

Falling behind, ventilation, reports and masks

It's hot. Are you hot? We hope you're not in an unairconditioned computer room. No one deserves to be that dehydrated.

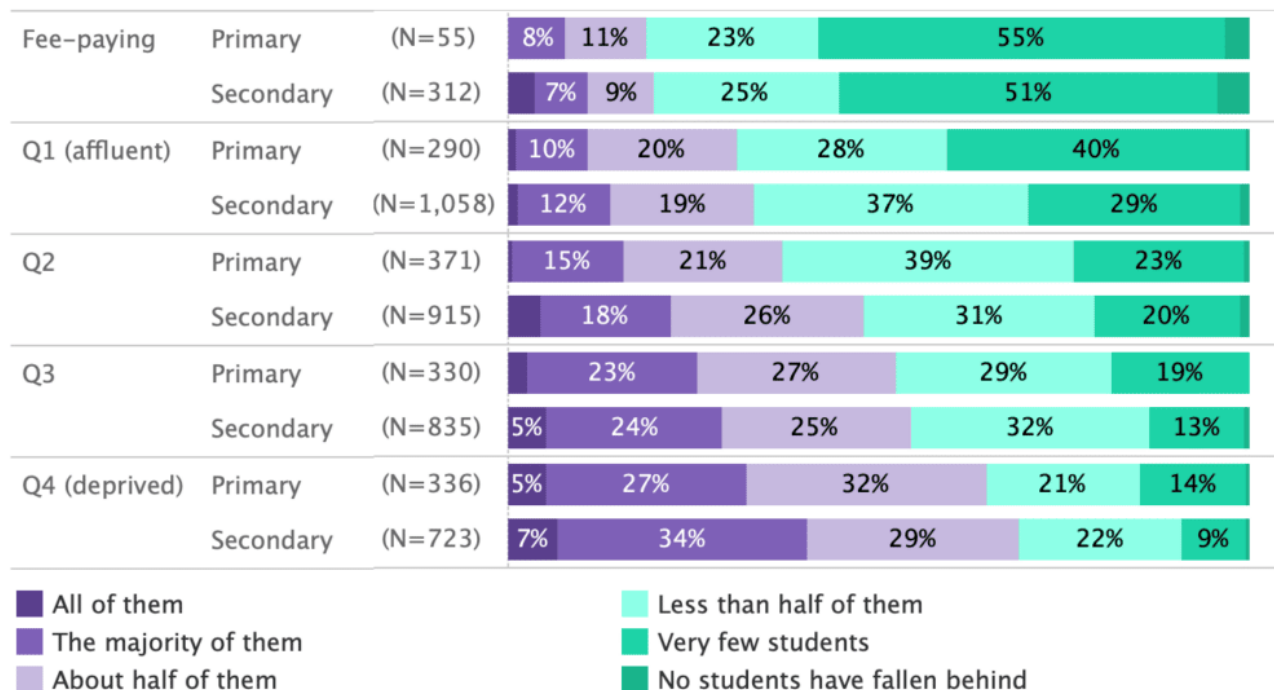
Right, onto this week's findings...

1. Just how many students have fallen behind?

Catch up. Learning loss. There are all kinds of words for describing the fact that quite a lot of pupils had their schooling disrupted and so may have missed out on crucial knowledge development. But how far 'behind' are the kids?

In big part, it depends what type of school you are in. Those in private schools barely seem to have missed a beat with most people saying very few students are behind. Compare that to secondary school teachers in the most deprived parts of the country where 70% say that at least half of their students have fallen behind.

What proportion of your students do you feel have fallen behind due to missed learning over the last year?



At secondary, the subjects with the biggest concerns that their students had fallen behind were maths, languages and arts teachers. Humanities teachers had the least concerns.

