

# What does distance learning look like in England? (And where will teachers' kids be today?)

The last week has been indescribably difficult. Total school closures and exam cancellations have never happened in the UK. Not even during World War Two.

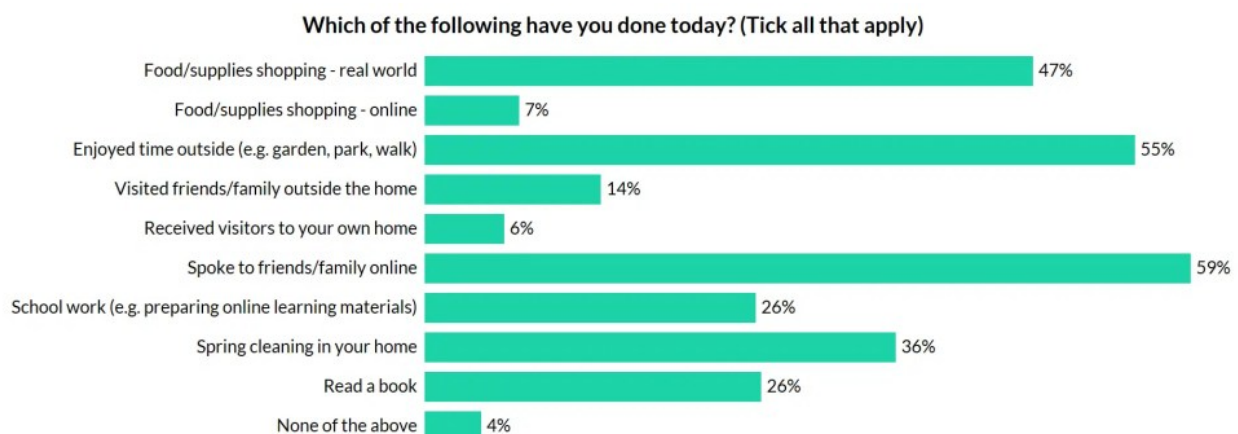
However, with life going as it has, over the next week there will be two forms of education available. Distance learning, in partnership with parents who will need to keep their pupils committed to the task, and 'childcare supervision hubs' in which schools will supervise the learning of vulnerable children and those with a key-worker parent who can't otherwise find a sitter.

Throughout this time we are going to keep asking questions and we hope you are happy to answer them. Now, more than ever, this is our way to keep in touch with what's happening on the ground and ensure that you are able to learn what is happening elsewhere. After all, being a teacher is part of who you are - even if it's happening from home!

## 1. How did teachers use this weekend?

After a gruelling five days, many of you took advantage of the nice weather on Saturday and got outside in a garden or park - something which was allowed as long as social distancing is observed.

Two groups were working more than others on Saturday, however: headteachers (37%) and private school teachers (43%).



Question answered by 6,795 panellists on 21/03/2020

Private school teachers are in a slightly different position to the state sector because the parents are directly PAYING A FEE for the service so have contractual expectations of what will be delivered. Might this explain why so many private school teachers were completing prep work over the weekend?

