

Equal Education

Summary Impact Report

2020/2021



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Introduction

Message from the Managing Director

I am delighted to provide you with an evaluation report outlining some of the key findings from the evaluation of the Equal Education Autumn 2020 Tutoring Programme conducted by ImpactEd.

Our view is that data is only as useful as the purposes for which you use it. But done well, meaningful impact evaluation can help drive meaningful decision making to do more of what is working best, and less of what is not. Hopefully, this report helps provide some summary insights to support that process.

We also want to take this opportunity to say thank you for partnering with us. Please do continue to provide us with your feedback so that we can best develop our way of working with you.

Owen Carter

Co-Founder and Managing Director

Owen Carter

Our Mission

To improve pupil outcomes and life chances by addressing the evaluation deficit in education

About us

ImpactEd is a non-profit organisation that exists to help evaluate, understand, and improve impact in education. We support schools and those that work with them to reliably understand the impact of the programmes they run. We do this through partnership to build capacity for research and evaluation, and our digital platform which makes monitoring and evaluation easy.



The Challenge

£4 billion

ANNUAL INTERVENTION SPEND BY
ENGLISH SCHOOLS (INC STAFF TIME)



FROM 31 SCHOOLS
INTERVIEWED, **JUST
ONE** WAS CONFIDENT
IN THEIR IMPACT
EVALUATION

70%

IMPACT EVIDENCE
RATED 'POOR'
OR 'AVERAGE' BY
PAUL HAMLYN
FOUNDATION



Why do we exist?

'What works' in education is not an easy question to answer. Schools and education organisations invest substantial time, money and energy in different initiatives and interventions to improve outcomes for pupils. These might range from trialling new teaching and learning approaches, to curriculum redesigns, to mentoring, academic or behaviour interventions.

Through a range of evaluations, we know that some of these changes will be incredibly effective.

However, we also know that all too often such programmes can work against their intended aims. And it is often extremely challenging for schools and intervention providers to reliably evaluate the effect that their programmes have on pupil outcomes.

We established ImpactEd to help schools and education organisations understand what is and isn't working in their context, giving them access to robust research methodologies to assess impact, and making evaluation quicker, easier and more effective.

How we work



Platform

Partners use our unique digital platform to make monitoring and evaluation easy to run, accessing reliable research methods for assessing impact on both academic achievement and a range of broader skills.



Partnership

We provide a tailored support and training programme that helps partners identify what it is they are trying to improve, how they are trying to do it, and ways in which they might measure this. Our training and ongoing consultation builds staff capacity for research and evaluation.



Impact

The platform generates live impact reports making it easy to understand what is working, where. We work with partners to discuss findings, informing evidence-based decisions about what is making the biggest difference to pupils, understanding what hasn't, and sharing successes.



About the Organisations

Equal Education is a social enterprise, offering a range of specialist tutoring programmes that provide extra support for disadvantaged and vulnerable students, including Looked After Children (LAC) and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); to boost their academic grades, prospects, and confidence. Equal Education are increasingly working to narrow the attainment gap and improve outcomes for vulnerable learners.

ImpactEd is a non-profit organisation that exists to improve pupil outcomes by addressing this evaluation deficit in education. ImpactEd works in partnership across the education sector to support high-quality monitoring and evaluation that informs decisions about what will work most effectively to support students.

Programme Objectives

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is legally defined as ‘looked after’ by a local authority if he or she gets accommodation from the local authority for a continuous period or is subject to a care order (Children Act, 1989). Findings suggest educational outcomes for LAC are between 25-30% lower than their peers at KS2, continuing through to KS4 where they achieve significantly lower exam scores than peers (Department for Education, 2020). The Equal Education Autumn Tutoring 2020 Programme is a sustained tutoring intervention designed to specifically support LAC at secondary school to increase their attainment in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science. The Programme is delivered by Equal Education tutors – QTS qualified teachers all with the same vision of providing effective, empathetic, life-changing tuition to children living in care and disadvantage.

The Tutoring Programme aims to improve educational outcomes and aspirations for target students who are LAC/Looked After in secondary school. The key aims and objectives of the Programme for participating students are as follows:

- Increase pupil understanding of core academic subjects
- Improve overall pupil academic attainment and progress
- Improve pupil confidence, sense of self and intrinsic motivation

Executive Summary

This report brings together initial findings and insights from a mixed-method evaluation of the Equal Education Autumn 2020 Tutoring Programme for LAC. The focus of this impact evaluation was to assess changes in participant academic attainment and self-confidence following tutoring in Autumn 2020. The Programme was evaluated through retrospective analysis of participant attainment through proxies such as comprehension of academic work, pupil engagement, attendance, and performance on tests.

In addition to data exploring academic outcomes, quantitative and qualitative data was collected to understand the impact of the Programme on participants' self-confidence, as well as pupil, tutor, parents/carers overall experience of the Autumn Tuition. However, the results in this report must be **reviewed with caution** given the **small sample size of participants** on which this analysis is based.