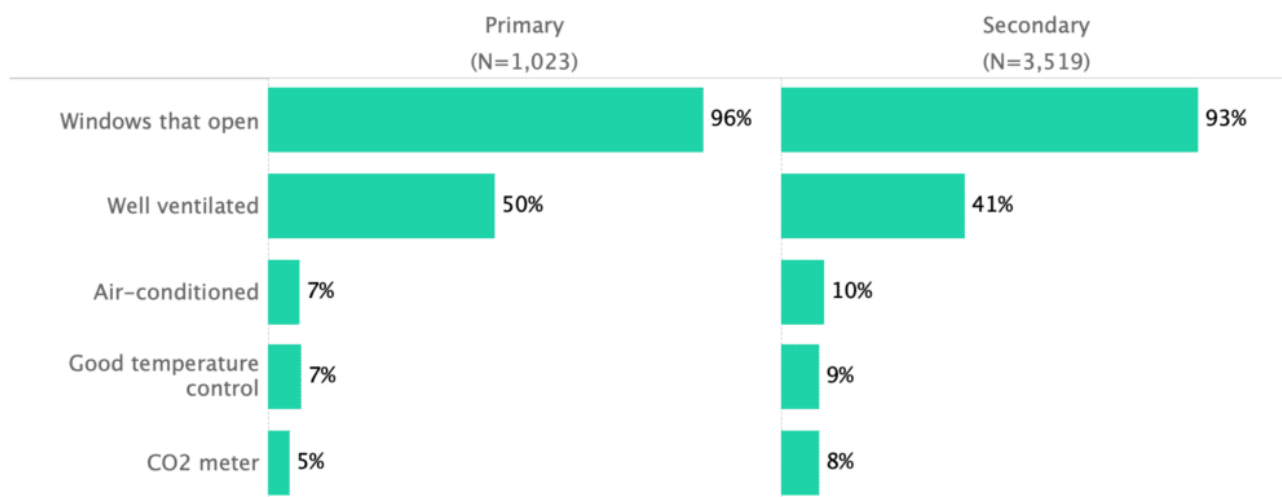
2. Who has the coolest classrooms? (Literally)

Given the boiling hot weather and ongoing concerns about social distancing, it was time to take a look at the physical environment that most of you spend your time in.

Thankfully, most of you are in schools built by architects sane enough to give you windows that open, however less than half of you described your rooms as 'well ventilated'. And less than 10% of you said there was 'good temperature control'.

For the lucky few of you with airconditioning, you'll be enjoying a cooler week - although it depends on the type of airconditioning you have as to whether or not it can continue amid the pandemic. If you've had to switch yours off, sorry! ■■

Which of the following are true about your classroom?

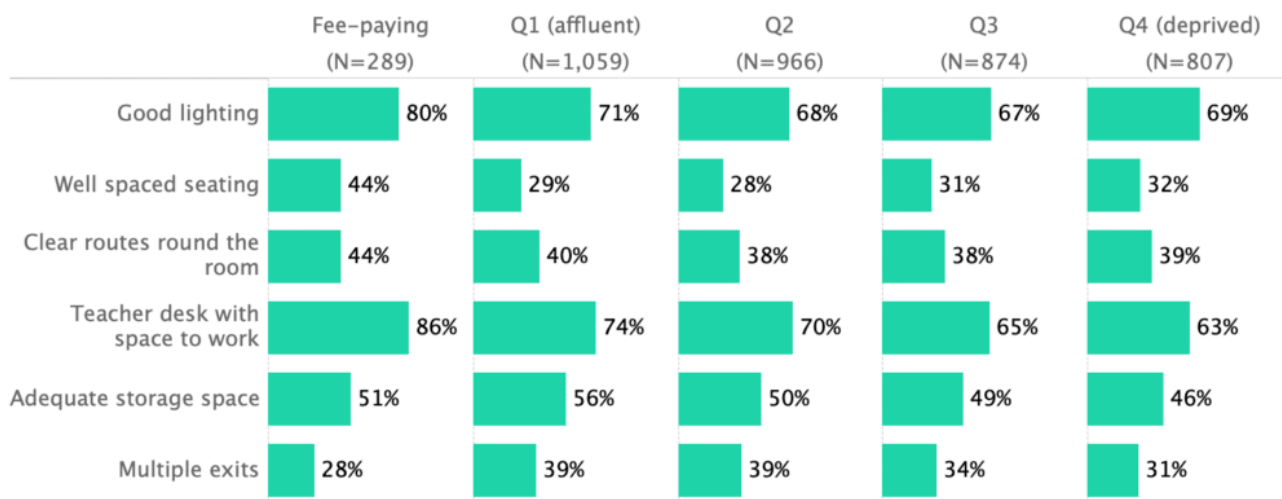


Question answered by 4,696 teachers on 08/06/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Quick fact of note: air-conditioning is one of those things where private schools are no more or less likely to have it than anyone else! Aircon truly is a social leveller.

