



EXPLORING HOW THE PANDEMIC AFFECTED GOSPEL OAK PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT ATTAINMENT

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Abstract

Teachers around the world are noticing students struggling in the classroom since returning to in-person learning post-pandemic. At Gospel Oak Primary school, located in London, staff have noticed increased rates of developmental delays and decreasing attainment levels post-pandemic. We conducted staff interviews (n:10) and surveys (n:3) to understand staff observations during and post-pandemic, along with an analysis of standardised testing and academic records. We determine that older students [9-11] were minimally affected, students 7-9 were impacted academically and students 3-7 were impacted developmentally. Our findings identify areas of concern based on where students are performing below expectations, which the school can use to tailor interventions to support struggling students.

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Executive Summary

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused schools around the world to close and transition to remote learning. Online learning was uncharted territory, and many schools were unable to make a seamless transition. Schools struggled to get consistent participation from students and teachers were working extra hours providing support to students and recording lessons. Additionally, workload expectations decreased and students were often not expected to submit by a specified deadline. Another challenge many students and teachers faced was access to technology and dependable internet. This makes it hard for students to participate in assignments and lessons. Lancker & Parolin, 2020 found that the longer students were deprived of learning due to lockdowns, the more they struggled when returning to the classroom. This was because they were no longer used to learning and found it hard to focus, preserve and work independently. Children between the ages of 0-5 suffered developmental delays, as they had not yet fully formed their cognitive function. Older children 6-11 were impacted differently, as their usual routines were disrupted and they missed more formal schooling time and key socialisation.

Located in the Camden borough of London, Gospel Oak Primary school is a large, high performing state primary school. The school is known for their students scoring extremely high on both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 exams. Similar to other schools, Gospel Oak was affected by the 2020-2021 COVID-19 lockdowns. These lockdowns resulted in school shutdowns, with only in-person learning available to a select group of students. Since returning to in-person learning, Gospel Oak staff have observed a wide range of differences in their students compared to pre-pandemic, with notable increases in students struggling with Reading and Writing. Staff working with younger students (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 & 2), have noted students suffering from developmental delays. These delays include struggling to focus during lessons and a dramatic increase in students not passing Phonics tests. Upon returning to in-person learning, these staff members have put interventions into place to support struggling students. These interventions include one-on-one support and focus groups, each is tailored for a group/ child with a specific need. Not all effects of the pandemic were negative, however, some students, particularly older students, students with sufficient digital access, or who have parents with flexible work schedules, seemed to have thrived during lockdowns. Headteacher John Hayes has observed this change and hypothesised that the education gap between vulnerable

(Disadvantaged, English as a Second Language, Special Education Needs) students and the rest of their cohort has expanded. This project determined the impact of the pandemic on Gospel Oak Primary and Nursery school students' attainment.

This research investigated the impact of the pandemic, by focusing on the following objectives:

1. Investigated Gospel Oak's response to the pandemic
2. Determined how the pandemic impacted student attainment

Methods

Our methods consisted of in-person staff interviews (n:10) and surveys (n:3), an in-depth analysis of standardised tests from (2017-2022) and practice testing from (2017-2022). The staff interviews and surveys, provided insight into staff observations of their students pre-pandemic, during the pandemic and post-pandemic. Each interview was recorded and transcribed and was semi-structured. We began by performing an in-person interview with Headteacher John Hayes, who was able to give us the school protocol and overall school observations. From teachers, we were able to gain insight into the classroom, curriculum, expectations and challenges, along with any interventions being utilised for whole cohort support. From TA and other teacher support we learned about how many students are struggling within each cohort and interventions being put into place for specific students.

We analysed Key Stage data and student academic history to understand how students are performing post-pandemic. Key Stage testing is the UK's form of standardised testing, which gauges a student's academic progress. From the data we were able to determine how the changes in teaching and enforcement of participation during the pandemic impacted different groups of students. We analysed Key Stage data from 2017-2022 (excluding 2020), which tested students on English, Writing and Maths skills. To analyse this data, we compared pre-pandemic to post-pandemic percent of students meeting the Expected Standard to determine how students are performing compared to the expectations set by previous cohorts. We then furthered this analysis by comparing the performance of vulnerable students. Vulnerable students were defined as a student who is considered disadvantaged, speaks English as a second language (EAL), and/or special education needs (SEN) in pre-pandemic cohorts to the performance of vulnerable

students post-pandemic. The first comparisons executed were, pre-pandemic (2017-2019) percentages to post-pandemic (2021 & 2022) percentages for both KS1 and KS2 tests. Next, we looked into the education gaps for each test- how vulnerable students performed compared to the rest of their cohort. For our Key Stage analysis, we had two Cohorts which took the KS1 before the pandemic and the KS2 after the pandemic- the 2017/2021 Cohort and 2018/2022 Cohort. KS testing data allowed us to determine how the gap for vulnerable students has changed from when students took KS1 pre pandemic and KS2 post pandemic.

We also analysed student academic progress history, which is how students have performed throughout their academic career in English, Writing, Maths and Phonics (when applicable). For Maths academic history, we examined Maths testing data, which the school calls White Rose data for cohorts ranging from current Year 8 students (Year 5 in 2020) to current Year 2 students (Nursery in 2020). This enabled us to establish how the gap for vulnerable students was expected to change in different cohorts post pandemic. For English we analysed Progress in Reading Assessment (PiRA) data for 2018 and 2021 and teacher assessments for Reading and Writing data for Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022. From these data sets, we identified cohorts performing lower than previous years and determined how far off track students are compared to previous cohorts.

Findings

Our findings revealed that education gaps between vulnerable students and the rest of the cohort expanded post pandemic due to lower academic support (both teacher and parental) and ability to participate in assignments or lessons during the pandemic. Teachers have noticed an increase in students who struggle to focus in the classroom and are suffering from developmental delays, which has resulted in lower attainment and necessitating more one-on-one support. These struggles and delayed developmental skills are resulting in lower attainment and more one-on-one support being needed within the classroom. We determined that students ages 9-11 were minimally affected, as they were more comfortable with Google Classroom and more self sufficient. Students 7-9 were primarily impacted educationally, as they needed more support. Students 3-7 were impacted developmentally, with more students struggling with Phonics, sensory skills and having challenges focusing.

Recommendations

Based on our findings, we determined two takeaways for Gospel Oak to support their student post-pandemic. First, the school should focus on the developmental development of the current Early Years groups to Year 2; these groups need extra emphasis on communication and focusing skills, along with Phonics. Another area of concern is the expanding education gaps between vulnerable groups of students and the rest of their cohort. Extra support is needed for these students and the school should consider a program, or classroom dynamic which supports these students.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 lockdowns, researchers estimate that UK students lost on average one-third to one-half of a year's worth of learning due to the myriad of complications resulting from remote learning (Lancker & Parolin 2020). The UK's response to the pandemic in March 2020 resulted in extended lockdowns and subsequent remote learning. Across the UK, remote learning resulted in less time spent on schoolwork and students completing fewer assignments during the three school shutdowns. Compared with an average of 5-6 hours spent on schoolwork pre-pandemic, students spent an average of only 2.5 hours, with 20% of students doing no schoolwork during lockdown (Green, 2020). Remote learning not only had negative impacts on the student's education but their mental and physical health as well. Reports of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and other behavioural challenges increased significantly during the pandemic and have not returned to pre-pandemic levels (Pearcey, 2023).

Following the onset of the pandemic, a burgeoning literature has explored how the effect that the pandemic had on children and their future in academics. There have been extensive journal articles about participation during online learning, learning loss over lockdowns, and all of the external factors in a child's life that may affect their academic performance like their home life, mobility, and ability to participate in lessons and assignments (Buchanan et al., 2021; Contini et al., 2022). The area of study is still emerging so there is much more for researchers to investigate in order to help schools better understand the challenges they will face in the next few years. There are many factors to how a child might fare during online learning and every school has a unique mix of pupils meaning each school may face various different challenges. As a school with increasing high rates of SEN and disadvantaged youth, Gospel Oak Primary School had a unique experience transitioning online and path to recovery.

The project evaluated the impact of the pandemic on Gospel Oak students' attainment. We will achieve this by:

1. Investigating Gospel Oak's response to the pandemic
2. Determining how the pandemic impacted student attainment

In the following sections, we discuss the regional pandemic timeline and the school's response, how the lockdowns affected children in the UK and similar countries in terms of attainment, possible contributing factors to lower attainment levels and background on Gospel Oak along with their response to Covid. We then discuss our multi-method approach composed of interviews, surveys, and procedure for analysing student academic data. Our findings demonstrate Gospel Oak's response to the pandemic, and the attainment levels for each cohort with attention to vulnerable students. We conclude with the broad lessons from our analysis about the future of attainment at Gospel Oak and recommend areas for teachers to put a greater focus on within their classroom. These areas include areas of concern for each Year group and overarching concerns for the school as a whole.

Chapter 2: Background

2.1 How the Pandemic Disrupted Education in the UK

On March 23, 2020, the government announced the first COVID lockdown, advising that everyone stay at home for the next three weeks. Schools were forced to transition to remote learning, administrators, teachers, and students were forced to adapt to a new method of teaching that heavily relied on the resources a child had at home. Some vulnerable students and children of key workers, however, were permitted to continue in-person, adding an extra challenge as schools had to cater to both groups (Evans, 2020). On April 16th, the government announced that the lockdown would continue for at least three more weeks, eventually ending in June (Institute for Government, 2022). In October 2020, a three-tiered COVID restriction system was implemented, and Johnson announced the second COVID lockdown, which lasted from November to December 2020. On December 21st, a fourth tier of COVID restrictions was added, the "Stay at Home" alert level, mandating that no one could enter or leave Tier 4 areas unless travelling for work, education, childcare, or exercise; people could also not leave the area to stay overnight outside of Tier 4 area (BBC, 2020; GOV.UK, 2022). In early January, the UK announced the final lockdown which lasted until March 8th and permitted students to re-join in-person learning. Pupils spent half a year in lockdown participating in remote learning during the pandemic.

2.2 Student Attainment

In education, attainment refers to the highest level of education an individual has received. In the United Kingdom, students' attainment levels are measured by a series of Key Stage (KS) assessments. The national curriculum in the UK requires students to take KS1 and KS2 assessments during their primary years and KS3 and KS4 assessments between the beginning of Year 7 and end of Year 11. KS assessments test students on their knowledge gained in Maths, Reading, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Blanden (2021) found that Year 2 children taking the KS1 exam in autumn 2021 were around 2 months behind 2017 expectations in Maths and Reading which is equivalent to 15% of a standard deviation.

Remote learning severely affected education in the UK, resulting in lower workloads and education deficits. Lancker & Parolin (2020) estimated that internationally students lost on average about one-third to one-half years' worth of learning during the first set of lockdowns. School days during lockdown were on average 2.5 hours, as opposed to the typical 6-hour school day in the UK. 71% of students had less than one lesson per day, and 20% of students did no work during lockdown (Green, 2020). Regional differences in education during lockdown may have contributed to more significant learning gaps in different parts of the country. In London and southeast England, 28% of students received an average of at least 4 assignments per day during lockdown, while in northeast England, only 9% of students had the same workload (Green, 2020). Some believe that some subjects were more affected; English teacher, CJ O'Connor, said "No decent work in English can be done without discussion," and "I think there is something intrinsically social about English and how language works and none of this is easily transferred online," (Evans, 2020). One factor which has been linked to academic delays post-COVID, is the length of complete shutdowns (Lancker & Parolin, 2020). Table 2 shows this relation collected from 18 countries. The pandemic caused various degrees of learning loss for each student, but some students suffered more than others. Students who suffered from pre-existing educational gaps between children were at an even worse disadvantage when schools shut down.

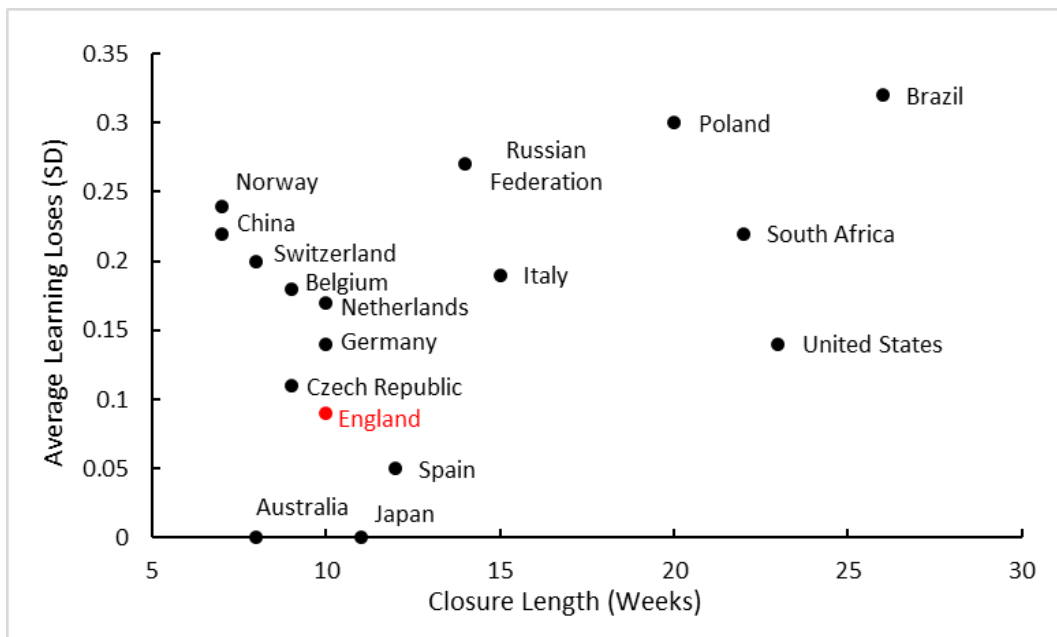


Figure 1. Modified version of Lancker & Parolin's (2020) table comparing different countries' calculated learning loss and length of school closures.