Findings from the evaluation indicate **positive improvements** in attainment trends, where based on school data exploring expected and predicted exam grades, **37.5% of participants performed at their expected level** and **50% performed above their target** by at least one grade following the Autumn Tuition Programme. A similar trend indicates **positive improvements** in academic attainment outcomes for LAC participants. Participants demonstrated a **1.2%** increase in their comprehension of material covered and a **4.6%** increase in their session engagement from baseline in Autumn 2020 to interim in February 2021.

A similar positive trend is also observed in the quantitative data collected from pupil and parent/carer surveys, exploring participants' intrinsic motivation and self-confidence towards learning and overall experience of the Programme. The findings provide strong evidence that the participating students improved in their self-confidence towards learning (**75%** parents/carers agreed), and in their academic engagement (**90%** pupils agreed) and attainment (**70%** pupils agreed). Finally, **90%** of the participating students reported that they enjoyed the sessions and felt confident in their ability to learn the academic material for the upcoming year, while **80%** said that they felt they would receive good grades.

The key insights gathered from the qualitative feedback suggest that the Programme was **positive for increasing levels of self-confidence in pupils' academic abilities**. Specifically, it was clear that promoting high levels of engagement was central to achieving these outcomes.

The **overall positive trends** observed are reassuring considering the disruptions brought on by Covid-19 school closures in the Autumn and Winter academic terms 2020/2021.

Key Findings:

- Survey data showed an increase in participants' self-confidence towards learning, academic engagement and attainment following the Autumn 2020 Tutor Programme.
- Following the Programme, 50% of participants performed above their attainment target level and 37.5% of participants performed at their expected level.
- Participants showed a 1.2% increase in comprehension of material covered and a 4.6% increase in session engagement following the Autumn 2020 Tutor Programme.
- Qualitative feedback from tutors suggests the Tutor Programme increased participants self-confidence, engagement, and attainment level to some extent. Tutors would like to see more direct input from schools regarding students, such as the provision of information regarding pupil academic history.

The evaluation had a combined focus. As well as looking at the impact of the Autumn Tutoring Programme on academic attainment in LAC, this evaluation also paid attention to exploring the views and capturing the voice of pupils, tutors and parents/carers to understand the Programme impact on non-cognitive outcomes – such as self-confidence – with predictive validity i.e., which have been showed to be associated with improvements in long-term outcomes such as academic engagement, attainment and motivational processes for young adolescents (Booth, 2011).

A **retrospective evaluation** was selected for this report, to explore participants current level of attainment, self-confidence and learning behaviour and identify the impact of the Autumn Tuition Programme. The evaluation used a **mixed methods triangulation design**, combining quantitative (school data and pupil/parent/carer surveys) and qualitative (focus group) data to develop a comprehensive understanding of the Autumn Tuition Programme. The following table summarises the data analysed as part of the report.

Type of Data Collected	Target Group
Retrospective Pupil Survey	Pupils
Retrospective Carer Survey	Parent/Carer
Tutor Focus Group	Tutors
Equal Education Student Reports	Pupils
School Pupil Assessment Results (where available)	Pupils

In terms of specific outcomes, we have considered the following:

- Pupil attainment data through proxies such as pupil engagement, attendance, and test/exam performance since starting the Programme.
- Assessment used statements from validated questionnaire measures to elicit perspectives and reflections from pupil and parent/carer on the Autumn Tuition Programme and the distance travelled since the Programme.
- Focus group to explore tutor perspectives on the efficacy of the Programme and suggested improvements.

The participants in this report consist of **18 LAC students aged 11-16**. Pupil selection was conducted by Equal Education participating schools in the Birmingham area, and through a voluntary sign-up process. A randomised or matched control group design was not possible, therefore where appropriate, baseline and interim data was used to assess pre/post programme impact.

A breakdown of the schools and number of pupils participating in the Autumn Tuition 2020 Programme can be found below:

School	Number of pupils	Year Group/s
Arden Academy	3	11
Ark Kings Academy	1	10
Arena Academy	1	10
Bishop Walsh Catholic School	1	10
Colmers School	1	8
Erdington Academy	2	8
North Birmingham Academy	1	11
Smith's Wood Academy	4	3 x 11 1x 10
Dudley VS	2	11 10
Total	18	

Some important caveats for this evaluation design are worth noting:

- Given the retrospective nature of this evaluation, data must be considered fact limited as findings are dependent on participant recall and may be subject to reliability bias.
- Due to disruptions brought on by COVID-19, tutoring sessions were conducted online (through platforms such as Zoom) throughout the Autumn Term, which may have impacted session participation and effectiveness for some pupils. As such, results may not be immediately generalisable to other school contexts or academic years.
- Given the programme is only being run with LAC, the overall sample size for participants is small. Therefore, any data of overall impact before and after the study must be read with this in mind.
- COVID-19 and school closures were a disruptive factor throughout the past year, although schools were open during the Autumn term. Whilst a minority of students were not engaging online as well as they were with in-person tuition, overall student engagement was nevertheless satisfactory.

Part 2: Academic Outcomes Evaluation

Academic Attainment Analysis

The data for the academic attainment analysis was provided by each of the 10 schools involved in the Autumn 2020 Tuition Programme. The primary outcome considered in the academic attainment analysis was relative progress between when participants started receiving tutoring in Autumn 2020, compared to February 2021.

