Technical Report for COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey

Technical report

October 2021

IFF Research

Contents

Overview

The School Snapshot survey has been conducted bi-annually since Winter 2017, with the aim of improving understanding of the opinions of leaders and teachers in primary and secondary schools on a range of educational topics.

This technical report discusses the methodology used for the COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey, the sixth wave of the survey, conducted while schools were closed to the majority of students during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

This wave comprised surveys with 1,576 school leaders and 997 classroom teachers. Both groups could undertake the survey online or over the phone. As shown below, two-thirds of surveys with leaders were conducted over the telephone while nearly all teacher surveys were conducted online. Fieldwork took place between 13 May 2020 and 31 May 2020.

Table 1. Completed surveys by mode

	Teachers Online	Teachers Telephone	Leaders Online	Leaders Telephone
Completes	954	43	531	1,045

To reduce the length of the survey whilst covering all relevant topics, school leaders were randomly assigned to one of two routes through the survey. 'Route 1' was completed by 787 leaders (396 primary and 391 secondary) and 'Route 2' by 789 leaders (406 primary and 383 secondary).

Sampling

Leaders

The target for the leader element of this survey was 1,600 surveys. To achieve, this we had a starting sample of 5,926 school leaders.[1] 729 of these school leaders had agreed to be re-contacted in the Summer 2019 and Winter 2019 waves of the School Snapshot Survey and were invited directly. The remaining 5,197 leaders were drawn from the 'Get Information about Schools' database. Ahead of fieldwork starting, all school leaders were sent an email outlining the purpose of the survey and inviting them to take part (see Appendix A for a copy of the email).

Using the 729 leaders as the base, a stratified sampling approach was taken for the selection of the remaining 5,197 schools from the GIAS database. A 4-cell sampling grid was used splitting schools by phase (primary/secondary) and by academy status (academy/non-academy). The aim for the survey was to achieve an even split in the number of surveys conducted between primary and secondary schools, and a representative split between academies and non-academies within each school phase. In order to achieve this, the following number of records was drawn, which took into account an anticipated lower response due to schools being closed to the majority of pupils as well as the lower response rate achieved in previous waves of the survey for secondary compared with primary schools (around 40% and 60% respectively).

Table 2. Starting sample for the leader survey

	Primary	Secondary
Academies	838	2,337
Non-academies	1,706	1,045
Total	**2,544**	**3,382**

Within each cell the sample was drawn on a '1 in n' basis from all eligible schools. Eligible schools were defined as those left after the following exclusions:

- Schools in Wales

- Phase of education: 16 plus institutions; nursery institutions; and not applicable codes were excluded

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[1] With schools closed the majority of pupils, we anticipated a lower response rate then regular School Snapshot Surveys which is why we drew a larger starting sample in the COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey compared with previous waves.

- Status of establishment: closed schools were excluded
- Type of establishment: excluded institutions that were not state primary or secondary; alternative provision schools (e.g. free school alternative provision, academy alternative provision, pupil referral units, independent special schools and free school special school)

Teachers

The teacher element had a target of 1,000 achieved surveys. The sample for this element was obtained through asking schools that were invited to take part in the leaders' survey to also provide contact details for teachers at their school, a form of clustered random sample. In addition, we invited 1,410 teachers who participated in Summer 2019 or Winter 2019 waves of the survey and had agreed to be re-contacted about future research.

In total, 1,701 teacher details were collected from schools (900 primary school teachers and 801 secondary school teachers). Of these, 1,261 details were collected over the telephone and 440 were entered by the school directly into the online portal.

The teacher survey was then conducted as an attempted census of those for whom contact details were provided by their school and those who had agreed to be re-contacted in previous research.

In total, 2,441 teachers were invited to complete the survey online. All 1,410 re-contact teachers were invited to take part and the first 1,031 teachers that we were given details for from their school were also invited to take part. Due to the large starting leader sample (over 5,000 leaders) and a commitment to a high response rate among the teacher population, the remaining 670 teachers were not contacted in this wave of the survey. Instead, most (587) of these 'additional' records were sent to DfE to use on the DfE leader and teacher panel.

Schools drawn for main survey sample

Each school that was drawn for the leaders' survey was asked to provide contact details (e-mail addresses and telephone numbers) for three teachers (excluding teaching assistants). These details could be entered into an online portal or collected over the telephone. To achieve a sample with a spread of teachers:

- Primary heads were asked to provide either two reception/KSI teachers and one KS2 teacher, or one reception/KS1 teacher and two KS2 teachers (schools were selected at random between these two options);

- Secondary heads were asked to provide teachers from three specified subjects (allocated to be maths, English, science, humanities/RS/Citizenship, modern foreign languages, IT/technology, music/art/design or PE).

