The curriculum programme pilot

Research Report

May 2021

CooperGibson Research

Glossary of terms

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

EAL – English as an Additional Language

MAT – Multi-academy trust

SATs - Standard Assessment Tests

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

KS2 – Key Stage 2

KS3 – Key Stage 3

KS4 – Key Stage 4

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Executive Summary

In January 2018, the Department for Education (DfE) committed £7.7 million over five years to the Curriculum Fund, to help teachers deliver the more challenging National Curriculum introduced in 2014, while reducing the workload associated with curriculum planning and resourcing. As part of the Curriculum Fund, the DfE set up the curriculum programme pilot, a £2.4m grant allocated to piloting complete curriculum programmes. These are packages of resources designed for teachers to deliver a National Curriculum subject across a key stage.

Eleven lead schools successfully applied to run two-term pilots, with seven being funded from January 2019 and four from April 2019. Two of the April start lead schools delayed delivery of their curriculum programmes in participating schools until September 2019. This report presents the final findings of the research.[1]

The pilot was used to fund schools to work with a minimum of six schools in which to test and refine their existing curriculum programmes, and to gather evidence on how those programmes improve pupil outcomes and reduce teacher workload.

Research aims and objectives

To support DfE's understanding of the curriculum programmes and the outcomes of the pilot, CooperGibson Research (CGR) was commissioned to carry out a study of the implementation, benefits and potential impact of the curriculum programmes, and to explore how they could be effectively shared across a wide range of schools.

To achieve the above aims, the following research objectives were set:

- Investigate pedagogical fidelity in how complete curriculum programmes are taught in participating schools and what factors affect this.
- Investigate which implementation models for complete curriculum programmes work best, in which contexts and identify any barriers to implementation.
- Investigate how useful teachers find the curriculum programme materials and the reasons for this.
- Investigate how teachers perceive the current and future implications for both teacher workload, and pupil progress and engagement.

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[1] Details of the lead schools and the length of their projects, including those that were extended can be found here. All leads schools were subsequently offered extensions of up to two terms and nine of the lead schools applied for and secured these extensions. This report does not include delivery taking place during the extension period.

A mixed-method design was used for the research. This allowed for triangulation of data collected from different sources, and involved:

- **Baseline and follow-up online surveys** with lead schools, participating school co-ordinators and participating school teachers (baseline: 121 teachers, 41 co-ordinators, 9 leads; follow-up: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators, 9 leads).
- **Baseline and follow-up in-depth telephone interviews** with lead schools, participating school co-ordinators and participating school teachers. (48 baseline; 68 follow-up).
- **Five focus groups** with participating schools, involving 23 teachers.

Key findings

Design and initial involvement

Curriculum programme design was generally an iterative process that had started prior to the pilot and for some was ongoing during delivery of the pilot. According to leads, at the time of the baseline survey, the curriculum programme was already fully designed and in use in four of the 13 programmes represented; in five it was nearly complete and in the remaining four there were some elements of the programme that were in use beforehand.

An increased emphasis on subject and curriculum development, and supporting transition between key stages had driven participating schools' decisions to be involved in the pilot. Reducing teacher workload was also a key factor.

Perceptions of recruitment processes improved over the course of the pilot. Lead schools generally found it easy to recruit participating schools to the pilot, perhaps because there were pre-established collaborative relationships between some lead and participating schools. Half of participating school co-ordinators (50%, n=22) in the follow-up survey had worked in partnership with the lead school prior to the pilot.

Delivery and engagement

Satisfaction with the initial set-up and implementation of the pilot was high. Nearly all co-ordinators (91%, n=40) and three-quarters of teachers (70%, n=71) were satisfied with delivery at the time of the follow-up survey. Furthermore, at the follow-up stage, co-ordinators said that they had a clear understanding of the programme and its focus.

Co-ordinators reported positively on teacher engagement with the pilot, with over three-quarters (77%, n=34) in the follow-up survey rating this as being either easy or very easy. Resistance to change in pedagogical style had lessened over time. The majority of participating schools were using all or most of the programme materials. Providing

training and support directly to teachers was identified as a critical factor in supporting teachers' engagement in the pilot; a clear explanation of the rationale was seen as instrumental in securing teacher buy-in.

At the follow-up stage, the majority (66%, n=29) of co-ordinators reported that it had been very easy or easy to apply resources to the school and pupil context and to sequence the units of work to meet the school's needs. Furthermore 70% (n=31) of co-ordinators at the follow-up reported that they were able to balance the programme with other priorities or commitment within school (baseline: 51%, n=21).

Engagement with the use of assessment materials increased statistically significantly across the pilot. However, teachers had mixed views of the assessment materials. In particular, teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes reported challenges in adopting the formal assessment elements where they did not meet the needs of their school context and pupils.

Programme fidelity and adaptations

Teacher satisfaction with the pedagogical approach of the programmes was high (81%, n=82) and teachers felt they had adhered well to the knowledge rich, teacher-led and whole-class teaching aspects of the programmes. Furthermore, the majority of co-ordinators (75%, n=33) believed that ensuring pedagogical fidelity had been easy by the time of the follow-up survey. Three out of five teachers (60%, n=61) said they had not found it challenging to adapt to the suggested pedagogy, although almost one-quarter (24%, n=24) had experienced difficulties, particularly those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes. Leads noted that this could be a sensitive issue to broach with participating schools and all stakeholders acknowledged the importance of continued training and support for staff to effectively apply new teaching styles.

However, training on the pedagogical approaches had not always been cascaded to all teachers. Although base sizes were low[2], indications were that teachers who had not received any training or support were less likely to be happy with the pedagogy of the programme, particularly for Key Stage 3 programmes.

Nearly all teachers (95%, n=109) who had received the programme materials said they would adapt the programme to some extent. Leads recognised that allowing some flexibility was necessary as it helped to ensure that the lessons remained engaging and teacher-led and that teachers were able to remain creative in their classroom practice. However, teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes perceived there to be less flexibility in the programmes and this led to concerns about teacher creativity and pupil engagement for a minority. It was important for the success of the curriculum

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[2] 24%, n=29 at the baseline and 11%, n=11 at the follow-up.

programmes to achieve a balance of teacher autonomy whilst providing a consistent, clear structure for delivery. Sequencing was highlighted by leads as the most important aspect of the programmes, as it supported the gradual development of pupil knowledge.

Support and training

A wide range of training and support was offered to participating schools. Access to training improved during the pilot, with almost nine out of ten (89%, n=90) teachers having received some form of training or support by the time of the follow-up survey.

Exchanges of staff to observe teaching at the lead or participating school and face-to face group training were the most common types of training and these were also felt to have been the most useful. Reciprocal visits were seen by all interview groups as fundamental to the success of the curriculum programme as they generated buy-in among teachers. Participating schools having the opportunity to observe practice at the lead schools was felt to be especially valuable, as was one-to-one feedback, coaching or planning support.

Co-ordinators' satisfaction with the support provided by the lead school remained high throughout the pilot and the majority of teachers were also satisfied. However, lack of access to training and support was a key barrier to maximising the success of the curriculum programmes. Teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes in particular were not always able to take up the training and support offered by lead schools. Capacity or staffing issues were key barriers to teachers accessing training, and training opportunities were not always communicated to teaching staff. As such, satisfaction with the training and support offered was lower amongst teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (Key Stage 3 60%, n=47; Key Stage 2 77%, n=24[3]). This highlighted the importance of teachers being able to take part in training when introducing new curriculum programmes, to ensure potential impact can be maximised.

Impact and outcomes

The majority of co-ordinators (82%, n=36) and half (50%, n=50) of teachers reported a positive impact on pupil engagement and the curriculum programmes were reported by teachers to have impacted positively on knowledge, behaviour management and literacy. They felt that the knowledge rich aspect of the programmes had stretched pupils (70%, n=71) and challenged teachers' beliefs about what pupils could achieve (48%, n=48). Positive impact on literacy was mentioned in particular by those involved in piloting Key Stage 3 programmes, including improvement in technical, subject-specific vocabulary, longform writing and increased focus during reading sessions.

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[3] Note: low base, n=31.

However around one in five teachers (21%, n=21) perceived a negative impact on pupil engagement. There were concerns amongst teachers that lessons could be repetitive and lower attainers had difficulties in accessing the resources, resulting in a lack of engagement.

Overall teachers reported a positive impact on pupil attainment. Impact on attainment was most likely to be reported by teachers for higher (62%, n=63) and average (61%, n=62) attainment pupils. Teachers were least likely to report a positive impact on SEN (34%, n=34) or EAL (36%, n=36) pupils.

There was found to be a strong positive impact on teacher workload, which was sustained throughout the pilot. Two-thirds (67%, n=68) of teachers at the follow-up stage believed that the pilot had impacted positively on their workload, particularly those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes (81%, n=25).[4] Teachers and co-ordinators very commonly talked about workload decreasing 'massively', 'dropping dramatically' or being 'cut down considerably'. Furthermore, the pilot was perceived by teachers to have impacted positively on effective curriculum implementation (70%, n=71), the complexity of planning (67%, n=68) and the quality of teaching and learning (62%, n=63). Specifically, teachers felt that their time spent planning, identifying and creating lesson resources had reduced. However, the pilot was also able to contribute to how teachers used their time to plan and prepare for lessons. Teachers reported that they used this saved time to focus more on activities that they felt were meaningful to their role, such as differentiating materials for pupils, planning delivery of lessons and research to develop their subject knowledge. Impact on other indicators of teacher job satisfaction was more limited at this stage in the pilot.

Challenges and improvements

There were common challenges around the relevance or flexibility of the programme materials (44%, n=44 at follow-up stage). Teachers and co-ordinators perceived there to be a lack of differentiation within resources for different attainment levels, in particular for pupils with SEND, EAL and lower attainment pupils.

A third of teachers experienced challenges with pupil engagement (33%, n=33) and adapting to a new way of teaching (30%, n=30). Teachers piloting humanities programmes specifically felt a sense of frustration about the rigid or repetitive nature of the resources, which were felt to stifle teacher creativity. This led to concerns about the new programmes deterring pupils from progressing to higher levels of study or not developing independent learning.

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[4] Note: low base, n=31.

Variations in the length and content of Key Stage 3 curriculums led to difficulties in planning appropriate content for lessons for some participating schools. Ensuring that the content allowed a smooth transition from Key Stage 3 through to Key Stage 4 was also a challenge for some, and would potentially have implications for future rollout of the programmes.

Suggested improvements to the programmes included: improvements to resources, formats and tailored materials, additional training and support and timing of the programme so that delivery aligns with the academic year.

Sustainability of programme delivery

There is good evidence to suggest that the curriculum programmes would be used to some extent within participating schools after the pilot had finished. The pilot had helped to facilitate the development of positive peer-to-peer support networks between the lead and participating schools, which there was a desire to continue after the pilot. Typically, teachers and co-ordinators indicated they would adopt the concept of a knowledge-rich curriculum and the pedagogical approach, but adapt or supplement the programmes to suit the context of the individual school and its profile of pupils. Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[5] were significantly more likely to report that they would continue to use the full programme compared to those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (Key Stage 2, 45%, n=14; Key Stage 3, 18%, n=14).

Staff at participating schools were positive about the potential longevity of impact after the pilot had finished. Teacher workload was the area where impact was thought to be most likely to continue. Although it was felt that there would also be a continued impact on the quality of teaching and learning, co-ordinators were more positive about this than teachers.

Conclusions

Overall, the curriculum programmes were regarded by leads, co-ordinators and teachers to provide a high-quality range of knowledge rich resources, developed by subject specialists, which were flexible and adaptable to school and pupil contexts. Programmes with strong knowledge-rich, teacher-led, whole-class teaching elements contributed to perceived improvements in pupil knowledge and skills, particularly in relation to technical vocabulary, comprehension and extended writing. Teachers reported reduced workload and more efficient and effective use of their planning time.

This suggests the school-to-school models of curriculum programme development and implementation can have positive impacts. However, there was a recognition that

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[5] Note: low base, n=31.

flexibility in curriculum programme design was important in maintaining teacher autonomy and creativity, and in allowing resources to be adapted to suit the needs of pupils, teachers, and school contexts.

Challenges were recognised however and key areas for development were:

Key Stage 3 teachers were less positive about the impact of the programme on workload, teaching and learning, training and support and satisfaction with the pedagogical approach.

Non-specialists were challenged in some instances by assumptions within the materials regarding pre-existing teacher knowledge highlighting the need for specific training and support for non-specialists.

Access to training and support: Effective training and support was critical to the success of the programme. A lack of access to training and support for teachers in some participating schools led to feelings of isolation; more written teacher guidance and the opportunity to observe the use of materials in practice would have been welcomed.

Pedagogical fidelity: Clear messages on the pedagogy and rationale of each programme, disseminated to all teachers would assist in addressing lead school's concerns about participating schools' adherence to the pedagogical approach or the level of adaptations being undertaken.

Pupil engagement: Teachers were concerned about accessibility of materials for lower attaining pupils or those with SEND or EAL. Ensuring programmes are adaptable and providing clarity on differentiation should be considered in any further roll-out or development of the curriculum programmes.

Communication: There were differences in perceptions of impact and training and support between lead and participating schools highlighting the importance of regular, open communication between all stakeholders to support effective delivery.

Timescales: Running curriculum programmes across a full academic year would help to alleviate some issues in terms of sequencing of units and aligning the programme content with other curriculum delivery.

Monitoring and evaluation: Accurate benchmarks (for example, pupil attainment, teacher workload levels and soft measures such as engagement), could be put in place at a school level and tracked over time to assist in providing more detailed evidence on the impact of the curriculum programmes in the longer-term.

1. Introduction

In January 2018, the Department for Education (DfE) committed £7.7 million over five years to the Curriculum Fund, to help teachers deliver the more challenging National Curriculum introduced in 2014, while reducing the workload associated with curriculum planning and resourcing.

As part of the Curriculum Fund, the DfE set up the curriculum programme pilot, a £2.4m grant allocated to piloting complete curriculum programmes. These are packages of resources designed for teachers to deliver a National Curriculum subject across a key stage. The grant specification of requirements suggests that curriculum programmes 'include a long-term plan, with content and knowledge sequenced carefully, as well as all the resources and training required for teachers to deliver individual lessons.[6] A key aspect was that they should be knowledge rich, and focus on teacher-led instruction and whole-class teaching approaches.

The pilot was used to fund schools to work with other schools to: test and refine their existing curriculum programmes and to gather evidence on how those programmes improve pupil outcomes and reduce teacher workload. To support DfE's understanding of the curriculum programmes and the outcomes of the pilot, CooperGibson Research (CGR) was commissioned to carry out a study of the implementation, benefits and impact of the curriculum programmes, and how they could be effectively shared across a wide range of schools. Early findings from the project were published in a DfE research brief in October 2019.[7] This report presents the final findings of the research.

Note on terminology

This report refers throughout to 'lead' schools and 'participating' schools.

Lead schools are those which designed and developed complete curriculum programmes in their own schools and subsequently shared the programmes with other schools. Participating schools are those which the lead schools' partnered with, and which piloted the curriculum programmes as a new approach in their schools.

The research specifically targeted those with key roles within the delivery and implementation of the complete curriculum programmes in both lead and participating schools. The following roles are referred to throughout this report:

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[6] DfE (2018), Grants to pilot curriculum programmes in science, history and geography: Specification of requirements, p6.
[7] CooperGibson Research (2019), *The curriculum programme pilot: early findings*. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-curriculum-programme-pilot-early-findings.

- **Project leads** (shortened to "leads") – staff in the lead school team providing support to participating school staff.

- **Participating school co-ordinators** (shortened to "co-ordinators") – the key person in a participating school who liaised and co-ordinated with the project lead in the lead school and teachers in their own school. They may also have been trialling the materials in their class or classes.

- **Participating teachers** (shortened to "teachers") – the teachers in the participating schools trialling the materials in their class or classes.

1.1 The curriculum programme pilot

As a condition of the application to the curriculum programme pilot, each applying school was required to recruit a minimum of six participating schools in which to test their curriculum programmes. Each lead school was required to meet specific criteria set out in the grant specification to ensure a diversity of participating schools in terms of disadvantage catchment and Ofsted inspection grade. Schools were able to pilot more than one programme in different subjects and/or key stages.

Eleven lead schools successfully applied to run two-term pilots, with seven being funded from January 2019 and four from April 2019. Two of the April start lead school delayed delivery of their curriculum programmes in participating schools until September 2019. All leads schools were subsequently offered extensions of up to two terms and nine of the lead schools applied for and secured these extensions.[8]

The majority of the 11 lead schools piloted one curriculum programme and a small number piloted two or three programmes; resulting in 15 curriculum programmes being piloted (five at Key Stage 2 and ten at Key Stage 3). [9] The programmes were history and geography at Key Stage 2 and history, geography and science at Key Stage 3.

A total of 79 participating schools implemented the curriculum programmes in their teaching between January and July 2019. There were three participating schools that were involved in a curriculum programme with two lead schools; one lead school that was also a participating school on another curriculum programme and one lead school that was also a participating school (i.e. they were trialling it in their own school).. A

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[8] Details of the lead schools and the length of their projects, including those that were extended can be found here. This report does not include findings of the extension period.
[9] Eight lead schools piloted one curriculum programme (history, geography or science at Key Stage 2 or 3). Two lead schools piloted two curriculum programmes each (Key Stage 3 geography and science and Key Stage 2 geography and history). One lead school piloted three curriculum programmes (Key Stage 2 geography and history and Key Stage 3 science).

further 12 participating schools implemented the curriculum programmes in their teaching from September 2019.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the research

The research running alongside the pilot aimed to develop the current evidence base to understand the benefits that complete curriculum programmes have, including whether they can improve pupil outcomes and reduce teacher workload and how they can be effectively shared and implemented between a wide range of schools. The specific objectives were to:

- Investigate pedagogical fidelity in how complete curriculum programmes are taught in participating schools and what factors affect this.
- Investigate which implementation models for complete curriculum programmes work best, in which contexts and identify any barriers to implementation.
- Investigate how useful teachers find the curriculum programme materials and the reasons for this.
- Investigate how teachers perceive the current and future implications for both teacher workload, and pupil progress and engagement.

1.3 Methodology

A mixed-method design was used for the research. This allowed for triangulation of data collected from different sources, and involved:

- **Online surveys** with leads, participating school co-ordinators and participating school teachers.
- **In-depth telephone interviews** with leads, participating school co-ordinators and participating school teachers.
- **Focus groups** with participating school teachers.

To identify changes in perceptions over the course of the pilots, a two-stage process involving baseline and follow-up data collection was employed. The focus of the baseline study was exploring early implementation models and challenges, setting initial measures, and exploring early impact. The follow-up focused on identifying ongoing use versus intention, gaps, challenges, changes in perceptions and impact of the curriculum programmes on teachers and pupils.

Data collection was staggered to account for differences in delivery start dates across the programmes (Table 1).

Table 1: Timing of fieldwork by phase and type (2019)

Start of programme	Baseline survey	Follow-up survey	Baseline telephone interviews	Follow-up telephone interviews	Focus groups
January/February	17th March -9th April	24th June – 23rd August	March-April	June-July	June-July
April/May	9th May – 12th June	4th November - 27th November	May-June	October-November	October-November
September	Not included	Not included	Not included	October-November	October-November

The two lead schools (and associated participating schools) that did not begin delivery of the programme until September were not included in the baseline survey and interviews. They did, however, complete telephone interviews and participate in the focus groups during the fieldwork that took place towards the end of the first term in the 2019/20 academic year. Further details on the methodology are detailed in Appendix 1.

1.4 Sample of respondents

The survey sample included nine of the 11 lead schools piloting their complete curriculum programmes and their participating schools. Two lead schools were not included as their participating schools had delayed teaching the curriculum programmes until September 2019.

1.4.1 Baseline survey sample

A baseline survey was disseminated to co-ordinators in 79 participating schools who then asked to complete it and circulate to teachers that were involved in the programme. Responses were received from 62 participating schools, representing a 78% response rate at a school level.

In total, 162 individual respondents completed the baseline survey of participating schools, across a range of programmes (Table 2). Some respondents completed the survey for more than one programme. There were 121 individual teachers piloting the curriculum programmes who responded to the baseline survey and 41 participating school co-ordinators. Leads indicated that circa 463 teachers would be involved in

delivery across the programmes. Therefore, this suggests a response rate to the survey of approximately 35%.

A separate baseline survey was disseminated to nine leads; all nine responded, representing 13 curriculum programmes being piloted.[10]

Table 2: Baseline survey responses by curriculum programme

Curriculum programme	Teachers: number of mentions[11]	Teachers: % of mentions	Co-ordinators: Number of mentions	Co-ordinators: % of mentions	Leads: Number of mentions
Science KS3	53	44%	21	51%	4
History KS2	12	10%	3	7%	2
History KS3	20	17%	12	29%	2
Geography KS2	31	26%	4	10%	3
Geography KS3	15	12%	7	17%	2
Total mentions	**131**		**47**		**13**

Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 121 teachers, 41 co-ordinators, 9 leads.

1.4.2 Follow-up survey sample

The follow-up survey was disseminated to co-ordinators in 79 participating schools. In addition, it was sent directly to the teachers who had responded to the baseline survey and had provided their email addresses. Responses were received from 61 participating schools (out of 79), representing a 77% response rate at a school level.