2.3 Factors Contributing to Lower Attainment

There are many contributing factors that were caused by the pandemic which can be related to lower attainment levels in school children. Lockdowns took students out of in-person classrooms and away from the social aspect and support of school. Therefore, upon returning to in-person academics, parents and teachers are claiming to notice that many students are suffering from a lack of language and social skills, along with falling below the expected attainment levels (Buchanan et al., 2021).

2.3.1 Existing Education Gaps

One contributing factor to lower attainment levels is pupil mobility. Pupil mobility refers to when a student changes schools (either once or on repeated occasions), at times other than the typical age that students start or finish their education at a school. Prior to COVID shutdowns, a negative association was determined between high pupil mobility and low educational attainment (Strand & Demie, 2013). When a child is moved from their school and home, they often encounter negative feelings due to the lack of familiarity and safety. This can cause children to feel uncomfortable in social settings and unmotivated in academic settings (Strand & Demie, 2013). Primary school teachers tend to know the needed support each student needs; when a new student comes into the classroom, both the child and teacher are learning how the other functions.

Another contributing factor is childhood poverty. Prior to COVID there was a notable education gap between students from lower income households and their peers (Lancker & Parolin 2020). Students who were already behind their peers, fell even further behind due to the pandemic, in part due to scarcity of technological and network availability. Subsequently, when comparing students KS1 scores in 2020 along with students KS1 scores from 2017, there was a noticeable five-month delay between students from lower-income homes compared to students from higher-income families (Buchanan et al., 2021).

Students with learning disabilities prior to COVID- 19 shutdowns were also put at a higher disadvantage once schools transitioned to remote learning (Buchanan et al., 2021, Lancker & Parolin 2020). Schools were unable to provide the academic accommodations

previously utilised like, special tutoring or support. Similarly, students could not receive needed attention or support from teachers, as the teaching became less personalised (Anthony et al., 2021, Lancker & Parolin, 2020). Due to this lack of support, students' disabilities also may have become more apparent because their needs were no longer being met, leading to more students seeking diagnoses.

EAL is one of the leading contributors to a pre-existing educational gap between students. More resources and EAL teachers are required to support student's learning needs (Demie, 2017). Prior to COVID, the difficulties relating progression in EAL to attainment in the national curriculum is that there was no nationally agreed framework to rate a student's academic progression. Therefore, post-pandemic, there is no standardised way to gauge if a student is progressing at the same rate or failing behind. Another factor that came with lockdowns was that students who didn't speak English at home were no longer utilising English outside of the classroom during the school day. Due to this, their KS Reading and Writing performance declined (Anthony et al., 2021).

2.3.2 Students Missing Developmental Milestones

Due to the lockdowns, many children are now missing developmental milestones, resulting in students falling below expected attainment levels. To gauge a child's milestone progress during their formative years, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) published a milestone tracker (see Table 1) which contains major developmental milestones (social, language, cognitive, and physical) for ages 2 months to 5 years (Centers for Disease Control, 2022). It is universally reported that children are missing the expected social skills and social competence post-pandemic (Blanden et al., 2021; Lancker & Parolin 2020). Social competence is a set of skills which allows one to interact effectively with others in a social setting, involving reading social cues, appropriate responses, and the ability to resolve conflict. While social skills are the physical ability to interact and communicate with others. Both of these skills are developed during a child's formative years and are based on parent-child and peer relationships developed during this stage of their life.

	3 yr.	4 yr.	5 yr.
Social/ Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Calms down within 10 min. After being left (drop off at childcare) · Notices other children and joins them to play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Pretends to be something else during play (teacher, superhero, dog) · Asks to play with children if none are around · Comforts others who are hurt or sad (hugging a crying friend) · Avoids danger, like not jumping from tall heights at the playground · Likes to be a "helper" · Changes behavior based on where they are (library, playground) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Follows rules or takes turns when playing games with others · Sings, dances, or acts · Does simple chores at home (matching socks, cleaning the table)
Language/ Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Talks in conversation using at least two back- and forth exchanges · Asks "who," "where," or "why" questions ("Where is mommy/daddy") · Says what action is happening in a picture or book when asked · Says first name, when asked · Talks well enough for others to understand (most of the time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Says sentences with four or more words · Says some words from a song, story, or nursery rhyme · Talks about at least one thing that happened during their day ("I played soccer") · Answers simple questions like "What is a coat for?" or "What is a crayon for" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Tells a story they heard or made up with at least 2 events · Answers simple questions about a book or story after you read or tell it · Keeps a conversation going with more than three back-and-forth exchanges · Uses or recognizes simple rhymes (bat-cat, ball-tall)
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Draws a circle, when shown how to · Avoids touching hot objects, when warned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Names a few colours of items · Tells what comes next in a well-known story · Draws a person with three or more body parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Counts to 10 · Names some numbers between 1 and 5 when you point · Uses words about time (yesterday, morning) · Pays attention for 5-10 min · Writes some letters in their name · Names some letters when pointed to
Movement/ Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Strings items together (large beads or macaroni) · Puts on some clothes by himself (loose pants or jacket) · Uses a fork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Catches a large ball most of the time · Serves themselves food or pours water, with adult supervision · Unbuttons some buttons · Holds a crayon or pencil between fingers and thumb (not a fist) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Buttons some buttons · Hops on one foot

Table 1. Developmental Milestone Tracker for parents to gauge child development created by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control, 2022).

The attachment bond formed between a child and their parents is essential at a young age for a child to develop social competence and form their social foundation (Clikeman, 2017). However, as a child develops their individuality it is just as important for a child to be separated from their family and socialise with other students and adults. By the age 5, the foundations of the most important sensory and perception systems are formed, so for children under the age of

5, the shutdowns may have caused developmental delays causing them to fall behind expectations for their age levels (Dodge, 1986). Upon entering school, these students had little to no interactions with people outside of their family, causing students to feel lonely in school settings (Blanden et al., 2021). This attachment has caused a disconnect within the classroom and increased rates of Separation Anxiety Disorder, which is characterised by an excessive and unrealistic fear of harm coming to oneself or their caregiver when away from said caregiver and manifests in a refusal to be apart from a caregiver and behavioural outbursts (Eisen et al., 2005, Patrinos et al., 2022). Young children during the pandemic had an unexpected prolonged period at home and in turn are now at a social disadvantage. The lack of access to new and uncomfortable social situations had had a noticeable impact on social competence, especially in younger children (Blanden et al., 2021; Lancker & Parolin 2020).

Older primary students' socialisation skills were affected differently than younger students as they were accustomed to the classroom and in-person interactions. This is because their foundational socialisation skills had already been developed at the onset of the pandemic and were stunted as they were no longer interacting with others and forming an understanding of the world around them. One small-scale study that focused on well performing students revealed that most of the children preferred learning at school rather than at home due to the opportunities to socially interact with peers as they felt lonely and unmotivated during lockdown (Manyukhina 2021). Another study interviewed similarly aged students but with previously low attainment levels; students were split on being nervous or excited about returning to school (Buchanan et al.). Upon returning to the classroom, students have stated they feel more reluctant to ask for help from teachers and peers due to the heightened anxiety (Buchanan et al.; 2021, Manyukhina 2021). A study which compared various responses from mothers of primary students stated that mothers reported that their children exhibited more emotional and behavioural difficulties during the pandemic compared to before and social difficulty upon returning to the classroom (Blanden et al., 2021).

2.3.3 Student Health

A burgeoning literature has examined the mental health implications resulting from the pandemic on children, (Burns et al., 2023; Egan, 2021; Isensee et al., 2022; Samji et al., 2022;

Sicouri et al., 2023). For younger children, mild feelings of anxiety and fear are expected, however, clinical anxiety disorders have increased since the pandemic. This is due to the lack of access to social environments with peers resulting in stunted socioemotional skills development such as developing a sense of belonging and reducing children's fears that they are a burden to others (NHS, 2023, O'Sullivan et al., 2021). Social isolation and decreases in daily structure were cited as reasons for children having more outbursts and lower moods (Burns et al., 2023; Egan, 2021; Hall et al., 2023). Lack of socialisation and community building during the pandemic affected the disparities children of colour and disabled children are facing upon return to school (Baird, et al, 2023, Velez, 2021). Within children diagnosed with autism or other special educational needs, mental health outcomes tended to vary. A substantial minority of neurodivergent children in one UK study found the first lockdown to be a welcome break from the bullying and intense academic demands of schooling and felt the return to in-person school increased symptoms of depression and behavioural problems, while others reported worsening suicidal ideation, self harm, and aggravated violence during the pandemic (Asbury & Toseeb, 2023; Hall et al., 2023; Toseeb & Asbury, 2023). The increase in childrens' screen time since the pandemic has had devastating effects on their health (Gueron-Sela et al., 2023; Salway et al., 2023). One Germany-based study found families with neurodivergent children who lost access to therapy had higher increases in screen use (Isensee et al., 2022). Increased screen time was more rampant in lower and middle-income families where parents worked full time, stating they felt they had to use television as a babysitter to work (Egan et al., 2021; Gueron-Sela et al., 2023; Salway et al., 2023).

2.4 Gospel Oak Primary School's Response to the Pandemic

Gospel Oak is a primary school in the London Borough of Camden. There are over 450 Co-ed nursery and primary students enrolled, with ages ranging from 3 to 11. The current student-to-teacher ratio is 21:1. Census data indicates 37% of students at Gospel Oak have at one time been eligible for free school meals in the last six years, and that 47.5% of students at Gospel Oak do not speak English as a first language (GOV.UK 2023). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gospel Oak provided 120 Chromebooks to students for online learning and catered food for students who were eligible for free meals. To accommodate children of essential workers, the school allowed an allotted group of students to attend in-person sessions.

While there is no published state testing data on attainment from Gospel Oak during the pandemic, there is data on academics in the years leading up to the pandemic. From 2017 - 2019, the percentage of students meeting the Expected Standard in Reading, Writing and Maths rose from 68% to 92% in Key Stage testing. For students with high attainment in Key Stage 1, 100% of the students met the standard for Reading, Writing and Maths, with 43% having attained the higher standard in those subjects. 93% of students that achieved middle attainment met the standard, with 2% achieving a higher standard. For students in which English is an Additional Language, 94% of students met the Expected Standard, with 10% achieving a higher standard (GOV.UK 2023).

Chapter 3: Methods

To assist Gospel Oak in supporting students as they return to school post-pandemic, this project explored Gospel Oak Primary school's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and how students' attainment levels were impacted. To accomplish this goal, we outlined two objectives:

1. Investigate Gospel Oak's response to the pandemic
2. Determine how the pandemic impacted student attainment

3.1 Investigate Gospel Oak's response to the pandemic

To understand how Gospel Oak operated during the pandemic, we conducted staff interviews and surveys. All staff members were sent an interest form where they could learn about the study and opt in to participate in either an interview or a survey. From these methods we gathered information about the transition to remote learning, resources the school provided for disadvantaged families, day to day routines and the curriculum during the lockdowns.

3.1.1 Staff Interviews

We interviewed staff from leadership, the support team, and teachers from various phases to gain insight into their unique perspectives about the transition and response to online learning. We interviewed Headteacher John Hayes to explore the administrative side of the transition and the school-wide changes that were made to the structure of schooling, three members of the support team to explore the socio-emotional challenges pupils faced during the transitions to and from online learning. We also interviewed five teachers, to explore their transition to online learning, approach to teaching, challenges faced by students during the return to school, and changes they noticed in attainment and behaviour. These interviews were semi-structured, following a similar framework and we asked varying follow up questions to allow staff to highlight the areas that are most relevant to their position and experiences (see Appendix A). We recorded and transcribed these interviews followed by a combination deductive and inductive coding system which allowed us to categorise and evaluate the information collected. This allowed us to identify relevant themes and key timeframes.

3.1.2 Staff Surveys

To supplement our interviews, we offered an online survey which three staff members participated in. The survey explored similar themes to the interviews with teachers such as challenges to student attainment post-pandemic, changes within the classroom environment since the return to school, and current strategies used to catch students up (see Appendix B). This survey was administered using Qualtrics and was sent by emailing a link. Quantitative answers were analysed using Qualtrics analytical tools and qualitative answers were analysed with the same coding system as the interviews to build on themes and trends previously established.

3.2 Analysing Gospel Oak Participation and Attainment Data

To determine how the pandemic impacted student attainment, we analysed standardised testing, practice testing, and online learning participation records provided by Gospel Oak. Testing records ranged from December 2017-December 2022 and the online learning records contained information for both the March-July 2020 and January-March 2021 lockdowns. The data provided by the school allowed us to evaluate their academic performance at multiple timepoints before, during, and after the pandemic and compare it across different demographics within a cohort, other cohorts during the same year of schooling, and national/regional data.

3.2.1 Key Stage 1 and 2 Analysis

Student academic data from before and after the pandemic allowed us to identify how student attainment has changed due to lockdown. From the literature review, it was expected that each student lost at least a year and a half of education during online learning, and that 20% of students did not complete any work during the lockdowns (Lancker & Parolin 2020; Green, 2020). From the statistical comparison of expectations of students' performance from before the pandemic to after, we found specific areas where Gospel Oak students are no longer meeting these expectations. With the collected data, we made a graphical representation of student performances and compared student performance from before COVID to post COVID.

3.2.2 Gospel Oak Online Learning Records

The academic data provided by the school also contained student completion of assignments throughout the pandemic. To determine how children engaged with material in

several different subjects during lockdowns, we found the percentages of assignments completed each week in different subjects for each pupil using data teachers collected during different lockdown periods. We used this data to find trends in participation between different students, age groups, and subjects. We used a colour scale from least participation to most to visualise how well students and classes were engaging with each subject throughout the term.

