

Strikes, Red Nose Day, Childcare & More On Behaviour...

Wand, give me behaviour skills!

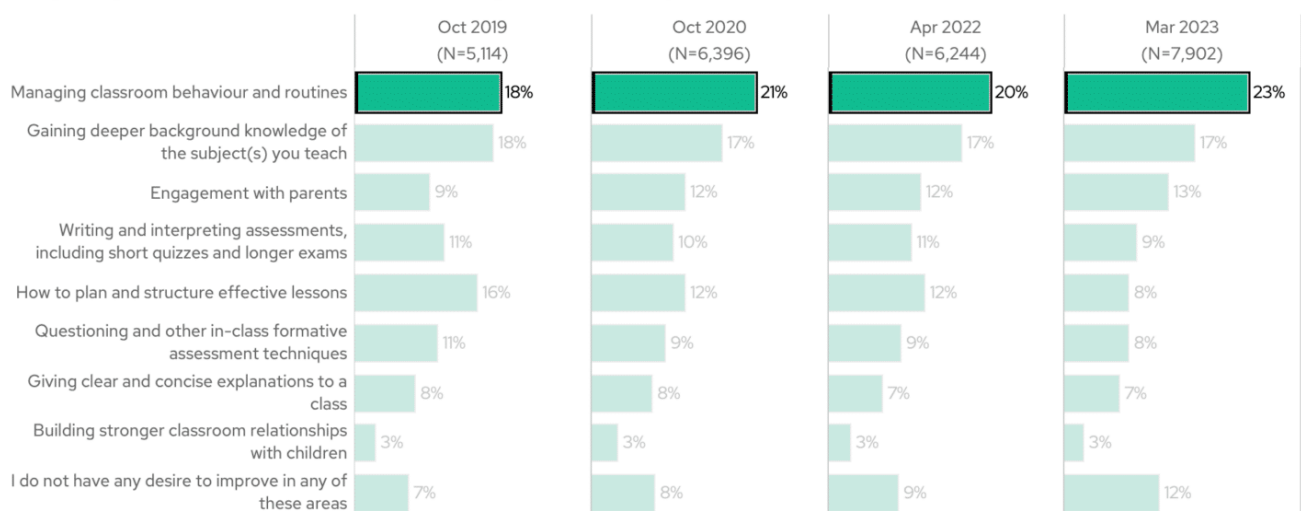
A common conversation in schools at the moment is whether behaviour is worse than before the pandemic. So far, our evidence is that things feel worse but we can't find data that stands up that the average classroom behaviour actually is worse. (This doesn't stop behaviour outside the classroom from being worse, of course).

Another signal that something is going on, however, is that more teachers this year said that if you could just improve one aspect of your teaching you would choose to improve behaviour management – steadily up from 18% in October 2019 to 23% now.

Engagement with parents is also up from 9% to 13%. Many schools brought in parents communication systems during Covid which now means parents are more able, and more practiced, in sending messages to schools and so it has become a greater expectation on schools to respond.

If you're involved in planning any future INSET days it would be worth asking your staff these questions to see if they feel similarly and planning sessions accordingly. (And if you want help in doing this, our [School Surveys](#) service may be just the thing for you!)

If you could wave a magic wand and drastically improve your proficiency in just one aspect of how to do your job, which ONE of the following areas would you choose?