Teacher desk space, however, accrues the most advantaged - with 86% of teachers in the private sector saying they had their own desk with space to work, compared to just 63% of teachers in the most deprived areas.

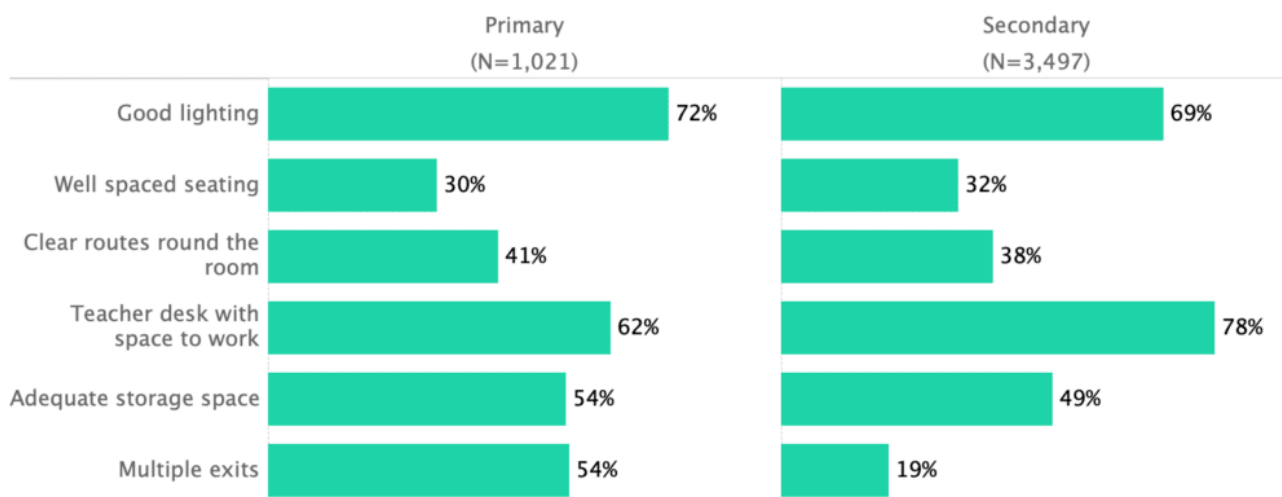
Which of the following are true about your classroom?



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Primary teachers are also more likely to lose out on having a nice big desk, but they do win at having multiple exits to their rooms. You win some, you lose some, eh?

Which of the following are true about your classroom?