In total, 145 individual respondents completed the follow-up survey of participating schools across the curriculum programmes (Table 3). There were 101 individual teachers who were using the curriculum resources in their teaching who responded to the follow-up survey and 44 were received from co-ordinators. This suggests a response rate to the survey of 31% (of 463 teachers involved in programme delivery).

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[10] Six leads responded about one programme; two responded about two programmes and one responded about three programmes.
[11] Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes. As such 'mentions' refers to the number of responses to the questions on each specific curriculum programme. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

In total, 112 of the teachers and co-ordinators who responded to the baseline survey of participating schools also responded to the follow-up survey.

A separate follow-up survey was also disseminated to nine leads; all nine responded, representing 13 curriculum programmes being piloted.

Table 3: Follow-up survey responses by curriculum programme

Curriculum programme	Teachers: Number of mentions[12]	Teachers: % of mentions	Co-ordinators: Number of mentions	Co-ordinators: % of mentions	Leads: Number of mentions
Science KS3	50	48%	17	35%	4
History KS2	10	10%	4	8%	2
History KS3	12	12%	13	27%	2
Geography KS2	21	20%	7	15%	3
Geography KS3	16	15%	7	15%	2
Total mentions	**109**		**48**		**13**

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators, 9 leads.

Tests of statistical significance were conducted on survey data, comparing baseline and follow up data, and sub-groups where base sizes were n=30 or above. Unless otherwise specified, differences which are noted as being statistically different are at the 95% level of confidence.

1.4.3 Telephone interview sample

A total of 48 baseline interviews and 68 follow-up interviews were conducted across a sample of lead and participating schools (Table 4). Where possible in each participating school and lead school two interviews were conducted. For more details on the sampling of lead and participating schools for the telephone interviews see Appendix 1.

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[12] Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes. As such 'mentions' refers to the number of responses to the questions on each specific curriculum programme. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 4: Baseline and follow-up telephone interviews by curriculum programme

Curriculum Programme	Baseline telephone interviews: Teachers	Baseline telephone interviews: Co-ordinators	Baseline telephone interviews: Leads	Baseline telephone interviews: Teachers	Baseline telephone interviews: Co-ordinators	Baseline telephone interviews: Leads
Science KS3	4	6	2	5	2	3
History KS2	2	2[13]	2	3	3	2
History KS3	6	6	2	9	11	4
Geography KS2	9	4	3	6	5	3
Geography KS3	0	0	0	4	5	3
Total	**21**	**18**	**9**	**27**	**26**	**15**

Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline and Follow-up Telephone Interviews.

1.4.4 Focus groups

Five focus groups were undertaken with a total of 23 teachers from participating schools. Two of these focus groups were facilitated online, and three were held face-to-face.

Focus groups were held with participating school teachers who were piloting programmes with two lead schools that started delivery in January/February, two lead schools that started delivery from April/May, and one lead school that started delivery in September. The timing of the focus groups was staggered to take account of the phased delivery. More detail on the sampling approach to the focus groups can be found in Appendix 1.

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[13] Two lead schools were piloting history Key Stage 2 programmes and nine out of the 24 participating schools implementing Key Stage 2 programmes were piloting history. Two lead schools were piloting history alone, and seven were piloting both history and geography. The telephone interview sample therefore included a mix of history and geography programmes in those schools.

1.5 Methodological considerations

There are four important methodological considerations to note when considering the findings provided in this report:

- **Timescales for delivery**: Schools started programme delivery at different times, with seven starting in January or February, two in April and two in September 2019. Fieldwork was planned to ensure that delivery had begun before the baseline survey and interviews. However, in practice schools varied in when they began delivery. In some cases, schools had not started regularly teaching with the materials at the point of completing the baseline survey.

- **Perceptions over time**: Reported perceptions shifted over time as the programmes became more firmly embedded in the school settings. Later stages of this research sought to capture these developing perceptions and the reported impacts of the programmes.

- **Prior programme experience**: Some participating schools had been using the programme materials prior to commencement of the pilot. The extent of this varied, therefore it is likely that baseline measures were affected by this prior experience and may not fully represent early implementation in all cases.

- **Generalisability of findings**: lead schools and participating schools were sampled for involvement in the qualitative research to ensure that a range of curriculum programmes (subject and phase), stage of delivery and schools in different contexts were covered. The survey was disseminated to all lead and all relevant participating schools. Their response was voluntary. As such, not all programmes were included in the survey and qualitative research and therefore the findings in this report cannot be considered generalisable to all curriculum programmes.

In addition, a process of **developing model typologies** was undertaken during the analysis process. These model typologies were developed through a process of reviewing the lead schools' initial application forms to DfE, qualitative interviews and survey findings to establish whether there were any key similarities or differences.

The first stage of analysis considered all aspects of the programmes, including programme development and theoretical models employed, type and format of resources, resource content, intended delivery, programme flexibility, and the level and type of training and support provided by lead schools. This process identified that the key differentiating qualities of the programmes were the level of flexibility as described within the pedagogical approach, the choice given to teachers in participating schools regarding the resources and units used, and the level of training and support that was reported to be on offer by project leads..

However, there were a number of challenges to confidently and robustly applying model typologies within the wider quantitative and qualitative analysis. These were:

- The number of interview and survey responses received for each school/programme varied widely within the sample, meaning some programmes were overrepresented and others underrepresented.

- Survey and interview responses were not received from all programmes due to the timing of the pilots, meaning some programmes could not be included in the model analysis.

- Variations between the model descriptors as specified by leads, and the delivery and use of materials among teachers.

- Discrepancies between the features reported by leads, and those that participating school teachers said had occurred (particularly in relation to the provision of training and support).

These challenges meant that although some differences could be observed at a model level, it was not possible to robustly and confidently conclude the extent to which these differences were attributable to model type rather than other factors in the delivery of the pilots. As such the analysis undertaken by model type has not been included in this report. The analysis presented in this report explores aspects of models, elements of delivery and key influencing factors.

2. Design and initial involvement

This section discusses the design and set-up of the curriculum programme pilots. It includes reasons for participating in the pilot, the process for recruiting participating schools and the reach of the programmes across teachers and pupils.

Summary

The design of the curriculum programme pilot amongst lead schools had generally been an iterative process that had started prior to the pilot and for some was ongoing during delivery of the pilot. Some lead schools had developed a knowledge rich curriculum over a few years or had worked with other schools to improve curriculum delivery prior to the pilot. At the time of the baseline survey, in four of the 13 programmes represented, leads said that their curriculum programme was already fully designed and in use in the lead school prior to the pilot; in five it was nearly complete and in the remaining four there were some elements of the programme that were in use beforehand.

Participating schools' decisions to be involved in the pilot was driven by heads of department or senior leaderships teams; with the main drivers for participation being an increased emphasis on subject and curriculum development, and supporting transition between key stages. Reducing teacher workload was also a key motivation for participating schools to take part, and particularly the potential to reduce the time teachers spent on planning and sourcing materials.

Perceptions of recruitment processes improved over the course of the project. Lead schools generally found it easy to recruit participating schools to the pilot, with only one lead school reporting difficulties with this in the follow-up survey. Participating schools often had existing relationships with lead schools prior to the pilot, staff spoke about pre-established collaborative relationships and half of participating school co-ordinators (50%, n=22) in the follow-up survey reported that they had worked in partnership with the lead school prior to the pilot. Professional networks and events/conferences were also used as a mechanisms for engaging participating schools in the pilot.

2.1 Designing curriculum programmes

Leads reported during the baseline survey and interviews that they had been developing knowledge rich curriculums over a few years, or working with other schools to improve curriculum delivery prior to their involvement in the curriculum programme pilot (Table 5). Consequently, the pilot had provided an opportunity to disseminate the materials that leads had developed, and share the lessons that they had learned with peers.

Table 5: To what extent was the curriculum programme already designed and established prior to this pilot?

Extent of curriculum programme	Number of programmes
Fully designed, and already in use in our school	4
Nearly complete, some amendments made to allow sharing with other schools	5
Some elements designed/in use beforehand	4

Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 9 leads.[14]

In terms of the design process itself, leads described an iterative approach to creating materials in-house by drawing on the expertise of a small team of staff. This generally consisted of two or three key individuals who worked together to develop and refine resources, and to deliver training and support to participating schools. Overall, this work was undertaken in addition to existing workloads, which was reported to be a challenge by leads.[15]

> [Myself and a colleague] developed all the resources…We have delivered training in primary schools and worked closely to look at their current schemes of work and how this project can fit into what they had already got. We have given the schools some paperwork which includes [feedback forms] to be completed every few times they use a resource. I check all this feedback, for example if content needs changing, so I keep adapting the resources as we go along. It was hard to develop the resources…It has been a lot to plan. [For

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[14] On the questionnaire, respondents could also tick the following option: 'Not designed at all, had been designed for this pilot'. There were no responses to this statement. Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes.
[15] The pilot specification stated that the grant funding was to cover the cost of the project lead being involved in the project.

myself and my colleague], developing the programme definitely increased our workload. (Project lead, secondary school)

In a small number of cases, lead school staff were seconded on a temporary basis onto the project full-time whilst resources were developed, or a member of the lead school's administrative team would provide support in terms of managing the logistics of arranging visits, travel and training day agendas.

Leads across all subjects and key stages said that they aimed to create programmes that gradually increased pupil knowledge whilst introducing important vocabulary and concepts over time.[16] To this end, several leads had mapped subject knowledge development across key stages.

> In each department we think about what a 16 year old's expertise would be in year 11 and work backwards from there, right to what they need to know in the autumn term in year 7. So, the curriculum is mapped out over five years. (Project lead, secondary school)

For most leads, the refinement of the curriculum programme resources and materials was an iterative process, based on feedback from participating schools. For details on adaptations made to materials by participating school co-ordinators and teachers, see section 4.2.

2.2 Participating in the pilots

Decisions to be involved in the pilot as either a lead or participating school were driven by heads of department, or members of school senior leadership teams (SLTs). There were three main drivers for participation: subject development, workload reduction and supporting transition between key stages.[17] Although these drivers were mentioned by all interviewee groups across Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, there were differences in how they reported their primary motivations for getting involved. These are detailed as follows:

1. **Subject and curriculum development**: Co-ordinators piloting Key Stage 3 programmes most commonly said that the revised Ofsted inspection framework meant that they had started to review provision in their schools.[18] Thus, the pilot

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[16] Notably, as delivery of the curriculum programmes progressed, a positive impact on pupils' literacy was reported by participating teachers (see section 6.2.3).
[17] Other less commonly mentioned reasons for being involved in the pilots were: opportunities for staff development and to build working relationships with other schools/teachers, developing literacy skills among pupils, and encouraging pupils to become more responsible for their work by giving them ownership of resources.
[18] Education inspection framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/education-inspection-framework.

offered a structured means to explore ideas about developing teaching practice and subject knowledge, whilst delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

2. **Reducing teacher workload**: Co-ordinators piloting Key Stage 2 programmes most commonly said that reducing teacher workload was a key motivation for taking part in the pilots. They reported that they were specifically looking to support teachers in reducing the time spent on planning and sourcing materials for lessons (for impact of the pilots on teacher workload, see section 6.3.1).

3. **Promoting clear progression between key stages or phases of education**: Key Stage 2 Leads reported an opportunity to work closely with primary schools and support a smoother transition to Key Stage 3, or to work with others across the same multi academy trust (MAT) to foster an ethos of collaboration among colleagues.

2.2.1 Recruiting participating schools

Perceptions of recruitment processes improved over the course of the project. By the time of the follow-up survey, seven of the nine leads said that recruiting participating schools had been either easy or very easy. Only one reported that this element of the programme was difficult.[19] This was an improvement on the baseline research, notably when recruitment had been a more recent activity, and three leads reported it to be difficult. The key challenge in relation to recruitment, at both baseline and follow-up was reported to be the tight timescales for delivery (see section 7).

Staff in participating schools tended to report that they became involved with the pilots after being directly approached by a lead school. For example, half of co-ordinators responding to the follow-up survey stated that they had worked in partnership with the lead school prior to the curriculum programme pilot (50%, n=22). This was also a strong theme during the telephone interviews, where co-ordinators often spoke about pre-established collaborative relationships with leads or being contacted by the project lead through a professional network, or at events such as conferences attended by teaching staff.

In a small number of cases, staff within participating schools had previously worked at the lead school, or were already aware of the lead school's curriculum programmes via social media. These connections enabled them to approach leads about taking part in the pilot.

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[19] The remaining lead school gave a 'neither' response to this question.

Our head is part of [a local teaching network] group and she knows quite a few contacts. From that she [was] aware [of the lead school's programme]…The school…needs an overhaul in terms of curriculum, particularly with the new Ofsted framework, so [the headteacher] asked to be part of the pilot. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

It was a requirement of the funding that the lead schools adhered to certain criteria when recruiting participating schools.[20] According to leads, participating schools did not need to meet additional specific criteria in order to be involved in the pilot. Leads generally spoke about wanting to work with schools that were open to the idea of developing a knowledge rich curriculum, or had already requested support (for example, from within the same MAT). Geographical location was considered to a limited extent, for example where leads wanted to ensure that they would be able to travel to participating schools fairly easily in order to provide support.

2.3 Set-up and implementation

Overall, leads and co-ordinators were satisfied with the set-up and implementation of the curriculum programme pilot.[21] In terms of delivery, satisfaction levels were high; nearly all co-ordinators (91%, n=40) and nearly three-quarters of teachers (70%, n=71) were satisfied with the delivery of programmes at the time of the follow-up survey.[22] Furthermore, nearly all co-ordinators (93%, n=41) and three-quarters of teachers (73%, n=74) were satisfied with the usefulness of materials (Figure 1).

This remained consistent compared to the baseline findings.[23] Likewise, the overall quality was also rated highly by over three-quarters of teachers piloting the programme

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[20] Overall, a requirement of the funding was that lead schools should recruit at least six schools to participate in the pilot and that: (1) At least one third of the participating primary schools, and at least one quarter of the participating secondary schools must have at least 40% of its pupils registered as eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the last 6 years; and (2) one of the participating schools must have been rated as Requires Improvement in its most recent Ofsted inspection.

[21] At the baseline, eight leads reported being satisfied or very satisfied with set-up and implementation and one was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. At the baseline 98% (n=40) of co-ordinators were satisfied with the set-up and implementation, the remaining co-ordinator stated that they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

[22] At the follow-up survey seven of the nine leads indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with set-up and implementation the way participating schools had delivered their programme(s). The remaining two lead schools reported that they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

[23] Overall, most participating school teachers who responded to the baseline survey rated the programme information and materials as useful (43% very useful, n=51, 39% useful, n=47, out of 119 provided with the resource). A minority of participating school teachers rated any of the materials they were provided with as not useful, the most likely being the resources/lesson materials (7% not useful, n=8) or the training materials/guidance (5% not useful n=4).

(79%, n=80). Notably, those piloting Key Stage 2[24] programmes were statistically significantly more likely to be satisfied with the overall quality of the programme compared to those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (94%, n=29 and 74%, n=58 respectively).

Figure 1: Overall how satisfied are you with the following aspects of the curriculum programme(s) that you have been trialling?
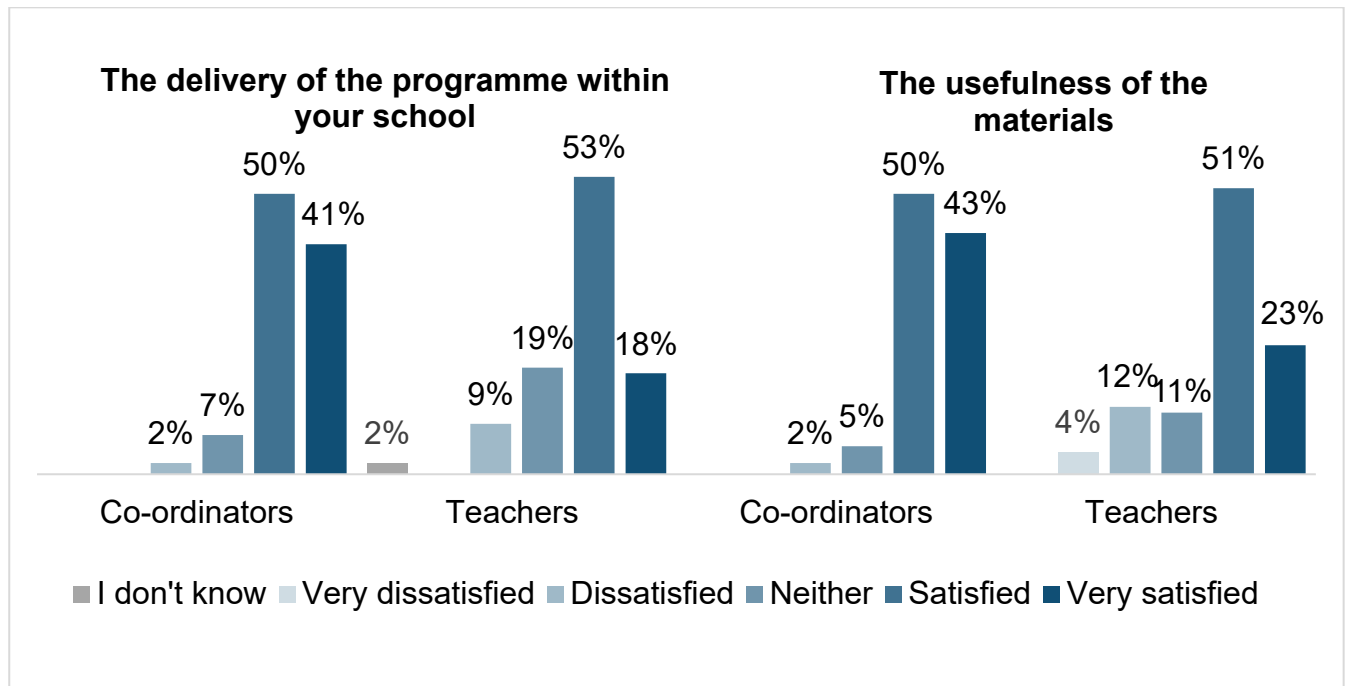
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators.

2.4 Reach of the pilot

Approximately 355 teachers were involved in the pilot across the participating schools according to leads who completed the follow-up survey.[25] Most commonly, co-ordinators reported that there were three or four teachers (40%,n=14) involved in trialling the curriculum programmes in each school (Figure 2). In primary schools, this tended to mean all teaching staff delivering the specified subject were selected to take part. In secondary schools, the approach to involving teaching staff in the pilot was variable at a participating school level. In some instances co-ordinators would involve all teaching staff delivering the specified subject in order to ensure consistency in delivery, or they would select teachers who had a teaching and learning responsibility (TLR), a middle leadership role, or were working towards a middle leadership role. For the latter cohort, involvement in the pilot was regarded as a positive opportunity for professional

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[24] Note: low base, n=31.
[25] This calculation does not include teachers in participating schools who were involved with the curriculum programmes from the two lead schools that were not included in the survey process.

development. In other participating schools the teachers involved in the pilot were influenced by the school's decision about which year groups and how many classes would be involved in the pilot. Often this meant that early career teachers with responsibility for teaching year 7 and 8 classes were involved.

Figure 2: How many classroom teachers within your school have been involved in trialling this curriculum programme in their teaching?
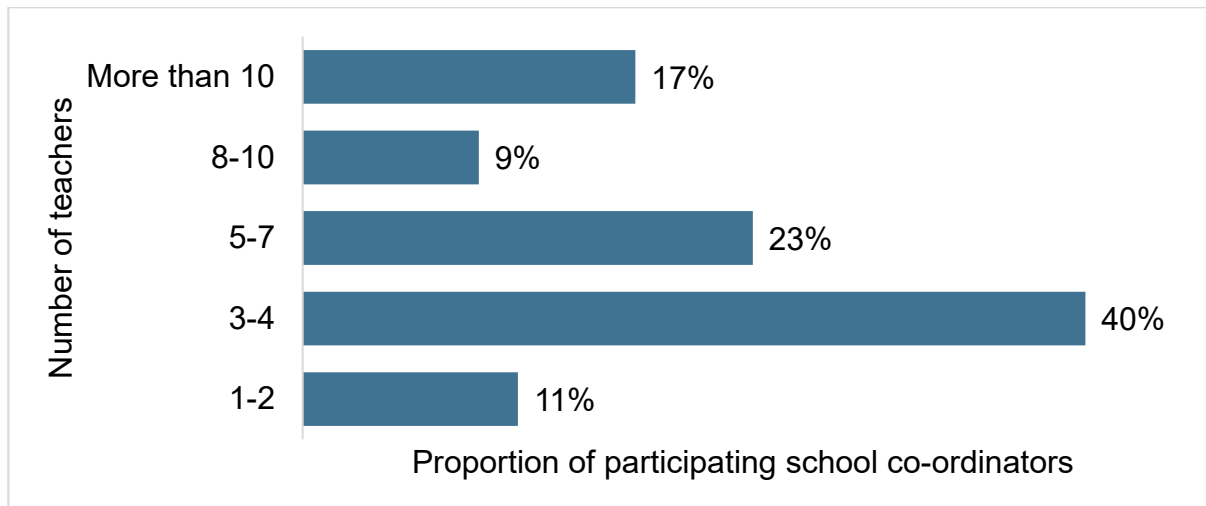
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 35 co-ordinators.[26]

The majority of teachers responding to the surveys were either subject or key stage specialists (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Proportion of survey respondents who reported being a subject or key stage specialist.
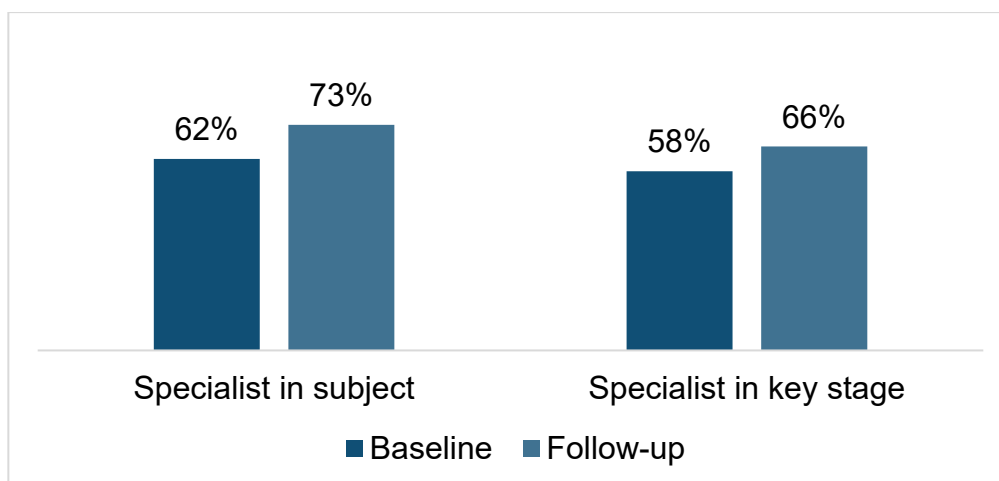
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[26] Data adjusted to take into account six participating schools where more than one co-ordinator responded to the survey. Some participating school co-ordinators responded about multiple programmes.

