



November 2020

The Psychology Zone ran from 2 to 27 November 2020. The Zone was one out of 4 Zones that ran as part of *I'm a Scientist: On Demand* in November 2020.

I'm a Scientist: On Demand aims to offer greater flexibility to teachers in how, and when, they can take part in *I'm a Scientist*. This is in response to the COVID-19 situation and greater restrictions and uncertainty in schools.

The Psychology Zone was funded by the British Psychological Society (BPS).

Psychologists

- 41 psychologists created profiles in the Zone.
- 27 engaged with students through live Chats and/or Ask questions.
- Psychologists were from a broad range of fields and career stages. For example:
 - Marianna Karavidas Assistant Psychologist in the NHS
 - Simon Payne lecturer in Psychology and Behaviour Change at Aberystwyth University
 - Madeleine Steeds cyberpsychologist at the University of Manchester

Students

- 384 students from 17 schools all over the UK logged into the Zone.
- 80% of active students were from target schools (WP and/or U).
 - o 39% were from widening participation (WP) schools.
 - 71% were from underserved (U) schools.

Live Chats and Questions

- 26 live Chats took place took place during the activity.
- 36 live Chats were booked (60% of capacity), but dropout was higher than usual with 10 cancellations.
- On average, 5 psychologists attended each live Chat session.
- 41 student questions were approved. Psychologists responded with 217 answers.

Psychology Zone key figu	Nov 2020 Average	
Schools	17	20
Students logged in	384	488
% of students active	91%	83%
Psychologists onboarded	41	42
% of psychologists active	66%	88%
Questions asked	51	176
Questions approved	41	104
Answers given	217	263
Psychologist comments	27	51
Student comments	5	4
Votes	192	252
Live chats	26	30
Lines of live chat	7389	9562
Average lines per chat	284	321

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Uptake across all November 2020 Zones was much lower than initially expected.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased uncertainty and pressure in schools. Many teachers reported lost time due to school closures and students isolating, and a need to focus on the core curriculum.

Student attendance dropped to 65% for some schools in November. The rapidly changing situation made it difficult for teachers to plan ahead. Many schools restricted access to shared IT equipment, leading some teachers to ask questions in live Chats on behalf of their students, projecting the Chat on a screen. The average class size attending a chat was 25% below normal.









School activity

	Active	Chats attended/	Live chat lines		Questions
School	students	booked	Total	Per student	approved
Furness Academy, Barrow-In-Furness (WP/U)	81	4/4	710	9	2
The Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe (U)	46	4/5	558	12	16
Burford School, Burford (U)	37	1/1	211	6	2
St Bridget's Primary School, Glasgow (WP)	32	2/2	448	14	1
Cleeve School, Cheltenham (U)	32	2/2	312	10	2
Gillotts School, Henley-On-Thames	28	1/1	312	11	10
Beaulieu Convent School, Jersey (U)	21	1/1	300	14	0
The James Hornsby School, Basildon (WP/U)	17	1/1	146	9	0
Aquinas College, Stockport	15	1/2	45	3	0
St John Rigby RC Sixth Form College, Wigan	12	1/1	123	10	0
Wigan and Leigh College, Wigan	10	1/1	70	7	2
South Wilts Grammar School For Girls, Salisbury (U)	8	1/1	77	10	0
Orchards Academy, Swanley (WP/U)	4	0/1	0	0	5
Northfield School and Sports College, Billingham	3	Only joined open chat	33	11	1
Kenmont Primary School, London (WP)	1	Only joined open chat	48	48	0
Robert May's School, Hook (U)	1	Only joined open chat	8	8	0

We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups going into STEM careers. Find out what we mean by our under-served (U) and WP schools (WP), and how you can support us in working with more of these at: about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp/