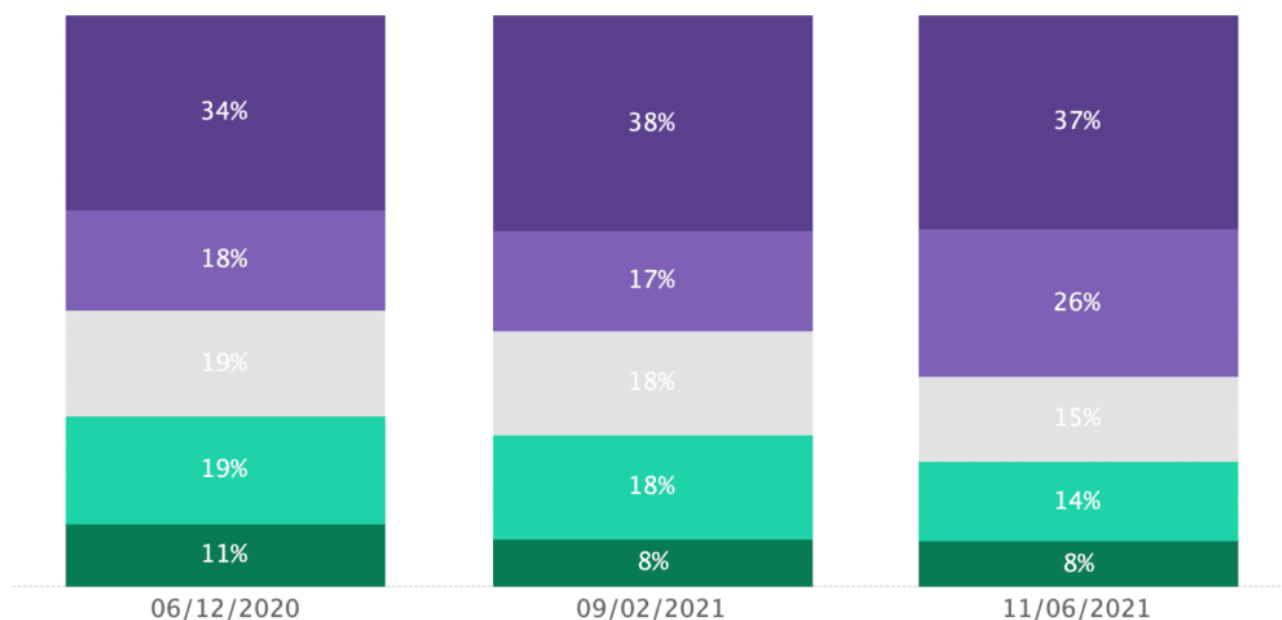


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3. Does all the TAG-ing mean we should scrap GCSEs?

If teachers weren't already persuaded after last year's algorithm issues, it appears that TAGs have further reduced appetite for scrapping GCSEs. Just 22% of secondary teachers would now get rid of the exams for 16-year-olds compared to 30% in December last year.

Should England scrap GCSEs?



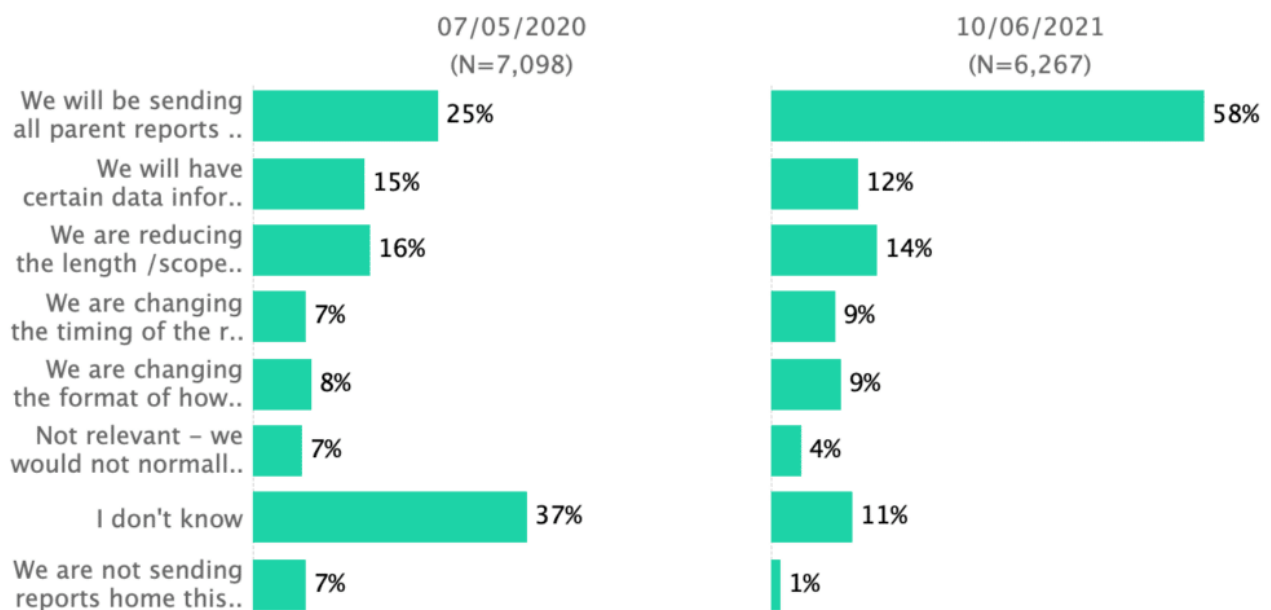
Teacher responses vary from 4,435 to 4,724, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

■ No, disagree ■ Not sure ■ Yes, strongly agree
■ No, strongly disagree ■ Yes, agree