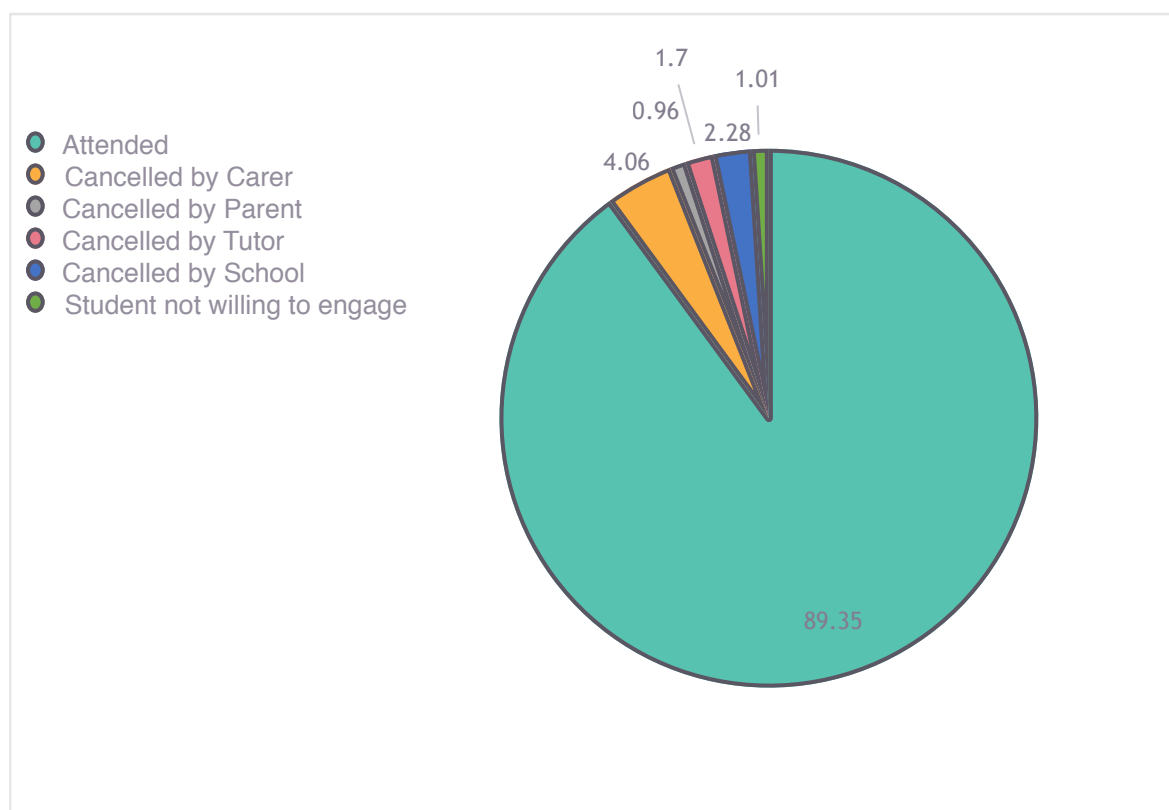
Two caveats should be noted here:

- There was a lack of standardised data on academic attainment recorded over time, thus pupil attainment has been evaluated through proxies such as tutor session engagement, comprehension of material, attendance, alongside comparing overall attainment since the Programme with predicted attainment grades where possible.
- This study was conducted during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time there were extended periods of school closures and exam cancellations and tutor sessions were conducted via online platforms.

The overall sample is small and so results should not be taken as generalisable to the overall population or to other students that participated in the Autumn Tuition Programme 2020 (n=18) or may participate in the future.

Attendance

The attendance data has been taken from the Equal Education student reports, completed during the Autumn/Winter terms of the academic year 2020/21. Overall, findings indicate that



session attendance was generally high, with an **average attendance rate of 89.4%**. When exploring intervention impact, it is important to note that some tutor sessions were not attended:

- Of the 10.6% sessions which were not attended by pupils, the most common reason for pupils not attending sessions was **cancellation by a carer** accounting for **4.06%** of all absences.
- Cancellations by school (**2.28%**), tutors (**1.70%**) and parents (**0.96%**) were also recorded.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that students attending sessions were willing to engage, as **only 1.01% of sessions missed were due to lack of participant engagement**. This is in line with the Engagement Analysis outlined below and indicates promising evidence of Programme impact on engagement and associated attainment.