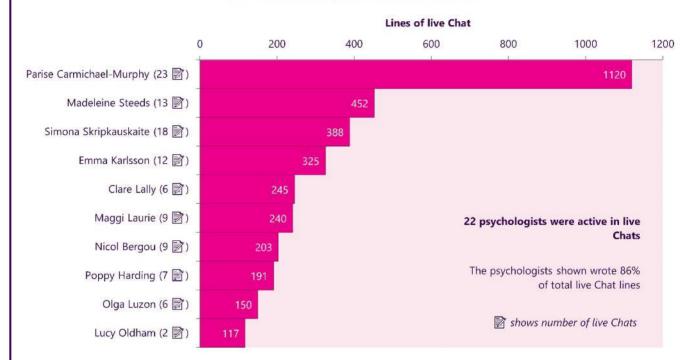




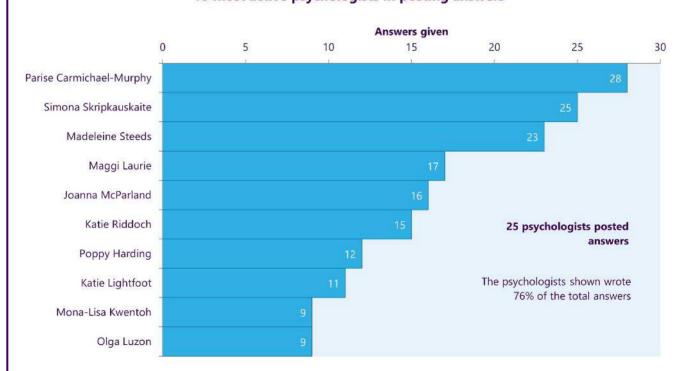
Psychologist activity

27 psychologists were active in the Zone, writing 3972 lines of live chat, and providing 217 answers to posted questions.

10 most active psychologists in live Chats



10 most active psychologists in posting answers



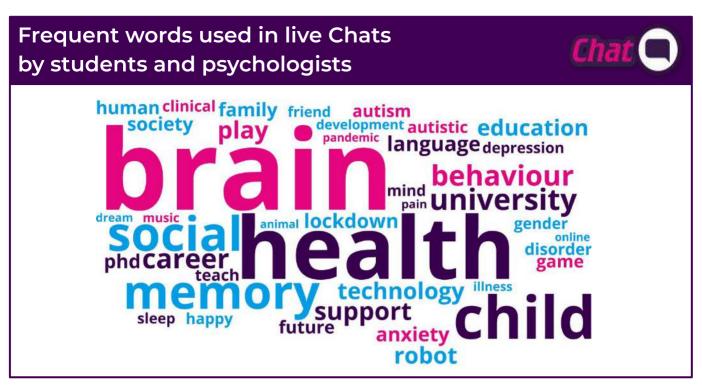
See all the participating psychologists: psychologyn2020.imascientist.org.uk/psychologists

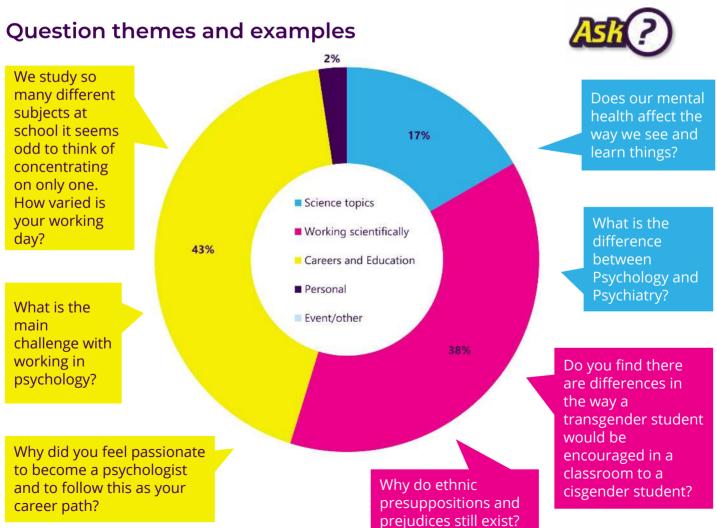






















Examples of good engagement

Students asked novel and interesting questions to the psychologists in Ask. The psychologists gave creative and thoughtful answers, such as this example asking for tips in working as a psychologist.



