

A New Academic Year – What Will Happen?

September 1st. The first day of autumn in 2020 and the beginning of new possibilities. Except for the few of you who have been in school since August (hello Scotland and Leicester!), most of you will be starting school again this year. For many it will be the first time back in full classrooms since March and things will look different. You've already told us that many of you are without a classroom for the first time, or will be experiencing staggered starts, or socially-distanced lunch breaks!

When we started Teacher Tapp, this week, three years ago in 2017, we did so to look at what was normal. With your help, over the next months, we aim to look at what is normal for now, and to advocate for what this means for teachers and pupils, and how government needs to respond.

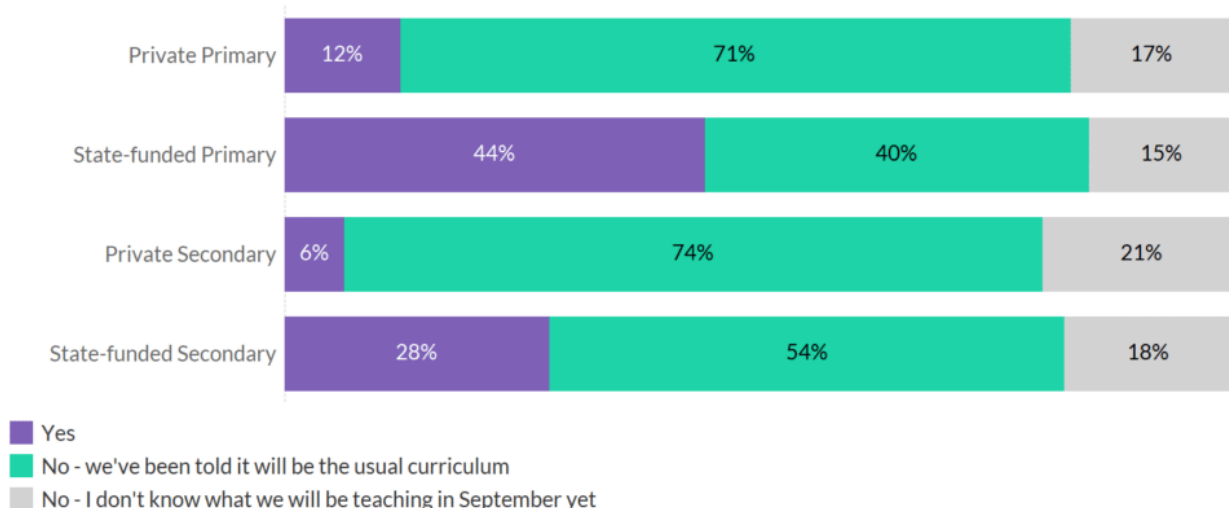
In the meantime, here are our final findings from the summer....

[1. It's school, but not as we know it](#)

Last week our blog focused on changes to practical arrangements across the school. This week we looked at what and who you think you'll be teaching this academic year.

First up, will your curriculum look different? For some, yes. 44% of primary and 28% of secondary state school teachers have been asked to adapt their normal curriculum to take account of missed learning between March and July. (Amazingly, over 3-in-20 of you say you don't know what you'll be teaching yet!) Doing so will mean a lot of adaptations to lesson planning, which means the workload gains of the past few years are likely to diminish over this term.