3.2.3 White Rose Mathematics Practice Testing

We obtained records of a standardised practice test in Mathematics called White Rose for multiple terms in between December 2017 and December 2022. These records included both the individual scores for each class, the cut offs for the score being Below Expected, on track for Expected Standard, and on track for Greater Depth, and the number of students achieving each of those categories across demographics including gender, SEN/Non-SEN, and disadvantaged/advantaged.

To analyse this data, we used the individual scores to find the average score of a student Below Expectations, at the Expected Standard, and at Greater Depth. We compared these average scores across the same cohort over throughout their time at the school and different cohorts in the same age group. The demographic data was converted to percentages using the same procedure as the Key Stage data so they could be directly compared. The gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged and SEN and Non-SEN, defined as the difference between percentage of vulnerable and non-vulnerable pupils reaching the Expected Standard and Greater Depth, was found. The data was graphed to follow each cohort from those who entered reception during 2014 to 2021 when this data was available.

3.2.4 PiRA Reading Practice Testing

We gathered records of the Progress in Reading Assessment scores (PiRA) from Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022. We used these records to compare the percent of pupils attaining Below Expectations, at the Expected Standard, and at Greater Depth of each cohort across disadvantaged/advantaged and SEN/Non-SEN pupils in Reading and Writing. We also compared this data to Reading and Writing attainment from other tests like KS1 and EYFS where available.

3.2.5 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Testing

We obtained the 2019 and 2022 EYFS booklets which have data from the standardised assessments conducted at the end of Reception and measured whether children are at a good level of development within 17 specific learning goals. It contains comparisons between Camden and National data across different demographics. We pulled overall percentages of children showing good development and percentages in some key learning goals in Maths and literature across SEN/non-SEN and disadvantaged/advantaged compared to local and national data between the years 2017 and 2022.

3.2.6 Year 1 Phonics Testing

We also received and analysed the data in the 2019 and 2022 Year 1 Phonics booklets which come from a standardised assessment covering a range of skills in Phonics that is conducted at the end of Year 1. We found the percentage of students across different demographics who had reached the Expected Standard and the score distribution among all pupils and compared the 2022 cohort to the data provided for 2017-2019.

3.3 Study Limitations

Limitations that came with our methods of data collection included small sample size within staff, inconsistent data, and limited context due to anonymisation. Only 27% of staff we contacted were willing to participate in the study and the testimonial we did get was skewed towards the older phases; only one person contacted worked in Early Years. The testing data received from the school was created by all different sources and people, making it hard to understand data and compare classes within a Cohort. Teachers used different methods of record taking during the pandemic, causing some confusion during analysis. The practice testing data was also not always reported in the same way and there were many terms missing from records available to us. Another major barrier we faced was that student records had all identifying information removed. This means our findings are unable to make meaningful connections between the individual students' participation, learning needs, or socio-economic status to changes in their attainment post-pandemic.

Chapter 4: Findings

Through our study we found that Gospel Oak staff worked very hard to adjust to remote learning quickly and accessibly. Within their means, they made sure children had access to appropriate technology for learning as teachers moved assignments to Google Classroom and instruction to Loom videos. In execution, pupils with larger homes, stable internet, and involved adults engaged more with the material and the missed learning has left a large impact on attainment. The oldest students during the pandemic needed less support from adults, participated more, and were able to catch up within the past few years. Pupils in the middle had greater disparities in Maths and the more academic parts of English. The youngest children felt the biggest impact in their social and language development.

4.1 Gospel Oak's Response to the Pandemic

Through interviews and data, we found that the school's response to the pandemic allowed for more flexibility in when pupils could engage with the lessons but less personalization to student needs. In our interview with Headteacher John Hayes, he explained that during the pandemic, the school opted to only provide recorded lessons for students. This was done in effort to allow the maximum number of students to participate in lessons because many families were only given one or two Chromebooks to be shared by many siblings. Recorded lessons were posted on the Google Classroom page, similar to procedure from before the pandemic. Assignments were optional, and students were not expected to make-up missed assignments. We also interviewed Educational and Pastoral Support Team members for Phase 1, Dawn O'Driscoll. O'Driscoll said she spent her time calling and checking in with families that were under participation, but some simply did not have the means or the desire to engage with online learning. From teacher interviews we learned that during the pandemic, despite following the established curriculum, they primarily focused their lessons on English and Maths. Teachers tried to make learning online as easy as possible for students. They were able to do this by simplifying lessons, only keeping record of participation instead of traditional marking and aiming lower in terms of expectations to include lower achieving students.

Many pupils did not have access to a computer or Wifi when lockdowns began so the school checked out Chromebooks and made 4G sims available to address this. Between April and June 2020, the school distributed 80 Chromebooks of which 12 were shared between 1-3 siblings. All families who received Chromebooks during this time indicated that they did have Wifi. During January 2021 the school loaned out 105 Chromebooks and 22 of them were confirmed to be shared with siblings. This time families were able to indicate their Wifi quality on a scale of good, poor, terrible or none and the school was able to provide 4G sims to six families to elevate the worst internet issues.

4.2 The Pandemic's Impact on Student Attainment

Upon returning to the classroom teachers noted students have struggled in English and Writing more than in Maths. Similarly, they have noticed that many students are struggling with perseverance and low self-esteem. Teachers shared how students have struggled to get back to the normal workload, work independently (without support) and have had social skill challenges. The loss of these critical skills has slowed the process of academic recovery after the pandemic and affected attainment. The following sections will cover the pandemic's impact on each cohort's attainment from those who entered Reception in 2014 to 2021 based on testing records, online learning records, and staff testimonial.

4.2.1 Past Cohorts (Years 8 and 7 During Academic Year 22-23)

The cohort who was in Year 5 when the first lockdown started had the least observable impacts. Compared to pre-pandemic White Rose Maths testing, more disadvantaged and advantaged students achieved the Expected Standard as well as the Greater Depth and the gap between the two groups decreased 8% for the Expected Standard (Appendix H, Figures 23 & 24). The number of SEN pupils achieving the Expected Standard increased by 20% (Figure 37). SEN pupils reaching Greater Depth were unaffected but 18% more Non-SEN pupils achieved Greater Depth than before the pandemic (Figure 38). The greatest challenge that Year 6 teachers reported during their return to school was trouble focusing during lessons because during remote learning that had not been required to sit still for hours at a time and coming back into that routine took time. Another challenge that this group faced especially in the 2020-21 academic year was increased anxiety due to COVID and increased access to news which caused several

pupils to fall behind. One teacher reported that this cohort returned mostly as expected but there were five or six students who had done very little over the lockdown that were further behind than she had ever experienced. In the KS2 2021 cohort, the most significant drops in Reading and Writing were noted in the EAL students, dropping 15.3% and 27.7%, respectively (Appendix F, Figure 15). In Maths the significant drop was seen in the percent of SEN performing at the Expected Standard, dropping 36.3% (Appendix E, Figure 11). It should also be noted that within the whole cohort, the percent of students reaching the Expected Standard in Writing dropped 27.7%.

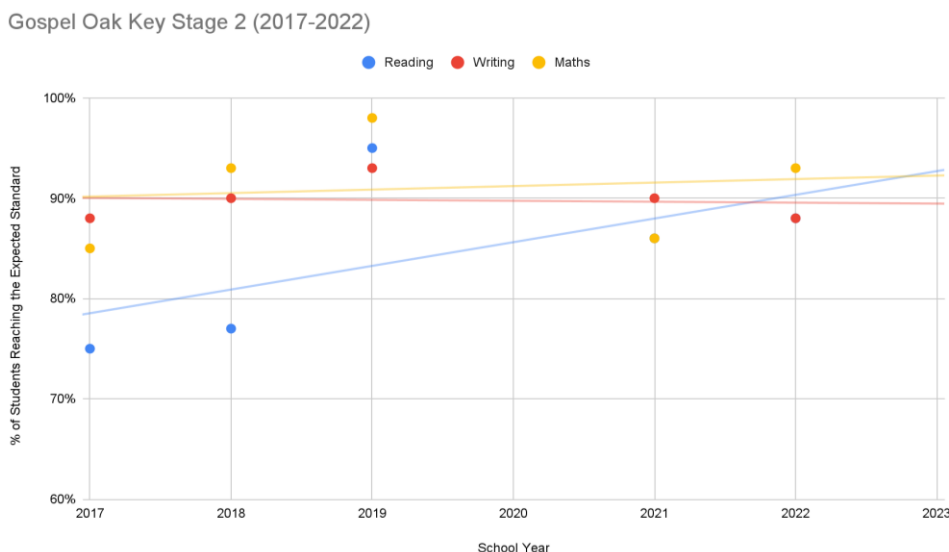


Figure 2. KS2 comparison of the % of students reaching the Expected Standard over the course of the available years (2017-2022).

Students in Year 7 during the 22-23 academic year, were in Year 4 at the time the pandemic hit. This group took the KS2 test in 2022. Additionally, the students in Year 8 in the 22-23 academic year took the KS2 test in 2021 (see Figure 2). Although there was a slight dip in the percentage of students meeting the Expected Standard in 2021, both the 2021 and 2022 cohorts performed similar to the 2017-2019 cohorts (Appendix C, Figure 6). The percent of students performing at the Expected Standard for both cohorts dropped 6% or less for all subjects. In terms of vulnerable pupils, there was a more noticeable drop in their performance. The drops in performance of vulnerable subjects for the 2022 cohorts were less dramatic and performance was more similar to the 2017-2019 cohorts (Appendix C, Figure 6). In Reading, the most significant drop was in the number of SEN students meeting the Expected Standard, which

dropped 10% (Appendix E, Figures 13). In Writing, the percent of SEN and EAL students reaching the Expected Standard dropped 13.7% (Appendix E, Figures 13). In Maths, the percent of SEN and EAL students reaching the Expected Standard dropped 13.3% and 13.7%, respectively (Appendix E, Figures 13, Appendix F, Figure 17). In the White Rose practice testing, this cohort had no noticeable difference to the number of students on track for or achieving the Expected Standard but there was a large difference in pupils on track for Greater Depth in the first term after the pandemic, which had almost recovered by the KS2.

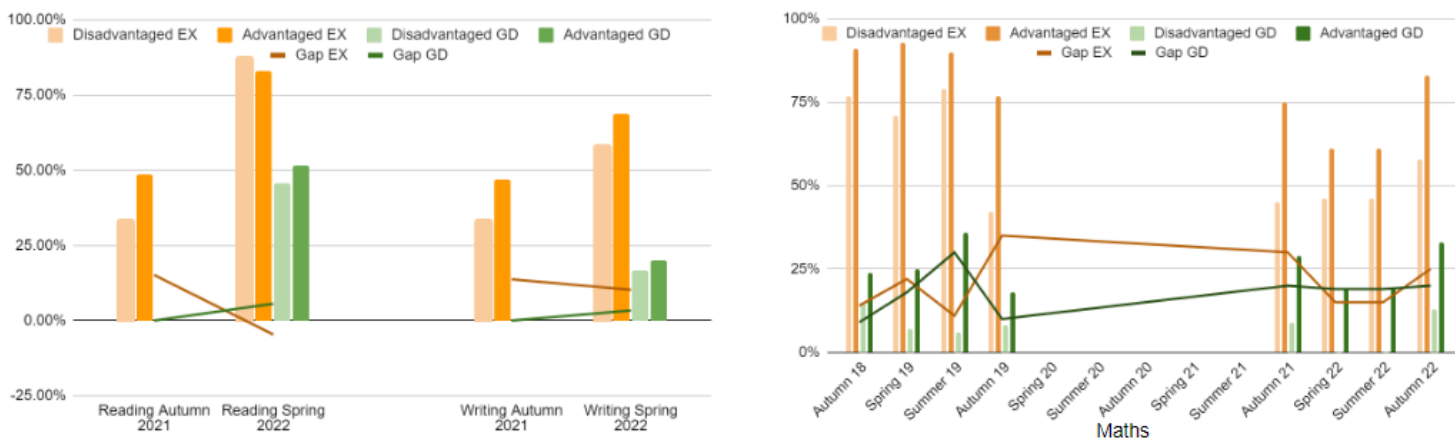
4.2.2 Phase 3 (Years 6 and 5 During Academic Year 22-23)

Pupils in Year 6 during the academic year 22-23, had noticeable but not drastic effects to their attainment following the pandemic but seem to be struggling more the last few years. The online learning record for the spring of 2021 showed that the average completion rate of assignments during remote learning was only 65%. There were five pupils in the cohort who completed less than 10% of work assigned. Participation in Maths assignments was lower than English assignments. Based on the practice testing records and standardised testing data, more advantaged pupils have been achieving the Expected Standard in practice testing throughout the terms following the pandemic, but less disadvantaged students are able to reach the Expected Standard and the gap between the two groups is the largest it has ever been (Appendix H, Figure 24). Across all available demographics the number of students achieving Greater Depth has increased over the pandemic except disadvantaged and SEN pupils in Writing, with a greater percent of SEN students achieving Greater Depth than Non-SEN students in Maths (Appendix H, Figure 25). On the other hand, the SEN students who are below expectation are observed to be much further behind than pre pandemic; a phase three teacher reported that pupils in her class with severe special needs who would normally get intensive support at school would become very emotional and not be able to finish work during remote learning.

Pupils who are in Year 5 in the 22-23 academic year had noticeable academic impacts from the pandemic but most students in this cohort have recovered. During the first lockdown in the summer 2020 term the cohort had a participation rate of 68.5%. In the spring of 2021 during online learning the cohort had an overall participation rate of 73%. This cohort only had 4 pupils below 15% participation, mostly due to access issues and most pupils completed over 80% of all

assignments in both lockdowns with records. From 21-22 PiRa assessments, this cohort is similar in English across demographics as all gaps are low or negative, but overall attainment across all pupils is comparatively low. From examining the White Rose practice testing data, the gap between disadvantaged and advantaged and SEN and Non-SEN students has increased since the pandemic. Both advantaged and disadvantaged pupil percentages decreased in Expected Standard over the pandemic. Advantaged students seem to have recovered while disadvantaged students have not (Figure 3). While the fluctuations between the terms of the number of SEN students achieving the Expected Standard are similar before and after the pandemic, the gap between SEN and non-SEN students had been steadily growing since the return to school (Appendix H, Figure 26).