4. Back to usual with report writing

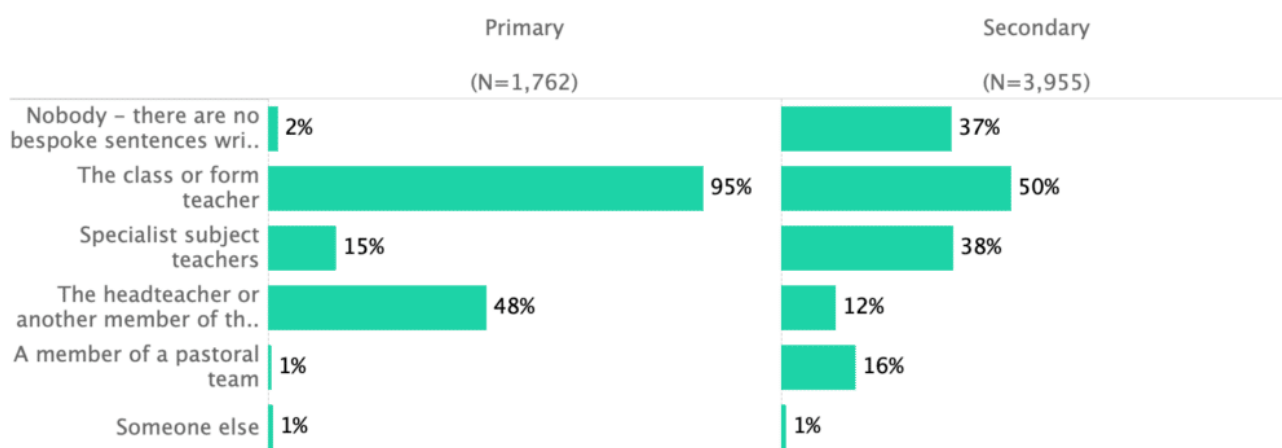
Last year schools took a hiatus on school report writing as we were in the grip of the first lockdown and things were... well, frantic. This year 58% of schools are once again sending them home as usual, though 14% said they would be reducing the length or scope. Last year just 25% of schools sent reports out as usual, and 7% didn't send any home at all!

Think about all the school reports you would usually (pre-COVID) send home to parents between mid-March and July. How are you sending them?



Parents can expect to see a big difference between the reports sent by primary schools versus those sent from secondary schools, though. In primary 95% of reports have the class teacher writing a bespoke comment about their pupils. In secondary schools, only 50% of teachers write a bespoke comment, and only 38% of you said you're expected to write subject-related bespoke comments. More than a third of secondary teachers said their school doesn't provide any bespoke sentences at all – pupils only receive standardised comments or grades.

Which of these people typically writes at least one bespoke sentence about the student in the report?



Question answered by 5,924 teachers on 10/06/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

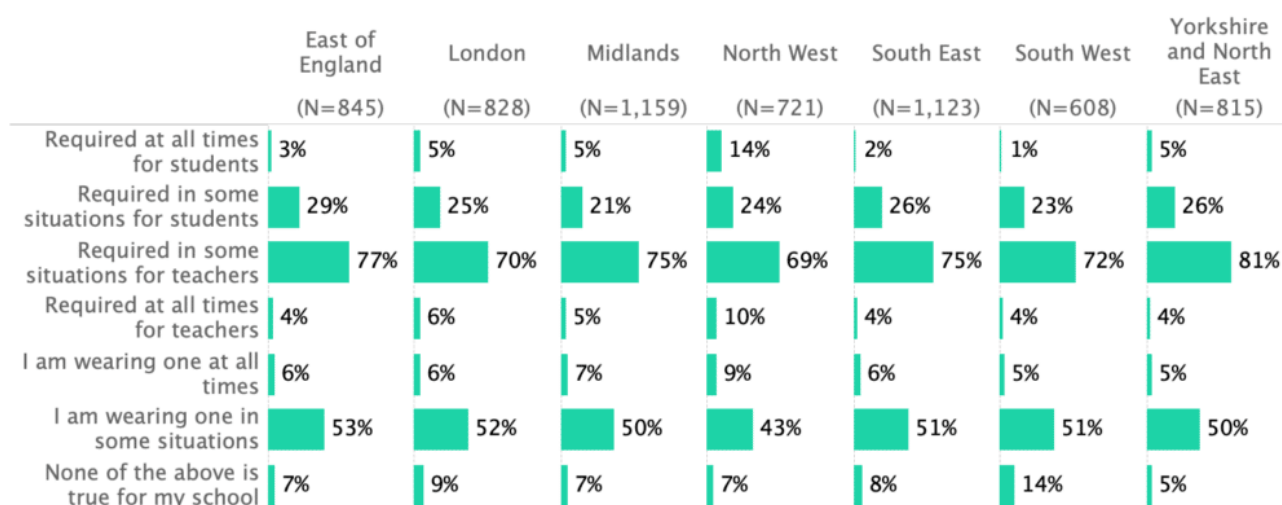
5. And back to masks

Finally this week. With infection rates rising again in certain parts of the country, several of you asked about masks.