Question: if being a psychologist was a game what would some loading screen tips .



Keywords: advice, video games

Asked by sarim on 13 Nov 2020.



Simon Payne answered on 16 Nov 2020:

"Remember, it's not about racing to the destination, try to enjoy the journey."



Parise Carmichael-Murphy answered on 13 Nov 2020:

remember to save your progress regularly!



Simona Skripkauskaite answered on 13 Nov 2020: last edited 13 Nov 2020 11:06 am

Remember to not bring work home, you cannot help everyone!

When asked if you can read their mind by a random person in the party, press L1 & R1 to avoid conversation.



Press [] repeatedly to deflect guilt of being angry at someone, when you understand that their behaviour is not their fault.

Students also had very thoughtful conversations about not only biological aspect of psychology, but also the social applications of psychology, and the importance if interdisciplinary work.

RawlekaW @Parise: So would you say there are certain groups who are more likely to experience mental health problems, due to biological/psychological factors?

Parise @RawlekaW: there are biological factors but I don't study those as much, I look at social factors - so things like living in areas which have less resources or government support than others / 'poverty'

RawlekaW @Parise: that's super interesting for me because I study both psychology and sociology! What has your research indicated about the social factors and how they influence life experiences, including mental health issues?

Parise @RawlekaW: I wish I did sociology too! but I like social psychology so I get to cross over and study both a little bit - I look at things like gender and race - so for example...teachers are more likely to encourage boys to go into jobs which require physical labour - this could impact on their physical health.









There were lots conversations in the chats about the psychologists individual work areas, such as Simona's research on autism. In this conversation, a student relates Simona's answer to a personal situation, helping them understand the research. This personal link helps to support their Science Capital:

maria b @Maggi @Simona what's something you've learnt about autism that shocked or surprised you?

Simona @maria b: I think the thing that surprised me the most is the lack of a functioning system. For example, autistic people who struggle with mental health issues often have their treatment discontinued because they now have the autism diagnosis. There's a real issue of people falling through the cracks because autism specialists and mental health specialists keep throwing people to one another.

maria b @Simona: that shocking to hear, i know of a two children i babysit that had taken ages for the boy to be diagnosed and they are still trying to diagnose the daughter :(do you think that diagnosing young children can have a negative affect in the way that labelling in schools can have?

Simona @maria b: The usefulness of labels is a very important debate, indeed, and there are good arguments pro and con. In general, diagnostic labels serve to indicate when something is causing issues in functioning everyday life and should be addressed (by receiving support or treatment). Without the labels, it would be hard to achieve in the current system.

Psychologists of the Week

Students voted each week for their favourite psychologist to be named *Psychologist of the Week*. There was a tie in week 2.

These psychologists were: Parise Carmichael-Murphy, Maggi Laurie, Simon Payne, Simona Skripkauskaite, and Emma Karlsson.

The overall winner in the Zone was **Parise Carmichael-Murphy**.









Scientist Get me Out of here

Feedback

"The chats are quite lively and engaging - so I think they've worked well."

Maggi Laurie, Psychologist

"We're really grateful for the psychologists sharing their experience and knowledge with us."

Student

"I had so many interesting conversations with you during the live Chats, and many of you shared your ideas or experience which made me think about what I might like to do in the future too.

I would recommend I'm a Scientist to anyone looking to develop their engagement skills – it really is an invaluable experience."

> Parise Carmichael-Murphy, Psychology Zone Winner



Poppy Harding @PsychPoppy Nov 30 I've enjoyed being a #psychologist on the panel for the @imascientist #psychology zone this month. It has been great to engage with students about psychology and #mentalhealth, and hopefully it's inspired budding future psychologists! #childmentalhealth #mentalhealtheducation

"It helped me learn lots of things I didn't know about psychology."

Student

"Thanks to all the scientists for their time. The students love the programme."

Teacher

"It has been great! Loads of great questions and interesting conversations."

Emma, Psychologist