Attainment and Engagement Analysis

Participant levels of attainment and engagement were explored through measures of **comprehension of material understood** and **young person's engagement** in sessions. Data has been taken from the Equal Education student reports, completed by tutors during the Autumn/Winter terms of the academic year 2020/21 alongside other pupil data provided by schools. Baseline data was taken from the first tutor session in Autumn 2020 and is compared with interim data from the most recently recorded tutor session report in February 2021. Two caveats should be noted here:

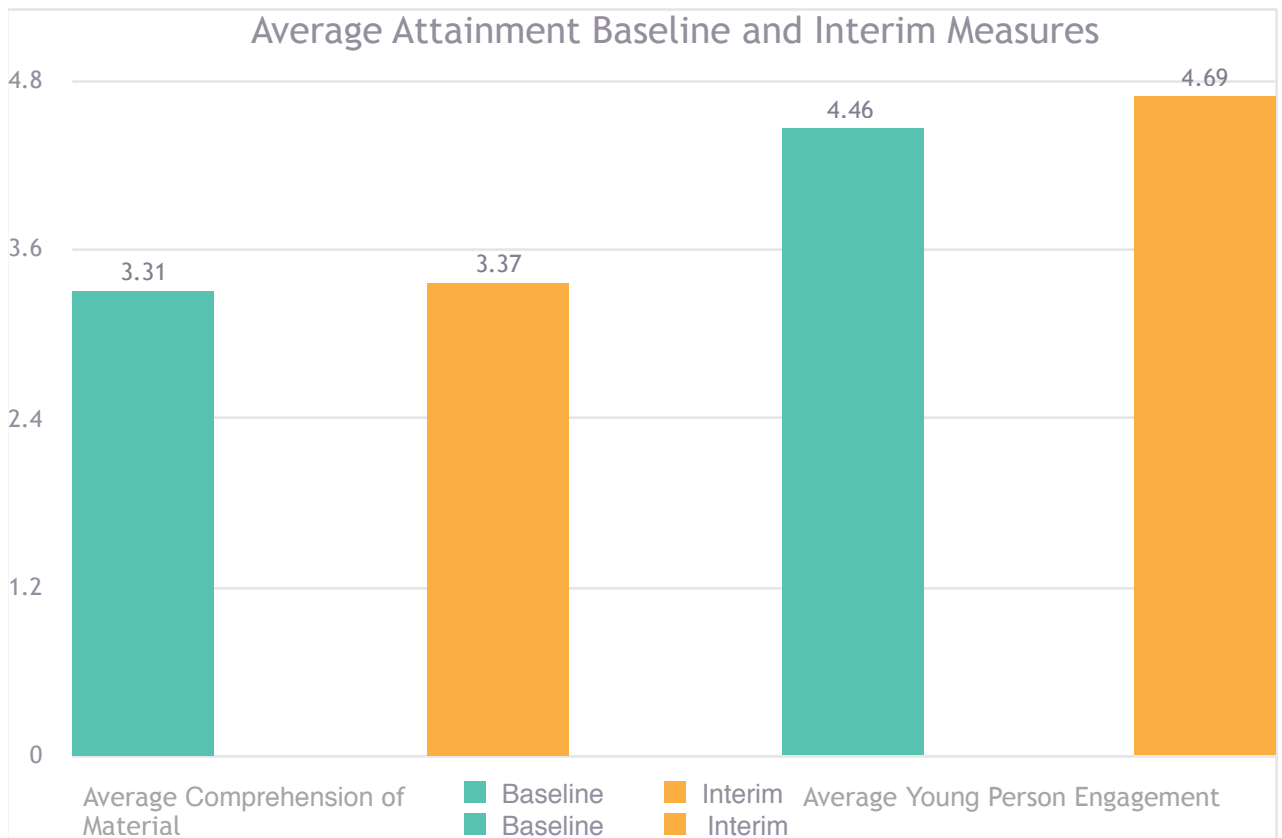
- These attainment and engagement scores reflect a snapshot of pre/post intervention and it is important to remember the number of tutor sessions and associated time scales differed by individual. Calculating average comprehension and engagement scores therefore provides an overview of effect.
- Attainment data collected from a comparison group of similar students who did not participate in the Autumn Tuition Programme was not available. Therefore, this evaluation does not compare participant attainment data with a control group as a measure of intervention impact.

Key Findings

When comparing overall academic progress made between Autumn 2020 and February 2021:

- Participants saw a **1.2% increase in their comprehension of material covered** from baseline. student reports confirm this by indicating that participants regularly applied new understandings and solidified topic knowledge when recapping previous sessions (through guided and independent practice; Question and Answer sessions; and exam style questions). In addition, findings from the Tutor Focus Group outlined substantial improvements in participants learning behaviour including handwriting, structuring question responses, applying critical thinking and exam style questions following intervention involvement. Please refer to the graph below summarising the average overall comprehension of material between baseline and interim for Programme participants.

- On average, interim findings demonstrate a **4.6% increase in engagement levels**, compared with baseline (please refer to the chart below). This indicates a positive trend for academic progress, as research shows students that are actively engaged in their learning are more likely to learn, stick to and attain their academic goals (McClenney et al., 2012). The student reports further support this finding, whereby tutors suggested that higher levels of engagement were associated with increased pupil enjoyment, self-confidence, and independence. Strategies for maintaining engagement included ‘starter activities’ to recap previous sessions and provide discussion opportunities.



Overall, the findings demonstrate small increases in levels of comprehension and engagement between baseline and interim. The data outlines that this progress varies over time depending on the individual, however it is clear that tutor input positively impacted participants understanding and interaction with their learning, thus contributing to academic attainment and progress.

