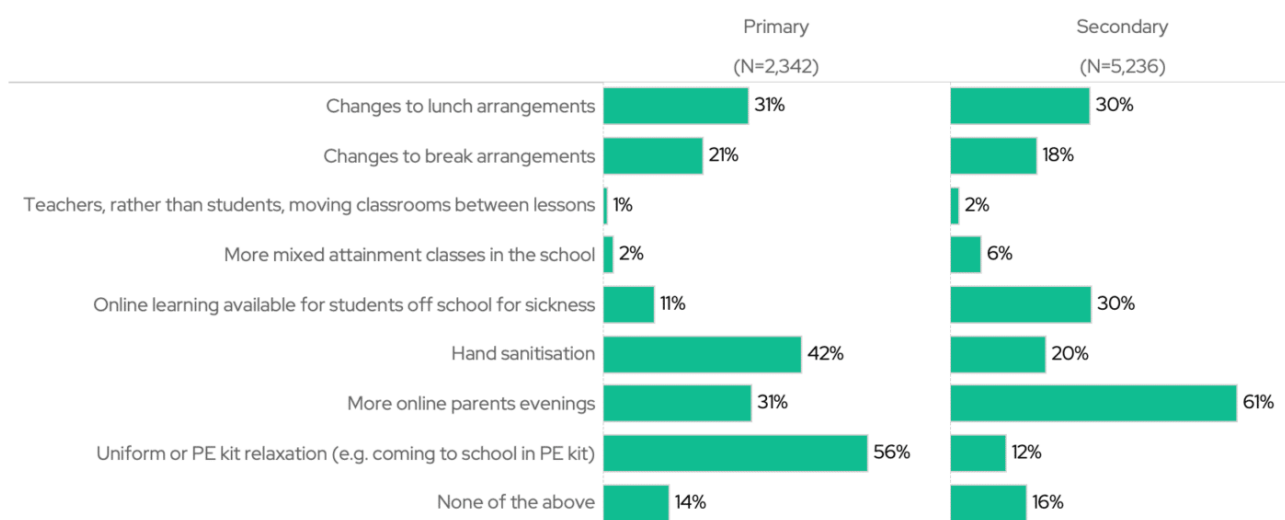
Question answered by 7,906 teachers on 14/01/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

What did we learn from the pandemic?

Schools had to change so many practices during the pandemic, but what changes worked out so well that you kept them? In primary schools, over half of you said you have relaxed uniform in some way. 42% of you said that you still have hand sanitisation in place (even though we've known for a long time now that COVID is airborne). And about a third said you make use of online parents evening and have kept some changes to lunch arrangements.

6-in-10 secondaries are keeping some online parents evenings. 3-in-10 now provide online learning for students off-sick. And a about a third have made lasting changes to lunch arrangements. Other things have generally returned to pre-pandemic arrangements. We've [reported in the past](#) that mixed attainment classes have generally returned to pre-pandemic levels (though have remained slightly higher in English). Similarly, very few schools have retained having students remain seated in one classroom whilst teachers move rooms.

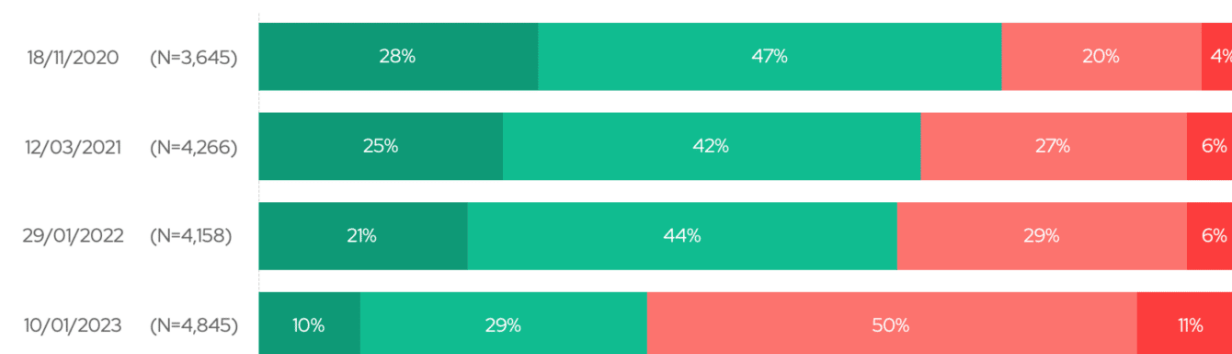
Did your school make any changes due to COVID that it has decided to keep in place (so far, at least)?



Question answered by 7,578 teachers on 13/01/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Talking of getting back to normal. It seems that secondary teachers finally feel that the exam classes seem more normal in terms of their anxiety and stress levels. These are cohorts whose secondary education has been severely disrupted by the pandemic, but they have known for a long time now that they will be examined at the end of their courses. And they have had the chance to sit end-of-year tests and mock exams to get used to the idea of working towards their exams.

Our current exam classes (Year 11/13) appear to be more anxious and stressed than previous exam classes for this time of year



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



And finally...

The most read blog post of the week was from Jonathan Mountstevens who explained why his school has [stopped using target grades](#).

Other posts last week were:

- [Psychological safety in teams](#)
- [The effect of blended learning on attainment](#)
- [Are your students thinking?](#)
- [Literacy progress in the first year of school](#)
- [When students lie](#)
- [A hopeful curriculum](#)