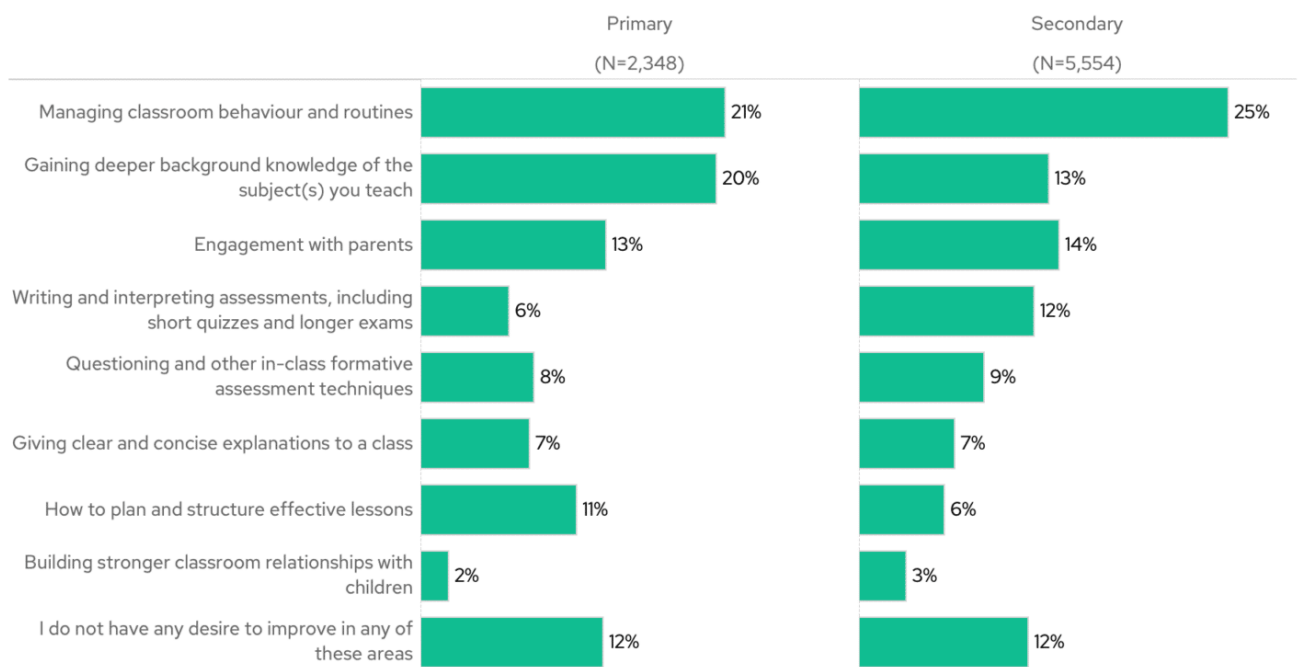


Teacher responses vary from 5,114 to 7,902, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Secondary teachers are more likely to say they want behaviour training than primary. Primary teachers are almost equal in wanting more emphasis on subject knowledge and almost twice as many want to learn more about planning and structuring effective lessons compared to secondary colleagues.

If all this seems surprising, it's worth remembering that only people who have been in post in September 2018 have experienced one whole normal year in their role. Every academic year since then has been touched by Covid in some way. For anyone who joined the profession after this point their experience of teaching has been disrupted and so revisiting aspects of training which are normally heavily modelled in the first few years of the profession would be beneficial for many people.

If you could wave a magic wand and drastically improve your proficiency in just one aspect of how to do your job, which ONE of the following areas would you choose?

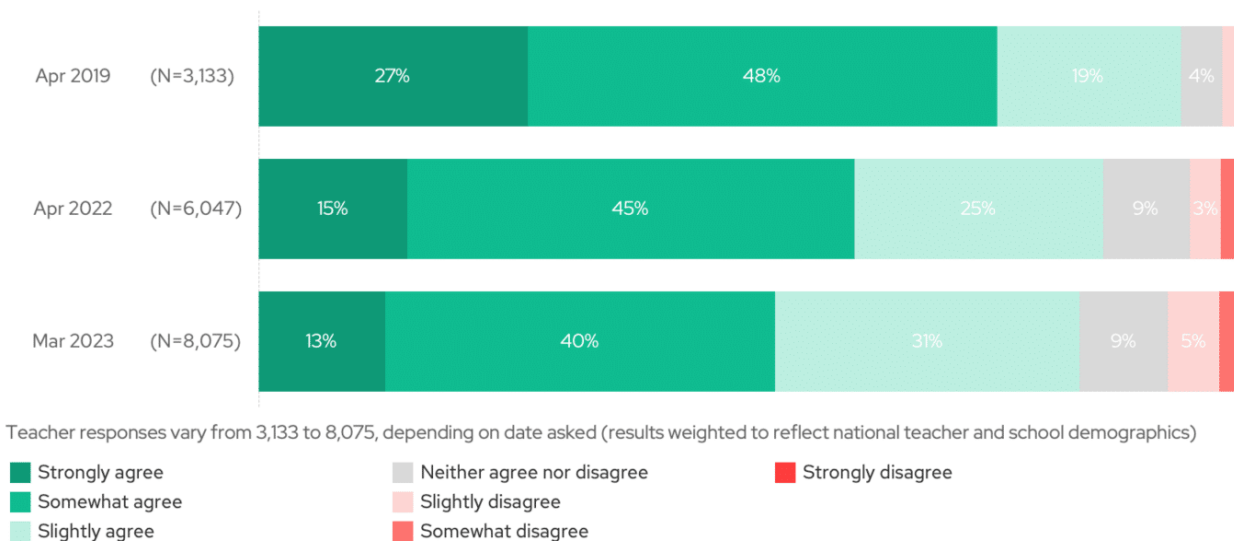


Question answered by 7,902 teachers on 13/03/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

One other change we spotted is that fewer teachers currently have clear goals for how they would like to improve their classroom teaching compared to before the pandemic. Again, this makes sense given all the disruption. Most schools and teachers, in 2019, assumed the world was reasonably unchanging and so could plan where they wanted to get to next. The last few years disrupted that. The country barely seems to know what it's headed towards, amid that it's hard to keep a crystal clear school or personal improvement plan in mind.