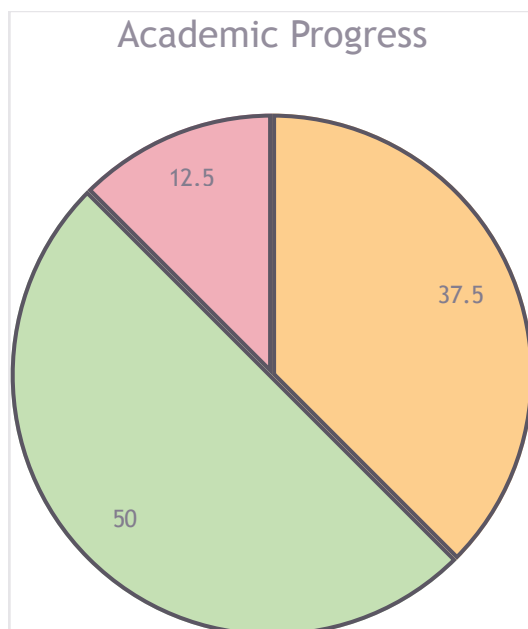
Examination Results Analysis

The data for the examination results analysis was provided by participating schools. This examination data serves as a standardised measure for academic progress, by comparing current attainment exam results with end of year target exam grades. It is important to note the following caveats:

- Data gathered in this analysis has been taken from across year groups and subjects (English, Maths and Science). Data has been considered in relation to a student's individual year group and associated grading.
- Due to disruptions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the collection of academic progress data from schools during the Autumn and Winter terms 2020/21 is limited, with standardised academic data only available for n=8 participants from the participating cohort of 18. Thus, the results in this section must be reviewed with caution given the small sample size of participants on which this analysis is based.

A RAG system was used to explore this analysis:

- Green – student is above their expected target grade by one grade or more
- Amber – student is meeting their expected target grade (same or one grade below)
- Red – student is below their expected target grade by two or more grades



The primary outcome considered in this analysis was for students to be at an 'Above' (green) or 'Expected' (amber) level. Participants involved in the Autumn Tuition Programme showed positive academic attainment, with **37.5%** performing at their expected level, and **50%** performing above their expected target by at least one grade.

This finding is supported by qualitative data, whereby some tutors mentioned their pupil had performed well in an assessed piece of work since starting the sessions.

“[My student] achieved 87% in [their] maths test – top of the class!”

Results Summary

When comparing academic progress made by participants following the Autumn Tuition Programme:

- Participants showed **increased levels of improvement (1.2%) in their comprehension of material** covered from baseline in Autumn 2020 to February 2021.
- On average participants demonstrated a 4.6% increase in their levels of engagement in tutor sessions from baseline in Autumn 2020 to February 2021. This is associated with factors such as improved levels of enjoyment, self-confidence, and interaction in sessions. Data collected from the pupil survey reinforces this, with **90%** agreeing they *‘paid attention in the tutor sessions and followed instructions.’*

- Positive changes were observed for academic attainment with **87.5% of participants performed at or above their expected target** by at least one grade. These results indicate positive intervention impact and suggest positive future outcomes for participants meeting or exceeding their target grade.

The findings from the academic attainment analysis are consistent with the impact evaluation combining survey responses and qualitative feedback from pupils, parents/carers, and tutors. It is clear that some progress has been made in academic attainment between baseline and final data collection following the Autumn Tuition Programme. Similar trends are also sustained with participant constructs such as self-confidence and intrinsic motivation, suggesting **an interaction between these factors** and offering a promising picture of the Autumn Tuition Programme in improving academic and non-cognitive outcomes. Please refer to Part 3 for more in-depth analysis on non-cognitive outcomes.

The presence of COVID-19 could well have limited this report's access to baseline and attainment data, and it is important to note that due to a lack of standardised data and a control group, the results have to be read with caution. For future investigation, it is suggested that obtaining data that reflects a larger sample size containing adequate demographic data, while also using academically validated scales for measuring such change at baseline and final points would further elucidate the findings and conclusions made in this report. Additional recommendations are also included in the final section of the report.

Part 3: Non-Cognitive Outcomes Analysis

As well as looking at impact on academic attainment through student reports and school data, it was also important to gain feedback from those involved in the intervention, including pupils, parents/carers, and tutors. Collecting data and insight from these groups was also critical when considering the Programme impact on non-cognitive outcomes including self-confidence towards learning and the impact of this on academic engagement and attainment.

Pupil Survey Analysis

Participants were asked to complete an online survey, and rate statements on the following scale: 1 (not like me at all after Autumn Tuition) – 7 (very much like me after Autumn Tuition). Intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy were used as proxies to measure pupil self-confidence and the school engagement was used as a proxy to understand pupil behaviour and overall engagement with learning.

The following outcomes were measured in the pupil surveys by borrowing statements from academically validated scales which are known to have high reliability and validity.