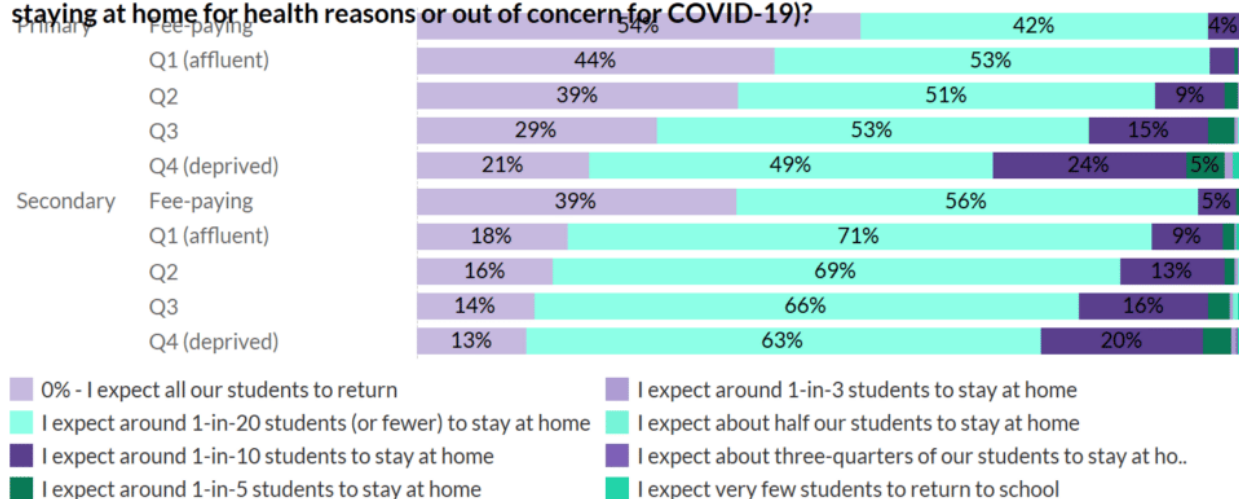
Have you been asked to plan/deliver a 'recovery curriculum' for September?



Question answered by 6,964 teachers on 24/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Some students will stay at home with their families in September, most likely for health reasons. However, most of you expect this to be less than one student per class. Those of you teaching in lower income communities expect this figure to be a little higher. Perhaps because many of these communities have seen much higher infection rates as a result of their urban location and typical household composition. In a few weeks, we'll find out who has actually returned to school.

This coming September, what proportion of students at your school do you think are likely not to return (e.g. staying at home for health reasons or out of concern for COVID-19)?

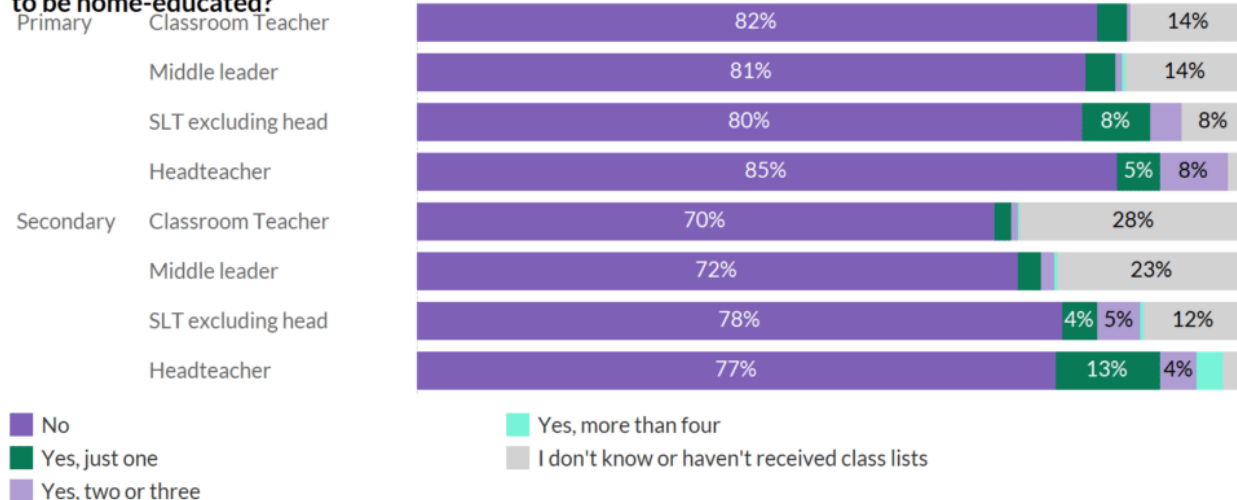


Question answered by 7,199 teachers on 24/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Commentators have speculated that some parents enjoyed home schooling so much that they may decide to do it on a permanent basis. We asked whether you know of any former students who will now be home schooled. The answer is generally 'no'.

Headteachers, who would have the best idea of changes in roll, sometimes know of one or two students, but the data suggest the vast majority of parents have no desire to home-school on a permanent basis!

Have you been notified that any of the students you teach won't be returning in September because they are to be home-educated?