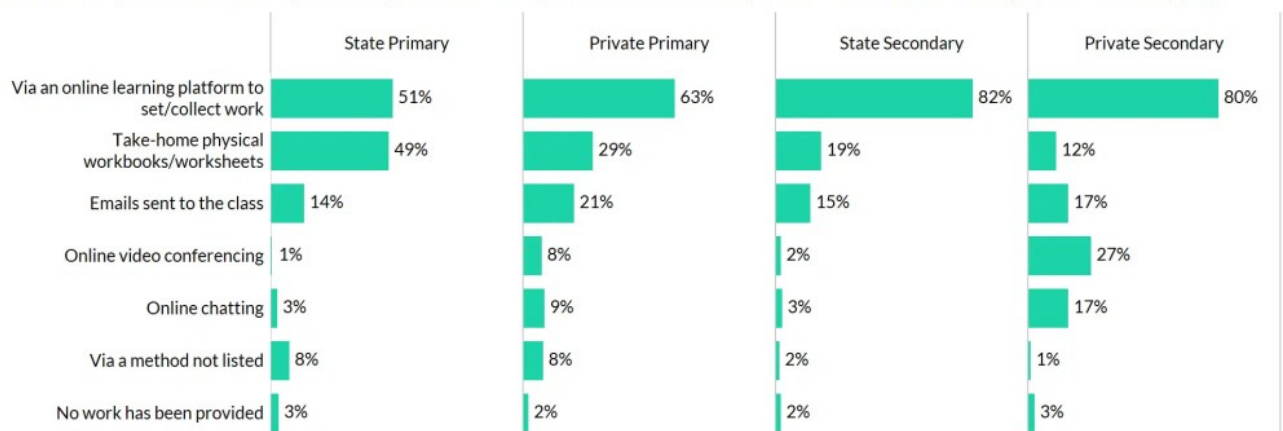
## 2. What does distance learning look like?

Children across the country are now at home. But how are you going to be helping them learn? Half of state primary schools have set work via online learning platforms, whereas the other half have provided physical workbooks/worksheets. A few weeks ago, only around 20% of primary schools had an online learning platform available - so there has clearly been a scramble.

Secondary schools are largely relying on online platforms, with 15% of teachers also using email.

Private school secondary teachers are by far the most likely to be using online video conferencing (27%) or online chatting programmes (17%). In part this might be because these programmes are more expensive and because it assumes that students will have their own device and access to the internet that's good enough to stream video.

Think of a class you would normally have taught on a Monday. How has work been provided for that class today? (Tick all that apply)



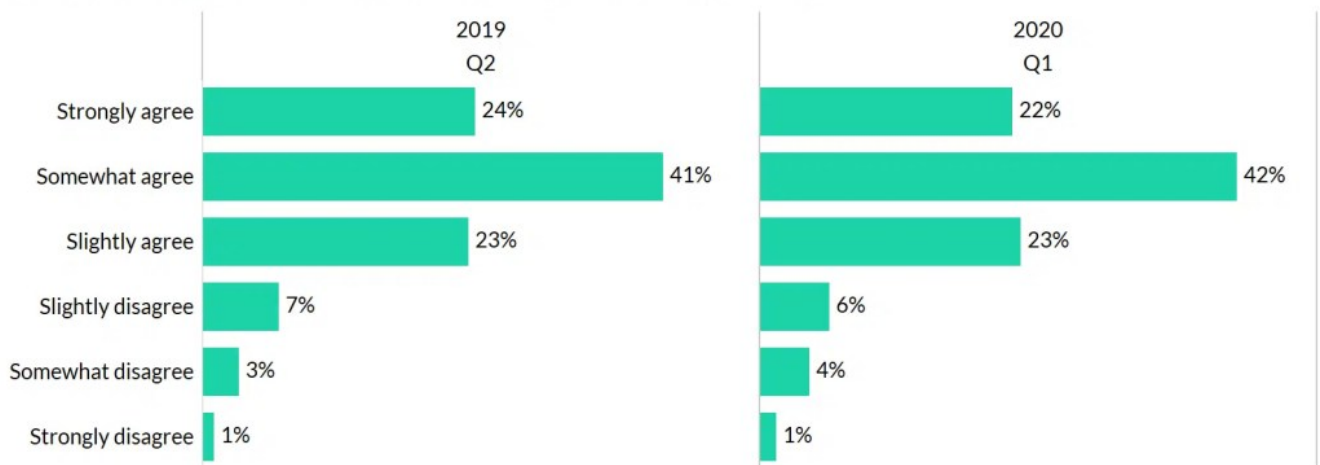
Question answered by 6,360 panellists on 22/03/2020

Furthermore, private school teachers feel more confident using educational technology than state school teachers do (33% strongly agree versus 22% for state teachers).