Figure 3. Percent of disadvantaged and advantaged pupils in Year 5 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).



4.2.3 Phase 2 (Years 4 and 3 During Academic Year 22-23)

The students in Year 4 during the 22-23 academic year have had one of the most devastating effects to their attainment as they were already a lower attaining cohort that lost support during critical years. During online learning in the first lockdown this cohort faced the most challenges in participation as they were very dependent on their support at home. The cohort had a 40% participation rate during the first lockdown and 16 pupils did less than 10% of their work. Some of the pupils with low engagement had reasons written into the record, most of which were no internet access or trouble sharing a device with siblings.

From the 2021 KS1, this cohort performed 15% lower than the average of the 2017-2019 (Appendix C, Figure 5) cohorts in Reading, in Writing they performed 19% lower and in Maths the cohort performed 14.3% lower. This is the lowest performing cohort in the analysed KS1 data (see Figure 4). In terms of vulnerable students, there was a significant drop in their Reading performance. The biggest change was noticed in the percent of SEN students reaching the Expected Standard in Reading, as it dropped about 36.3% compared to the SEN students from the 2017-2019 cohorts. Another big drop was the percentage of disadvantaged students reaching the Expected Standard when compared to the 2017-2019 cohorts, there was a 27.3% drop. EAL pupils performed about 23.3% lower than the cohorts from before the pandemic. The performance of these groups of students also dropped in Writing and Maths, although less significant. In Writing, SEN students' performance dropped 21%, disadvantaged students dropped 21% and EAL students dropped 12.7%. In Maths, SEN students' performance dropped 9%, disadvantaged students dropped significantly, 30% and EAL students dropped 7.7%.

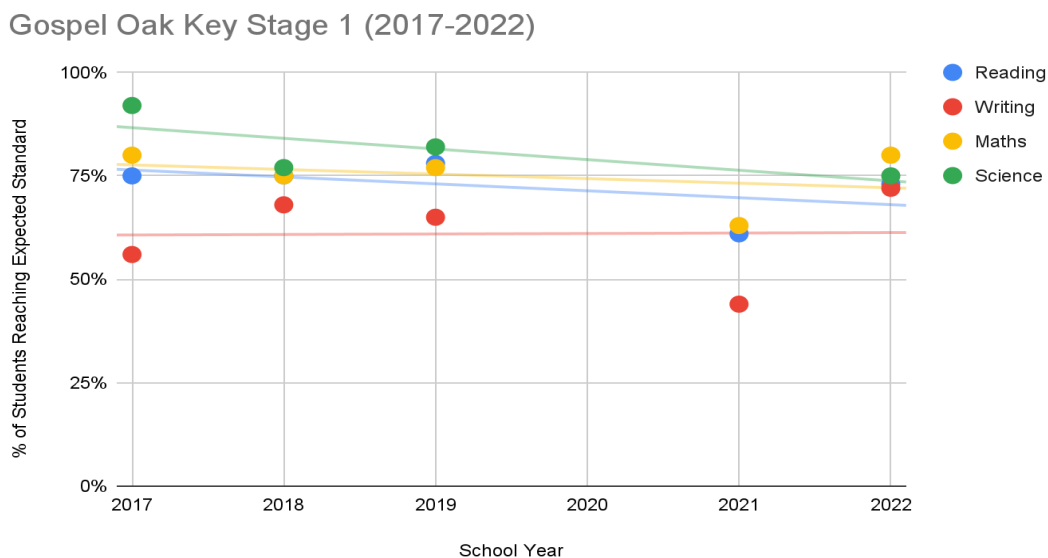


Figure 4. KS1 comparison of the % of students reaching the Expected Standard over the course of the available years (2017-2022).

In PiRa, no disadvantaged or SEN pupils are achieving Greater Depth in Writing and all gaps have noticeably expanded between disadvantaged and advantaged pupils. White Rose

Mathematics practice test data shows that the SEN students of this cohort have been severely affected by the pandemic while disadvantaged and advantaged gaps have stayed fairly consistent (Appendix H, Figure 27). Since the pandemic began the gap between the percentage of SEN and Non-SEN pupils achieving the Expected Standard has risen 17%. No SEN student in the cohort had achieved Greater Depth since the pandemic despite a small percentage reaching that standard before, meanwhile Non-SEN peers reaching Greater Depth is three times higher than right before the pandemic (Appendix H, Figure 28). This cohort also has the lowest average scores on these practice tests than any other cohort in those Years. For comparison, in Autumn Year 4 the 2017-2019 cohorts had an average below expectations scores between 35% of available points; this cohort had an average below expectations score of 13%, weighed down by increasing students obtaining none of the available points (Appendix G, Figure 22).

Students in Year 3 during the 22-23 academic year had minimal setbacks from the pandemic and post-pandemic the percent of students achieving the Expected Standard on the KS1 exam in 2022 performed more similarly to the performance of cohorts from prior to the pandemic (see Figure 4). Their KS1 scores showed no appreciable drops in any subject. Vulnerable students had a more significant drop in performance compared to the 2017-2019 cohorts. Reading had the most significant drop, the performance of SEN students dropped 20.3%, disadvantaged students performed 21.7% and EAL performance dropped 24.3%. In Writing, SEN students' performance dropped 4%, disadvantaged students dropped 27% and EAL students dropped 9.3%. In Maths, SEN students' performance dropped 9%, disadvantaged students dropped significantly, 14% and EAL students dropped 6.3%. From the 21-22 PiRa records, the gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged students are low or negative across both Reading and Writing (Appendix H, Figure 29). The gaps are higher between SEN and non-SEN students and expanded between the two terms. From the White Rose data, the gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged and SEN and Non-SEN have been steadily closing since the return to school (Appendix H, Figure 30). Compared to other cohorts in the Autumn of Year 3 this cohort is, on average, scoring better than the three pre-pandemic cohorts and much better than the 2021 cohort. Additionally, the percent of students achieving Expected Standard and Greater Depth are greater than any point since 2017 (Appendix H, Figure 22).

4.2.4 Phase 1 (Years 2 and 1 During Academic Year 22-23)

Teachers of students who were a part of younger year groups (Nursery- Year 4), revealed that they are noticing educational gaps between students, with 4-5 students significantly further behind their peers. A staff member in Year 2 stated that she has also noted students struggling with social skills and independence. This staff member noticed her students struggling academically with Writing and number facts. The cohort that is in Year 2 for the 22-23 academic year was in nursery at the beginning of the pandemic; they were severely affected by missing school time especially based on the engagement time they were able to engage with their parents or guardians. One of the main impacts the pandemic had on this cohort was speech and communication. The English Lead stressed the lack of verbal skills of students entering nursery and reception as they believed they weren't being talked to at home during the pandemic. These impacts are evident in Phonics testing data from 2022 when this cohort was in Year 1. The percentage of students reaching the Expected Standard was 63%, which is 34% lower than in 2019. There were significant decreases across all demographics, and the gaps between disadvantaged and advantages were much larger than in 2019. The gap was the largest in SEN students with only 8% reaching the Expected Standard while 78% of their Non-SEN peers reached the Expected Standard. That 70% gap is seven times larger than the SEN/Non-SEN gap in 2019. From the practice testing, gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged students are closing in Expected Standard but expanding in Greater depth, although more students within both groups are attaining both expected and greater depth post-pandemic (Appendix H, Figure 30). The SEN students of this cohort are extremely underperforming compared to non-SEN peers. English gaps have remained high with Reading at 35% and Writing at 50%. Last year the SEN pupils had similarly high gaps in Maths but with the % of SEN students attaining the expected standard increasing 50% that gap decreased 15% (Appendix H, Figure 31).

While the pupils in Year 1 during the 22-23 academic year did not miss any formal schooling, their limited access to nursery and the impact to their early development has shown differences that can be seen in the Early Years baseline established in 2022. The percent of children at a good level of development in this cohort is 56% which is 7% lower than in 2019. Surprisingly, a greater percentage of disadvantaged pupils than advantaged pupils have shown

good development in 13 of the 17 early learning goals. The gaps that do still exist in Reading, Writing, Numbers, and Numerical Patterns are lower than they were in the three years preceding the pandemic. The gap between SEN and non-SEN students was smaller than 2019 but comparable to the averages of 2017-2019. One Nursery staff member stressed that the COVID precautions that needed to be implemented in the nursery in the 20-21 academic year affected children's development, for example, they had no soft surfaces like pillows or comfortable chairs to read in which can contribute to negative connection to Reading. The cohort only has one recorded White Rose Practice Test, which shows the percentage of pupils on track for Greater Depth or Expected Standard is noticeably higher than the average of the three Year 1 cohorts pre-pandemic, but the Maths Lead, predicts this may be a proctoring error (Appendix G, Figure 19).

4.3 Discussion

From the analysis, one main concern stood out. This concern is the expansion of the education gap between vulnerable students and the rest of their cohort. Despite the percent of students reaching the Expected Standard being on par with previous expectations and the surrounding areas, staff interviews revealed that there are significant education gaps between students. Among the students in the cohort that took the KS1 exam in 2017 and the KS2 exam in 2021, we observed changes in learning gaps between disadvantaged students and advantaged students. The gap in students meeting expectations in Reading closed, but the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students reaching Greater Depth expanded by 32% in Writing and 11% in Maths. In the cohort that took KS1 in 2018 and KS2 in 2022, the large gaps in students meeting expectations in Writing and Maths closed significantly, but the gap in students reaching Greater Depth expanded by 29%. The percentage of disadvantaged students reaching Greater Depth in Reading decreased from 18% to 10% from KS1 to KS2 (Appendix D, Figure 10).

Changes in learning gaps among disadvantaged and advantaged students were similarly observed in SEN and Non-SEN students. In the cohort that took KS1 in 2017 and KS2 in 2021, the gaps in students meeting expectations in Writing and Maths, which were originally at 48% and 42%, have closed by 27% and 15%, respectively (Appendix E, Figure 11). The gap among SEN and Non-SEN students reaching Greater Depth in Writing increased by 36%, with zero

SEN students reaching Greater Depth on KS2 (Appendix D, Figure 12). Among the cohort that took KS1 in 2018 and KS2 in 2022, all of the gaps in students meeting expectations in KS1 were significantly closed by KS2. For students reaching Greater Depth, the 22% gap in Reading flipped; 57% of SEN students reached Greater Depth on KS2 Reading, while 47% of non-SEN students reached Greater Depth (Appendix E, Figure 14). For both cohorts (2017 KS1 to 2021 KS2 and 2018 KS1 to 2022 KS2), the gaps between EAL students and students that speak English as a primary language were negligible. Small gaps existed in different subjects where EAL had a higher percentage of students meeting expectations than primary English speakers and vice versa, but by KS2 those gaps had closed.

A new area of concern due to its dramatic increase in students suffering post-pandemic is students suffering from developmental delays. Staff working with younger students (Nursery, Reception, Phase 1 students) have noted that these students are struggling with Reading, Phonics, letter formation and sentence formation. Specifically in the Nursery and Reception students, Staff members have reported that many students are struggling with communication and social skills, along with emotional development. According to Table 1, one expectation for a 5-year-old is the ability to count to ten. Post pandemic, staff are noticing students in reception struggling to surpass this milestone. Another milestone a child should achieve by 5 years old, is the ability to pay attention for more than 10 seconds. Staff at Gospel Oak noted this as a concern within the school, as students as old as Year 2 (6-7) are struggling with focusing within the classroom. Staff also noted that upon returning to the classroom, there has been an increase in the number of students who require one-on-one support. One of the school's Behavioural Needs Specialist, reported that post-pandemic, the Nursery has had multiple students entering the Nursery as non-verbal. After further analysis, they were able to determine these students were not suffering from special needs, but rather for the duration of the lockdowns, these children had little to no interactions with others. Early Years students aren't the only students struggling due to little to no interaction during lockdowns. One Teaching Assistant (TA) who works primarily with students struggling with Phonics. This TA reported that in recent years (2022, 2023) 16-17 students have failed the Year 1 Phonics test. Before the pandemic, on average only 4-6 students failed this test.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Post pandemic, students across the world are suffering academically. The goal of the project was to determine the effects of the pandemic on Gospel Oak Primary school students. To determine these effects, we looked at the school as a whole along with specific groups of vulnerable students (disadvantage, SEN, EAL). This form of analysis allowed us to establish education gaps and changes in student performance after the pandemic. From our background research, we learned that post-pandemic students around the world are performing lower academically and missing developmental milestones. This allowed us to create two objectives to focus our research on. These objectives were to investigate Gospel Oak's response to the pandemic and determine how the pandemic impacted student attainment.

Based on our analysis of standardised tests, staff interviews and student's academic history, we were able to determine education gaps and changes in student performance after the pandemic. Our main findings determined that older students thrived during the pandemic, while younger students are now suffering upon returning to in-person learning. Teachers revealed that students suffering are primarily struggling in the classroom in English. These same teachers have contributed these struggles to focus challenges and developmental delays due to the pandemic.

5.1 Gospel Oak Recommendations

Based on the practice testing records and standardised testing data, pupils who were the oldest (9-11) during the pandemic had little to no negative impact on their Maths attainment. This was also proven by the KS2 data percentages, which show the 2021 and 2022 cohorts to have performed similarly to the 2017-2019 cohorts.

Teachers and staff have noted a concern about student English and Phonics skills as well as social skills and emotional development. Underdeveloped social skills and emotional development may cause students to fall behind their peers. Another factor which may cause certain students to fall behind is education gaps caused by students needing extra support. From our analysis we were able to establish that most times, students who needed extra support struggled more due to the pandemic.