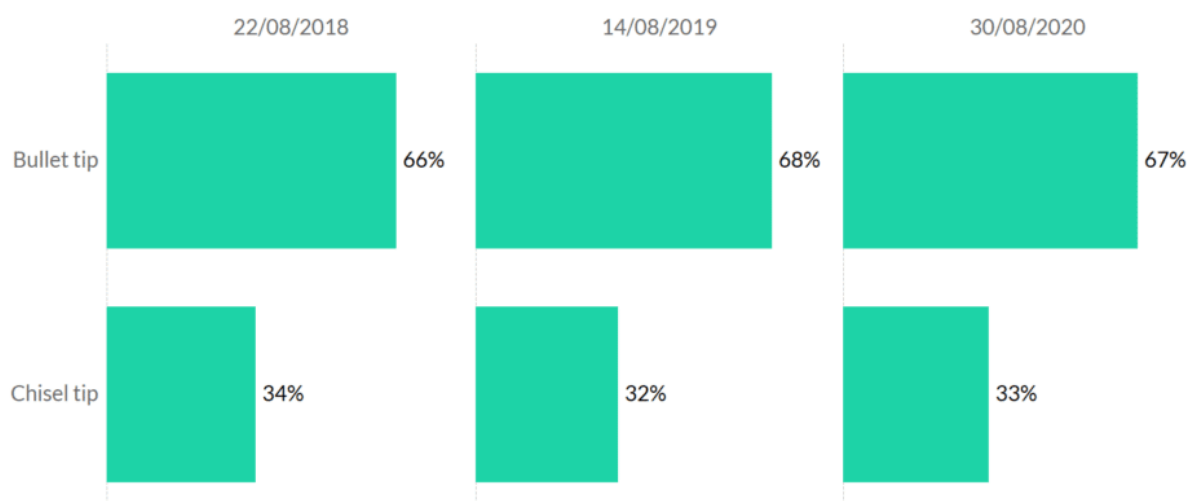


Question answered by 7,113 teachers on 24/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

2. A pandemic doesn't change everything

After 3 years of checking... it seems the bullet marker is the solid winner as best marker pen of all time. With three years of results, and no ground made by #teamchisel, despite their social media efforts, it is time to call this one. Bullets are the most loved, by far.

What is the best type of board marker?



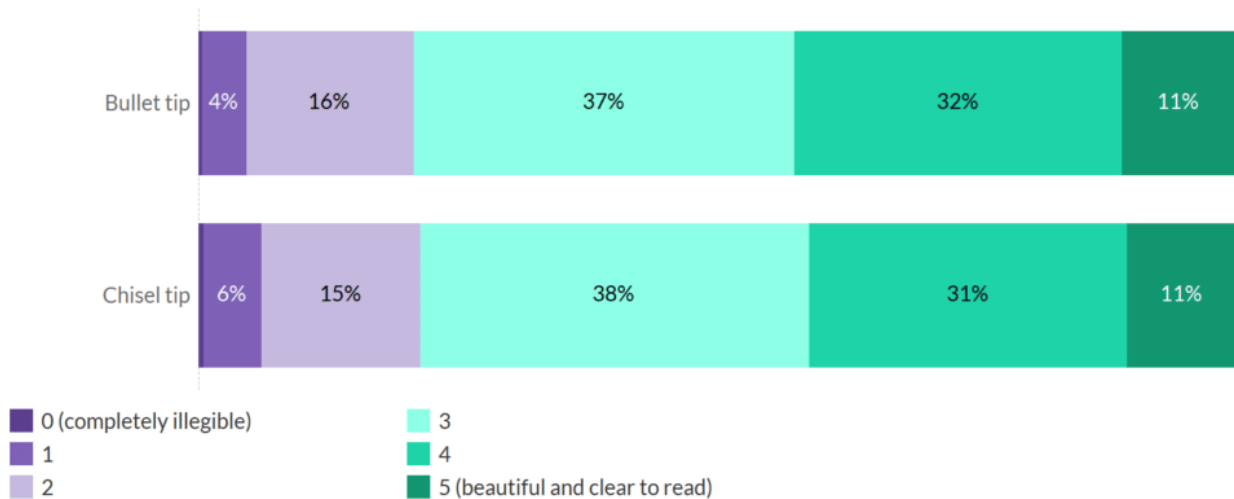
Question answered by 6,935 teachers on 30/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Chisel fans knew they were likely to lose the board pen wars again, so started proclaiming on

social media that their preference was a sign of their superior handwriting. Were they correct?