Around half of teachers said they were still wearing a mask at school, with nearly 1-in-10 teachers in the North West stating that they are still wearing them at all times. Indeed, 14% of teachers in the North West said their school had retained masks for everyone. Given several areas in the region are hotspots at the moment, this seems sensible.

Echoing the pattern from last year, the South West has the least mask wearing (and some of the lowest Covid rates).

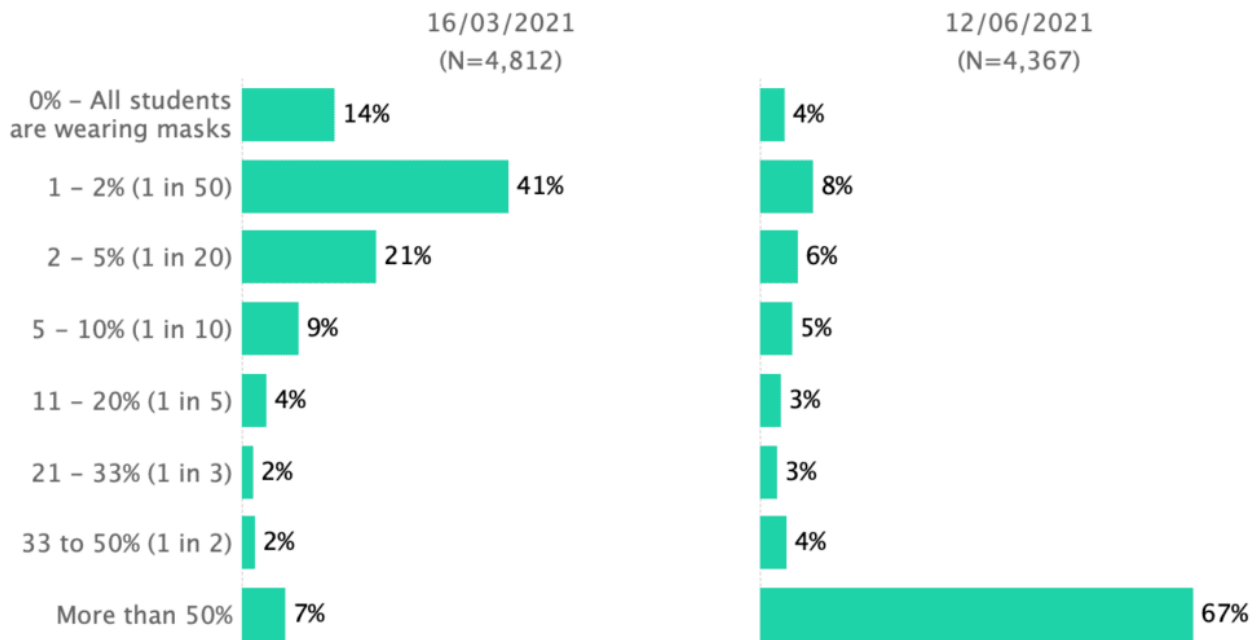
Which of the following is true about mask wearing at your school?



Question answered by 6,456 teachers on 07/06/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

The change in rules has obviously contributed to fewer students wearing masks in lessons now. This graph compares the situation in March (left) with now (right).

What proportion of students ****DO NOT**** wear masks during your lessons?



With infection rates rising and lockdown delayed, it might be worth ministers considering if wearing masks for just a few more weeks in schools might also be a useful idea.

Finally, we know you love the daily read, so here are the ones from last week

The most popular tip from last week was [Fundamentals for getting back on track](#)

Followed by:

- [Absences matter and you can help](#)
- [Annual reporting to parents](#)
- [3 action planning mistakes and 3 ways to avoid them](#)
- [The SEND Parent Paradox](#)
- [Caught in the study web](#)
- [Reflections on an exam system that could never be the same again](#)