Thinking to yourself, or with colleagues, about what you'd like to improve over the next few years is therefore likely to pay dividends at this point.

I have clear goals for how I would like to improve my classroom teaching



Strikes: A final analysis

The sweeping round of National Education Union strikes are now complete and there is a pause for negotiations with the government between all unions.

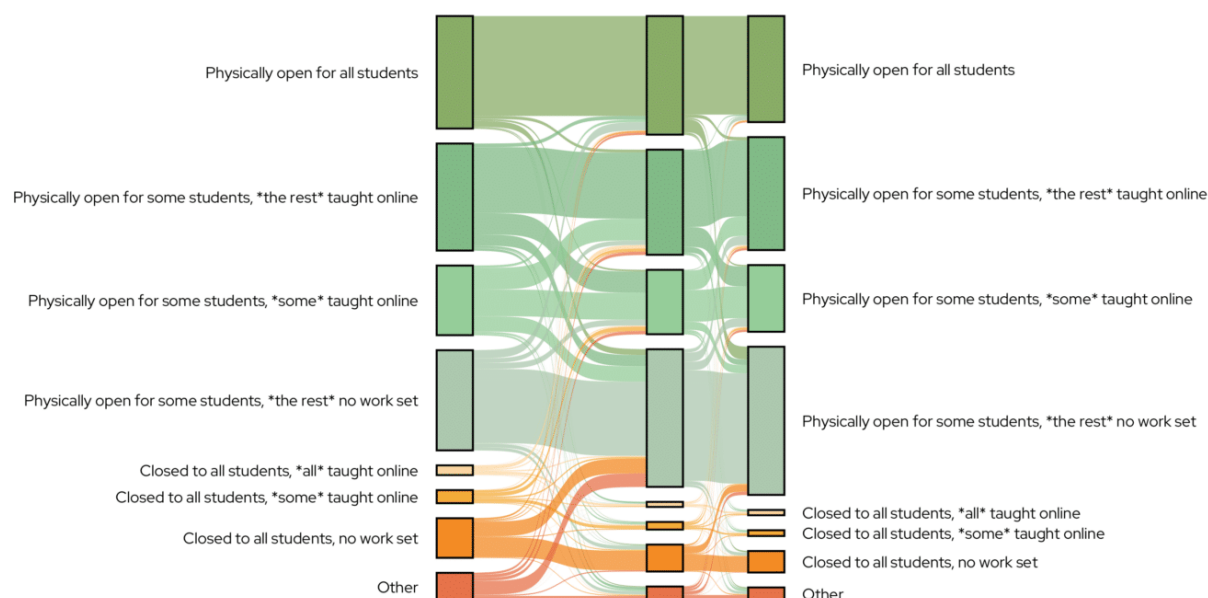
But what actually happened over the period that they were taking place?

The Sankey chart below shows how changes occurred across three sets of strike dates – the first national one, the regional ones, and then the final one. The green blocks show schools that managed to stay open in some form. The orange and red show schools that were closed.

Over time, you can see that the green blocks get slightly larger – although the number of schools physically open for all students actually reduced slightly.

More school managed to stay open during the latest round of strikes

Question asked: "On your strike days/regional strike day this week, how did your school operate?"



Question answered by 5,967 teachers between 2023-02-02 and 2023-03-17.
Only valid teachers included (i.e. those who have confirmed they teach in a school with a valid job title).

Over the period we heard some teachers say they couldn't afford to continuing striking and so a few didn't continue with strike action.

Overall our estimates of teachers out on strike for each date are:

- 1st Feb: ~39%
- Regional: ~32%, though our data suggests it was high in the North and South (35%) and lower in the Midlands (26%)
- 15th Mar: ~35%
- 16th Mar: ~34%

Like everyone else we now have to wait to see what happens next!