In a limited number of secondary schools, non-specialists in the specified subject area were identified by co-ordinators as key teaching staff to be involved in the pilot. In these examples, it was hoped by co-ordinators that the resources would enable improvements in knowledge, professional development, and a clearer structure to teaching and learning.

> We have got all [subject] specialists teaching [Key Stage 3], so for us it was [all teachers involved]. But equally we have got non-specialists who do teach as well. If anything, [the curriculum programme] is easier for them. Most of the time they are either reading the textbook with the [pupils], and helping them break that down and doing a bit of scaffolding…or it is a writing lesson where the [pupils] are meant to [work] more independently. So it worked out quite well for us. Where possible, we will always give the non-specialists the reading lesson, because it is all there then for them. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

Most teachers had been trialling the materials for four months or more at the time of the follow-up survey (Figure 4).

Figure 4: How long have you been trialling the materials for?
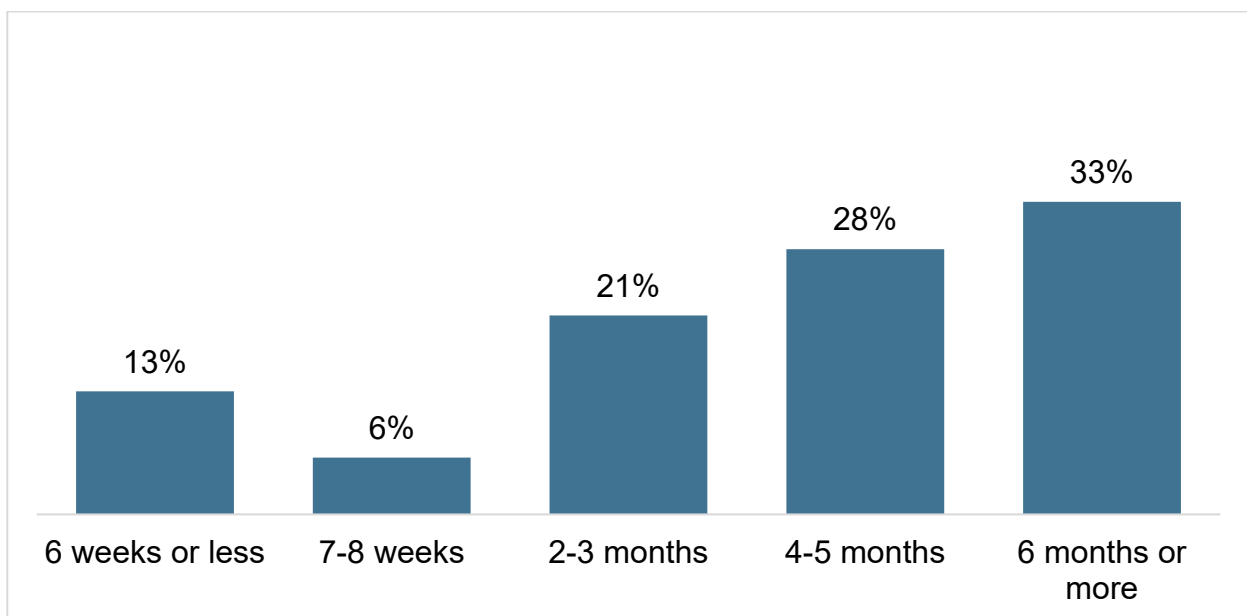
2.5 Pupil profile

The pilot involved pupils across all Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 year groups (Table 6). However, the programmes were least likely to be piloted with year 9 pupils, due to the different approaches that participating schools took to the delivery of Key Stage 4 (see section 7.1.1).

Typically, the curriculum programmes were being piloted in the key stage that they were designed for. Three participating secondary school teachers, however, were piloting Key Stage 2 programmes with Key Stage 3 classes. This tended to be secondary schools in challenging circumstances trialling Key Stage 2 programmes with year 7 pupils, where it was felt that these pupils would benefit from this form of support. One project lead noted that to enable the same materials to be used in primary and secondary contexts, teachers were able to adapt elements to suit the required skill level (for example longer essay writing tasks at secondary level).

Table 6: Which year groups were involved in trialling this curriculum programme?

Year group	Science Key stage 3	History Key Stage 2	History Key Stage 3	Geography Key Stage 2	Geography Key Stage 3
Year 3	0	3	0	5	0
Year 4	0	3	0	5	0
Year 5	0	3	0	5	0
Year 6	0	2	0	5	0
Year 7	12	1	11	0	3
Year 8	10	1	10	0	6
Year 9	1	0	4	0	2

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 37 co-ordinators.[28]

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[27] Programme mentions: Science Key Stage 3=50; history Key Stage 2=10, history Key Stage 3=12, geography Key Stage 2=21, geography Key Stage 3=16. Some participating school teachers responded about multiple programmes.

[28] Data adjusted to take into account six participating schools where more than one co-ordinator responded to the survey. Some participating school co-ordinators responded about multiple programmes.

According to the follow-up survey, the average pupil reach in each participating school was 266 pupils (Table 7). Using this as an overall mean, an estimated total reach of the programme is around 24,206.[29] It is important to note that this can only be assumed to be a proxy measure of pupil reach as responses were not received from all participating schools involved in the pilot.

Table 7: How many pupils do you expect to reach through the curriculum programme during this pilot?

Descriptive statistic	Science Key Stage 3	History Key Stage 2	History Key Stage 3	Geography Key Stage 2	Geography Key Stage 3
Minimum	30	200	150	120	100
Maximum	600	330	660	330	400
Mean	**265**	**257**	**335**	**174**	**223**

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 37 co-ordinators.[30]

Table 8: Average pupils reached by key stage and estimated total reach

Key stage	Number
Key Stage 2 mean	205
Key Stage 3 mean	251
Overall mean	266
Estimated total programme reach	24,206

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 37 co-ordinators.[31]

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[29] This pupil reach has been calculated from the average number of pupils per school (266) multiplied by the total number of participating schools involved in delivery (n=91). Care should be taken in the interpretation of this data.

[30] Data adjusted to take into account six schools where more than one co-ordinator responded to the survey. Some participating school co-ordinators responded about multiple programmes.

[31] Data adjusted to take into account six schools where more than one co-ordinator responded to the survey. Some participating school co-ordinators responded about multiple programmes.

3. Delivery and engagement

This section explores the engagement with, and use of, different elements of the curriculum programmes by co-ordinators and teachers, and how far the programmes were embedded into delivery across participating schools.

Summary

The pilot was embedded well by participating schools. At the follow-up stage, co-ordinators said they had a clear understanding of the programme and its focus. Satisfaction with the set-up and implementation of the pilot was high; 91% (n=40) of co-ordinators and 70% (n=71) of teachers were satisfied with delivery at the time of the follow-up survey.

Co-ordinators reported positively on teacher engagement with the pilot, with over three-quarters (77%, n=34) in the follow-up survey rating this as being either easy or very easy. Levels of engagement with, and use of, the curriculum programme materials were high. At the time of the follow-up survey, most leads found it easy or very easy to provide participating schools with materials and resources and on the whole, participating schools were using all or most of the programme materials they had been provided with.

At the baseline stage, there was some uncertainty and variability in the use of assessment materials as part of the pilot. However, the follow-up stage suggested that engagement with this element of the pilot had increased significantly. In the follow-up survey three-quarters (75%, n=33) of co-ordinators rated teachers' level of engagement with the assessment materials as good or very good, compared to 56% (n=23) in the baseline survey.

Teachers had a more mixed attitude towards the assessment materials; with teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes in particular reporting challenges in adopting the formal assessment elements where they did not reflect existing school policies or were not felt to meet the needs of the school or pupil context.

The provision of training to teachers directly by lead schools was identified as being a critical factor in support teachers' engagement in the pilot; a clear explanation of the rationale was seen as instrumental in securing teacher buy-in.

There had been an increase in those who reported that they were able to balance the programme with other priorities or commitments within school (baseline 51%, n=21; follow-up 70%, n=31). Similarly, in the follow-up survey, the majority (66%, n=29) of co-ordinators reported that it had been very easy or easy to apply materials/resources to the school/pupil context and to sequence the units of work to meet the school's needs.

3.1 Engagement with the programme

During the telephone interviews (both baseline and follow-up), participating school co-ordinators and teachers described the key elements of the programmes that they piloted. These were the:

- **Resources being used**, which were most commonly booklets or textbooks, with PowerPoint slides for teachers to use during lessons as supplementary material.

- **Assessment materials**, often designed around quiz-style knowledge recall at the start and end of each lesson. Alternatively, assessments came in the form of writing sessions, building up to the development of longform essays at Key Stage 3 and for higher attainers.

- **Knowledge rich** nature of the programmes, which was more commonly mentioned by those trialling the Key Stage 2 programmes as being a new approach to teaching, compared to those delivering Key Stage 3 programmes. The latter often suggested that they were already delivering a knowledge rich curriculum before the pilots began, and they were looking to develop this approach further.

- **Schemes of work**, or sequences of units, that tended to vary between formal curriculum maps for the academic year or overviews for each unit to be covered during the year. Many teachers commented that a scheme of work was not provided in a separate document, but they felt that it was clear to them from the materials due to the progression through different units or topics.

Planning materials (short, medium or long-term) were generally not mentioned by telephone interviewees from participating schools, or they said that such plans were not provided by leads.[32] Leads, however, all reported that they had provided planning materials, highlighting the gaps in training and communication that appeared to occur among some teachers (see section 7 for challenges).

Neither were training materials commonly mentioned (for Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 3 programmes). Instead, training on the use of materials tended to be delivered face-to-face by leads (see section 5). A few teachers noted that they were given teacher guides, knowledge sheets, or background reading related to the pedagogical approaches and subject knowledge being applied.[33]

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[32] A small number noted that lesson delivery was inevitably planned for them because this was dictated by the sequential progression through the resources provided, or that they could see an overview of each unit and how they linked together through the schemes of work.
[33] Where participating school co-ordinators and teachers discussed the pedagogical approaches required by leads, this feedback is detailed in section 4.

3.2 Use of programme materials

Overall, levels of engagement with, and use of, the curriculum programme materials were high. All leads reported during the follow-up survey that they had found providing materials and resources either easy or very easy. This was reflected in their rating of participating schools' use of the programme resources, with seven of nine leads stating that engagement with materials over the course of the programmes had been good or very good.[34]

At the start of the pilot, teachers in participating schools often said in the telephone interviews that they felt confident in the quality of the resources because they had been approved by the lead school, or developed by subject specialists. It became clear during the follow-up research (including the focus groups) that confidence in the quality of the resources remained fairly high. Knowing that practising teachers had been involved in the development of the resources enhanced participating teachers' confidence in the programme.

> There is more academic rigour, it is presented in more attractive way
> for students and teachers using the resources, it is attractive and
> accessible, it is engaging, attractive and accessible - with more
> rigour in terms of planning and content of the lessons as
> well. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

However, coordinators and teachers delivering Key Stage 2 programmes also noted (during both the baseline and follow-up interviews) that additional input from primary specialists in the development of curriculum resources at this level would be beneficial for future rollout.

Teachers' high level of confidence in the materials was reflected in overall usage patterns. Leads reported in the follow-up survey that participating schools were using all or most of the programme materials they had been provided (11 out of 13 programmes represented by the survey) [35], and the majority of teachers agreed that this was the case (Figure 5). Where teachers were not using the materials as provided, this was generally due to the need to make adaptations and changes so that they were applicable to the school or pupil context (see section 4.2). [36]

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[34] The remaining two leads reported use of resources by participating schools to be 'acceptable'.

[35] For the remaining two programmes 'some' of the programme materials were being used.

[36] This need to adapt materials in some contexts was echoed by participating school co-ordinators: two-thirds responding to the follow-up survey (66%, n=29) indicated that applying materials and resources to the school/pupil context was either easy or very easy (compared to 71%, n=29 at the baseline).

Figure 5: How many of the materials/resources provided for this curriculum programme are you using?

	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	A few of them	None of them	Unsure at this stage
Baseline	38%	35%	11%	5%	1%	10%
Follow-up	30%	43%	18%	6%	2%	1%
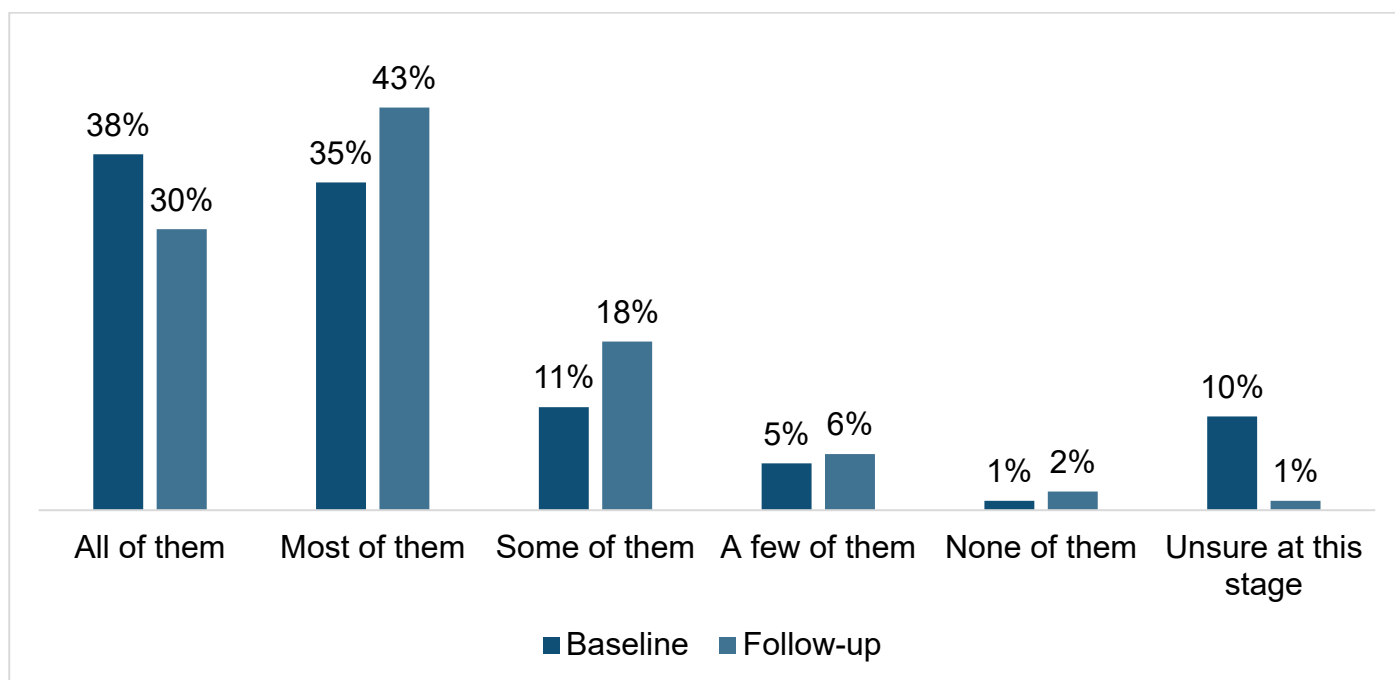
Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up).[37]

During the early stages of implementation, teachers and co-ordinators felt that the programme materials might support non-specialists, as they would be provided with the knowledge and content for each lesson. This was reflected at follow-up, particularly during the focus groups.

> It's actually great because I am the only [subject specialist] teaching Key Stage 3…the rest of the staff are [non-specialists] and they found it really useful to be able to see a succession of lessons and to just open the next lesson and carry on from there. The resources are quite good so they have not had to come back to me for extra support very often. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

However, at follow-up it was also highlighted that in a small number of cases the programme resources had created challenges for non-specialists. This included a lack of

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[37]Programme mentions: Baseline survey - science Key Stage 3=50; history Key Stage 2=13, history Key Stage 3=19, geography Key Stage 2=32, geography Key Stage 3=13; follow-up survey science Key Stage 3=50; history Key Stage 2=10, history Key Stage 3=12, geography Key Stage 2=21, geography Key Stage 3=16. Some participating school teachers responded about multiple programmes.

examples of answers to knowledge recall tests or quizzes, or where specialist knowledge among teachers had been assumed within the resource material. In some cases the level of detail regarding tasks that pupils needed to complete was perceived to be insufficient, meaning that teachers had to spend time producing additional documentation to further explain tasks before they could be undertaken. There were also adaptations and additions required to ensure that the programme content and materials were accessible by a range of pupils (see section 4.2).

3.2.1 Assessment materials

At the outset of the pilot, the greatest area of uncertainty for participating school co-ordinators was the use of assessment materials; over one-third (34%, n=14) were unsure that teachers would engage with these. Furthermore, the telephone interviews identified that the use of assessment materials was variable across participating schools during the early stages of the pilot, with some teachers not using the assessment materials at all. Reasons included that the lead had not specified the materials to be used, teachers continuing to use their own schools' assessment processes to ensure that outcomes data were comparable with previous years, or it being too early in the pilot to have assessed pupil progress.

However, at the time of the follow-up survey and interviews, teachers' engagement with the assessment materials had increased statistically significantly. Three-quarters (75%, n=33) of co-ordinators rated levels of engagement with the assessment materials by teachers as either good or very good, compared to 56% (n=23) at the baseline. Leads were also generally positive about participating schools' use of assessment materials.[38]

The interviews highlighted that some specific types of assessment material were very commonly adopted and appreciated by teachers. These included starting and ending each lesson with quiz-style knowledge recall activities, or implementing class-based writing sessions.

> [The teachers] really like the formative assessments, which [comprises] questions at the beginning to test knowledge and then repeated multiple-choice at the end. This is something that [we] have rolled out further into Key Stage 4. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Nonetheless, there were mixed attitudes amongst teachers regarding the assessments. Over half of teachers responding to the follow-up survey (59%, n=60) agreed with the statement that *'the…assessment gave me the information I needed to support students'*

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[38] Six of the nine rated this as 'good' and one reported that this was 'acceptable'. Two leads suggested that participating schools' use of assessment materials was poor.

progress'. However, nearly one-quarter (22%, n=22) did not agree or disagree, and 7% (n=7) did not know. Of the remaining 12 teachers who disagreed with this statement, all were piloting Key Stage 3 programmes. During the interviews, Key Stage 3 teachers specifically highlighted the challenges in adopting approaches to assessment where they did not reflect existing school policies, or where the materials did not meet the needs or context of their school and pupils (see section 7 for further detail).

3.3 Teacher engagement

Perceptions of teacher engagement with the curriculum programmes were somewhat mixed. Five leads felt that engaging teachers with all aspects of the curriculum programmes had been 'difficult' or 'very difficult' at the time of follow-up survey, after teachers had been piloting the materials for several months. Three leads felt that it had been 'easy' and one was 'unsure'.[39] Leads commonly spoke during the follow-up interviews about encountering resistance to change among teaching staff in participating schools, or of whole-school policies or cultures not 'aligning' with the ethos of the programmes.

> It is a different pedagogy and way of working. Teachers have been confronted with a jump in expectations in terms of curriculum content, so this has been a challenge. (Project lead, secondary school)

Teachers also acknowledged, particularly during the follow-up interviews, that they had been resistant at the start of the pilot as they were being asked to deliver lessons using approaches that were very different to their usual pedagogical style. However they went on to state that this perspective had changed during the course of delivery.

> To be honest when we first saw them, we thought "do we really have to deliver this?"… But as the term has gone on, I have enjoyed it more…[There are] lots of different elements to it that actually, once you are in it, it grows on you and you see it fit together...It's been a development process but really positive. We've all felt the same in the department: to begin with we were reluctant, but after throwing ourselves into the project we all enjoyed it. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

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[39] At the time of the baseline survey, when teachers had not yet engaged with all of the materials, one lead believed that engagement had been 'very difficult', whilst four believed that it had been 'easy', three felt that it had been 'neither' easy nor difficult and one was 'unsure'.