Response rate

The following tables show the response rates for leaders and teachers by their school phase (primary or secondary) and the academy status of their school. This section also shows the breakdown of the types of leaders that completed the survey.

Table 3. Response rate by key group

	Leaders Primary	Leaders Secondary	Teachers Primary	Teachers Secondary
Starting sample	2,544	3,382	1,271	1,170
Complete surveys	802	774	504	493
Response rate	**32%**	**23%**	**40%**	**42%**

Table 4. Response rate by academy status

	Leaders Academy	Leaders Non-academy	Teachers Academy	Teachers Non-academy
Sample size	3,175	2,751	1,244	1,197
Completes surveys	768	808	495	502
Response rate	**24%**	**30%**	**40%**	**42%**

School leader job titles

Table 5 shows the job titles of the leaders surveyed. Two-thirds were Headteachers (69%) and 9 in 10 (93%) were Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers or Assistant Headteachers.

Table 5. Completed surveys by type of leader

	Job role Frequency	Job role Proportion
Headteacher	1,089	69%
Deputy Headteacher	243	15%
Assistant Headteacher	144	9%
Leading Practitioner	17	1%
Other	83	5%
Total	**1,576**	**100%**

Weighting

School level weighting

At the analysis stage, the school-level/leaders' data was grossed up to the overall population of schools. This process corrects for the over-sampling of secondary schools (relative to the proportion of the population that they represent) so that the findings can be interpreted as being representative of all (in scope) state-funded schools.

The population data for weighting was drawn from GIAS. The following population figures were used:

Table 6. Population data (from Get Information about Schools)

Number of schools	Primary[2]	Secondary[3]	Grand Total
Academy converter	4,099	1,592	5,691
Academy sponsor led	1,510	745	2,255
Community school	6,031	357	6,388
Foundation school	558	177	735
Free schools	198	194	392
Voluntary aided school	2,669	230	2,899
Voluntary controlled school	1,726	30	1,756
Studio school	0	24	24
Technical college	0	48	48
Grand Total	**16,791**	**3,397**	**20,188**

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[2] Includes middle deemed primary schools.
[3] Includes all through and middle deemed secondary schools.

Table 7. Achieved surveys (unweighted) for weight 1 (Route 1)

Number of schools	Primary	Secondary	Total
Academy converter	96	202	298
Academy sponsor led	18	75	93
Community school	147	45	192
Foundation school	13	23	36
Free schools	6	15	21
Voluntary aided school	77	23	100
Voluntary controlled school	39	5	44
Studio school	0	1	1
Technical college	0	2	2
Total	**396**	**391**	**787**

Table 8. Grossing factors by cell for weight 1 (Route 1)

Number of schools	Primary	Secondary
Academy converter	42.7	7.9
Academy sponsor led	83.9	9.9
Community school	41.0	7.9
Foundation school	42.9	7.7
Free schools	33.0	12.9
Voluntary aided school	34.7	10.0
Voluntary controlled school	44.3	6.0
Studio school	-	24.0
Technical college	-	24.0

Table 9. Achieved surveys (unweighted) for weight 2 (Route 2)

Number of schools	Primary	Secondary	Total
Academy converter	108	185	293
Academy sponsor led	31	53	84
Community school	144	54	198
Foundation school	12	28	40
Free schools	2	22	24
Voluntary aided school	74	27	101
Voluntary controlled school	35	7	42
Studio school	0	4	4
Technical college	0	3	3
Total	**406**	**383**	**789**

Table 10. Grossing factors by cell for weight 2 (Route 2)

Number of schools	Primary	Secondary
Academy converter	38.0	8.6
Academy sponsor led	48.7	14.1
Community school	41.9	6.6
Foundation school	46.5	6.3
Free schools	99.0	8.8
Voluntary aided school	36.1	8.5
Voluntary controlled school	49.3	4.3
Studio school	-	6.0
Technical college	-	16.0

Teachers / individual weighting

For the analysis on a teacher base, the responses from leaders and classroom teachers were combined and weighted together to the overall population of teachers. The population data for the teachers weighting was taken from the Schools Workforce Census based on November 2019 data.