In advance of the marker question, we asked you to rate your own board hand-writing skills. Do chisel tippers have better hand-writing. Um... no!

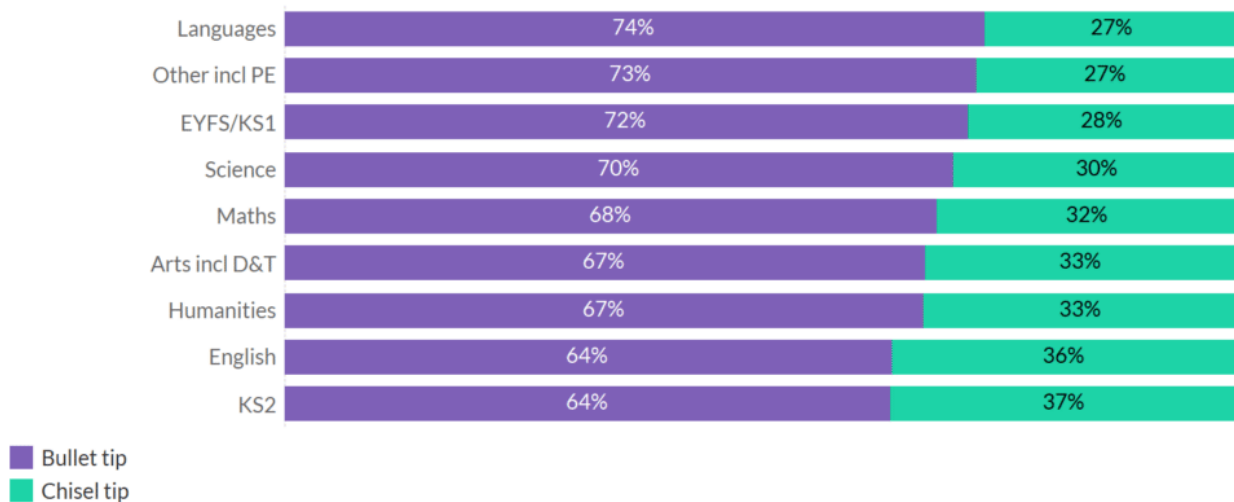
What is the best type of board marker?



Question answered by 6,935 teachers on 30/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

What we did find, however, is a preference for chisel tips among English teachers and, curiously, those of you in KS2. Is this because you are modelling joined up handwriting the most? Meanwhile, MFL teachers came out as the strongest bullet types.

What is the best type of board marker?

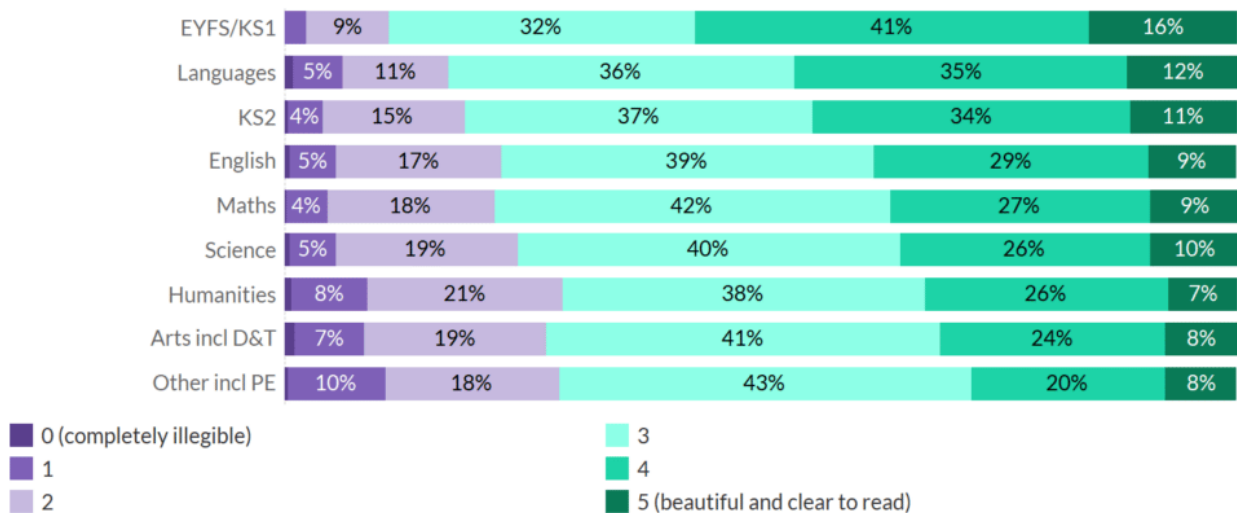


Question answered by 6,935 teachers on 30/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