After a thorough analysis and deep understanding of the school protocol during the pandemic. We have determined the following recommendations for each Year group for the coming year (2023-2024). These recommendations have been created for the school to use as a reference when deciding how to distribute support.

Early Years: Focus on verbal and sensory early years development skills along with peer socialisation.

Year 1: Focus on communication, focus and socialisation skills along with Phonics.

Year 2: Extra emphasis on Reading and Phonics for the whole cohort, extra emphasis on SEN student's Phonics development.

Year 3: Focus on communication, focus and socialisation skills along with Phonics for the whole cohort, extra emphasis on SEN student's Phonics development.

Year 4: Vulnerable groups focus on Reading skill development, disadvantaged also focus on Maths

Year 5: Vulnerable groups focus on Reading skill development.

Year 6: Maths focus for disadvantaged students.

5.2 Future Works

Our research does not prove that the pandemic caused an academic downfall at Gospel Oak, but rather puts emphasis on the expanding gaps between vulnerable students and their counterparts. To investigate if the pandemic has caused these students to struggle, we recommend analysing Gospel Oak's Key Stage data and other testing data from prior to the pandemic. We investigated up to 2017 data and would recommend looking back to 2013. Processing of this data would allow for a deeper understanding of how cohorts typically perform, which can then be used for comparison to post-pandemic cohorts. Another recommendation we have is to look into increased rates in special needs, specifically Autism Spectrum Disorder and Down Syndrome. Many of the teachers we interviewed, relayed a concern about these increased rates. This could be cause for why gaps may be expanding and why more students are struggling within the classroom. Similarly, this analysis would help to establish what type of interventions should be put into place to support students.

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Appendix A: Staff Interviews Questions

1. How long have you worked at Gospel Oak?
2. What is your official title at Gospel Oak?
 - a. Have you held any other positions at Gospel Oak? Outside of Gospel Oak?
3. What is the age of students you primarily work with?
4. Have you noticed any changes in the classroom since returning from lockdowns?
5. What interventions have you put into place to support students struggling since returning to in-person learning?
 - a. For staff other than teachers, what have the interventions you've run included and have you noticed success resulting from them?

Appendix B: Staff Survey Questions

1. What is your Name?
2. What year did you start working for Gospel Oak?
Page Break
3. Prior to COVID, how long did students spend on academics outside of school?
 - >1 hr. per day
 - 1-2 hrs. per day
 - 2-3 hrs. per day
 - 3-4 hrs. per day
 - 4-5 hrs. per day
 - 5+ hrs. per day
4. During the school day how many breaks were given to the class? Breaks include: recess, snack breaks, rest time, etc
 - a. >1 per day
 - b. 1 per day
 - c. 2 per day
 - d. 3 per day
 - e. 4 + per day
5. How long were breaks? **Please list all time frames separated by comas**
6. Please describe the environment of your classroom before COVID school lockdowns?

Page Break

7. When COVID hit, how did you prepare the workload for students?
8. What did a typical school day look like during remote learning?
9. How many hours a day were students expected to be doing academic work during online learning?
 - a. >1 hr. per day
 - b. 1-2 hrs. per day
 - c. 2-3 hrs. per day
 - d. 3-4 hrs. per day
 - e. 4-5 hrs. per day
 - f. 6+ hrs. per day _____
10. How has the dynamic of your classroom shifted since returning to in-person learning?
11. Have you noticed changes in how students learn? i.e. delays in specific subjects, more energy, varied participation, or changes in social skills
12. What changes have you noticed in the needs of your students since returning to in-person learning?
13. What type of extra academic practice has been implemented upon returning to in-person learning?
 - a. Worksheets?
 - b. Homework?
 - c. Other. Please specify _____
14. Please describe how this differed from before the pandemic.
15. Describe some of the main challenges you are facing in your classroom post-pandemic i.e. focus, motivation, learning needs, and/or behaviour.

16. Post-pandemic, what have you implemented in your classroom to support your students?
Please list as much information you think is necessary, including various interventions
and whether they have been successful or not.

Appendix C: Key Stage Comparisons of Data from Prior to the Pandemic

Students Reaching Expected Standard (Avg. 2017-2019)



Figure 5. KS1 data comparing % of students reaching the Expected Standard before the pandemic (2017-2019) in the subjects of Reading, Writing and Maths for Gospel Oak and the surrounding areas.

Students Reaching Expected Standard (Avg. 2017-2019)



Figure 6. KS2 data comparing % of students reaching the Expected Standard before the pandemic (2017-2019) in the subjects of Reading, Writing and Maths for Gospel Oak and the surrounding areas.

Appendix D: Key Stage Disadvantaged Students vs Non-Disadvantaged Students (Past Cohorts)

2017 KS1 and 2021 KS2 Cohort (Expected Standard)

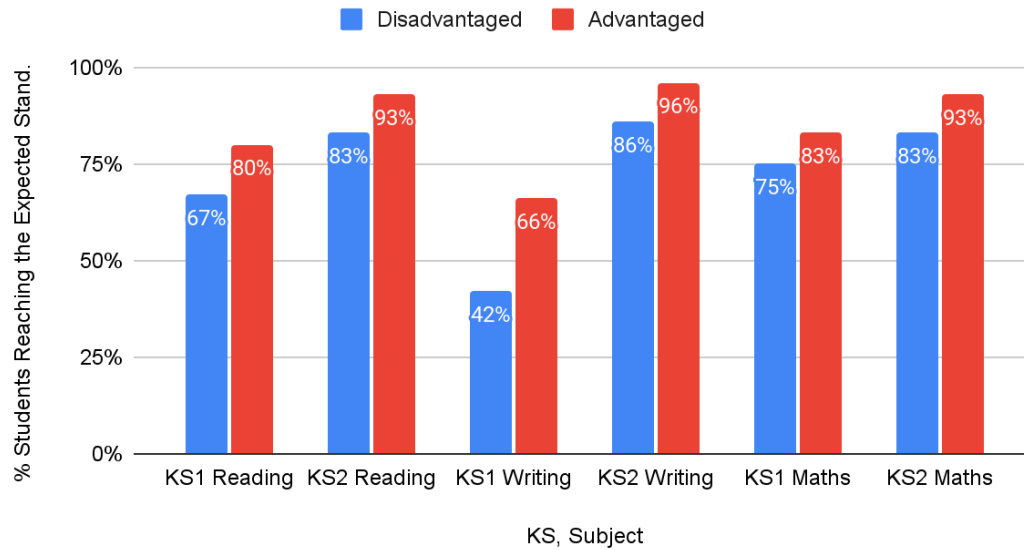


Figure 7. 2017 KS1 cohort % disadvantaged students (blue) vs advantaged students (red) reaching the Expected Standard compared to 2021 KS2 %s

2017 KS1 and 2021 KS2 Cohort (Greater Depth)

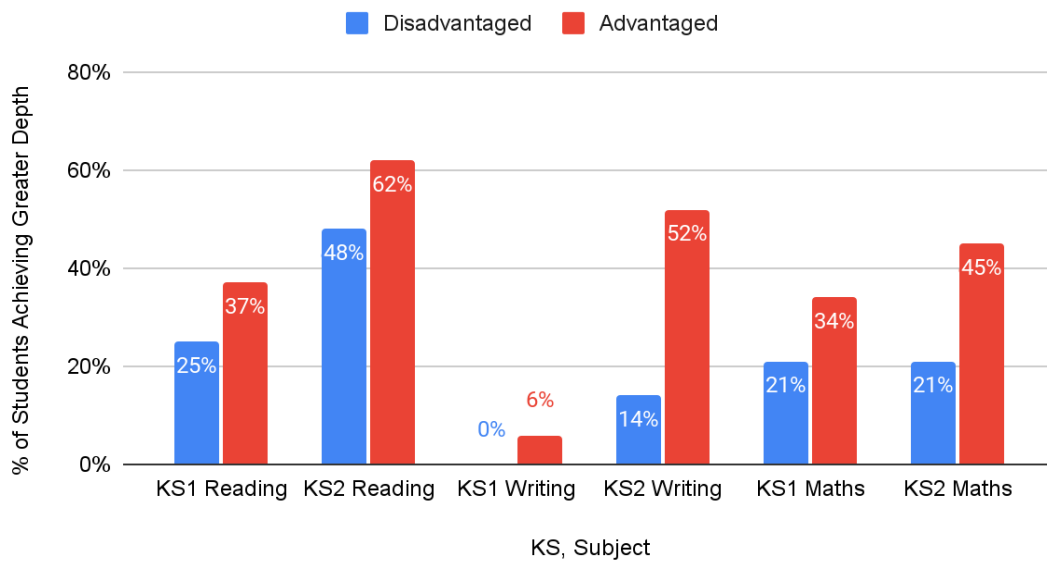


Figure 8. 2017 KS1 cohort % disadvantaged students (blue) vs advantaged students (red) achieving Greater Depth compared to 2021 KS2 %s

2018 KS1 and 2022 KS2 Cohort (Expected Standard)

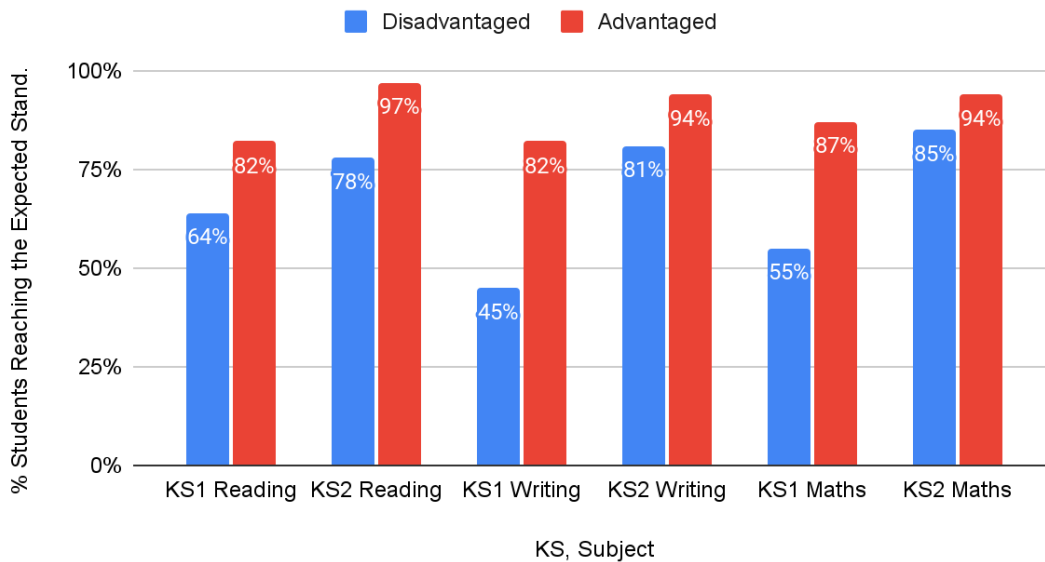


Figure 9. 2018 KS1 cohort % disadvantaged students (blue) vs advantaged students (red) reaching the Expected Standard compared to 2022 KS2 %s

2018 KS1 and 2022 KS2 (Greater Depth)

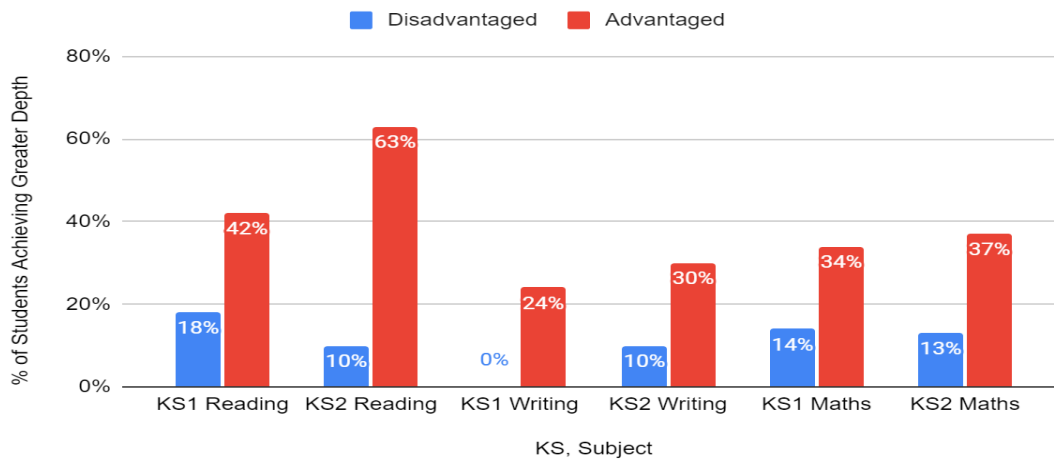


Figure 10. 2018 KS1 cohort % disadvantaged students (blue) vs advantaged students (red) achieving Greater Depth compared to 2022 KS2 %s

Appendix E: Key Stage SEN Students vs Non-SEN Students (Past Cohorts)

2017 KS1 and 2021 KS2 Cohort (Expected Standard)

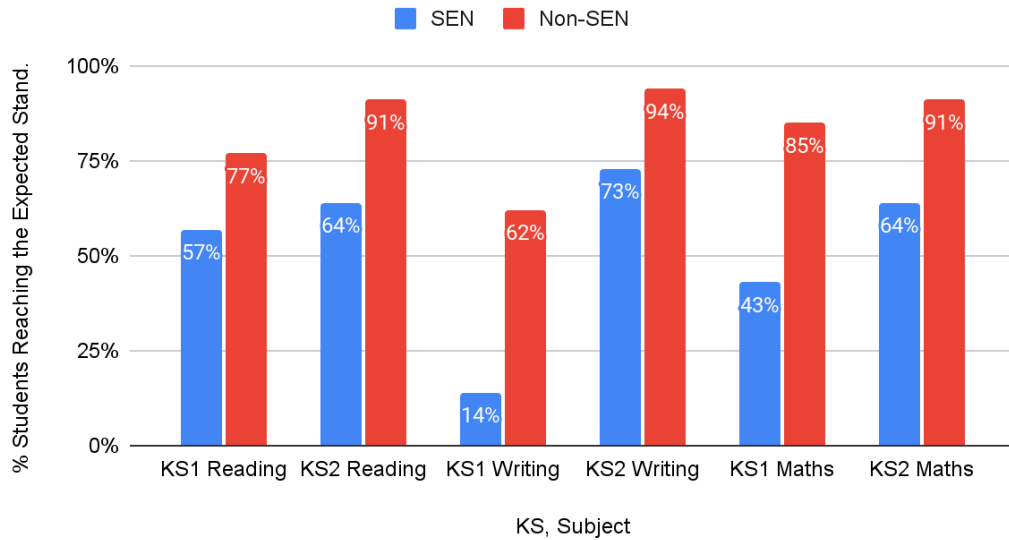


Figure 11. 2017 KS1 cohort % SEN students (blue) vs Non-SEN students (red) reaching the Expected Standard compared to 2021 KS2 %s