- **Motivation:** Intrinsic motivation has been shown to have a strong correlation with academic achievement (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). Statements from the **Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire** (MSLQ; Pintrich, 1991) were included in the questionnaire using measures of students' motivation and self-regulated learning.
- **Self-Efficacy:** Self-efficacy is a measure of pupils' belief in their ability to achieve a specific task in the future. It is correlated with higher academic achievement and persistence. Statements from the **Self-efficacy Subscale of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire** were included in the questionnaire.
- **Pupil engagement:** Pupil engagement has multiple interlinked dimensions: behavioural, emotional, and cognitive and is primarily measured through observable behaviours such as participation and time on task etc. These characteristics were measured through statements adapted from the pupil reported **School Engagement Scale**.

1. Intrinsic Motivation

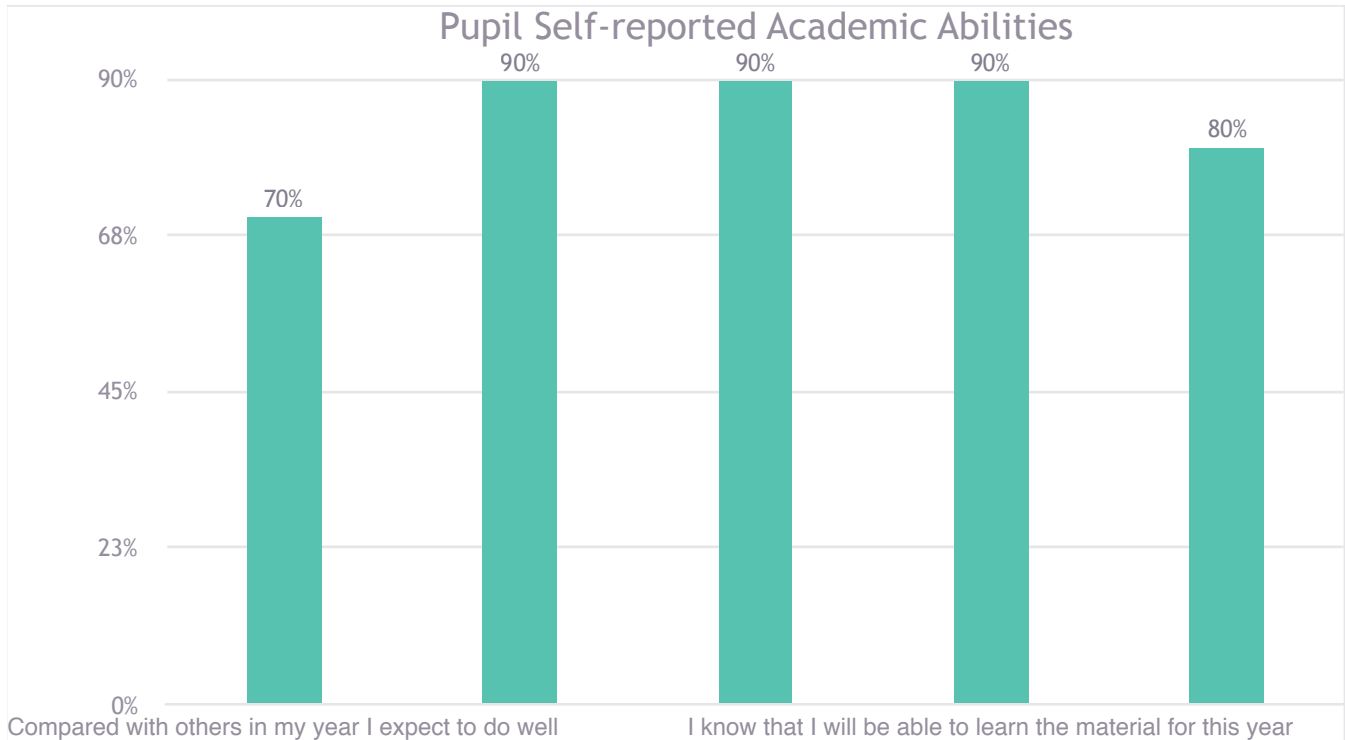
Feedback from participants on drivers of motivation included engaging in schoolwork that is challenging so they can learn new things (**60%** agreed with this statement). Specifically, **20% of participants strongly agreed that they enjoy challenging schoolwork** following the Tuition Programme. Findings further strengthen this as several students agreed that they often choose topics that they will learn something from even if they require more work (**25%** identify with this '*very much*').

2. Self-efficacy

Overall participants seemed confident about their academic abilities. Compared to their peers, most students said they expected to do well in their year academically, with **70%** saying this is '*like them*'/'*very much like them*'. **90%** of participants also felt that compared with others in their year group they were a good student. The majority of participants also reported that they can do an excellent job on tasks they are assigned to, with just one student disagreeing with this statement. Almost all participants (**90%**) also thought they would be able to learn the academic material for this year, with **80%** saying they thought they would receive good grades.

3. Pupil Engagement in learning

Feedback on different elements of the session content was broadly positive. When asked whether they liked what they were learning during Autumn Tuition, **90% said they enjoyed the sessions**, with **40%** strongly identifying with this statement. Most participants (**90%**) also agreed that they paid attention in the sessions and followed instructions provided by the tutor.