A very strong theme emerging from the interviews was that teacher engagement, and acceptance of change, was driven by the training and support provided directly to teachers by leads.

Both co-ordinators and teachers emphasised that where initial presentations from leads included a clear explanation behind the rationale of a curriculum programme, these were instrumental in encouraging staff buy-in (for further discussion on training and support, see section 5). According to co-ordinators, this information from leads had reassured teachers that they were adopting materials that were developed using a secure evidence-based approach (see section 2 for design materials).

> [Engagement from the project lead] has definitely helped [to encourage staff buy-in to the programmes]. The lead school were very good with the teachers and they came back from the [training events] much more motivated and enthusiastic about the programme than when they had gone. [The events] helped alleviate some of the concerns the teachers had had about the programme. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

This reassurance translated into staff confidence to deliver the programmes, which was perceived by co-ordinators to have statistically significantly increased between the baseline and follow-up surveys (Figure 6). For the impact of the curriculum programme pilot on teachers, see section 6.3.

In contrast to the responses from leads and teachers, the large majority of participating school co-ordinators felt that teacher engagement had been positive overall. Co-ordinators reported that they had found it easy to recruit teachers to trial the programme and the majority felt it has been easy to engage teachers with all aspects of the programmes (Figure 6).[40]

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[40] In many participating schools, the decision to be involved in the pilot was not made by teachers. Instead, teachers were generally informed by middle or senior leaders that the pilot was taking place in their subject/year group, rather than being given an option whether or not to take part.

Figure 6: How easy or difficult has it been to deliver the following elements of the curriculum programme pilot(s)?

	Unsure	Very difficult/difficult	Neither	Very easy/easy
Recruiting teachers to trial the programme — Baseline	5%		7%	85%
Recruiting teachers to trial the programme — Follow-up	2%	5%	11%	82%
Staff ability/subject knowledge to deliver — Baseline	2%	5%	24%	68%
Staff ability/subject knowledge to deliver — Follow-up	2%	5%	11%	82%
Staff confidence to deliver — Baseline	12%	5%	32%	51%
Staff confidence to deliver — Follow-up		9%	14%	77%
Engaging teachers with all aspects of the programme — Baseline	10%	5%	17%	68%
Engaging teachers with all aspects of the programme — Follow-up		7%	16%	77%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Furthermore, the level of engagement by teachers with the training and support offered through the duration of the pilot, was also perceived by co-ordinators to be good or very good at both the baseline and the follow-up (Figure 7).

Figure 7: How would you rate teachers' engagement with…Attendance / engagement with training / support offered?
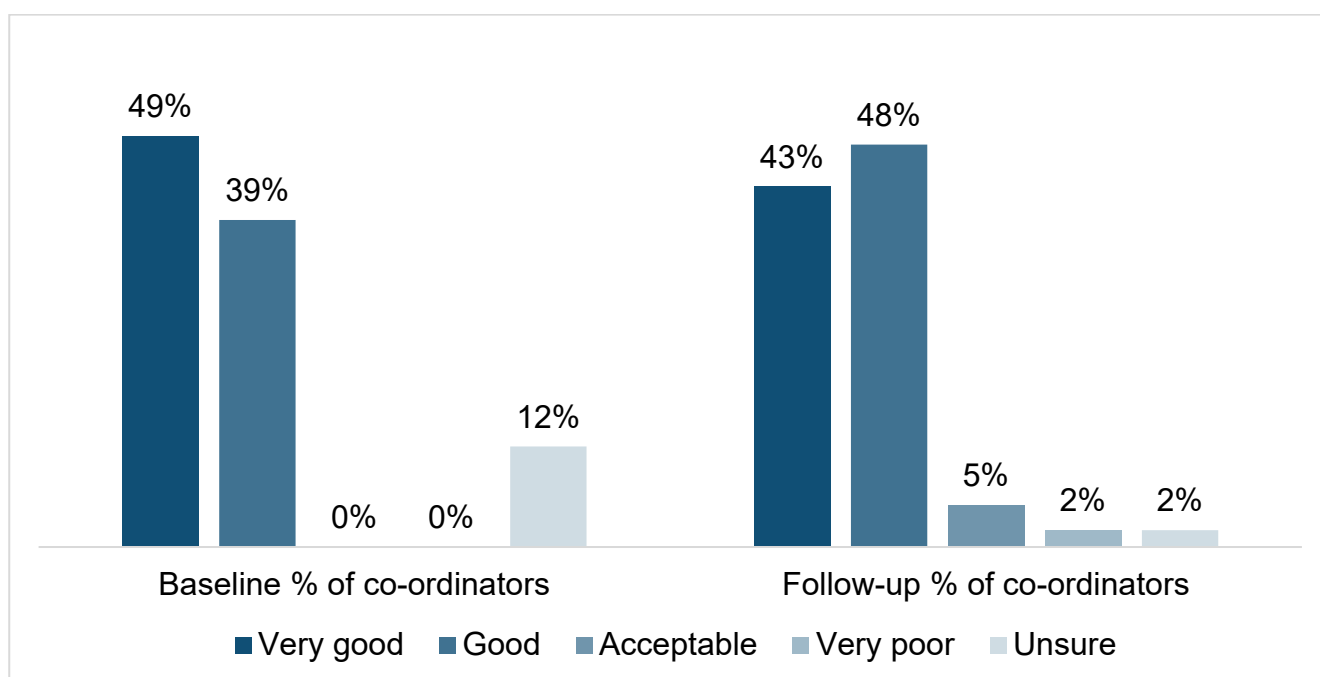
Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up). No ratings of 'poor' were given.

3.4 Communication with participating schools

Communications between lead and participating schools were perceived differently by co-ordinators and leads across the range of curriculum programmes. Overall, co-ordinators were positive about the communications and support from leads, the relationship between the two and the responsiveness of the lead (Figure 8).[41] All co-ordinators agreed during the follow-up survey that the lead school had been approachable and supportive (100%, n=44).

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[41] At both the baseline and follow-up, co-ordinators rated communication as either easy or very easy – 98%, n=40, compared to 91%, n=40, respectively.

Figure 8: Overall how satisfied are you with the following aspects of the curriculum programme(s) that you have been trialling?
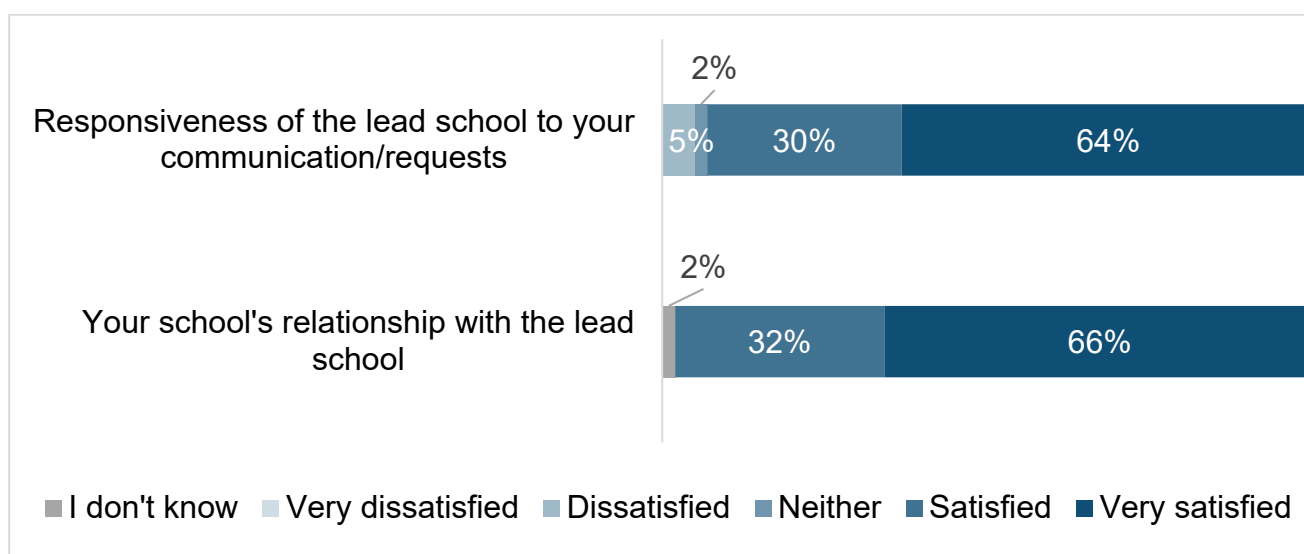
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 44 co-ordinators.

Leads, however, were more guarded about this aspect of the pilot. Although six reported satisfaction with the responsiveness of participating schools, three did not. This remained consistent with the baseline survey, and was noted by leads to a limited extent during the follow-up telephone interviews. [42] In one case, the lack of engagement from participating school staff had led to a scaling back of the pilot to focus on training for a specific year group of teachers.

3.5 Embedding the programmes

Overall, the programmes were embedded well by participating schools (Figure 9). By the end of the pilot, after two terms:

- Co-ordinators felt that they had a clear understanding of the programme and its focus - all but one reported that this was either easy or very easy to understand.

- Co-ordinators also reported positively on being able to balance the programme with other priorities/commitments within school.

- Two-thirds (66%, n=29) of co-ordinators at the follow-up reported that applying materials/resources to the school and pupil context, and the sequencing the units of work to meet schools needs had been either easy or very easy to deliver.

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[42] At the time of the baseline survey, five leads reported that the responsiveness of the participating schools was 'good' or 'very good', three that it was 'acceptable' and one that it was poor.

Figure 9: How easy or difficult has it been to deliver the following elements of the curriculum programme pilot(s)?
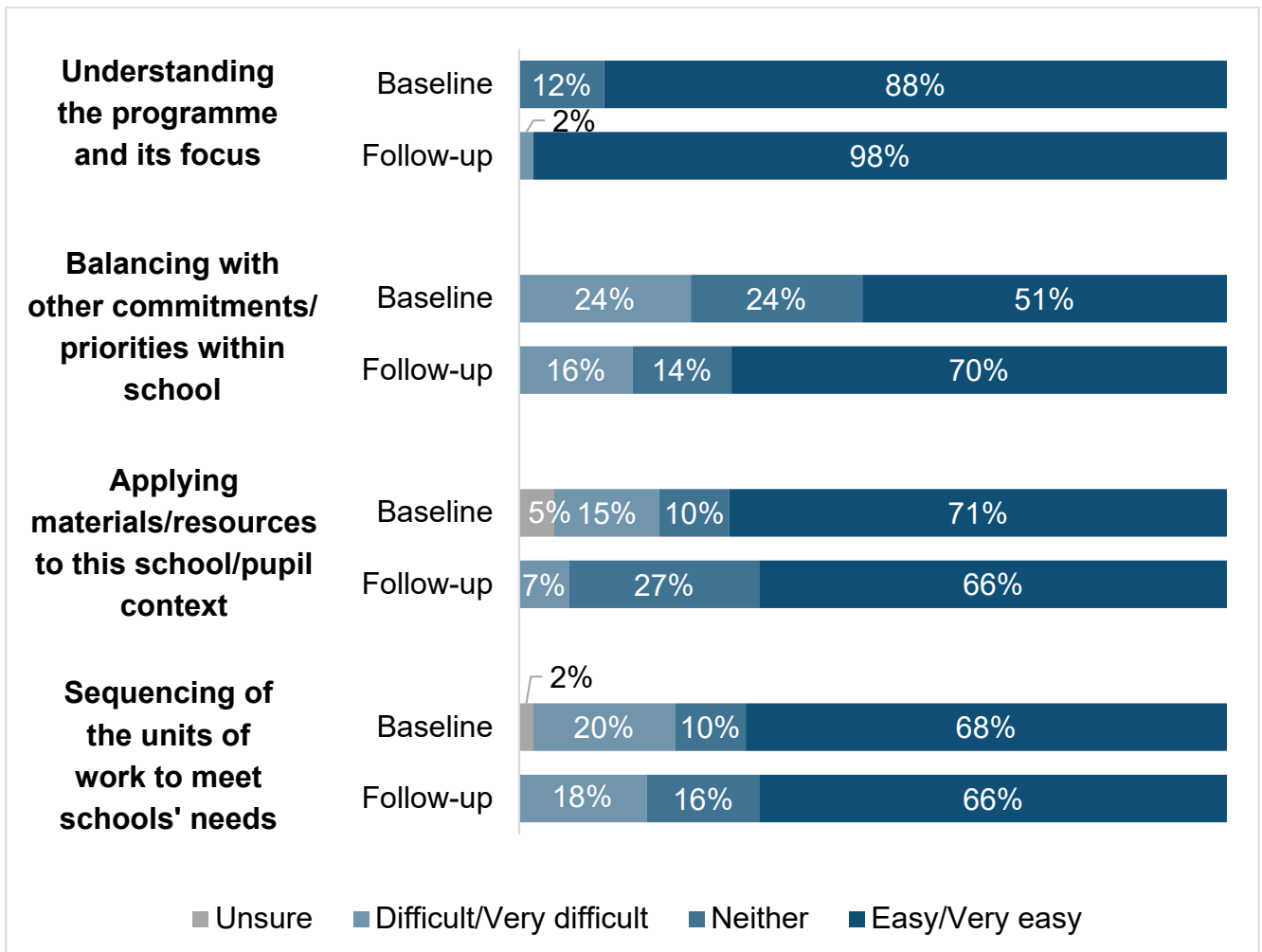
Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Where challenges remained with specific elements of the pilot, these tended to be related to Key Stage 3 programmes:

- Of the seven co-ordinators who reported that balancing the programme with other commitments and priorities remained a challenge, all but one were piloting a Key Stage 3 curriculum programme.

- Of the eight co-ordinators that still reported difficulties with sequencing at the follow-up stage, all but one were piloting a Key Stage 3 programme.

During the telephone interviews, these challenges were generally attributed to the need to match programme content to the varying durations of the Key Stage 4 curriculum within participating secondary schools – for example, ensuring that progression from a

Key Stage 3 programme could align with the content then covered in either a two or three-year Key Stage 4 curriculum (see section 7.1.1).

4. Programme fidelity and adaptations

This section explores the pedagogical fidelity of the pilots – i.e. the extent to which programme delivery within the participating schools was in line with the approach originally devised by leads.

Summary

Overall, the majority of teachers (81%, n=82) were happy with the pedagogical approach of the programmes. Teachers felt that, aside from adapting resources to their school context, they had adhered well to the knowledge rich, teacher-led and whole-class teaching aspects. This positive view was maintained through the pilot. Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes were particularly positive.

The majority of co-ordinators (75%, n=33) believed that ensuring pedagogical fidelity had been easy by the time of the follow-up survey. In addition, three out of five teachers (60%, n=61) said they had not found it challenging to adapt to the suggested pedagogy, although almost one-quarter (24%, n=24) had experienced difficulties. Ensuring pedagogical fidelity in participating schools was also reported as a challenge by five of the nine leads surveyed and it was noted that this could be a sensitive issue to broach with participating schools. It was acknowledged by all that participating schools needed training and continued support to enable staff to effectively apply new teaching styles, better understand the vision and reasons for the approach taken and the potential benefits. Early engagement by lead schools also helped to reduce concerns and reassured teachers that the programme was part of a developmental, not judgemental, process.

Whilst most leads had advised participating schools on the pedagogical approaches to be taken, this training was not always cascaded to all teachers. Although base sizes were low (24%, n=29 at the baseline and 11%, n=11 at the follow-up), indications are that those teachers who had not had any training or support were less likely to be happy with the pedagogy of the programme. This appeared to be an issue for Key Stage 3 programmes in particular.

Nearly all teachers who had received programme materials at the time of the baseline survey (95%, n=109) said they would adapt the programme to some extent. Leads recognised that allowing some flexibility in the programmes was necessary. However, teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes perceived there to be less flexibility in the programmes than those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes and this led to concerns about teacher creativity and pupil engagement for a minority. Sequencing was highlighted by leads as the most important aspect of the programmes, as it supported the gradual development of pupil knowledge.

4.1 Pedagogical fidelity

Overall, teachers were happy with the pedagogical approach of the curriculum programme that they were piloting and this view was sustained throughout the pilot (Table 8). Furthermore, nearly all teachers reported during the interviews that, aside from adapting resources to their school context, they had generally adhered to the suggested approach. This included teachers who were sceptical or less enthusiastic about the programmes overall, but continued to deliver them as requested for the duration of the pilot.

> 'We've done it in exactly that way….We have delivered [the curriculum programme] in [the suggested] format but we have had to change some of the phrasing - just the wording so the children recognise things. We haven't changed the content'. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

Table 9: Thinking about the suggested pedagogical approach of the curriculum programme, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Response	Agree to disagree scale	Baseline	Follow-up
I am happy with the overall pedagogical approach of the programme	Agree or strongly agree	76%	81%
	Neither	7%	6%
	Disagree or strongly disagree	8%	12%
	Don't know	8%	1%
The suggested pedagogical approach fits my existing teaching style	Agree or strongly agree	64%	63%
	Neither	14%	16%
	Disagree or strongly disagree	14%	19%
	Don't know	7%	2%
I have found it challenging to adapt to the suggested pedagogical approach	Agree or strongly agree	20%	24%
	Neither	12%	15%
	Disagree or strongly disagree	60%	60%
	Don't know	8%	1%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up).

Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[43] were particularly positive about the pedagogical approach, and were more likely to agree that they were happy with it compared to those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (94%, n=29 and 77%, n=60 respectively).[44]

The large majority of co-ordinators who responded to the follow-up survey believed that adherence to the overall pedagogical approach amongst teachers in their school was either good or very good (91%, n=40).[45] Supporting this, three-quarters also felt that

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[43] Note: low base, n=31.

[44] Participating school teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes were also statistically significantly more likely to agree that the suggested pedagogical approach fit their existing teaching style (89% agree Key Stage 2, n=40, 53% agree Key Stage 3, n=46). Almost nine out of ten (87%, n=39) agreed at the baseline that they were happy with the overall pedagogical approach, which was statistically significantly higher than those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (71%, n=61).

[45] The remaining co-ordinators believed that adherence to the overall pedagogical approach amongst teachers in their school was acceptable (5%, n=2) or poor (5%, n=2).

ensuring pedagogical fidelity among teachers had been either easy or very easy (75%, n=33).[46] Specifically, two thirds (66%, n=29) felt that teachers had fully adhered to all three aspects of the pedagogical approach; knowledge rich, teacher-led and whole-class teaching, and each aspect was rated as fully adhered to by at least 70% of co-ordinators (Figure 10). Broadly, teachers themselves agreed with this view.

Figure 10: To what extent have teachers adhered to the following aspects of the pedagogy for the curriculum programme(s) that your school has been trialling?
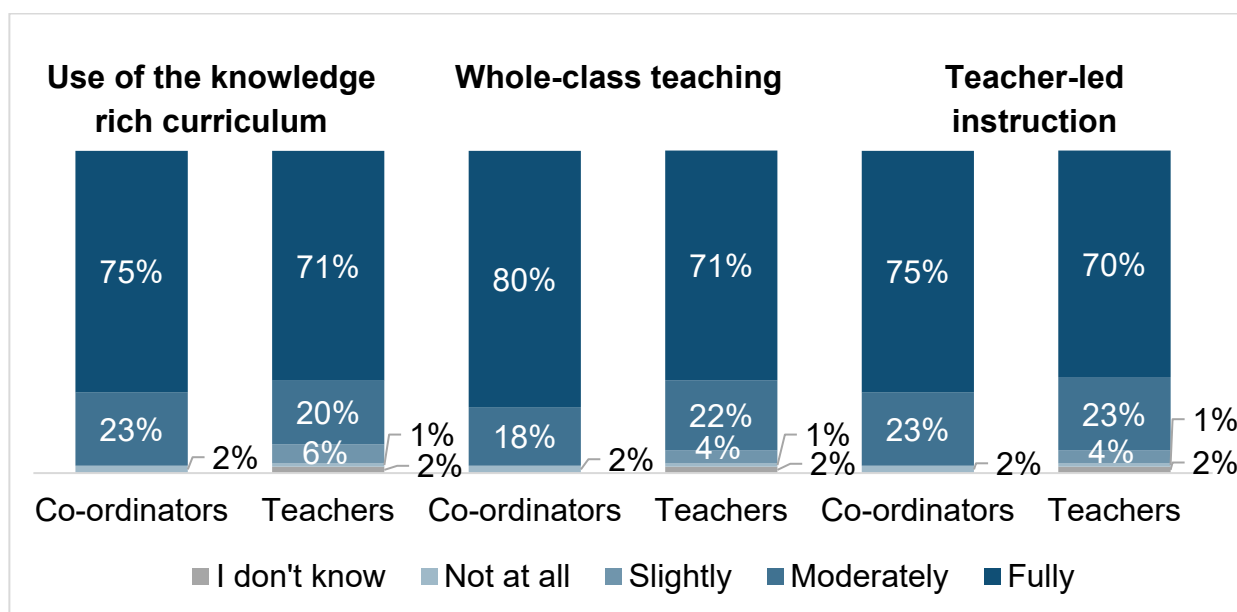
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 44 co-ordinators, 101 teachers.