2017 KS1 and 2021 KS2 Cohort (Greater Depth)

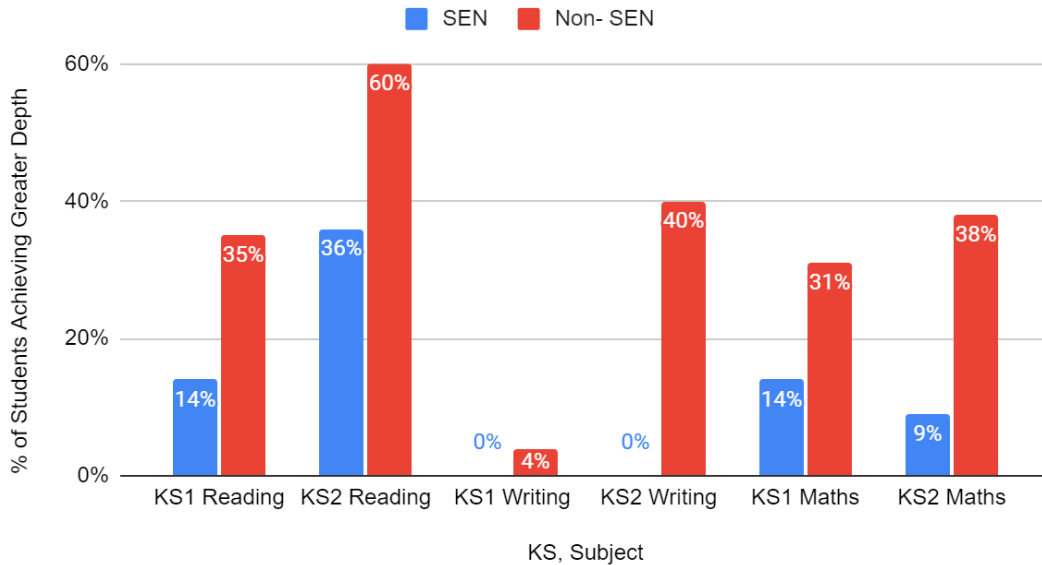


Figure 12. 2017 KS1 cohort % SEN students (blue) vs Non-SEN students (red) achieving Greater Depth compared to 2021 KS2 %s

2018 KS1 and 2022 KS2 Cohort (Expected Standard)

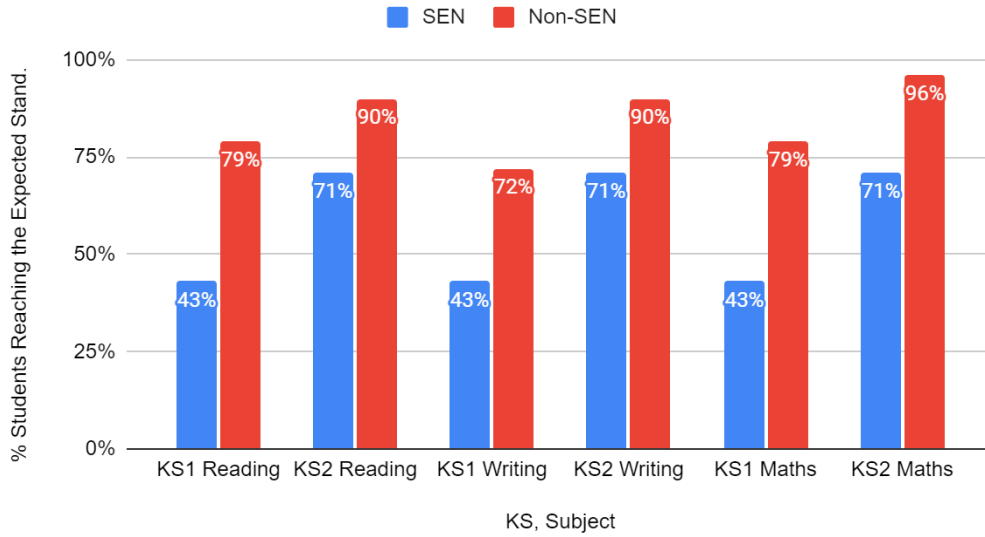


Figure 13. 2018 KS1 cohort % SEN students (blue) vs Non-SEN students (red) reaching the Expected Standard compared to 2022 KS2 %s

2018 KS1 and 2022 KS2 Cohort (Greater Depth)

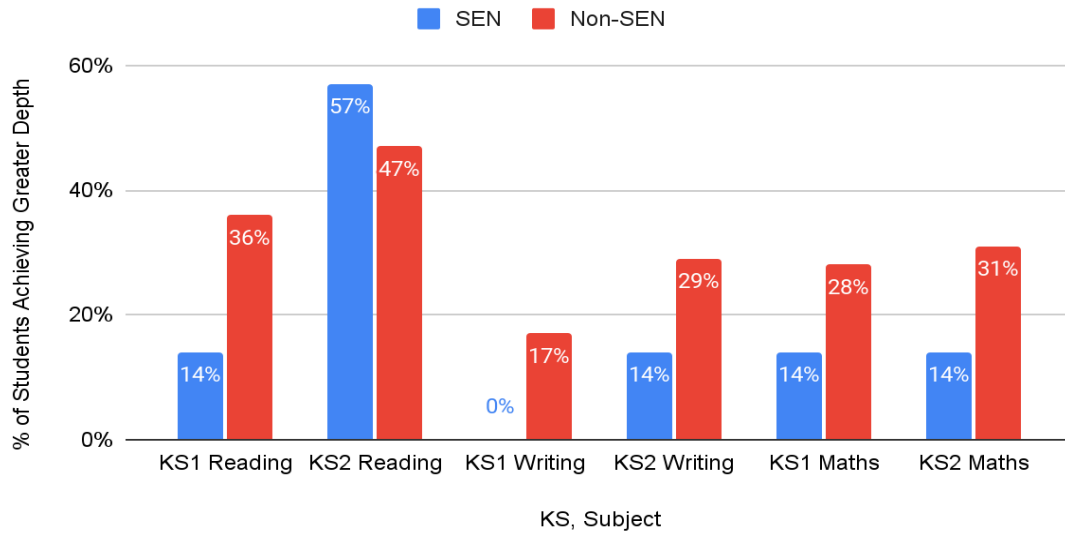


Figure 14. 2018 KS1 cohort % SEN students (blue) vs Non-SEN students (red) achieving Greater Depth compared to 2022 KS2 %s

Appendix F: Key Stage EAL Students vs Non-EAL Students (Past Cohorts)

2017 KS1 and 2021 KS2 Cohort (Expected Standard)

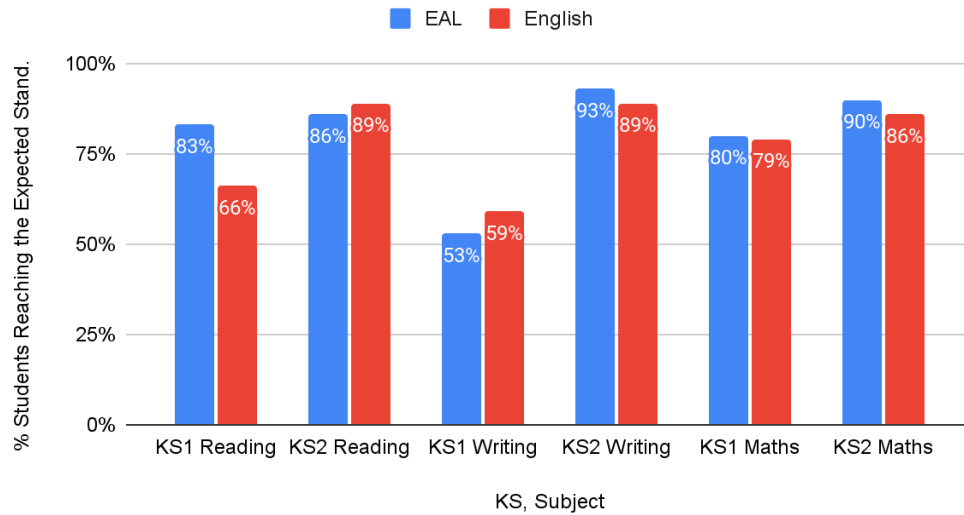


Figure 15. 2017 KS1 cohort % EAL students (blue) vs students who speak English as their first language (red) reaching Expected Standard to 2021 KS2 %s

2017 KS1 and 2021 KS2 Cohort (Greater Depth)

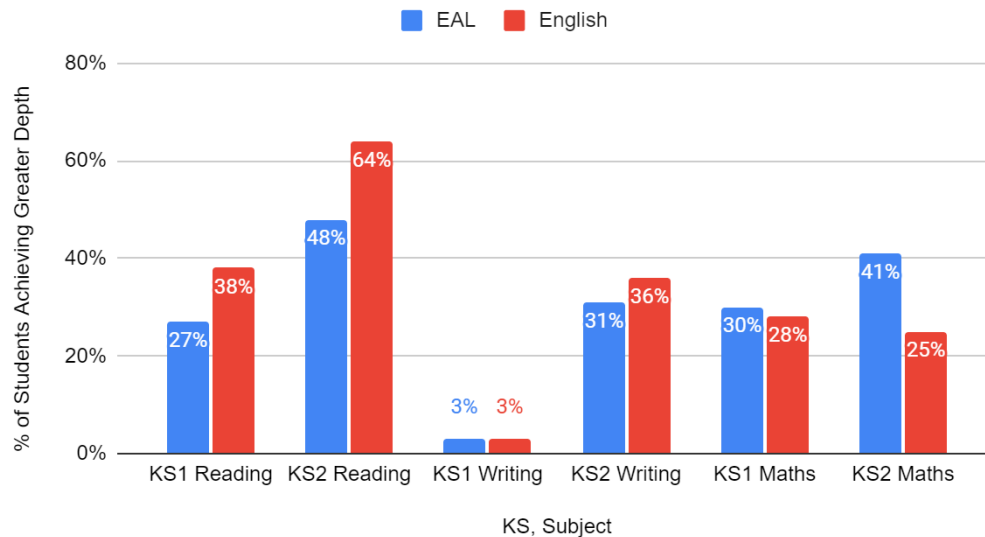


Figure 16. 2017 KS1 cohort % EAL students (blue) vs students who speak English as their first language (red) achieving Greater Depth to 2021 KS2 %s

2018 KS1 and 2022 KS2 Cohort (Expected Standard)

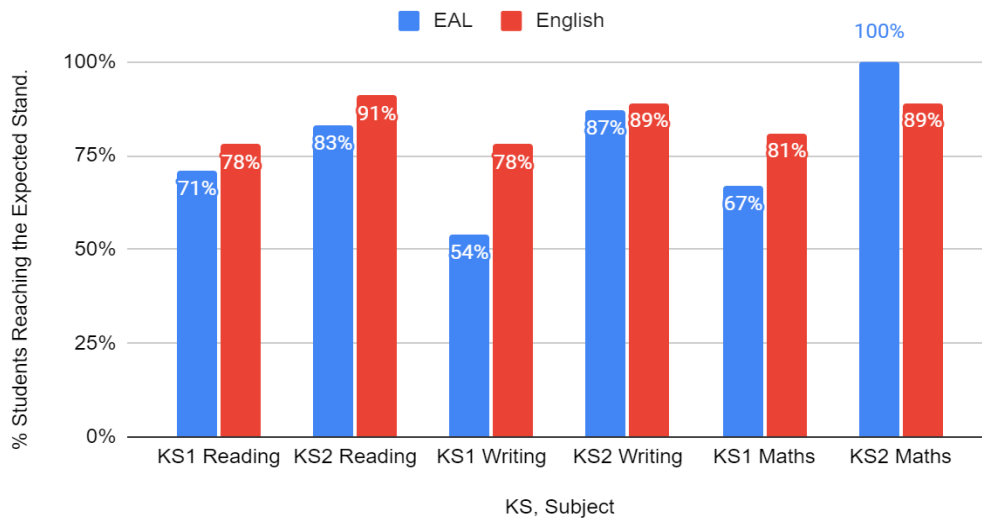


Figure 17. 2018 KS1 cohort % EAL students (blue) vs students who speak English as their first language (red) reaching Expected Standard to 2022 KS2 %s