Coincidentally, last April we asked you how confident you felt in using educational technology. Given so many of you said you've undertaken training in online learning in the past few weeks, we were surprised to see there has so far been almost no increase in confidence compared to last year.

Will that change in a few weeks once everyone is used to setting work remotely?

### I feel confident in using educational technology as a learning resource



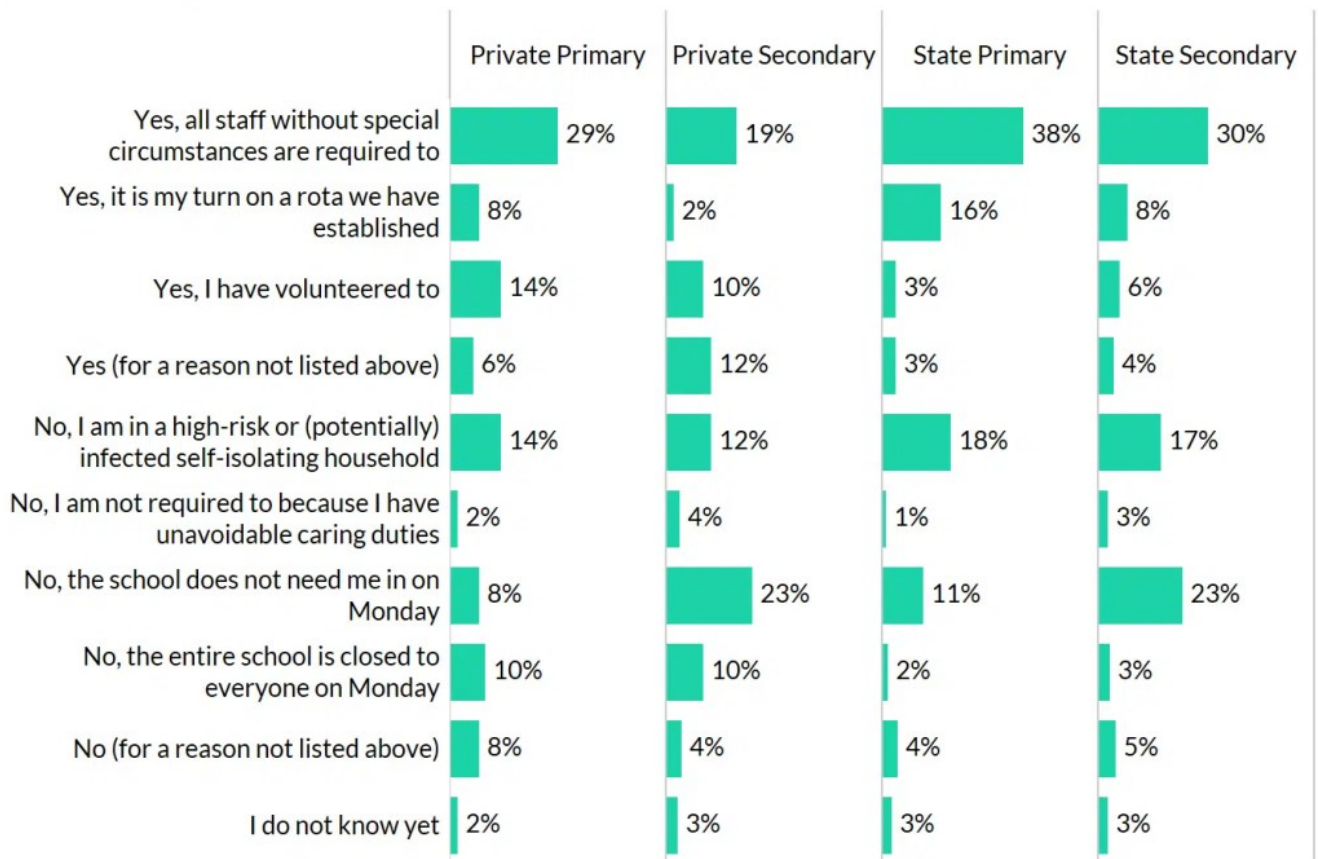
### 3. More staff than children in school on Monday?