Nonetheless, ensuring pedagogical fidelity continued to be a challenge for leads – five reported this a challenge at the time of the follow-up survey. Two reported that it had been easy, one that it had been neither easy nor difficult, and one was unsure.[47] Furthermore, whilst three out of five (60%, n=61) of teachers who responded to the follow-up survey had not found it challenging to adapt to the suggested pedagogical approach, almost one-quarter (24%, n=24) of teachers agreed that they had found it challenging. Conversely, the majority of co-ordinators (75%, n=33) found ensuring pedagogical fidelity to be easy by the time of the follow-up survey.[48]

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[46] The remaining co-ordinators felt that ensuring pedagogical fidelity among teachers had been neither easy nor difficult (14%, n=6), or difficult (11%, n=5).

[47] Four reported this a challenge at the baseline. One reported that this had been easy, three that had been neither easy nor difficult and one was unsure.

[48] Baseline: 51%, n=21 easy or very easy, 20%, n=8 neither easy nor difficult, 15%, n=6 difficult, 15%, n=6 unsure at this stage; follow-up: 75%, n=33 easy or very easy, 14%, n=6 neither easy nor difficult, 11%, n=5 difficult.

This mixed feedback highlights the importance of open and transparent communications between all stakeholders. One project lead acknowledged that ensuring pedagogical fidelity could be a sensitive issue to broach with participating schools,

> We have had conversations with [the participating school] and they know that…they [need] to stick to [the pedagogical approach]. It's a hard thing to say to a school…because we weren't massively prescriptive [but] they have taken it too loosely. Politically you can't tell a school no [to the way they are delivering the curriculum programme, as] we work with them more widely [than the pilot], so it's sensitive. (Project lead, secondary school)

Leads acknowledged during the telephone interviews that even though teachers had engaged with the suggested approaches, supporting them to understand and apply them using new teaching styles required training and development over time. Although most leads had advised participating schools on the pedagogical approaches to be taken, this training was not always cascaded to all teachers (see section 5.1.2).

> This process is probably one to two years of teacher development to get teachers to understand and be comfortable with that approach. [The programme] has been effective where teachers [have already adopted] that pedagogical approach, but there are other teachers that are earlier in their career or might need more support in that structure. (Project lead, secondary school)

The importance of training and development in encouraging staff buy-in to the suggested pedagogical approach was reflected in the surveys and the feedback emerging from the follow-up interviews (see section 5).

4.1.1 Engaging staff with pedagogical approaches

In terms of teacher engagement with specific elements of the curriculum programmes, co-ordinators felt that teacher-led instruction and whole-class teaching had increased significantly over the course of the pilot, with 93% reporting that teacher engagement with both of these aspects of the programme was good or very good (n = 41) (see Figure 11). Likewise, levels of engagement with programme materials were felt to be good throughout the pilot (Figure 11). There was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of co-ordinators who perceived teachers' engagement with the assessment materials was 'good' or 'very good', once teachers were more familiar with the programme materials (see section 3.2.1).

Figure 11: How would you rate teachers' engagement with the following elements of the curriculum programme(s)?

Whole-class teaching
- Baseline: Unsure 10%, Poor 12%, Acceptable 42%, Very good 37%
- Follow-up: 2%, 2%, Acceptable 48%, Very good 48%

Teacher-led instruction
- Baseline: Unsure 7%, Poor 10%, Acceptable 51%, Very good 32%
- Follow-up: 2%, 2%, Acceptable 50%, Very good 46%

Use of programme resources
- Baseline: Unsure 5%, Poor 15%, Acceptable 42%, Very good 39%
- Follow-up: Poor 14%, Acceptable 46%, Very good 41%

Use of assessment materials
- Baseline: Unsure 34%, Poor 10%, Acceptable 32%, Very good 24%
- Follow-up: Unsure 7%, 2%, Poor 16%, Acceptable 48%, Very good 27%

Legend: Unsure, Poor, Acceptable, Good, Very good

Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

This also reflects the feedback from leads over the duration of the pilots. Although at the outset, some leads had been unsure about the extent to which staff in participating schools would engage with these elements of the programmes, eight of the nine rated levels of engagement as 'good' by the time of the follow-up survey.[49]

Teachers reported during the telephone interviews that receiving initial insight from leads (for example via face-to-face presentations, demonstrations of using resources in the classroom, and meetings with staff) had enabled them to better understand the:

- Vision and theoretical context underpinning the programmes.

- Reasons for the types of approach taken.

- Potential benefits that could be gained from engaging fully with the programmes and their content.

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[49] One rated engagement as 'poor'.

Teachers noted that understanding these aspects helped them to implement the new programmes effectively.

> Without the training and coaching support we would have struggled to implement [the programme] effectively. We needed the lead school to show us the right way of doing things, and also to provide us with the evidence and research base about where certain aspects of the programme had come from. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Co-ordinators and teachers said that early engagement from leads helped to reduce their concerns, and reassured teachers that working with staff from the lead schools was part of a developmental – rather than a judgemental – process.

> The lead school has gone out of its way to visit [us] and undertake learning walks of all the lessons. They give feedback which has been timely and non-critical, like a critical friend. The teachers feel very much at ease now that they have got used to [the lead school] staff visiting the school and know that they're not being scrutinised. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

There was a similar sense among some leads and teachers that, as delivery went on, the relationships between staff in lead and participating schools became more reciprocal. For example, peer networks developed between staff teaching the same subjects in lead and participating schools, which were used to share practice wider than the curriculum programmes. This included teachers in lead and participating schools continuing to meet separately to the curriculum programme, or maintaining contact via email and telephone. Therefore, these relationships were perceived by participating school staff to be increasingly valuable and supportive.

4.1.2 Sequencing

The sequencing of units was identified by leads in the interviews as the most important aspect of the programmes to be followed, as this was designed to support the gradual development of pupil knowledge. Co-ordinators and teachers in participating schools reflected this feedback. They understood the need to follow particular sequences of units, and topics within units, in order to deliver the programme content as outlined in the curriculum resources. Nonetheless, over half of teachers reported in the baseline survey that they had adapted the short-term plans (57%, n=75) and schemes of work (56%, n=74). Where this was raised during the interviews, such changes commonly related to ensuring that the flow of units matched the planning already undertaken by the participating school/teacher, or aligned with the topics that they had originally planned to

teach. As most participating schools had started the pilot mid-way through an academic year, teachers reported during the follow-up interviews that they had changed the sequencing or numbers of units covered due to the time constraints of the pilot, or to fit delivery with curriculum coverage that had already been completed before the start of the pilot.

4.2 Adapting programme materials

Leads generally allowed some flexibility for participating schools to adapt elements of the programme (Table 9). When asked about the adaptations made to the programmes to take into account of different schools' contexts or pupil needs, leads mentioned during the interviews that they had:[50]

- Adapted topics for different year groups (for example a year 6 topic was adapted for year 3 classes on request from teachers in participating schools).

- Permitted teachers to add supplementary materials to curriculum delivery, for example images, PowerPoint slides and worksheets to provide detail suitable for lower attaining pupils or to add stretch and challenge for higher attaining pupils.

- Provided more content than would be covered in each lesson, to enable teachers to have control over the level at which to pitch delivery for their specific classes.

- Translated resources into braille for visually impaired pupils.

Table 10: How much flexibility is allowed to participating schools to adapt or use these elements of the programme(s)?

Programme elements	Complete flexibility	A little/some flexibility	Schools follow the programme exactly	Unsure at the moment	Not answered
Long-term plans (e.g. across key stage)	2	9	2	0	0
Resources / lesson materials e.g. individual lesson materials, homework tasks, PowerPoint slides /	2	11	0	0	0

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[50] Mentioned by one lead each.

presentations to aid teacher led instruction					
Training materials and guidance	0	11	0	1	1
Training of teachers / CPD on how to use the materials / programme	0	11	1	1	0

Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 9 leads, 13 programmes mentioned.[51]

Leads generally explained that enabling some flexibility was important, as it helped to ensure that the lessons remained engaging and teacher-led, and that teachers were able to remain creative in their classroom practice.

> The pick and mix approach has worked really well [i.e. providing a range of examples of activities and worksheets per topic, and allowing teachers to select which were most appropriate for their class or school]. I think it is a teaching thing. Teachers are all so different and all have different styles [and pupils] are all different. I think if you are made to use something and it's very prescriptive, I don't think you would get engagement from teachers, they would think that's not going to work for a whole host of reasons. We have had them say…the range [of materials] is good…It is about empowering teachers to do what they do best. They know their [pupils], they know how to teach them they just need resources to save time. It's flexible. They could leave bits out if [they have already been covered] in another subject, for example. (Project lead, secondary school)

Leads also felt that enabling some flexibility to adapt materials created a balance between teachers' knowledge of their class contexts, and fidelity to the intended pedagogical approach.

> When we were piloting it the first year we were too reliant on the booklets and the teachers' creative expertise was subordinated to the books. We have tried since to reinstate the pre-eminence of the teacher in the class. There were lots of teachers just reading the text. So we now have more teacher expertise, teacher explanation, extended writing, things like that – because we piloted it ourselves

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[51] Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes.

and we made those mistakes ourselves we have corrected them [and] learned from them. (Project lead, secondary school)

In a limited number of cases, leads were concerned that participating schools had not adopted the pedagogical approach fully, or had made extensive adaptations to the sequencing of units or content of resources (e.g. adding new material, changing the teacher-led focus into group activities among pupils). The extensive nature of some of these adaptations to fit with a current approach, rather than adopting the suggested pedagogy, were highlighted within the focus group discussions:

> We teach a thematic curriculum so [the resources] need quite a bit of tweaking. We can use the resources for maybe a couple of lessons from one topic and a couple from a different topic and then we can use those as a starting point to blend them together with the theme we are studying…It's always useful to start with something. Then you can use [one] bit and change [another] bit, rather than starting from scratch. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

For leads, this had raised challenges in terms of ensuring fidelity to the pedagogical approach.

> [In the future] I would be more prescriptive about what I would like [participating schools] to use from the start of the programme. For some of them, [they needed to] use a bit more of it, use the assessments…we [can ask for] feedback to see if works and if it is useful. (Project lead, secondary school)

Interview feedback suggested that teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes regarded there to be less flexibility permitted in the pedagogical approach, compared to those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes.[52] For example, teachers delivering Key Stage 3 humanities programmes commonly spoke about the lack of creativity that they felt when delivering content in a prescriptive way. They felt that the suggested pedagogical approaches diminished the experience of teaching and had led to less active and engaging delivery. Consequently, some of the teachers piloting Key Stage 3 humanities programmes went on to suggest that they felt less confident in the quality of their own teaching as a result, and that having all resources ready-prepared for them meant that they were not being asked to draw on their own subject specialisms during lessons. Ultimately, in a small number of cases, teachers perceived that this had a detrimental impact on pupil engagement (see section 6.2.1).

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[52] Note: low base, n=31.

4.2.1 Extent of adaptation

Despite the adaptations described by leads, many teachers remained concerned about the suitability of the pedagogical approaches in meeting the needs of pupils with different attainment levels, those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL). Just over half (52%, n=53) of teachers agreed at the time of the follow-up survey that the suggested pedagogical approach had suited their pupils' needs. One in five teachers disagreed (20%, n=20; compared to the baseline 12%, n=15).

Nonetheless, nearly all teachers (95%, n=109) who had received programme materials at the time of the baseline survey[53] said that they would adapt the programme to some extent. Teachers were most likely to adapt the lesson resources (85%, n=111) and this element was the most likely to have been adapted significantly (Figure 12). This was confirmed during the telephone interviews, particularly by those piloting humanities-based programmes, although teachers delivering science-based programmes also noted that they had added more practical elements to delivery.

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[53] At the time of the baseline survey, 94% (n=114) of teachers had received any programme materials.

Figure 12: How much are you or will you adapt these in your actual teaching?

	Unsure	Significant	Some	Few	No adaptations
Resources/lesson materials	6%	17%	47%	21%	7%
Short-term/medium-term plans	25%	9%	21%	27%	11%
Scheme of work/curriculum overview	24%	7%	28%	21%	15%
Assessment materials	24%	7%	20%	27%	15%
Long-term plans	35%	5%	18%	21%	12%
Overall pedagogical approach	33%	5%	19%	17%	18%
Training materials and guidance	31%	2%	21%	15%	19%
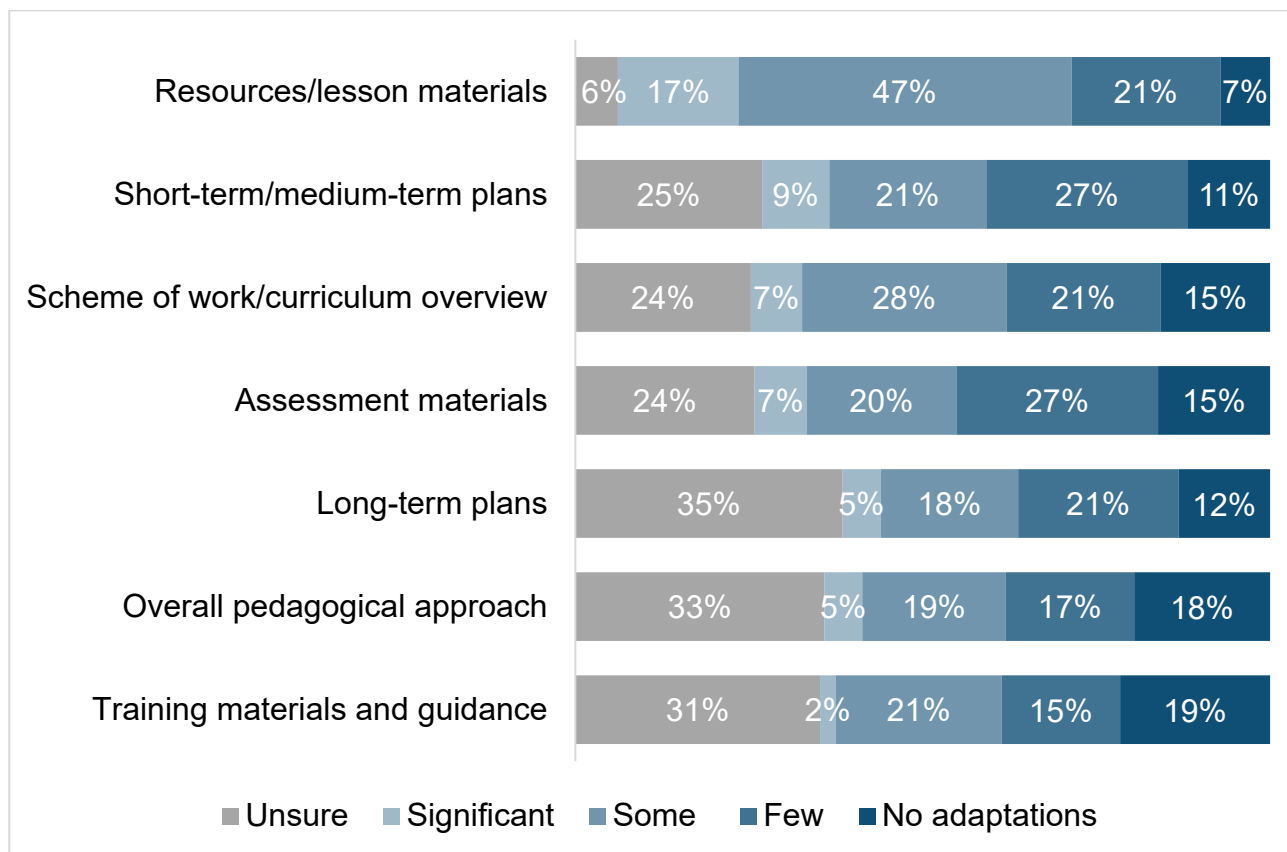
Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 121 teachers.[54]

Participating school teachers and co-ordinators described a wide range of changes that were made to the resources, during both the interviews and focus groups. These adaptations often addressed the needs of pupils, teachers and co-ordinators across all phases and subjects. A common response was around adding more resources or activities to engage pupils and break up the periods of reading required. These additional resources included slides, images, links to video clips and websites, group activities, and practical sessions for science-based programmes These adaptations were felt to offer 'experiential' and engaging approaches to topics where the curriculum resources provided by lead schools predominantly focused on text-based learning. In a small number of instances, these additional resources or activities had been included by teachers who felt that this would fit their own personal teaching style better than the approach suggested by the lead school.

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[54] Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes. Programmes mentioned: science Key Stage 3=53; history Key Stage 2=13, history Key Stage 3=19, geography Key Stage 2=32, geography Key Stage 3=14.

In addition, teachers delivering Key Stage 3 programmes commonly referenced the need to edit and correct content, for example, adding page references to clarify signposting throughout work booklets, amending grammar or spelling errors, amending incorrect or outdated subject content, and updating weblinks that no longer worked.

Other examples of adaptations, provided less commonly by interviewees, were:

- Including more opportunities for extended writing at Key Stage 2 (with the support of the lead school).

- Creating additional help sheets and teacher guides for non-subject specialists delivering the lessons, or to clarify the instructions provided for pupils.

- Including additional blank pages with work booklets to enable note-taking/annotation by pupils, and marking and feedback by teachers.

- Adding a topic of work for a particular year group where there was thought to be a gap (i.e. to provide basic/foundation knowledge in a topic so as to help support progression to the next key stage).

- Providing scaffolding content for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL), and pre-reading content with these pupils in advance of lessons to support their literacy development and comprehension in class.

- Including more challenging vocabulary or tasks to stretch higher attaining pupils.

- Missing out some extended writing or skills-focused lessons to recap on theory and ensure that knowledge was secure.

5. Support and training

Summary

Leads reported that a wide range of training and support was offered to participating schools. Access to training improved during the pilot, with almost nine out of ten (89%, n=90) teachers having received some form of training or support by the time of the follow-up survey. Exchanges of staff to observe teaching at the lead (58%, n=59) or participating school (60%, n=61) and face-to face group training (50%,n=51) were the most common and most useful types cited by teachers by the time of the follow-up survey. Reciprocal visits were seen by all interview groups as fundamental to the success of the curriculum programme in terms of generating buy-in among teachers, and embedding the programmes in delivery. The opportunity to observe practice at the lead schools was felt to be especially valuable, as was one-to-one feedback, coaching or planning support.

Key Stage 2Co-ordinators' satisfaction with the support provided by the lead school remained high throughout the pilot (98%, n=43) and the majority of teachers were also satisfied (65%, n=66). However, teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes were not always able to take up the training and support offered by lead schools. Capacity or staffing issues were cited by leads and co-ordinators during the interviews as key barriers to teachers accessing training (for example, being unable to release all staff for training). In some cases, the availability of training had not been communicated to teachers. Reflecting these challenges, satisfaction with the training and support offered was lower amongst teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (60%, n=47) compared to those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes (77%, n=24).

Lack of access to training and support was identified as a potential barrier to maximising the success of the curriculum programmes. Teachers who had not received any training at the time of the baseline or follow-up surveys were less likely to be happy with the overall pedagogical approach of the programme. This highlighted the importance of teachers being able to take part in training when introducing new curriculum programmes, to ensure potential impact can be maximised.

This section provides an overview of the training and support offered by leads to participating schools, including the type and format of support, and levels of satisfaction with the support that participating schools experienced.

5.1 Types of training and support

Leads offered a broad range of training and support to participating schools, depending on the programme being piloted. Examples included: personalised one-to-one teacher support, telephone/email support, meetings with members of the senior leadership team (SLT) and heads of department, joint planning meetings with teachers, whole school presentations, coaching visits to observe lessons and review books, inviting teachers to observe the use of the resources in practice at lead schools, and face-to-face group training.

In addition, several leads delivered a launch event to participating schools. It was these events, alongside face-to-face training sessions, which teachers most commonly said that they had received when asked about the support received during the pilot.[55] As delivery progressed:

- Reciprocal visits by staff between lead and participating schools became increasingly common. At the time of the follow-up survey, the majority of teachers stated that staff from the lead school had visited their school (60%, n=61), or that staff from their school had visited the lead (58%, n=59). These visits, and face-to-face group training (50%, n=51), were felt by teachers to be the most useful types of training and support.[56]

- Telephone or email support had been received by over one-third of teachers (37%, n=37), and almost one-quarter (24%, n=24) had received personalised one-to-one support.

- Nearly one-third (32%, n=32) had received written guidance or a teacher's guide.

- Online training, such as webinars and videos, was by far the least common mode of training and support that teachers said had been provided (6%, n=6), although this was noted by some as a potential area for future development (see section 7.2).

Teachers reported during the baseline and follow-up interviews and focus groups that they found face-to-face group training events most useful because they offered an opportunity for the lead school to talk through the programme and how to use it, respond to questions, and demonstrate the resources. Non-specialist teachers particularly noted that they had appreciated this form of guidance.

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[55] In the early stages of the pilot, just over half (54%, n=65) of teachers stated in the baseline survey that face-to-face group training had been provided by leads, a third (33%, n=40) mentioned a launch event.
[56] Rated most useful amongst teachers who received each type of training at the follow-up survey: 44%, n=27 staff from the lead school visiting their school, 41%, n=24 staff from participating school visiting the lead school, 37%, n=19 face-to-face group training, 25%, n=6 personalised 1:1 support. Other responses with low bases: 24%, n=6 launch event, 22%, n=7 written teacher guidance, 3%, n=1 telephone/email support.