2018 KS1 and 2022 KS2 Cohort (Greater Depth)

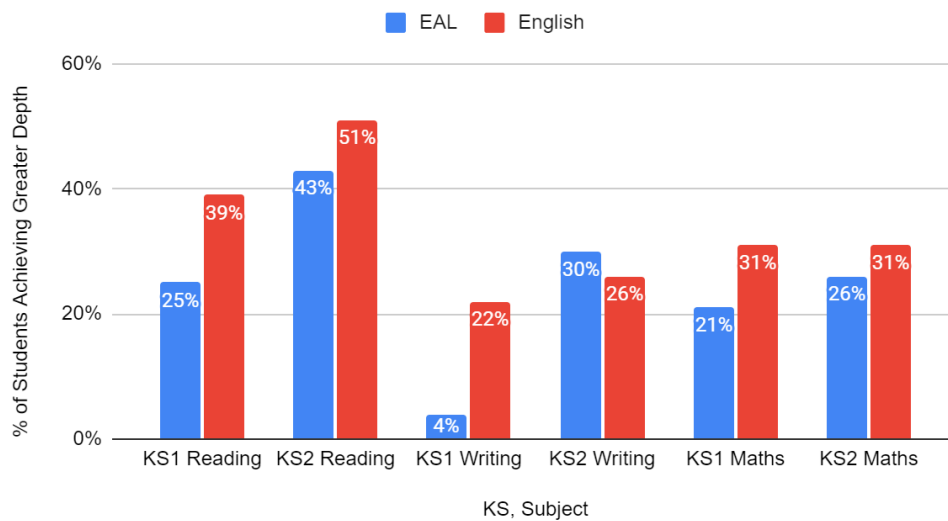


Figure 18. 2018 KS1 cohort % EAL students (blue) vs students who speak English as their first language (red) achieving Greater Depth to 2022 KS2 %s

Appendix G: White Rose 2017-2021 Comparisons

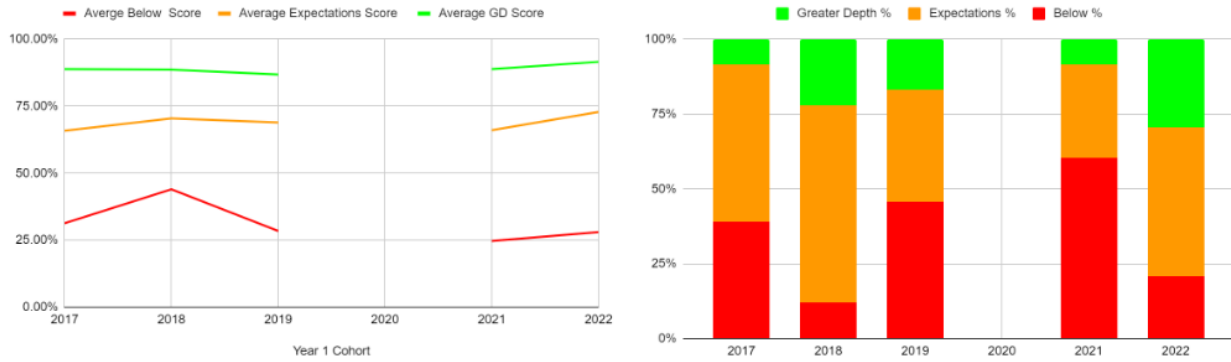


Figure 19: Autumn term Year 1 WR average score percentage (left) and percentage of pupils (right) for Below Expectations, Expected Standard and Greater Depth.

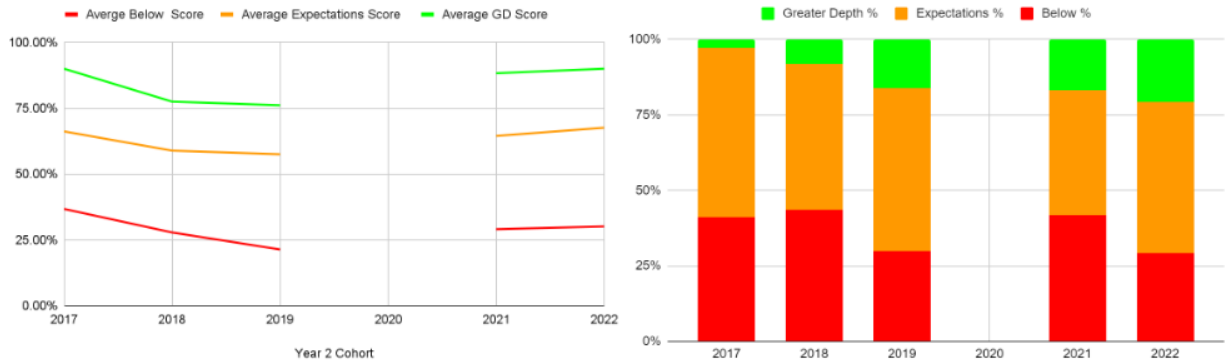


Figure 20: Autumn term Year 2 WR average score percentage (left) and percentage of pupils (right) for Below Expectations, Expected Standard and Greater Depth.

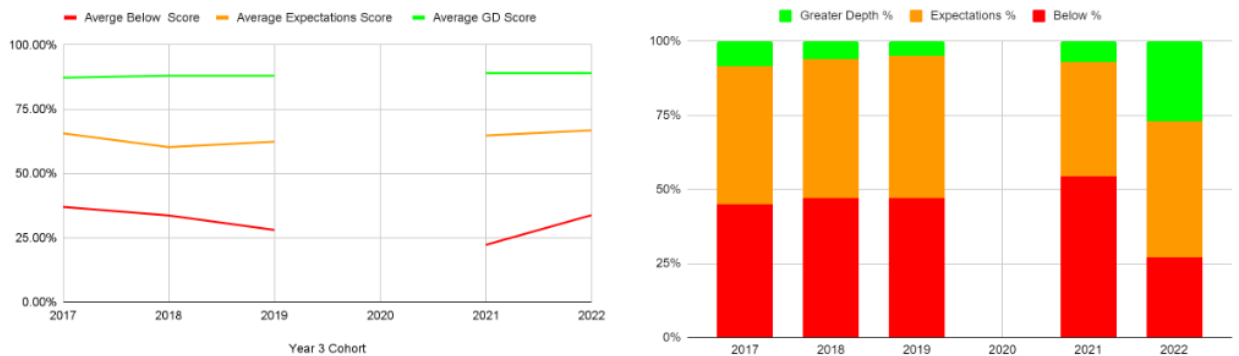


Figure 21: Autumn term Year 3 WR average score percentage (left) and percentage of pupils (right) for Below Expectations, Expected Standard and Greater Depth.

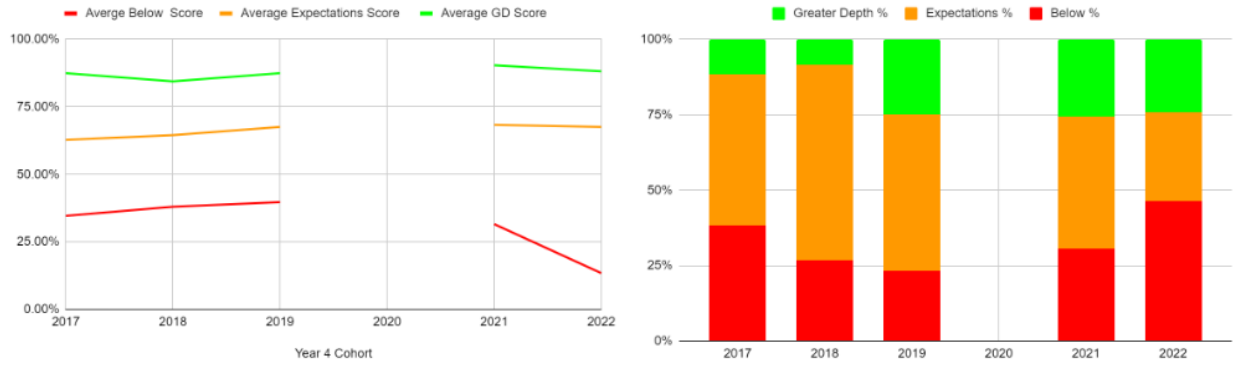


Figure 22: Autumn term Year 4 WR average score percentage (left) and percentage of pupils (right) for Below Expectations, Expected Standard and Greater Depth.

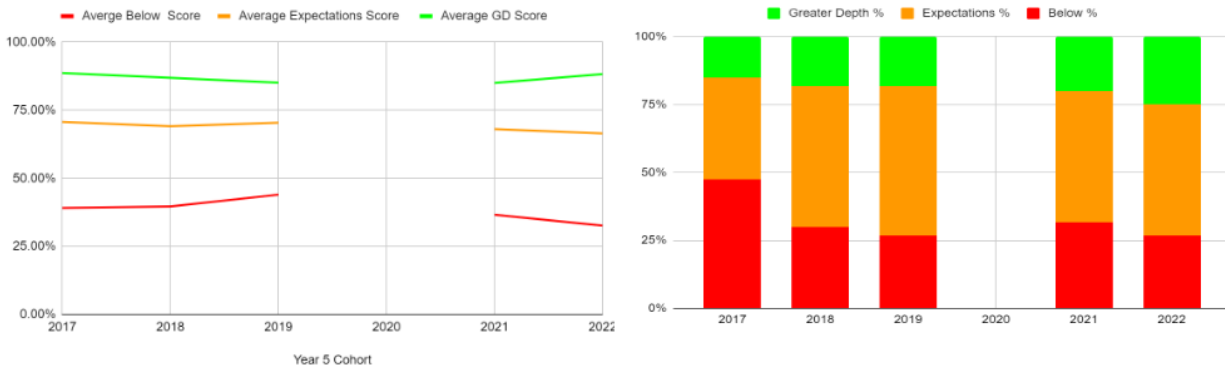


Figure 23: Autumn term Year 5 WR average score percentage (left) and percentage of pupils (right) for Below Expectations, Expected Standard and Greater Depth.

Appendix H: White Rose and PiRa Cohort demographic comparisons

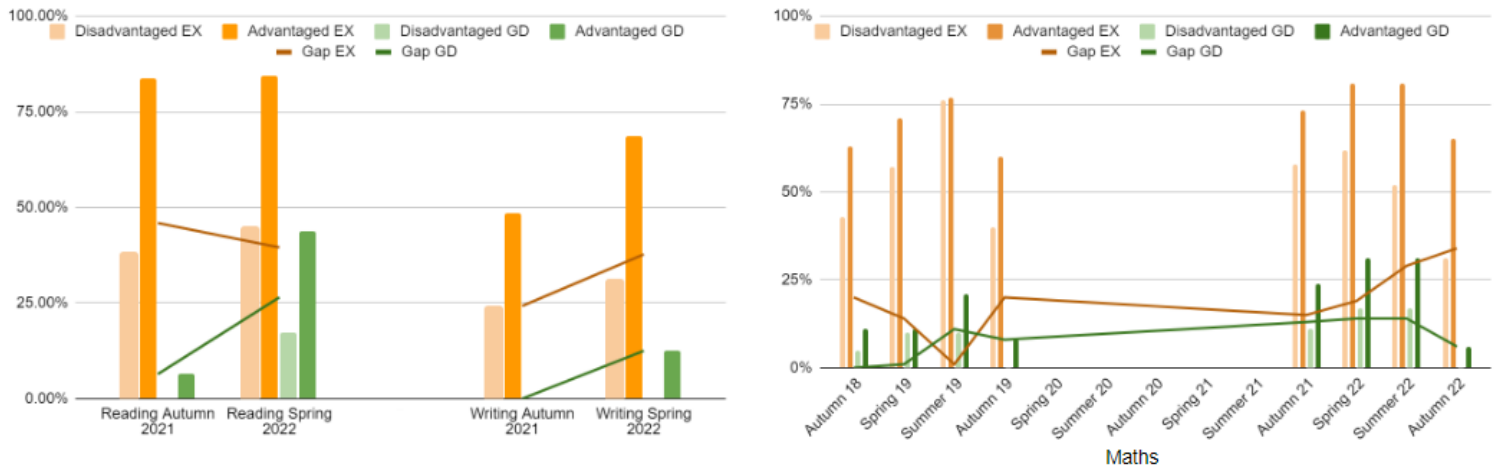


Figure 24. Percent of disadvantaged and advantaged pupils in Year 6 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

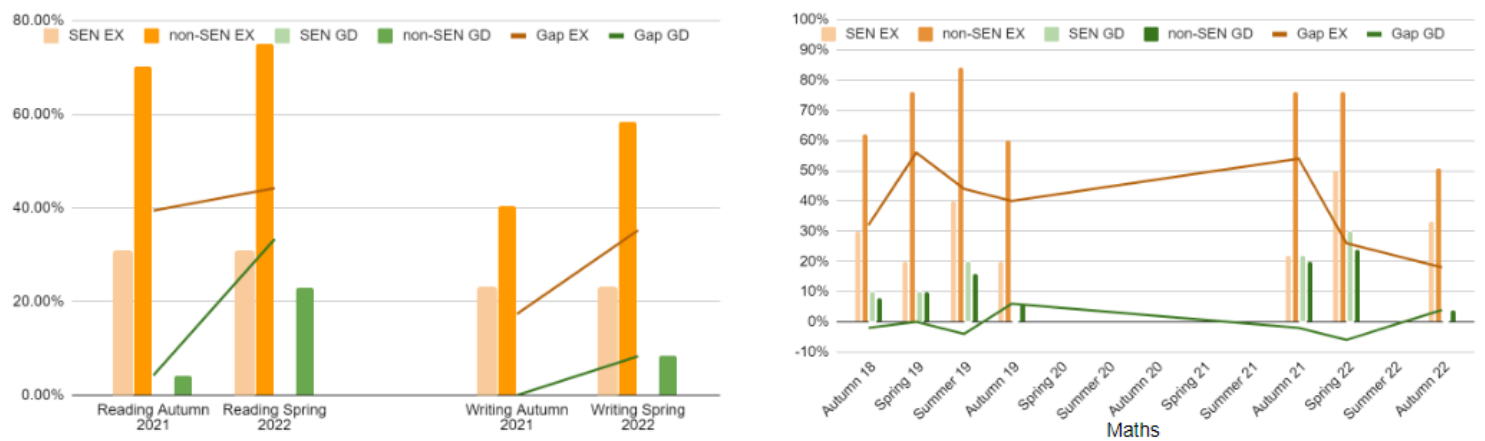


Figure 25. Percent of SEN and non-SEN pupils in Year 6 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