Of course, not every child is learning at a distance. Some children will be in school on Monday if they are vulnerable or their parent is a key worker and cannot provide childcare otherwise. Given the relatively low wages of many key workers, these places are mostly in the state sector.

Around half of teachers said they were expecting to have to be in school today - which is still around 250,000 people on the move. Many of you said on social media that this was an interim measure while the level of need is established. We also saw headteachers (often working on the Saturday) saying they had moved to a rota system so some teachers expecting to be in were now being told to stay home instead.

Note that in the primary sector, around 10% of schools (1-in-10) were expecting to be closed altogether on Monday.

**Next week, are you going into a school \*in person\* on Monday? (Tick the response that most closely applies.)**



Question answered by 6,288 panellists on 20/03/2020

#### 4. Which teachers have children at home?

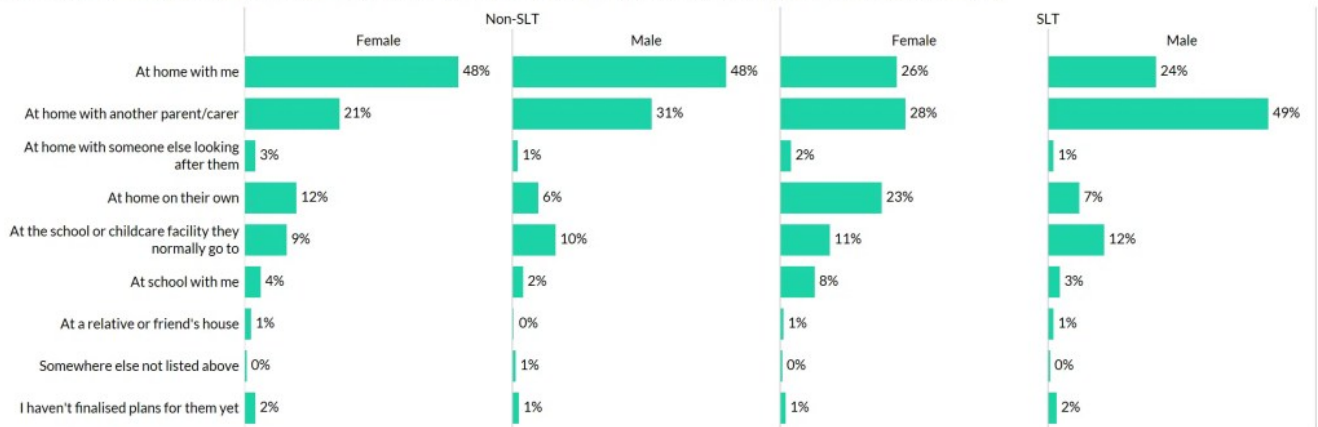
Across the country, white-collar workers will be struggling to work from home today whilst coaxing their own children in doing some work.

Teachers are in a slightly different position because they are eligible to continue to send their own children to school if needed. We took a look at the data as several of you asked how common this might be.

In terms of being at home with children, it's much more likely for classroom teachers than senior leaders (as the latter are much more likely to be in school). And there is no gender difference at all at this point.

However, look at what happens when we consider teachers who need someone else to look after their child. For classroom teachers and middle leaders, there is no pronounced gender difference. But at senior level, half of the male leaders have a partner who will be at home to look after the kids, compared to just 28% for female senior leaders.