All of which got us thinking. Given English teachers seem to love handwriting so much, does it mean they are the best handwriters? Apparently not! The (self-reported) best of the bunch

are the EYFS/KS1 teachers, who have to be very clear in their writing otherwise the students are unlikely to be able to read anything, closely followed by the language teachers.

On a scale of 0-5, how would you rate your own handwriting on the board?



Question answered by 7,243 teachers on 30/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

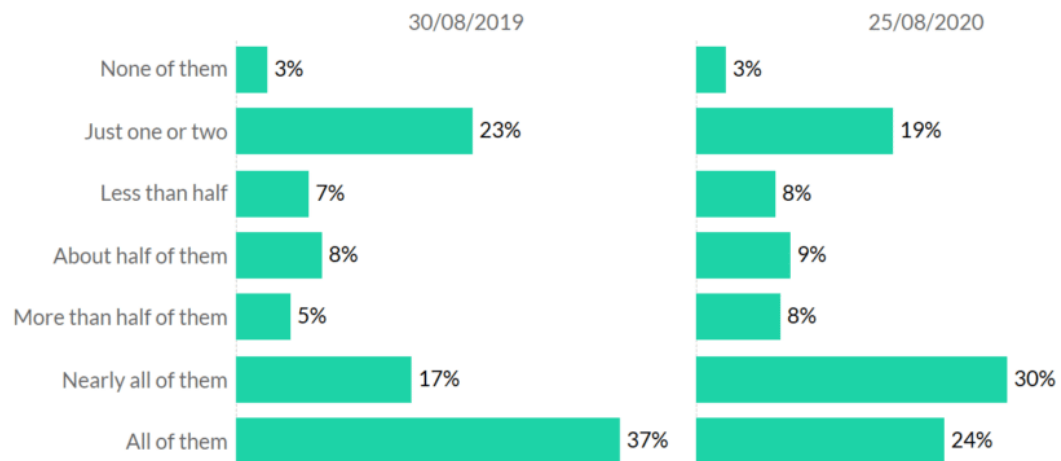
Ultimately, what this does teach us, is that if you are in charge of buying marker pens for your school, it's probably safest to err on the side of caution and buy mostly bullets!

3. A final question!

Every year the beginning of term involves teachers scratching their heads to remember passwords forgotten over the summer. But, this year, there are teachers who won't have been back to the school building for an even longer stretch of time. Will this mean a headache for IT staff!

The figures below compare how many passwords people felt confident they would remember when returning to school last year vs this year. As you can see - many fewer teachers think they will remember all of their passwords (24% compared to 37% last year). Instead, more people now think they will remember nearly all of them. That's a good amount of confidence, but let's see how it goes when you're stood in front of the photocopier desperately trying to remember your codes!

How many passwords are you confident you'll be able to remember on your return in September? (Or how many have you remembered if you are already back)



Question answered by 6,930 teachers on 25/08/2020 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

4. Have you moved schools? Or changed jobs?

One last note... Teacher Tapp analysis relies on us having up-to-date information about the schools and jobs that our users are in, so that we can do all the cool analysis above. Some things that we ask you never change (for instance, what sort of school did you attend as a kid), but other things do need an annual update. We will therefore be asking in the next week about changes to your jobs or school.

If you have changed school, please update the new school name and postcode in the top left menu of the app. This will enable us to recalculate all the critical data and ensure Teacher Tapp stays accurate.

5. Finally finally, we know you love the daily tips. So here are last week's!

- [Maths - variation theory](#)
- [An extraordinary primary school](#)
- [Bar models in science](#)
- [OECD global data](#)
- ['Micro-explanations'](#)
- [Student mental health on return](#)
- [How CPD goes wrong](#)
- [Remote learning contingency plans](#)
- [Problems with exams across the world](#)