4. Experience of Programme Delivery

The majority of participants (90%) said they **felt happy and excited by the work in tutor sessions**, however one student strongly disagreed with both of these statements. Importantly, 70% of participants strongly agreed that they **enjoyed working with their tutor**. Three key themes were identified amongst the reasons participants gave for enjoying the sessions: the tutors' style of teaching as **“fun”**; the **“extra support and help”** they received in the sessions which increased confidence; and the flexibility around the sessions including **“doing [the sessions] at home”** and having a **“carer come with me to support me”**. It is important to note here that for students who are LAC, the presence and support of parents/carers acts as a **substantial protective factor** in their learning process, a provision that Equal Education strives to achieve.

A small number of participants said they would change the length of sessions as they could be **“too long”**, and they often felt **“tired”**.

Parent/carers Survey Analysis

Parent/carers were asked to complete an online survey, and rate statements about their child's experience on the Autumn 2020 Tuition Programme.

Feedback on the sessions was positive, where 71% of the parents/carers agreed or strongly agreed that their child enjoyed the tutor sessions. The majority of parents/carers (75%) also agreed that the Programme had a positive effect on their child's attitude to learning, and a further 41.7% strongly agreed.

Parents/carers were generally positive about the effect of the Tutoring Programme on behaviour outcomes, specifically self-confidence and academic performance. A quarter of parents/carers (25%) agreed the sessions have positively impacted their child's self-confidence and a further 41.7% strongly agreed. Three quarters of parents/carers (75%) additionally agreed that the tutor sessions have had **a positive effect on their child's academic performance**.

Overall, three quarters of the parents/carers surveyed agreed that their child has had a positive experience during the Autumn Tuition Programme. Two parents/carers strongly disagreed with this statement; however, the findings suggest that the majority have had positive experiences with the Programme. It should be noted that **two respondents**, roughly **16.7% of parents/carers strongly disagreed with all of the above statements in the survey**.

Tutor Focus Group Analysis

The Equal Education Tutor Focus Group session was held online on the 17th of February 2021. Six tutors attended the session to offer reflections and insights on their **tutoring experience and report on pupil engagement and progress**. The background and experience of the tutors was varied, and reasons for involvement in the Programme ranged from personal experience working with looked after children to supporting vulnerable students and improving their life outcomes. A thematic analysis was conducted on this data to explore common themes. Findings from the Focus Group are summarised here.

1. Session Engagement

Tutors were generally positive about session engagement and this impact on academic attainment and outcomes. Two key themes were identified for effective session engagement:

- Session interaction: tutors were motivated by students using their camera as they could witness learning taking place, including writing, typing and general communication through body language and facial expressions.
- Effort applied outside sessions: tutors expressed that homework submission and external session work provided an indication to session engagement.

2. Impact on Pupil's Academic Attainment

A positive finding is that tutors agreed they have seen an improvement in their students' academic attainment to some extent following the Autumn Tuition Programme. This supports the Academic Attainment Analysis and future Programme trajectory.

“I'm proud as punch that [my students] got their calculated grades last year”

Feedback however was clear that improving the working relationship with schools was key to supporting participants' academic attainment. Tutors mentioned the need for schools to provide concrete baseline academic data to determine the focus of sessions: **“if the school is very precise as to [a student's capabilities] then we know where to start with students”**. Most of those who expressed this concern reported setting their own baselines on the first meeting with a pupil and tracked progress through recapping previous sessions and homework. Other tutors also worked to ensure that their tutoring is aligned to school curriculum and pace to ensure improved performance in exams: **“With regards to exams, I make a point of making sure that everything that he does runs parallel with school”**.

3. Impact on Pupil Confidence and Esteem

Feedback on the impact of the tutor sessions on self-confidence and esteem was generally positive. Most tutors agreed that many students came to sessions with low levels of esteem regarding their abilities and expectations and they have seen pupil's confidence build over time as they saw personal improvements in their own academic abilities. One tutor mentioned that an improvement in students' self-confidence often reflects in their test outputs (e.g., essays and exams). However, another tutor elaborated that pupil engagement and self-confidence is demonstrated through incremental changes in pupil behaviour which they observed over the course of tutoring their pupil: **“For me, engagement is all about the little things. Does the students sort of sign up on time for the lesson? Or do I need to send loads of reminders to the students or their carers? When they do sign up, do they comprehend?”** Most tutors agreed that those incremental changes they observed with their pupils and their continued attendance and improved levels of comprehension posits improved levels of self-confidence.

Another key theme identified was that LAC students are often worried about saying/getting something wrong, therefore the sessions help to boost confidence and resilience in understanding **“it is okay to be wrong”**.

4. Tutor Expectations and School Relationship

Feedback on tutor expectations was mixed and highly dependent on the communication and shared information tutors received from schools. Several tutors mentioned that they were often not provided with a baseline of the participants academic history or attainment. Tutors often mentioned that they struggled getting in direct contact with relevant teachers or obtaining appropriate data from the school.

“I don't have a relationship with the school”

Tutors also expressed the importance of being involved in the process of determining the number of sessions a student has or in which subject focus is applied. Tutors felt this impacted momentum due to breaks in hours and/or session subject changes.