If you have children of your own, where will they be on Monday? (Tick the response that most closely applies to your youngest child)



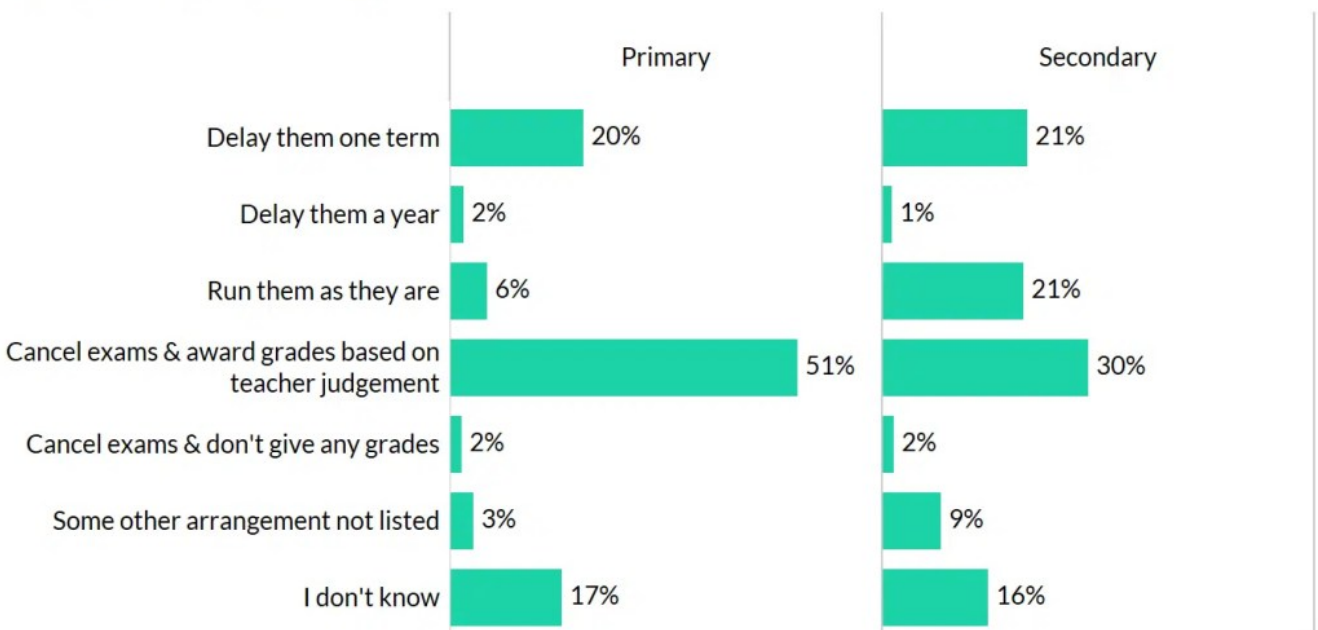
Question answered by 2,884 panellists on 20/03/2020

So where are the children of female senior leaders, many of whom have to go into school today, going to be?! A massive one quarter (1-in-4) of female senior leaders will be leaving their kids at home on their own. One reason for this might be that women tend to come into senior leadership at an older age than men and so their children are older. Why does it take women so much longer to come into leadership? Could it be because they are less able to rely on someone being able to look after their children?

## 5 What about exams?

When we knew that the government was weighing up what to do about exams we asked your opinions so that it could be used to influence the outcome. Ultimately, the most popular answer with both secondary and primary teachers was that exams ought to be cancelled with grades based on teacher judgement. Secondary teachers were more in favour of simply continuing or another arrangement not listed - but in the end, cancellations have happened.

**If you were in government, and bearing in mind the consequences for pupils and schools, what would you do about GCSEs?**



Question answered by 6,088 panellists on 17/03/2020

One thing we checked was to see if those of you with teenage children, aged between 13 and 18, felt differently about this question. Making a decision for other people's children is one thing; deciding for your own kids is another. But, actually, there was no difference. Teachers picked what they genuinely felt best all around.

6. Finally, we know you really enjoy the daily tips so here are all of them for last week...

- [Discussing the COVID-19 situation with pupils, parents and colleagues.](#)
- [Take a breath](#)
- [Setting work for a long haul](#)
- [Online learning from a Hong Kong teacher](#)
- [Monitoring key worker children for infection](#)