In addition, one-to-one support was perceived to be a valuable experience by teachers, particularly where this involved coaching in planning lessons or differentiation for lower or high attaining pupils. Emphasising the importance of direct training and support for engaging with teachers and encouraging their buy-in to curriculum programme delivery, teachers who had received one-to-one support or feedback said during the interviews and focus groups that this had been their most preferred form of training to-date.

> Having the project lead observe me was really good, because [they] made some comments about the way I was teaching. It actually showed me what I was doing was right. It seems like a really rigid structure when you are reading through it and going through the [materials]. But the [project lead] said you can throw in bits of additional information, which I wasn't doing as much. Now I am more aware of [what is possible], I am doing it more. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

5.1.1 Accessing training

Access to training improved over the course of the pilot:

- At the time of completing the baseline survey, around three-quarters (76%, n=92) of teachers had received training or support related to the programme, with almost one-quarter of teachers reporting that they had not (24%, n=29). [57]

- During the follow-up research this had increased to nearly nine out of ten teachers having received training or support (89%, n=90 had received training, 11%, n=11 received no training).

However, there were challenges in accessing training for those delivering Key Stage 3 programmes. All respondents who said at the time of the follow-up survey that they had not received any training or support were piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (14%, n=11).[58]

They were also statistically significantly less likely, compared to those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[59], to say that they had received training on how to use the resources in

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[57] One respondent answered that they had received no training or support, but also that they had received training or support on subject knowledge. Their responses remain included in both categories.
[58] At the baseline, 32% (n=28) of teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes had received no training or support compared to 2% (n=1) for teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes.
[59] Note: low base, n=31.

the classroom, the pedagogical rationale of the programme, subject knowledge and whole-class teaching (see Figure 13).[60] See section 5 for further discussion.

Figure 13: Have you received any support or training from the lead school on any of the following aspects of the programme?
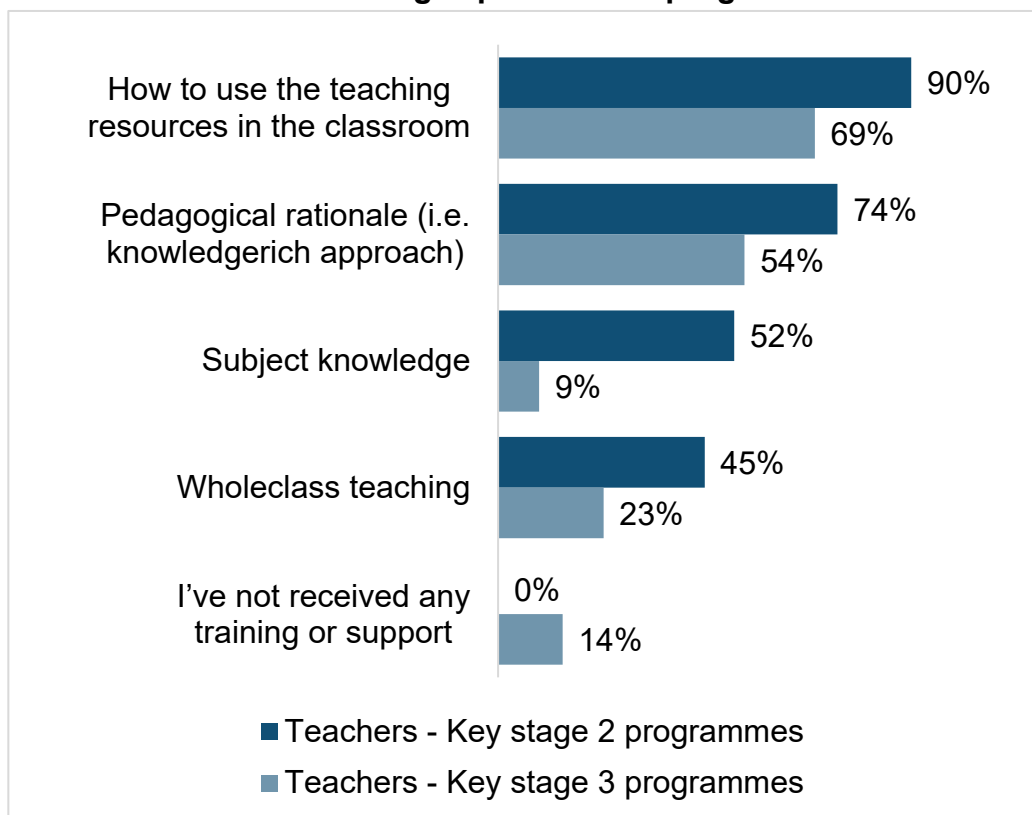
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: teachers, 31 Key Stage 2 programmes[61], 78 Key Stage 3 programmes.

This pattern was reflected during the follow-up interviews. Again, teachers who reported that they had not received training or support, or that this had decreased in quality over the course of the pilot, were mainly delivering Key Stage 3 programmes.

> The support could have been improved through having the
> opportunity to see one of the lessons in practice or a recording or
> video of a lesson in practice before starting to use the resources
> themselves…It was quite hard to work out how the highly intentional

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[60] This also reflected the baseline results to the following response options for training received: How to use the teaching resources in the classroom (82% Key Stage 2, n=37, 58% Key Stage 3, n=50); pedagogical rationale (80% Key Stage 2, n=36, 45% Key Stage 3, n=39); subject knowledge (51% Key Stage 2, n=23, 16% Key Stage 3, n=14); whole-class teaching (53% Key Stage 2, n=24, 26% Key Stage 3, n=22); teacher-led instruction (51% Key Stage 2, n=23, 28% Key Stage 3, n=24). Note: low base of teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes at the baseline, n=45.
[61] Note: low base, n=31.

processes would work before using them. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Examples were given by teachers who had been unaware of training taking place, or who had missed training due to a lack of communication. In these contexts, feedback regarding the level of support received was less positive, and this small cohort of teachers reported feeling isolated throughout the delivery of the pilot.

5.1.2 Barriers to accessing training

Despite the opportunities for training and support reported by leads, not all staff at participating schools took it up, or had the opportunity to. Leads agreed that engaging participating schools in the training for the programme had been an increasing challenge. Five of the nine reported in the follow-up survey that this was difficult, compared to two at the baseline.

A key barrier to accessing training as described by leads and co-ordinators was the lack of capacity in participating schools to release teachers for training or visits, as it was not possible logistically to have several staff away from site to attend training. This was exacerbated where there was considerable distance between lead and participating schools, which added to the time and costs of staff being away from school (for example, travel costs, and the cost of supply staff).

> Visits to [the lead school by participating school staff] is restricted in terms of numbers who can go. I think you can get away with two members of staff not being in school. But if we took all four, then it becomes slightly more of an issue here. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

Commonly, teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes provided examples of training and support being delivered to one member of staff within a participating school and this not being cascaded to other members of staff.

> We were delivered the booklets, PowerPoint and lesson plans. We didn't have any … face to face training, it wasn't offered to me, it may have been to the school but I wasn't aware of it. (Participating school teacher; secondary school)

Some teachers subsequently reported that additional training and support was required. Furthermore, in the follow-up survey the majority of the small number of teachers who hadn't received any training or support had been using the resources in their teaching for at least five weeks (ten of 11), and over half (six of 11) had been using them for two

months or more, reinforcing that some teachers were continuing to face barriers in accessing training and support as the pilot went on (see section 5.1.1 for those that did access training).

Where training or support had not been received, teachers reported feeling concerned about whether they were not delivering the programme effectively.

> An email, feedback on what they have seen [would be helpful]. Some kind of direct link to lead school, [because] it can be quite isolating…An online webinar [would be useful] or [the project lead] being able to organise to go into [the participating school] and check with us how it's going, to know you are [delivering] it how it should be done. I worry am I doing this the right way. (Participating school teacher, primary school)

Notably, co-ordinators rarely identified these challenges during the follow-up survey. The vast majority reported that arranging training and support with the lead school had been easy (89%, n=39), with no statistically significant differences compared to the baseline and few highlighted challenges during the interviews.[62] They were also positive about the level of teacher engagement with training (see Figure 14). This difference in perceptions may suggest that a communication issue exists between leads, co-ordinators and teachers.

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[62] Baseline: 33% very easy, n=13, 60% easy, n=24.

Figure 14: How would you rate teachers' engagement with the following elements of the curriculum programme(s)?
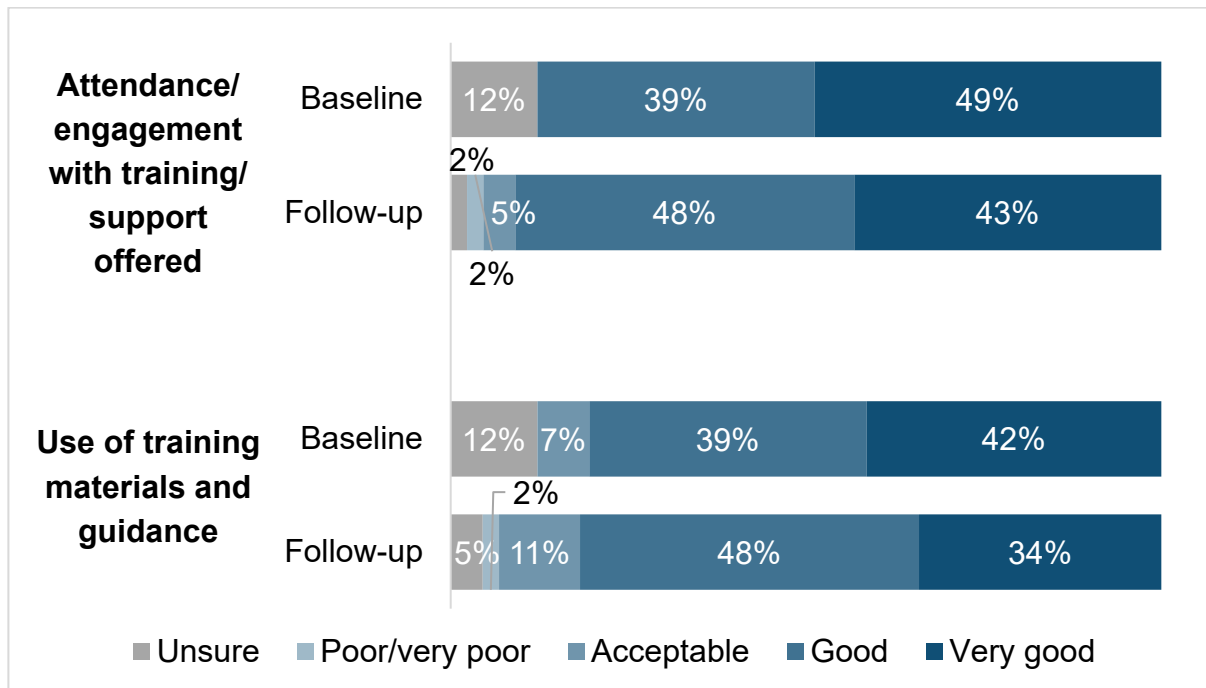
Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Nonetheless, interviewees of all types identified that a key *potential* barrier to maximising the impact of the curriculum programmes was staff in participating schools being unable to access training or support. Teachers' responses to the baseline survey supported this view. Those who had not received any training were less positive about the pilot and its potential impact.[63] In particular, teachers who had not received any training or support at the time of the baseline were less likely to agree that they were happy with the overall pedagogical approach of the programme, that the suggested pedagogical approach fitted with their existing teaching style and that it suited the needs of their pupils (see Figure 15).

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[63] Note: small base, baseline n=29, follow-up n=11.

Figure 15: Thinking specifically about the suggested pedagogical approach of the curriculum programme, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

% agree/agree strongly

Statement	Received training	Not received training
I am happy with the overall pedagogical approach of the programme	84%	52%
The suggested pedagogical approach fits my existing teaching style	71%	45%
The suggested pedagogical approach suits the needs of my pupils	62%	41%

■ Received training   ■ Not received training
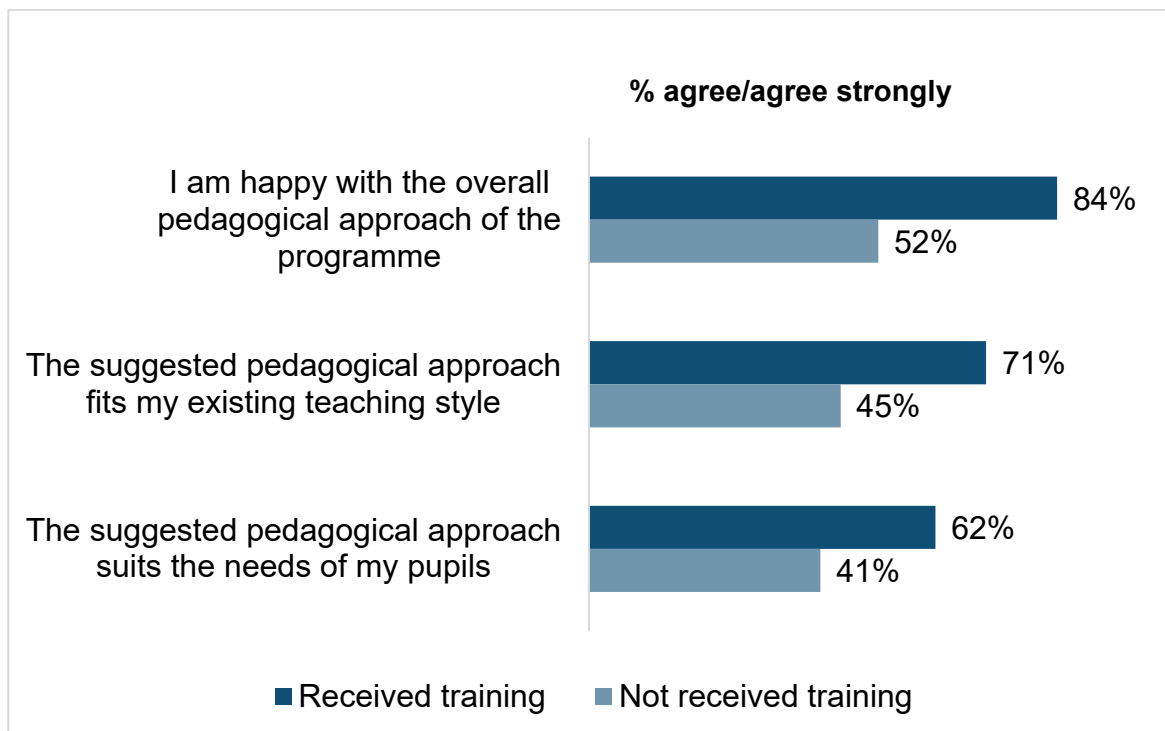
Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 92 teachers who received training, 29 teachers who received no training.

Whilst the number of teachers who had received no training at the time of the follow-up survey was too low for meaningful analysis (n=11), the pattern seen at the baseline remained consistent at follow-up.

5.2 Satisfaction with training and support provided

In terms of the usefulness of training and support (Table 10):

- Teachers consistently felt that the most useful aspect of training was how to use the teaching resources in the classroom.

- Training on how to use the assessment materials in the classroom was perceived to be useful the longer the pilot progressed.

Reciprocal school visits were regarded by teachers as being fundamental to the curriculum programmes being accepted, embedded and used appropriately within participating schools. The use of video or online resources showing teaching practice

was uncommon, although some leads suggested that this could be an area for future development (see section 7.2).

Table 11: Have you received any support or training from the lead school on any of the following aspects of the programme? And how useful was that training and support?

Aspect of the programme	Baseline % of teachers received	Follow-up % of teachers received	Baseline % most useful	Follow-up % most useful (of provided)
How to use the teaching resources in the classroom	65%	74%	33%	43%
Pedagogical rationale (i.e. knowledge rich approach)	55%	58%	23%	37%
How to use the assessment materials in the classroom	41%	38%	14%	37%*
Teacher-led instruction	34%	35%	6%	17%*
Whole-class teaching	33%	28%	6%	21%*
Subject knowledge	29%	20%	8%	40%*
I've not received any training or support	24%	11%	-	-

Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 101 co-ordinators (follow-up). Base for % of those provided varies.[64]

The value of training and support was a strong theme emerging from discussions with all of those involved in the telephone interviews. The opportunity to observe practice in lead schools was perceived to be particularly beneficial by all types of interviewee. They commented that seeing how teachers in lead schools delivered and adapted the curriculum programmes was an effective means of reassuring teachers and co-ordinators that the materials provided were suitable for a range of pupils. Visits to lead schools also allowed teachers to see how pupils reacted to the curriculum, and review workbooks to see examples of teaching and learning activities undertaken.

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[64] Note: low bases (<n=50).

> Some staff have been quite opposed to [the curriculum programme] but they have seen it [being delivered] here and then had a kind of conversion. (Project lead, secondary school)

Co-ordinators' satisfaction with the support provided by the lead school remained high throughout the pilot.[65] At the time of the follow-up, the majority of co-ordinators rated the quality of support as excellent (59%, n=26); or good (36%, n=16). All of those responding to the follow-up survey either agreed or strongly agreed that 'the lead school has been approachable and supportive' (100%, n=44).[66] This was reinforced during the interviews, with frequent comments that leads were open to ideas and suggestions, as well as being responsive to the needs of staff – this included examples of teachers being encouraged by leads to identify their own CPD needs, so that the support provided could be tailored.

> [The training and support has been] really useful. When I first got resources I was quite daunted by them and felt it wasn't going to be a curriculum [that] we wanted to roll out. But [the project lead was very helpful and talked at length about why the curriculum works, what [the] vision is and why [the programme had been] developed that way. During every visit [we receive] very pertinent feedback and very good suggestions, they have been considerate of our context [because] we are different to them. [The project lead is] respectful and interested in us as a school, they want to create a collaboration. (Participating school co-ordinator, primary school)

Overall, the majority of teachers were either satisfied or very satisfied with the training and support that they had received (Figure 16):

- From the lead school - around two-thirds of participating school teachers (65%, n=66) were satisfied/very satisfied.

- From their own school - just over two-thirds of participating school teachers (68%, n=68) were satisfied/very satisfied.

However, reflecting the barriers to training reported by teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes, levels of satisfaction in relation to training among this group of survey

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[65] Baseline: 66% excellent, n=27, 29% good, n=12, 5% acceptable, n=2. In the follow-up survey, the majority of co-ordinators rated the quality of support as excellent (59%, n=26); or good (36%, n=16) and no co-ordinators gave a poor rating. At the follow-up survey, 98% (n=43) of co-ordinators were very or quite satisfied with the training.
[66] Follow-up: 66% strongly agree, n=29, 34% agree, n=15; baseline: 76% strongly agree, n=31, 24% agree, n=10.

respondents was lower compared to those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes (60%, n=47 and 77%, n=24, respectively).[67]

Emphasising the value of face-to-face training and support, teachers in secondary schools tended to comment during the interviews that visits to lead schools to view the programmes in practice would have been useful, and that support could have been more direct and consistent, particularly in terms of receiving feedback following lesson observations by leads.

Figure 16: Overall, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of the curriculum programme(s) that you have been trialling?
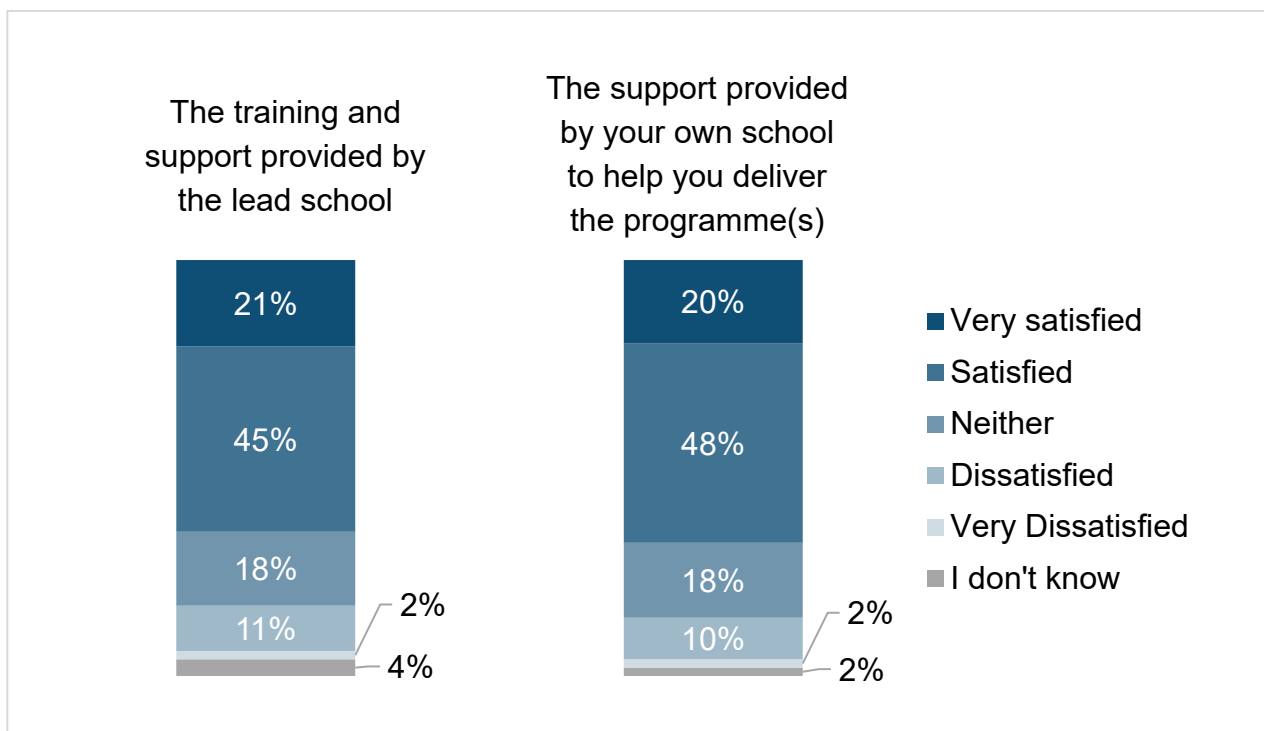
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers.