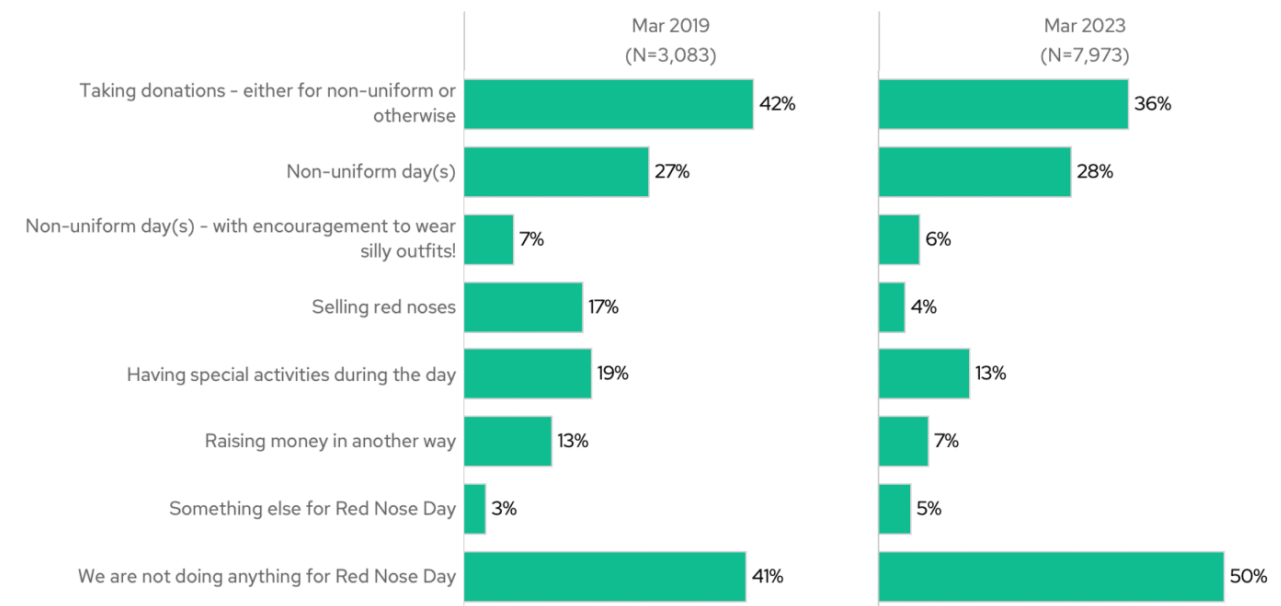
Red Nose Day and Non-Uniform Costs

On a more upbeat note, last week was Red Nose Day - the annual fundraiser for children and a stalwart of the school non-uniform calendar.

Last time we asked about it was 2019 so we felt now was the time to give it another whirl.

Many fewer schools are now selling red noses, raising money through activities or taking donations. Given the cost of living crisis plus the extra pressures on school (in which we include everything from extra absences to budget squeezes) there is likely less appetite for additional activities like this and a concern that families are less able to give.

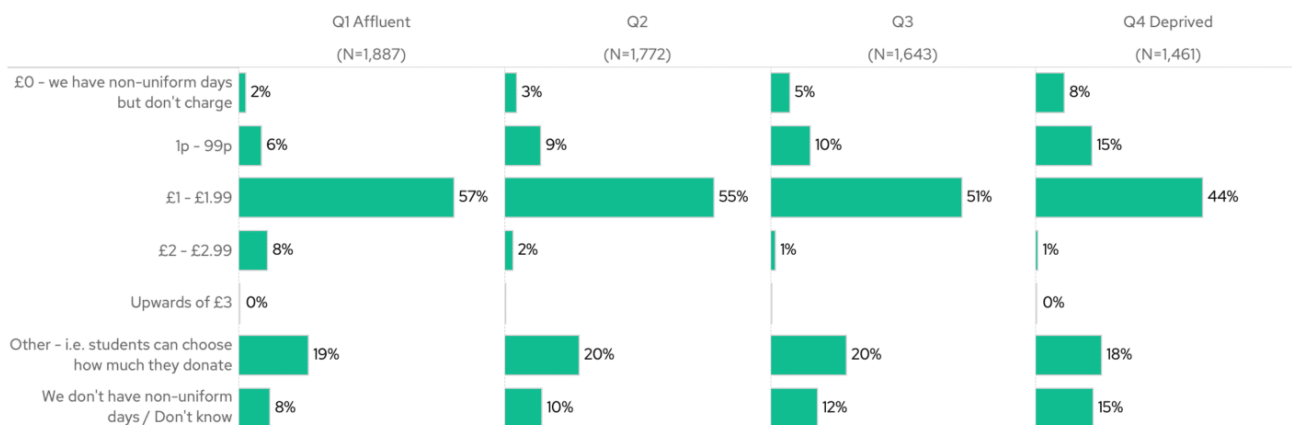
It's Red Nose Day! Which of these things did your school do this week?