The calculations for this element of the weighting are shown in the table below:

Table 11. Population data (from Schools Workforce Census)

	Classroom teachers	School leaders	Total
Primary	205,758	41,994	247,752
Secondary	197,108	23,480	220,588
Total	**402,866**	**65,474**	**468,340**

Table 12. Achieved surveys (unweighted) for weight 3 (Route 1 leaders and teachers)

	Classroom teachers	School leaders (Route 1)	Total
Primary	504	396	900
Secondary	493	391	884
Total	**997**	**787**	**1,784**

Table 13. Weights applied for weight 3 (Route 1 leaders and teachers)

	Classroom teachers	School leaders
Primary	1.500	0.398
Secondary	1.532	0.225

Table 14. Achieved surveys (unweighted) for weight 4 (Route 2 leaders and teachers)

	Classroom teachers	School leaders (Route 2)	Total
Primary	504	406	910
Secondary	493	383	876
Total	**997**	**789**	**1,786**

Table 15. Weights applied for weight 4 (Route 2 leaders and teachers)

	Classroom teachers	School leaders
Primary	1.534	0.389
Secondary	1.502	0.230

Changes over time

Typically, the Department is looking to track changes in leaders' and teachers' opinions of various topics over time. Consequently some of the questions included in the School Snapshot Surveys repeat those asked in the Teacher Voice Omnibus.[4] Participants for the Teacher Voice Omnibus were contacted from the NFER Teacher Voice Panel of practising leaders and teachers, whereas the School Snapshot Survey utilises a random sampling approach to selecting schools. This difference in sampling methodology means that caution should be taken if comparing results from questions that appear across the two surveys. Previous Teacher Voice Omnibus reports can be found alongside School Snapshot Survey reports on the gov.uk website.[5]

As the COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey was conducted under unique circumstances, necessitating a specific set of questions and requiring a faster turnaround than usual, comparisons with responses collected in previous waves of the School Snapshot Surveys have been drawn very infrequently.[6]

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[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-voice-omnibus-march-2018-survey
[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nfer-teacher-voice-omnibus
[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nfer-teacher-voice-omnibus

Appendix A. Advance email for school leaders invited to do survey and provide teacher details

ID: <ID>

Dear <CONTACT>,

[Subject line:] COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey for the DfE

The Department for Education (DfE) is undertaking an important survey **exploring the impact of COVID-19 on schools and teachers**. Results will help DfE decide how best to support the sector at this difficult time. The work is being managed by IFF Research, an independent research agency, and results will be completely confidential.

We would like to request your assistance in this research. This would involve two key elements:

1. You (or another School Leader) taking part in a **15-minute interview** (either online or over the phone). This can be arranged at a time that is convenient to you**.**

2. We would also like you to **provide details for 3 classroom teachers at your school** who we will then invite to provide their views via an **online survey.**

We would greatly appreciate your engagement. This is the first substantial survey the DfE has conducted since schools closed, and your results will directly inform the Department of COVID-19 impacts and ways in which the DfE can support schools and children

In line with their commitment to [reduce the burden on schools](), the DfE has tried to keep the survey as short as possible, requesting only essential information from schools – to allow you to focus on supporting children. This means that you will not be asked about every key topic. To ensure that the DfE receives responses on each key topic, the DfE will be randomly allocated which topics are asked of each participant.

Taking part in the survey

To take part in the online survey:

<LINK>

- Simply click the link above to complete the survey online. It should take no more than 15 minutes.

To take part over the phone:
- If you prefer to provide your answers via telephone, please contact the IFF Research team at schoolsnapshotsurvey@iffresearch.com and provide:
    1. Your ID number: <ID>
    2. Your preferred date a time to complete the survey (within the fieldwork period of 13 May – 3 June)
    3. The best telephone number to contact you on at this time
    4. An alternative date and time to call, in case there are any difficulties reaching you at your preferred time
- Alternatively, you can arrange an appointment by phoning IFF Research on 0800 054 2376 and leaving a message with the above information. Please ensure you record read out your ID <ID> on the call.

Providing details for 3 classroom teachers

To provide us with details of classroom teachers we would be very grateful if you or another member of staff could log on to this website: www.iffresearch.com/schoolsnapshotsurvey and provide us with work e-mail addresses (and also telephone numbers where possible) for:

- <TEACHTYPE1>

- <TEACHTYPE2>
- <TEACHTYPE3>

If your school does not have one or more of these types of teacher, we'd still like to hear from your school. You can decide which teachers to provide contact information for.