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[67] Note: low base for Key Stage 2 teachers, n=31: difference statistically significant at the 90% level of confidence.

6. Impact and outcomes

This section sets out the monitoring and evaluation processes put in place by lead and participating schools, and the emerging impacts of the curriculum programme pilot on pupils and teachers at the time of the follow-up research.

Summary

Although the curriculum programmes had only been piloted for around two terms, they were generally perceived by teachers to have impacted positively on pupil engagement and knowledge, behaviour management and literacy. Teachers believed that the knowledge rich aspect of the programmes had stretched their pupils (70%, n=71) and challenged their own beliefs about what pupils could achieve (48%, n=48). Positive impact on literacy was mentioned in particular by those involved in piloting Key Stage 3 programmes, including improvement in technical, subject-specific vocabulary, longform writing and increased focus during reading sessions.

Overall teachers reported a positive impact on pupil attainment. Impact on attainment was most likely to be reported by teachers for higher (62%, n=63) and average (61%, n=62) attainment pupils. Teachers were least likely to report a positive impact on pupils with SEN (34%, n=34) or EAL (36%, n=36). Whilst the majority of co-ordinators (82%, n=36) and half (50%, n=50) of teachers believed that the pilot had a positive impact on pupil engagement, around one in five teachers (21%, n=21) perceived a negative impact. Key Stage 3 teachers in particular had concerns that lessons could be repetitive, and that some pupils had found the materials challenging to access and disengaged from the lessons as a result.

A strong positive impact on teacher workload was sustained throughout the pilot. Two-thirds (67%, n=68) of teachers at the follow-up stage believed that the pilot had impacted positively on their workload, particularly those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes (81%, n=25). Furthermore, the pilot was perceived by teachers to have impacted positively on effective curriculum implementation (70%, n=71), the complexity of planning (67%, n=68) and the quality of teaching and learning (62%, n=63). Specifically, teachers felt that their time spent planning, identifying and creating lesson resources had reduced. For some, this enabled them to spend more time on other aspects of their role, such as developing their subject knowledge or adapting resources to meet pupil need. However, impact on other indicators of teacher job satisfaction was more limited.

a lack of comparative school data, other changes taking place in schools at the same time, and a reluctance to ask participating schools to change established assessment processes.

6.1 Monitoring and evaluation processes

Generally, leads and co-ordinators were satisfied with the monitoring and assessment of the curriculum programmes. Teachers had less involvement in this aspect of the pilot (Figure 17).[68]

Figure 17: Overall how satisfied are you with… the monitoring and assessment of the impact of the curriculum programme pilot?
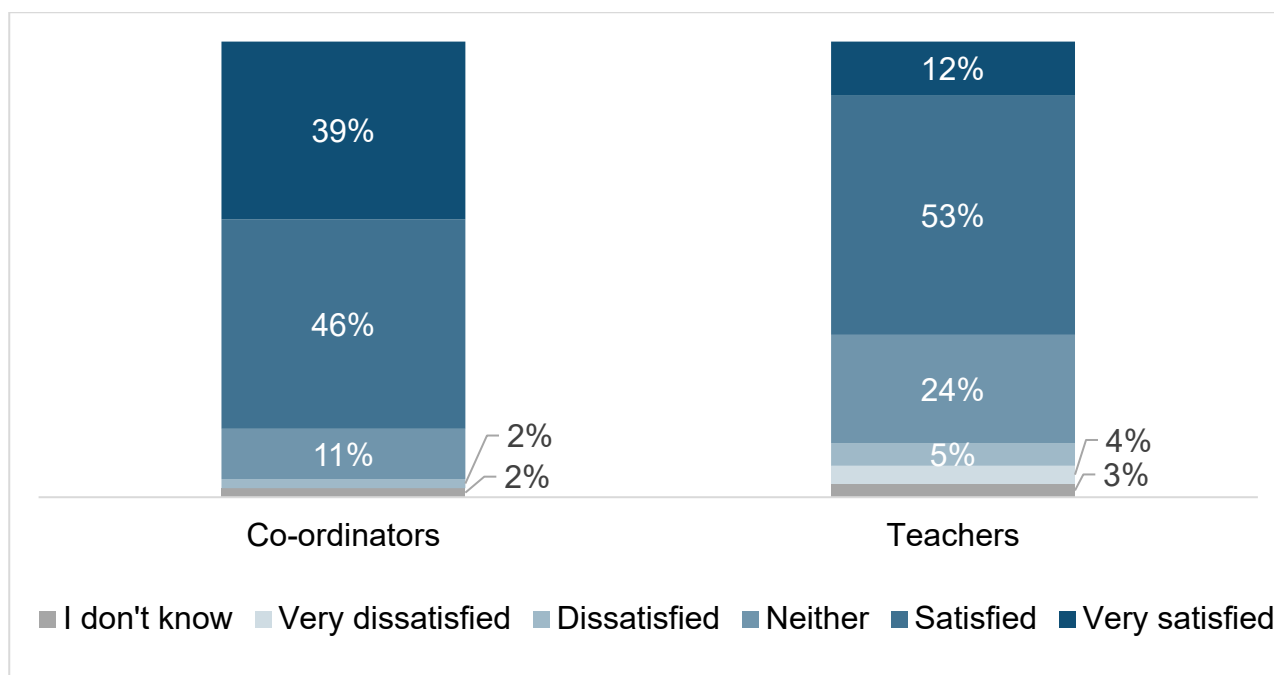
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators.

In order to assess the ongoing progress and impact of the curriculum programmes, leads and co-ordinators reviewed three main forms of evidence. These were (in order of frequency reported):

1. **Observations and work scrutiny**: This included book scrutinies and lesson observations during visits to participating schools, written reports from participating schools as to the progress of the pilots, and feedback from governor monitoring visits.

2. **Formal outcomes data**: Collected through the form of regular formative and summative assessments (for example quiz style questioning, or end of unit assessments or essays), school target-setting and monitoring data such as projected GCSE grades.

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[68] Nine participating school teachers reported dissatisfaction with the monitoring and assessment of the impact of the pilot. All of these teachers were piloting Key Stage 3 programmes.

3. **Staff and pupil voice**: To a lesser extent, leads said that they were collecting feedback forms from teachers about the resources that they had used, and anecdotal feedback was being collected from school staff during visits to participating schools. In a small number of cases, surveys had been carried out with staff and pupils to gather their perceptions of the curriculum programmes.

Although this data collection was taking place, it was common for interviewees from both lead and participating schools to highlight a number of issues with the overall monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum programmes:

- **Data validity:** Co-ordinators and teachers commonly suggested that it would not be possible to gather reliable and robust data to inform analysis of the impact of the curriculum programmes, due to a lack of comparative data or a range of other changes taking place in schools at the same time. In some cases, participating schools had not established how factors such as impact on teacher workload could be accurately measured. This suggests a need for participating schools to receive support in setting appropriate evaluation measures and milestones so that they can clearly ascertain whether adopting new curriculum programmes is beneficial to their teaching and learning.

- **Timing:** It was perceived by participating school co-ordinations to be too early in delivery to be able to discern the significance or sustainability of any impact that the curriculum programmes had made, including at the time of the follow-up interviews. They suggested that it would be more feasible to start to identify impact once the programmes were embedded, had been delivered for at least one full year, and comparative data were available.

- **School processes:** Leads were at times wary of imposing any formal assessment processes on participating schools, as each school had its own assessment policies already in place. This meant that monitoring and evaluation of impact in these contexts was reliant on anecdotal evidence.

These caveats should be kept in mind when reviewing the remainder of section 6.

6.2 Impact on pupils

In terms of the perceived impact of the pilot on pupils:

- Co-ordinators were very positive about the impact on pupil attainment and engagement, although the response from teachers (and their subsequent interview feedback) was more nuanced (Figure 18).

- According to teachers, there was a positive impact on behaviour management as a result of pupil engagement with the curriculum programme (see section 6.2.1).

- The development of literacy levels among pupils was regarded as a key benefit of the curriculum programmes by all types of interviewee (see section 6.2.3).

Figure 18: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot had an impact on the following areas?

	Pupils' engagement in learning		Pupil attainment	
	Teachers	Co-ordinators	Teachers	Co-ordinators
Positive/very positive	50%	82%	53%	80%
Neither	29%	14%	28%	14%
Negative/very negative	21%	2%	8%	7%
Don't know	1%	3%	11%	

Legend: ■ Don't know ■ Negative/very negative ■ Neither ■ Positive/very positive
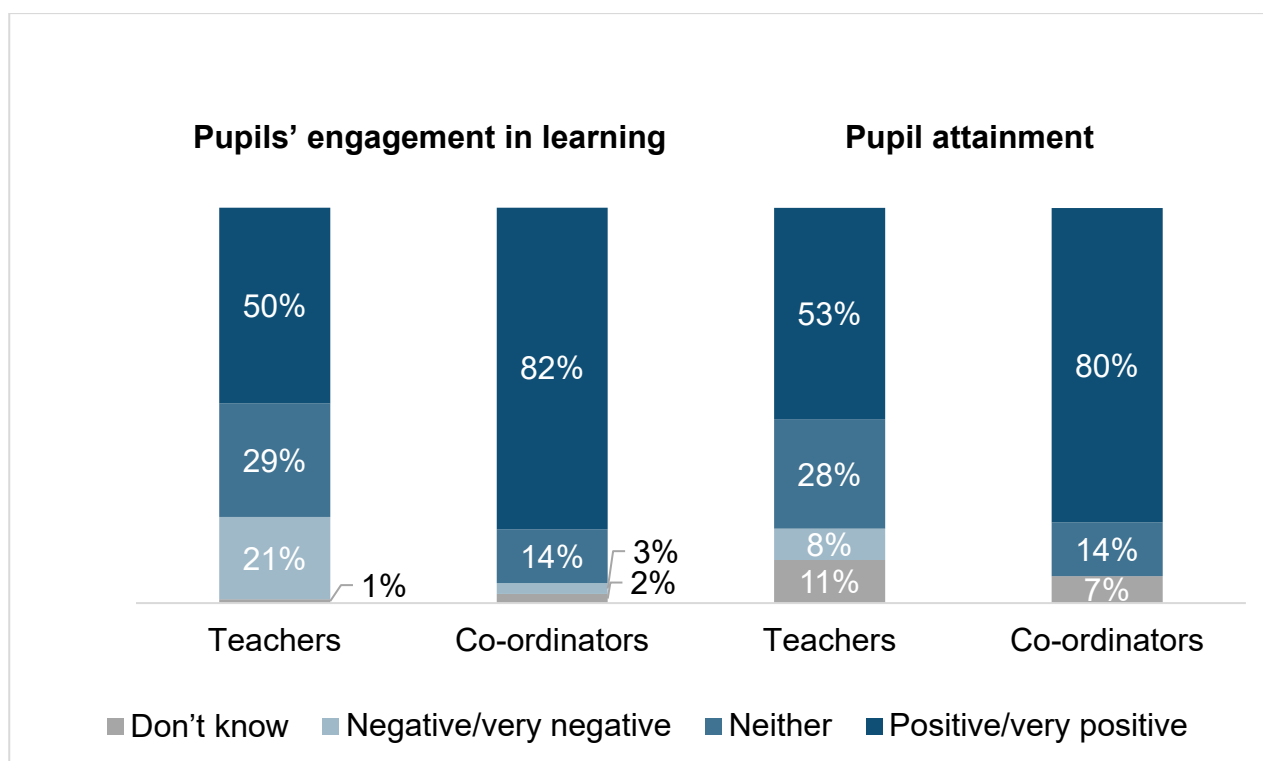
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators.

6.2.1 Engagement and behaviour

At the outset of the pilot, co-ordinators and teachers generally anticipated a positive level of engagement among pupils. Feedback provided during the follow-up survey (Figure 18) and interviews confirmed that this positive engagement had, to a large extent, been sustained throughout the course of delivery. Positive feedback regarding pupil engagement levels became increasingly common among teachers interviewed as the pilot progressed. Co-ordinators and teachers attributed improvements in pupil engagement to increased levels of pupil enthusiasm and enjoyment for the subjects being taught through the programmes, as well as resources providing a formal structure and clearer expectations for lessons.

> Students get…instant gratification [that] they can see their understanding developing; they get questions and answers. When they get the review section at the start of the next lesson, they get some time to review and then they get the answer, they check their understanding. They get excited checking their knowledge and like

the fact that they know what is coming next. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Feedback from teachers emphasised that pupils had demonstrated pride and enjoyment in seeing their own understanding develop, and learning how that knowledge could be applied to topics that were coming next. Thus, this was felt to have led to decreased levels of disruptive behaviour during lessons. In some cases, leads also provided support to teachers in instilling classroom routines using the materials.

It is easy to get class routines in place. Students come in, they know what the expectations are.. they get out their scripts and they get on with it…This also helps with behaviour management, because if students aren't adhering to those routines they can be gently reminded about it by the teacher. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

However, some teachers added caveats that, to maintain positive levels of pupil engagement, it was important that the resources were adapted to ensure that there were appropriate levels of stretch and challenge for higher attainers, and scaffolding for those pupils requiring additional support.

In response to the survey, 58% (n=18) of teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[69] said the curriculum programme pilot had made their lessons more interesting, compared to 33% (n=26) of teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes. This difference was reflected in the interviews with some Key Stage 3 teachers, who reported that lessons could be repetitive, that some pupils missed the resources they had used previously, and lower attainers had found the materials challenging to access and were disengaged from the lessons as a result. For further detail on challenges, see section 7.1.

6.2.2 Subject knowledge and attainment

Although most co-ordinators (80%, n=35) believed that the pilot had a positive impact on pupil attainment, teachers were less positive at the time of the follow-up survey (Figure 18).

- Just over half of teachers (53%, n=54) believed that the pilot had a positive impact on pupil attainment.[70]

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[69] Note: low base, n=31.
[70] Baseline: positive impact on pupil attainment; agree 63%, n=76, disagree 6%, n=7, neither 20%, n=24, don't know 12%, n=14.

- Eight teachers (across four participating schools) who completed the follow-up survey felt that there had been a negative impact on pupil attainment as a result of the pilot – all eight were implementing Key Stage 3 programmes.

During the survey, co-ordinators and teachers were least likely to report a positive impact of the programmes on the attainment of pupils with SEND or EAL (Figures 19 and 20). It was noted during the interviews and focus groups that these pupils became 'quieter and less involved' with teaching and learning, which was attributed to the technical or high level vocabulary often used throughout the programme materials.

> Some of the language and vocabulary is quite advanced for our…EAL [pupils]. And I can understand [the project lead's] point of view of trying to raise aspirations, and the only way you are going to improve vocabulary is to teach it. But it can cause a natural barrier to lessons progressing, because you are having to spend so long in [supporting] understanding before you can [develop and apply] knowledge. This can have an impact on behaviour. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

Conversely, co-ordinators and teachers were most likely to report a positive impact of the curriculum programmes on pupils with higher and average attainment (Figures 19 and 20), and generally for the same reasons – the depth of vocabulary and knowledge rich nature of the materials were perceived to engage these learners and push them to advance their learning.

Figure 19: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on attainment of different types of pupils in school?

	I don't know	Very negative	Negative	Neither	Positive	Very positive
Lower attainment pupils	9%	7%	14%		55%	16%
Higher attainment pupils	9%	2%	5%		50%	34%
Average attainment pupils	7%		9%		61%	23%
Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)	11%		5%	41%	34%	9%
Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)	11%		5%	32%	48%	5%
Pupils in receipt of pupil premium	11%			21%	52%	16%
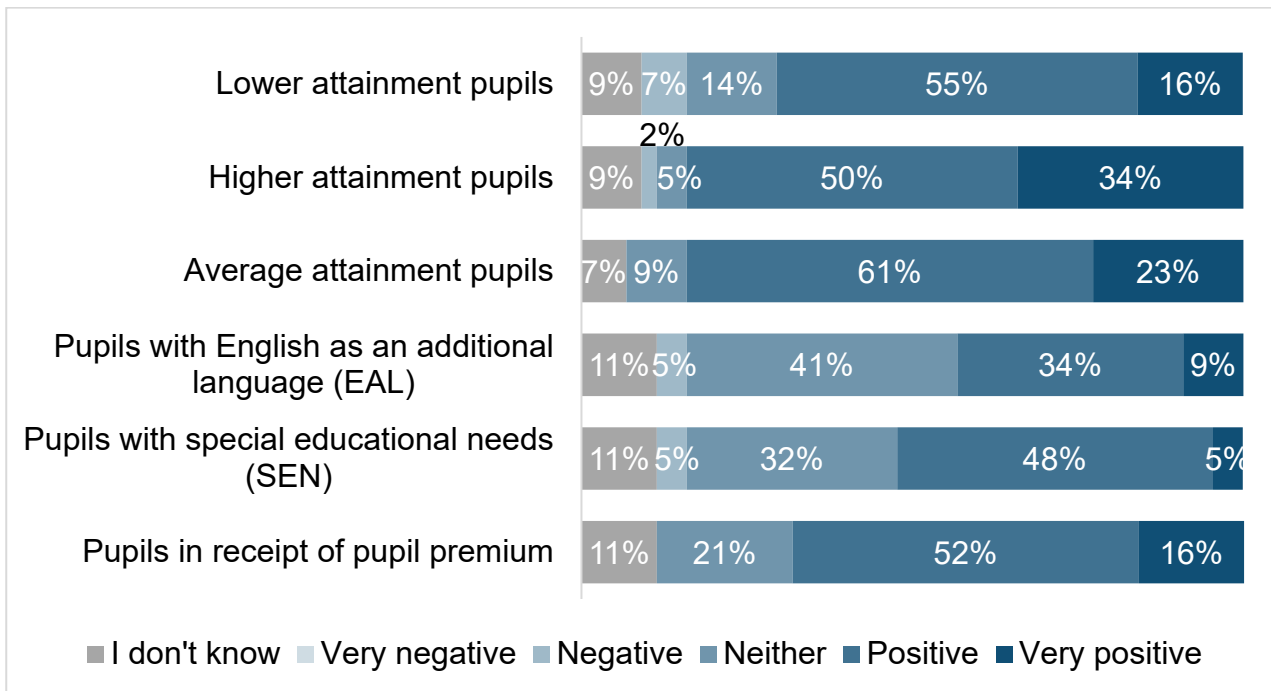
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 44 co-ordinators.

Figure 20: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on attainment of different types of pupils?

	I don't know	Very negative	Negative	Neither	Positive	Very positive
Lower attainment pupils	13%	5%	16%	26%	36%	5%
Higher attainment pupils	15%	3%	4%	16%	42%	21%
Average attainment pupils	14%	5%	20%		54%	8%
Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)	26%	4%	7%	28%	34%	2%
Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)	15%	8%	14%	30%	31%	3%
Pupils in receipt of pupil premium	23%	1%	1%	28%	43%	5%
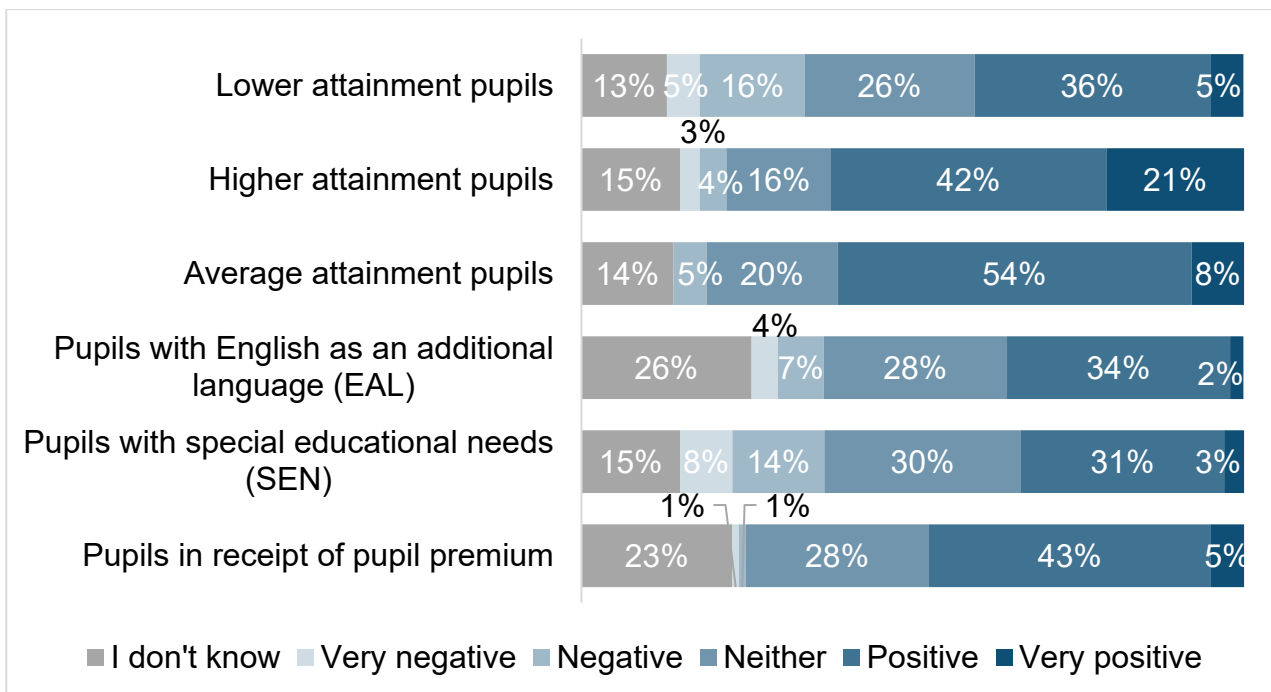
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers.