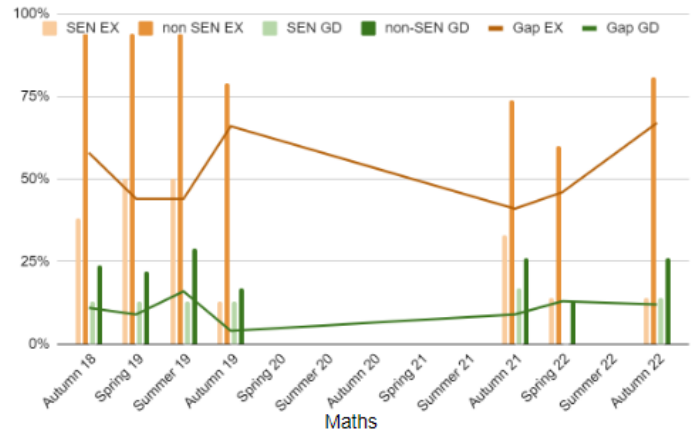


Figure 26. Percent of SEN and non-SEN pupils in Year 5 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

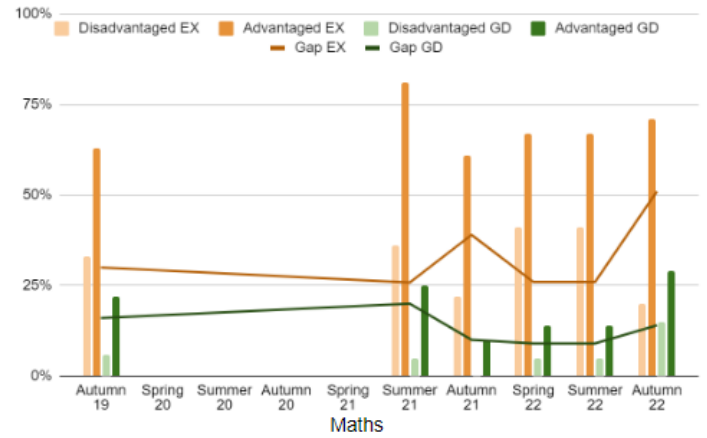
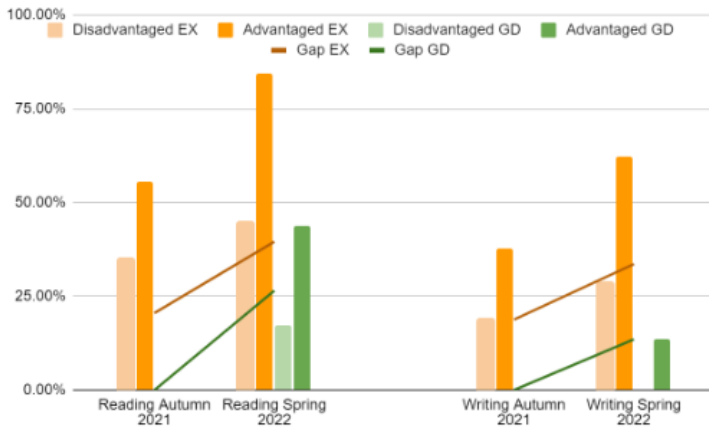


Figure 27. Percent of disadvantaged and advantaged pupils in Year 4 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

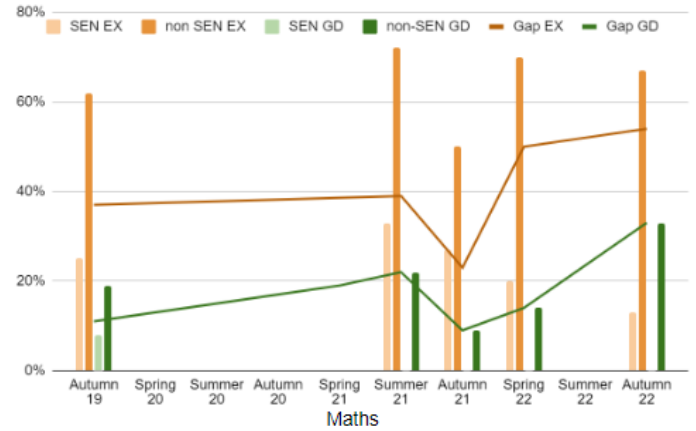
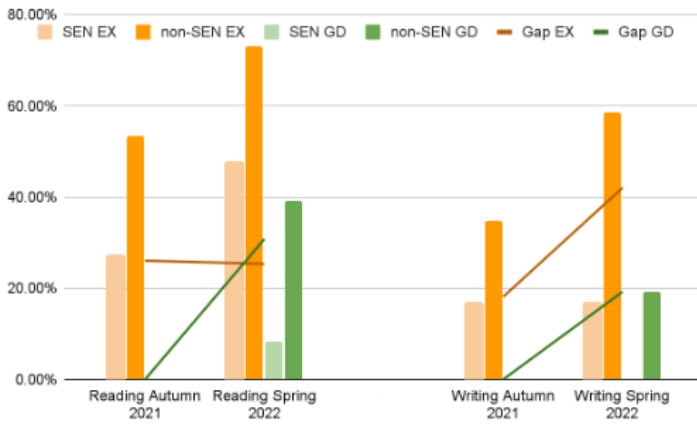


Figure 28. Percent of SEN and non-SEN pupils in Year 4 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

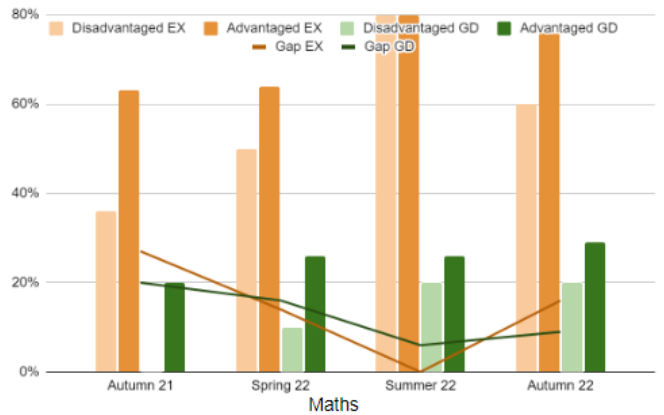
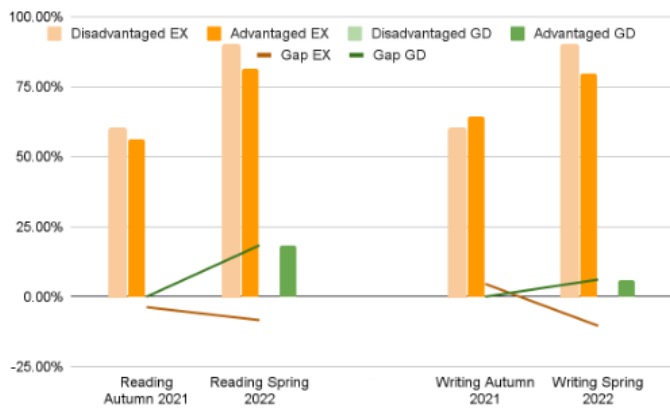


Figure 29. Percent of disadvantaged and advantaged pupils in Year 3 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

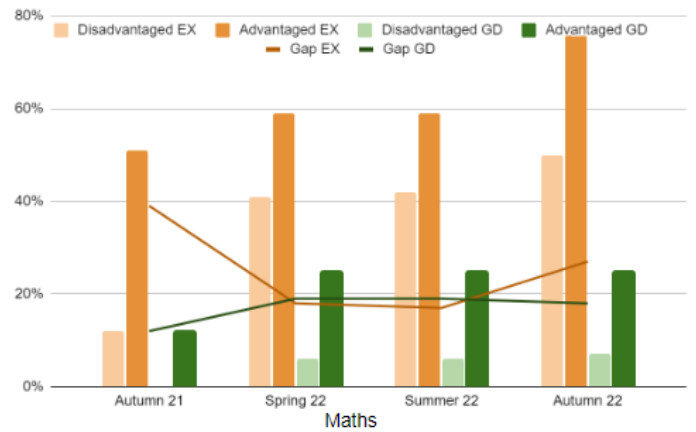
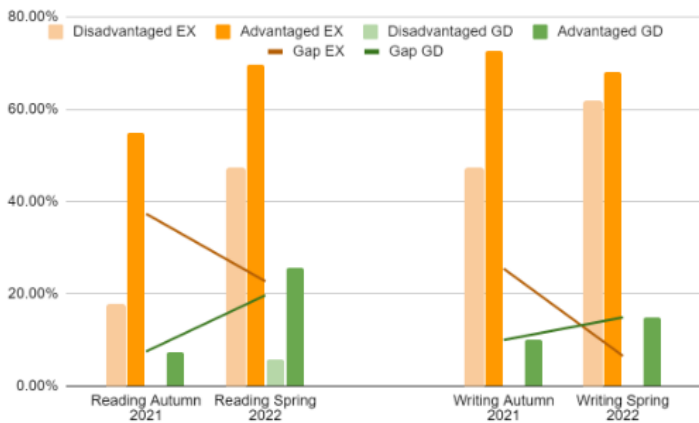


Figure 30. Percent of SEN and non-SEN pupils in Year 3 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

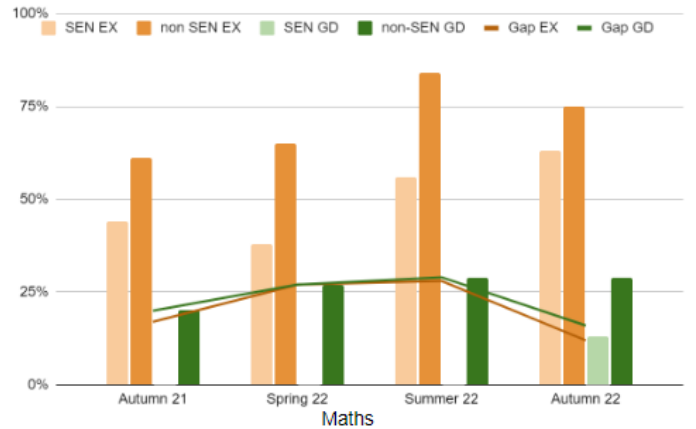


Figure 31. Percent of disadvantaged and advantaged pupils in Year 2 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

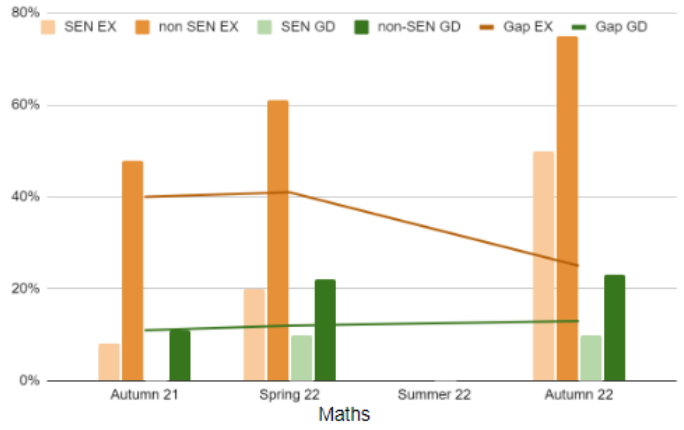


Figure 32. Percent of SEN and non-SEN pupils in Year 2 during academic year 2022-2023 achieving Expected Standard or higher (EX) and Greater Depth (GD) in PiRa Reading and Writing practice assessments (left) and White Rose Mathematics texting (right).

Authorship

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Chapter 2: Background		
2.1 How the Pandemic Disrupted Education in the UK	Gavin Maloney	Jessica Feeney, Alec Parish
2.2 Student Attainment	Jessica Feeney	Gavin Maloney, Alec Parish
2.3 Factors Contributing to Lower Attainment	Jessica Feeney	Alec Parish
2.3.1 Existing Education Gaps	Jessica Feeney	Gavin Maloney, Alec Parish
2.3.2 Students Missing Developmental Milestones	Jessica Feeney	Alec Parish
2.3.3 Student Health	Alec Parish	Jessica Feeney
2.4 Gospel Oak Primary School's Response to the Pandemic	Gavin Maloney	Jessica Feeney, Alec Parish
Chapter 3: Methods	Jessica Feeney	
3.1 Investigating Gospel Oak's	Jessica Feeney	Gavin Maloney, Alec Parish

response to the pandemic		
3.1.1 Staff Interviews	Jessica Feeney	Alec Parish
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3.2 Analysing Gospel Oak Participation and Attainment Data	Jessica Feeney	
3.2.1 Key Stage 1 and 2 Analysis	Jessica Feeney, Gavin Maloney	
3.2.2 Gospel Oak Online Learning Records	Alec Parish	
3.2.3 White Rose Mathematics Practice Testing	Alec Parish	
3.2.4 PiRA Reading Practice Testing	Gavin Maloney, Alec Parish	Jessica Feeney
3.2.5 Early Years Foundation Stage Testings	Alec Parish	
3.2.6 Year 1 Phonics Testing	Alec Parish	
3.3 Study Limitations	Jessica Feeney, Alec Parish	Gavin Maloney
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4.1 Gospel Oak's Response to the Pandemic	Jessica Feeney, Alec Parish	
4.2 The Pandemic's Impact on Student Attainment	Jessica Feeney	Alec Parish

4.2.1 Past Cohorts (Years 8 and 7 during academic year 22-23)	Jessica Feeney, Alec Parish	Gavin Maloney
4.2.2 Phase 3 (Years 6 and 5 during academic year 22-23)	Alec Parish	
4.2.3 Phase 2 (Years 4 and 3 during academic year 22-23)	Gavin Maloney, Alec Parish	Jessica Feeney
4.2.4 Phase 1 (Years 2 and 1 during academic year 22-23)	Jessica Feeney, Alec Parish	
4.3 Discussion	Jessica Feeney, Gavin Maloney	
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5.1 Gospel Oak Recommendations	Jessica Feeney	Gavin Maloney, Alec Parish
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