“If there was a way [sessions] could be reviewed, and tutors could be asked what the child would benefit from this would really help and have an impact”

There was also a sentiment that the level of planning and targeted support offered to pupils differed based on the subject they are tutoring and any information about pupil learning at school would help them design their sessions better. However, one tutor reported that where school data was missing, parents/carers filled in the gaps about the pupil which was beneficial.

5. Logistics

Logistical concerns using online platforms for the tutor sessions were raised. Tutors mentioned participants were often unwilling to use their camera during sessions, which made it difficult to gain feedback from micro facial expressions or witness participants learning behaviour such as writing. There was acknowledgment that participants may be concerned about their privacy using cameras online. A lack of communication with the parent/carer and lack of transparency about their home circumstances was also cited as a concern and barrier to collaborative working.

Overall Focus Group Summary

Almost all tutors reported that the Autumn 2020 Tutoring Programme was positive for **increasing levels of self-confidence in pupils' academic abilities and attainment**. In general, it was clear that promoting high levels of engagement was central to achieving these outcomes, with factors such as participation in sessions, turning cameras on for online sessions and completing homework highly important.

Areas for improvement focused on issues **obtaining a strong working relationship with schools**, specifically in relation to a lack of communication on pupil data and outcomes from schools. Feedback suggested that this provided a barrier for impact, as it was **difficult to align sessions with school topics/lessons** or identify accurate baselines for pupils. Tutors suggested improving transparency and communication with schools would be beneficial for session focus, planning and reviewing.

Part 4: Conclusion

Summarised Findings

The results from the evaluation of the Equal Education Autumn Tuition Programme 2020 are **encouraging**. Overall, it is clear that small positive trends can be seen across proxy attainment measures including comprehension of material, engagement and school attainment and predicted grades data. Survey feedback from pupils and parents/carers, alongside qualitative feedback from tutors additionally indicates improvements in levels of self-confidence and self-esteem towards learning.

When analysing school attainment and target grade data, **37.5%** of participants are performing at their expected level and **50%** performing above their target by at least one grade following the Autumn Tuition Programme. Pupil session reports show that participants demonstrated a marked **improvement in academic attainment** from baseline to interim for comprehension of subject material (**1.2%** increase) and engagement (**4.6%** increase). However, this finding should be interpreted with some caution given that statistically significant testing or more intricate analysis to understand variations was not possible.

The survey data available provides strong evidence that the Autumn Tuition Programme **improved non-cognitive outcomes**, such as self-confidence. Findings suggest an increase in self-confidence towards learning (**75%** parents agreed), improved academic engagement (**90%** pupils agreed) and attainment (**70%** pupils agreed). The positive trends observed in this data indicates that progress is in line with the aims and objectives of the Tuition Programme. This is especially significant, as research shows that a lack of self-esteem and confidence is a common and significant barrier to achievement and academic attainment among students who are looked after. However, the data would have been more indicative if the sample size were larger including pre and post surveys for more participants involved in the Tuition Programme. Furthermore, the retrospective nature means that pupils reflections on the programme experience may have been impacted by other factors outside of the scope of the study.

Finally, the qualitative data gathered from an in-depth tutor focus group highlights the merits of the tuition received in building pupil self-confidence, engagement, and academic attainment. Most tutors said they had seen marked improvements in participants' esteem towards learning, as well as in learning behaviour and exam attainment. Therefore, based on the data from the 18 pupils at the participating schools, the overall findings are positive and offer insight into the pupils' learning experiences.

Programme Recommendations

ImpactEd would recommend the following practice-level changes to the Equal Education Autumn Tuition Programme:

Recommendation 1: Improve the link up and communication pathways between key stakeholders, specifically tutors and schools. This is good practice and will support improve the quality of tutor sessions and planning.

Recommendation 2: Encourage regular reviews of session hours and content and involving tutors in these discussions where possible. This will ensure the tutor sessions are relevant and impactful.

Recommendation 3: Where and when possible, resume face to face tutoring sessions, to remove the barrier online learning presents for some students, e.g., avoidance being on camera, and promote communication and interaction between tutors and students.

ImpactEd would recommend the following changes to this Evaluation:

Recommendation 1: Including a larger sample size and working towards including a comparison or control group in the study to improve evaluation reliability and validity.

Recommendation 2: Using standardised and academically validated scales and baseline and final points for measuring change in non-cognitive outcomes which can mitigate risk of reporting bias.

Recommendation 3: Using a prospective evaluation design where data is collected at the start and end of the programme alongside programme delivery, to mitigate uncertainty about the Autumn Tuition Programme's degree of impact and success. Additional pupil demographic data such as Pupil Premium status, gender, postcode and other categories would also be beneficial to add context to the findings.

**impact culture across the
education system.”**

DAME SUE JOHN, Executive Director,
Challenge Partners

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schools approach their
programmes, embedding an
impact culture across the
education system.”**

DAME SUE JOHN, Executive Director,
Challenge Partners



Partners and supporters



Improving pupil outcomes
by working with schools to
address the evaluation deficit.

Get in touch
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