- Please include teachers' work email addresses.
- Please provide mobile numbers for teachers working at home and mobile or school numbers for those working on school premises.
- Ideally, these teachers should include a mix by gender and number of years of teaching experience.
- When you log on to the website, you will be asked to provide the ID number <ID> as an access code. You can access the link as many times as you need to.

We will be calling schools from 13th May to check if leaders can take part, and if someone at the school can provide the teacher details. If your school is currently closed and no staff will be around to take our call, please email us on schoolsnapshotsurvey@iffresearch.com to let us know the best telephone number to contact you on. If you do not wish to take part, we would be grateful if you let us know via the email address above (and leaving your ID number: <ID>).

Please be reassured that the findings are strictly confidential. Your personal details and those of your school will not be shared with anyone outside of IFF Research. The research is being conducted strictly in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct, and any information you provide will be handled securely in line with the UK Data Protection Act and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Unless express permission is given by you, your name and contact details will be deleted 6 months after completion of this project. You have a right to have a copy of your data, change your data, or withdraw from the research at any point. If you'd like to do this, please visit our website at: iffresearch.com/gdpr.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact the IFF Research team at schoolsnapshotsurvey@iffresearch.com or 0800 054 2376. Alternatively, if you wish to discuss the research with DfE, our contact is Toby Heffernan (Toby.HEFFERNAN@education.gov.uk). We very much hope you will be able to contribute to the research.

Kind Regards,

Lorna Adams,
Director, IFF Research

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Appendix B. Advance email for classroom teachers invited to do survey

ID: <ID>

[Subject line:] COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey for the DfE

Dear <CONTACT>,

The Department for Education (DfE) is undertaking an important 15-minute survey **exploring the impact of COVID-19 on schools and teachers**. Results will help DfE decide how best to support the sector at this difficult time. The work is being managed by IFF Research, an independent research agency, and results will be completely confidential.

<IF RECONTACT SAMPLE> In a previous School Snapshot Survey, you indicated that you would be happy to be re-contacted about future school-related research.

<IF FRESH GIAS SAMPLE> Along with one or two other teachers from your school, you have been nominated at random by your school leader to take part in this research. Your school leader has provided us with your email address.

We would greatly appreciate your engagement. This would involve taking part in a **15-minute interview** (either online or over the phone). This can be arranged at a time that is convenient to you**.**

This is the first substantial survey the DfE has conducted since schools closed, and your results will directly inform the Department of COVID-19 impacts and ways in which the DfE can support schools and children. In line with their commitment to reduce the burden on schools, the DfE has tried to keep the survey as short as possible, requesting only essential information from schools – to allow you to focus on supporting children.

<div style="background-color:green; color:white; text-align:center">Taking part in the survey</div>

To take part in the online survey:

<div style="text-align:center"><LINK></div>

- Simply click the link above to complete the survey online. It should take no more than 15 minutes.

To take part over the phone:
- If you prefer to provide your answers via telephone, please contact the IFF Research Team at schoolsnapshotsurvey@iffresearch.com and provide:
  1. Your ID number: <ID>
  2. Your preferred date and time to complete the survey (within the fieldwork period of 13 May – 3 June)
  3. The best telephone number to contact you on at this time
  4. An alternative date and time to call, in case there are any difficulties reaching you at your preferred time
- Alternatively, you can arrange an appointment by phoning IFF Research on 0800 054 2376 and leaving a message with the above information. Please ensure you read out your ID <ID> on the call.

We will be calling teachers from 15th May to check if you can take part. If your school is currently closed and no staff will be around to take our call, please email us on schoolsnapshotsurvey@iffresearch.com to let us know the best telephone number to contact you on. If you do not wish to take part, we would be grateful if you let us know via the email address above (and leaving your ID number: <ID>).

Please be reassured that the findings are strictly confidential. Your personal details and those of your school will not be shared with anyone outside of IFF Research. The research is being conducted strictly in accordance with

the Market Research Society Code of Conduct, and any information you provide will be handled securely in line with the UK Data Protection Act and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Unless express permission is given by you, your name and contact details will be deleted 6 months after completion of this project. You have a right to have a copy of your data, change your data, or withdraw from the research at any point. If you'd like to do this, please visit our website at: iffresearch.com/gdpr.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact the IFF Research team at schoolsnapshotsurvey@iffresearch.com or 0800 054 2376. Alternatively, if you wish to discuss the research with DfE, our contact is Toby Heffernan (Toby.HEFFERNAN@education.gov.uk). We very much hope you will be able to contribute to the research.

Kind Regards,

Lorna Adams,
Director, IFF Research

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