Teacher responses vary from 3,083 to 7,973, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Indeed, it seems that non-uniform days in general are dropping out of favour. 13% of schools now say they never do them at all, compared to 8% in 2019. Schools in the most deprived areas are the least likely to run non-uniform days and, where they do, are likely to charge less than schools in affluent areas. (This sounds intuitively fair, but it's worth remembering that there will be children in families that are struggling financially in all areas, so it's worth thinking through how you can reduce the stigma regardless of your school's demographic).

Lots of schools have non-uniform days in order to raise money for charity. How much does your school charge pupils for non-uniform?



Question answered by 6,763 teachers on 17/03/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Wrap-around childcare

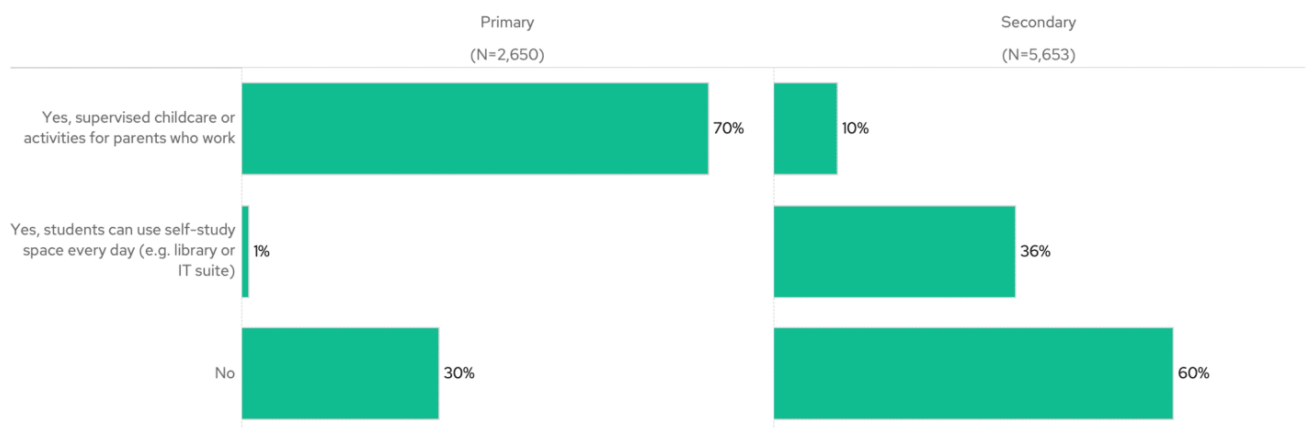
Last week the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, announced his intention that by 2026 school would provide wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm. Once details were released this was quickly

watered down to primary schools and that parents would be charged for the services. It is also only an intention.

Our estimates are that most primary schools (70%) already have after-school childcare that's open until 4.30pm each day. Around 40% of secondary schools have some provision available for children to stay onsite.

There are regional differences, however, with supervised childcare in primary is much more common in London (82%) than in Yorkshire and the North East (54%).

Does your school have after-school childcare or self-study provision on site that is open every day until at least 4:30pm?



Question answered by 8,303 teachers on 16/03/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

We used the open-ended questions to give you a chance to air your views on the policy – and you did! With an expletive index of 0.3% (meaning 0.3% of responses included a fairly strong swear word) this was one of the spicier proposals.

On the other hand, lots of you said it was a great idea in theory and you hoped it would work as it might make your own life easier.

Having fed the results to ChatGPT, the main themes it pulled out were:

- Funding and resources
- Adequate staffing
- The issue of conflating schools with childcare
- Worries that it affected local childcare providers (eg childminders)
- Pointing out that it already happens in lots of schools!
- Impact on children and their need for downtime

Which sounds about right to us. All hail the robots!

And finally...

The most read tip this week was: [A counterintuitive cure for burnout](#)

And here are the rest for your reference:

- [How do you know if a school is right for you?](#)
- [Noticed greater school absence on Fridays?](#)
- [Asking better questions!](#)
- [What does it say about our assessments if they can be completed by robots?](#)
- [How can we get students to commit more to memory?](#)