Across all areas, the impact on pupils of the curriculum programme pilot was reported to be more positive by teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[71] compared to those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (Figure 21). These differences were statistically significant for (see Figure 21):

- Pupil attainment and engagement in learning.
- Lower and average attainment pupils.
- Pupils with SEN or EAL.

Figure 21: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on the following?
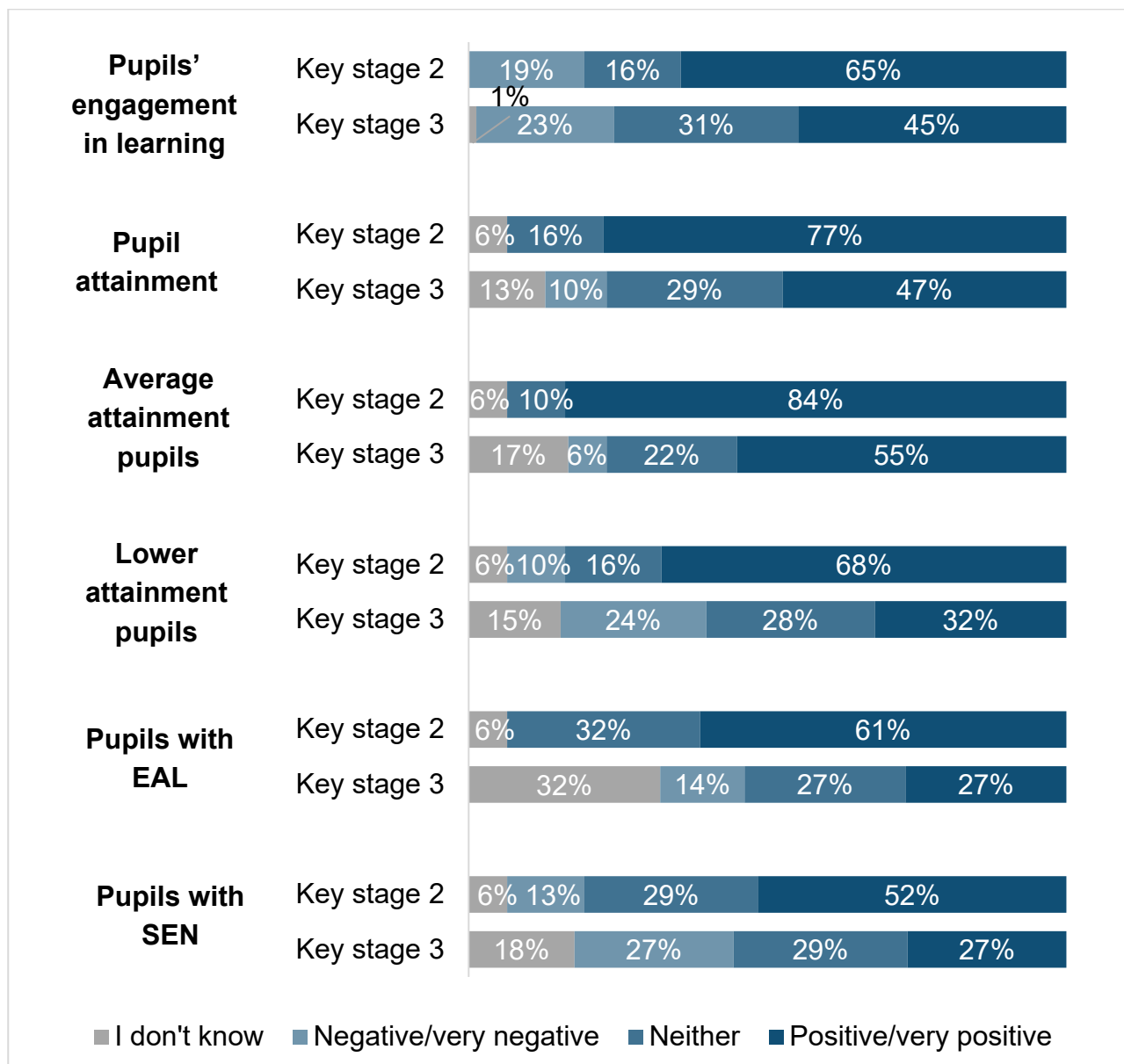
		I don't know	Negative/very negative	Neither	Positive/very positive
Pupils' engagement in learning	Key stage 2		19%	16%	65%
	Key stage 3	1%	23%	31%	45%
Pupil attainment	Key stage 2	6%	16%		77%
	Key stage 3	13%	10%	29%	47%
Average attainment pupils	Key stage 2	6%	10%		84%
	Key stage 3	17%	6%	22%	55%
Lower attainment pupils	Key stage 2	6%	10%	16%	68%
	Key stage 3	15%	24%	28%	32%
Pupils with EAL	Key stage 2	6%	32%		61%
	Key stage 3	32%	14%	27%	27%
Pupils with SEN	Key stage 2	6%	13%	29%	52%
	Key stage 3	18%	27%	29%	27%

■ I don't know ■ Negative/very negative ■ Neither ■ Positive/very positive

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[71] Note: low base, n=31.

At the outset, teachers from all programmes and key stages suggested that the level of subject knowledge that pupils were being exposed to had increased as a result of the curriculum programmes, and this remained a strong theme in interviews at the follow-up stage. Specifically, the depth of subject knowledge combined with teacher-led instruction was perceived by teachers and co-ordinators to have led to improved (and quicker) retention of knowledge among pupils, more accurate application and increased use of specialist vocabulary, and the reinforcement of core concepts.

> I think that having [regular revisiting of knowledge] at Key Stage 3 makes it become more of a normal [learning process]. I think it means that when [pupils] get to Key Stage 4 they are not panicking that there is so much to learn. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

The majority of teachers responding to the follow-up survey agreed that the knowledge rich aspect of the programme had stretched their pupils (70%, n=71). Furthermore, almost half (48%, n=48) agreed that the programme had challenged their beliefs about what pupils could achieve. Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[73] were more likely to be positive about these aspects than those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (see Figure 22). Indeed, half of those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes and interviewed at the follow-up stage noted that the knowledge rich element of the programme was a key benefit to pupil development.

> The children's retention of key facts was very good. I have same class so have been able to test their recall and it is good. I don't think we would have had the same level of academic recall. (Participating school co-ordinator, primary school)

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[72] Note: low base, n=31.
[73] Note: low base, n=31.

Figure 22: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following about the curriculum programme(s) that you have been trialling?

		I don't know	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither	Agree/strongly agree
The knowledge rich aspect of the programme(s) really stretched my pupils	Key stage 2			13%	87%
	Key stage 3	4%	13%	17%	67%
The programme(s) challenged my beliefs about what my pupils can achieve	Key stage 2		16%	16%	68%
	Key stage 3	6%	27%	23%	44%
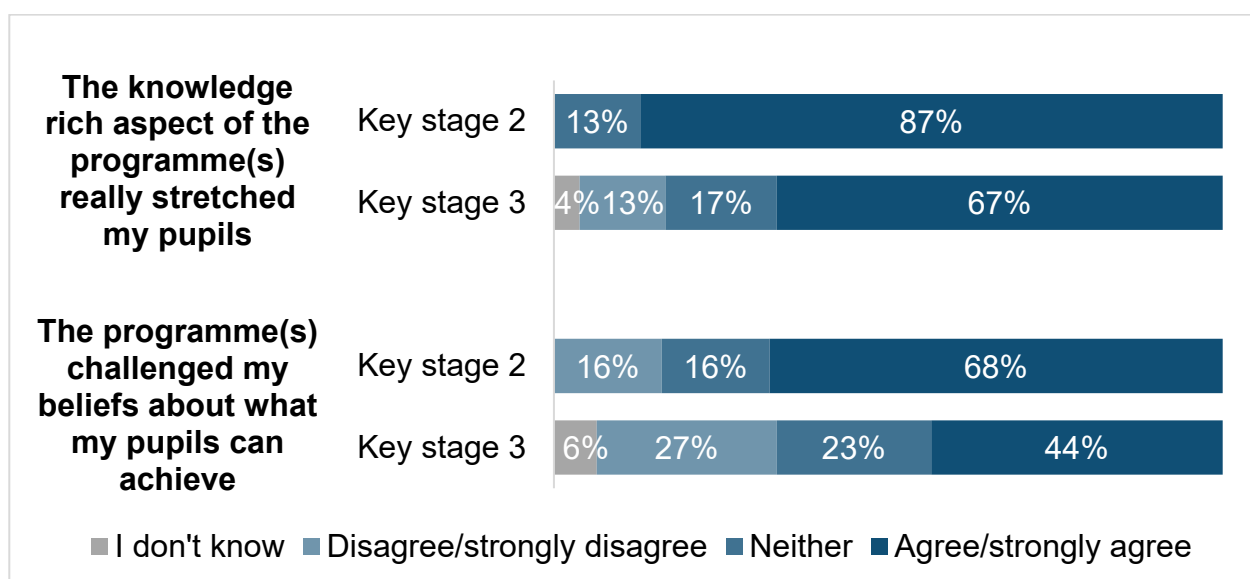
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: teachers, 31 Key Stage 2 programmes[74], 78 Key Stage 3 programmes.

6.2.3 Literacy

One of the key areas of impact on pupils, mentioned frequently by those involved in the pilot of Key Stage 3 programmes in particular, was the positive effect the resources had on the development of pupils' literacy.

> [We are] definitely seeing students reading more and their confidence in reading improving. [Previously] it was easy for students to be passive in lessons, but the focus on reading and having to read out loud in parts means that the [pedagogical] approach…has engaged them more in lessons…This has been reflected in their writing [across all attainment levels]. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

The development of pupils' literacy through the curriculum programme pilot was felt to be especially marked in relation to:

- Learning more technical, subject-specific vocabulary, and the accurate application of this vocabulary within spoken and written work.

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[74] Note: low base, n=31.

- Improved engagement and stamina with longform writing, such as essays, and developing academic rigour within written pieces of work.

- Increased focus from pupils during reading sessions, with pupils reading longer passages and better retaining the information contained within a text.

6.3 Impact on teachers

During the early stages of the pilot, teachers anticipated that the main impact of the pilot on them would be a reduction in workload, the provision of high quality resources, clearer links to a broader curriculum, and adopting a knowledge rich approach.

Although these elements were highlighted again during the follow-up interviews, teacher feedback shifted over time towards a focus on how the curriculum programmes had benefited teaching and learning directly. Thus, at the time of the follow-up survey, teachers and co-ordinators were most likely to believe that the programmes that they had been piloting had impacted positively on (Table 11):

- Effective curriculum implementation.

- Planning.

- Teacher workload.

Almost two-thirds of teachers believed the pilot had a positive impact on whole-class teaching (65%, n=66);and over three-fifths thought it impacted positively on the quality of teaching and learning (62%, n=63) and teacher pedagogical knowledge or approach (61%, n=62). Co-ordinators were statistically significantly more likely to perceive a positive impact of the programmes across all of these aspects (Table 11).

Table 12: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on the following areas?

Areas of impact	Teachers: % Positive	Teachers: % Negative	Co-ordinators: % Positive	Co-ordinators % Negative
Effective implementation of the curriculum	70%	6%	91%	0%
The complexity of planning	67%	3%	89%	2%

Teacher workload	67%	4%	95%	0%
Whole-class teaching	65%	7%	98%	0%
Quality of teaching and learning	62%	8%	95%	0%
Teacher pedagogical knowledge / approach	61%	4%	86%	0%
Understanding of a more effective way to teach the curriculum and subject	55%	11%	80%	0%
Teacher subject knowledge	54%	2%	77%	0%
Made lessons more interesting	39%	28%	57%	5%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators.[75]

Initial concerns about how interesting the curriculum programme lessons were, were expressed by teachers at the baseline stage and continued at the follow-up stage. Over one quarter (28%, n=28) believed that the programme they had been piloting had a negative impact on their lessons, with 39% (n=39) believing there had been a positive impact by making their lessons more interesting (Table 11). During the follow-up interviews, teachers suggested that a negative impact on lessons occurred where resources were considered formulaic or repetitive, therefore, risked reducing pupil engagement (see sections 6.2.1 and 7.1).

6.3.1 Workload

Teachers were asked in the baseline survey about their feelings towards their employment with the intention of measuring any change or impact at the follow-up stage. A strong positive impact on teacher workload was seen at the start of the pilot, and this was sustained as delivery of the programmes progressed. Over half (52% n=52) of teachers said during the follow-up survey that their workload had decreased since being involved in the curriculum pilot.[76]

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[75] Note: Data not shown = 'Neither' and 'Don't know'.
[76] A minority of teachers felt their workload had increased at the time of the follow-up survey (7%, n=7). As seen at the baseline, these were all secondary teachers and all but one were piloting Key Stage 3 programmes.

Figure 23: Since being involved in the curriculum pilot, would you say that workload has increased, decreased or stayed the same?
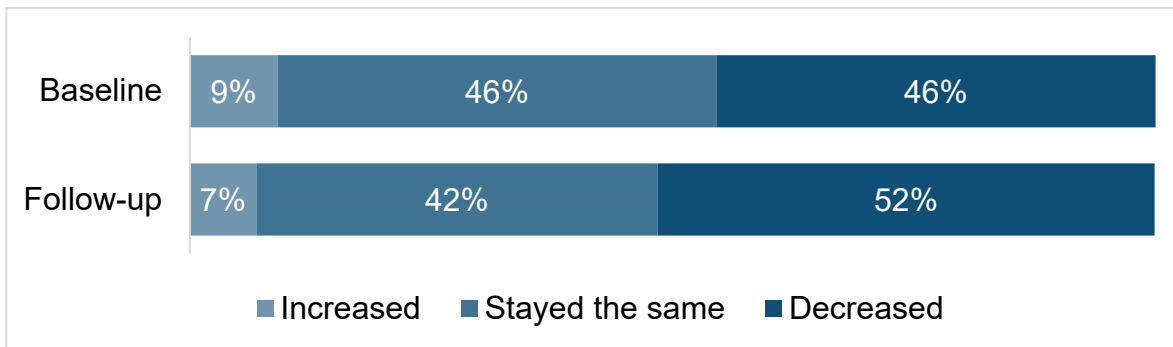
Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up).

The large majority of co-ordinators also agreed that the curriculum programmes had helped to reduce teachers' workload (89%, n=39). For impact on teacher wellbeing more generally, see section 6.3.3.Furthermore, the majority of teachers (particularly those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[77], Table 12) reported that teacher workload had reduced over the course of the pilot, showing some potential for long term benefits (perceived longer term impact is further discussed in section 8.3).

In the few examples where workload was reported to have increased during the interviews, leads noted that this was due to the time required to implement and support the rollout of curriculum programmes in participating schools. In addition, a small number of teachers who took part in the interviews attributed an increase in their workload to the time required to understand the new approach, or for adapting materials to their own lessons or pupils (these were predominantly teachers delivering Key Stage 3 programmes).

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[77] Note: low base, n=31.

Table 13: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on the following areas.

Areas of impact	% positive impact: Teachers – Key Stage 2 programmes	% positive impact: Teachers – Key Stage 3 programmes
Reducing the complexity of planning	84%	64%
Teacher workload	81%	65%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: teachers, 31 Key Stage 2 programmes[78], 78 Key Stage 3 programmes.

The most common theme emerging during the interviews in relation to workload reduction was the positive effect of the curriculum programmes on planning time, with the majority of teachers noting a positive impact on the complexity of planning (Table 12). For example, interviewees reported that they needed to spend less time identifying and developing appropriate resources for every lesson. They generally did not quantify the time saved, however some provided examples:

> I haven't worked many weekends, I usually work in an evening. At the start I was working later in the evening, until 8 / 9pm, that's after going into school for 7am. Now I rarely have to work past 5pm. I go home and leave my laptop here. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Rather than quantifying the impact of the curriculum programmes, teachers and co-ordinators very commonly talked about workload decreasing 'massively', 'dropping dramatically' or being 'cut down considerably'. Some also said that where the programme pilot had reduced workload in terms of basic planning and finding resources, they had subsequently been able to use that time to think about and plan delivery in more detail, including how they should differentiate for their class. This could explain why, for many teachers responding to the follow-up survey, workload overall had stayed the same (Figure 15). Nonetheless, this was regarded positively by teachers in the interviews, as they indicated that they were subsequently spending additional time on tasks that they felt were more meaningful for their role.

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[78] Note: low base n=31.

6.3.2 Teaching and learning

The vast majority of co-ordinators believed that the pilot had a positive impact on whole-class teaching (98%, n=43) and the quality of teaching and learning (95%, n=42).

However, differences by key stage were noted again by teachers (Figure 24). Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[79] were more likely than those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes to believe the pilot had a positive impact. This difference was statistically significant for all aspects of teaching and learning except improved whole-class teaching (Figure 24).

Figure 24: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on the following areas?
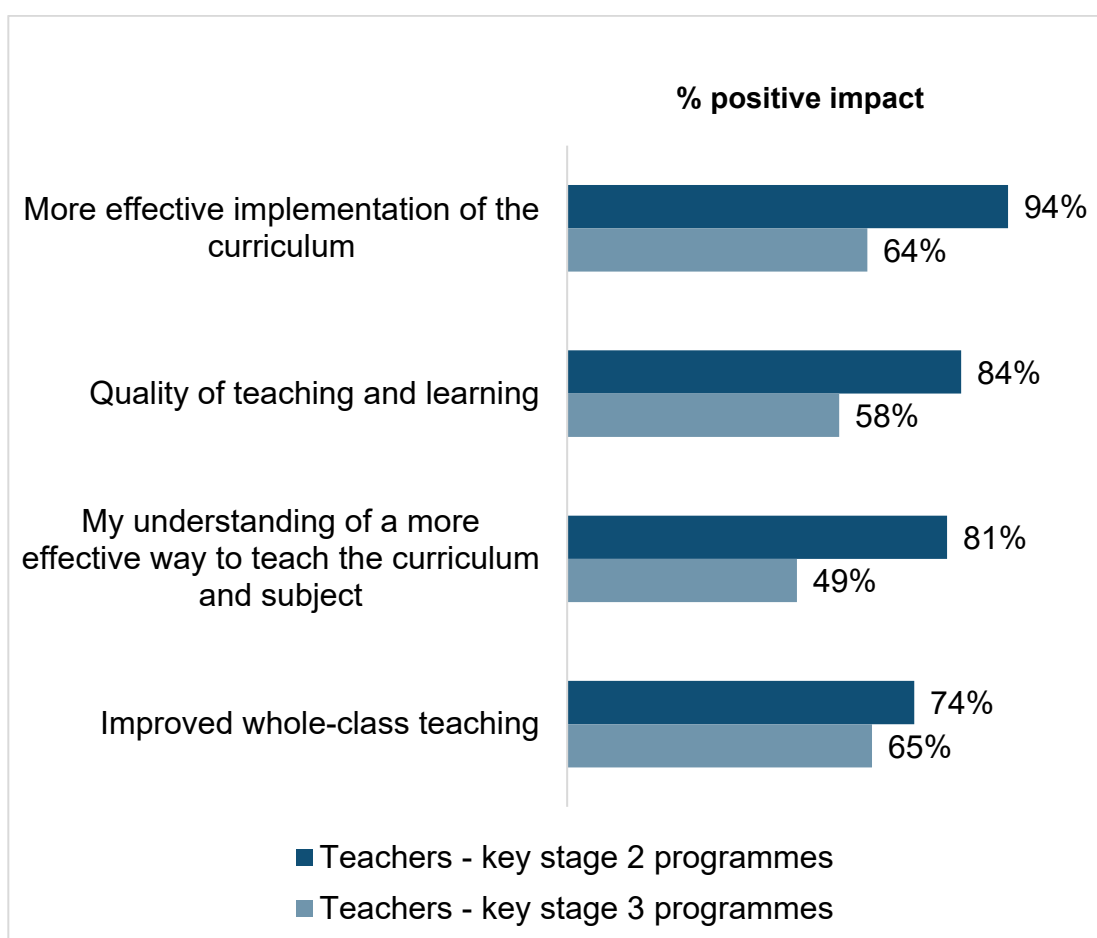
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: teachers, 31 Key Stage 2 programmes[80], 78 Key Stage 3 programmes.

Echoing this, and as another consequence of the time saved in planning, Key Stage 2 teachers said that they were spending more time on developing their own background

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[79] Note: low base, n=31.
[80] Note: low base n=31.

knowledge and carrying out research. This was reflected during the follow-up survey, during which the majority of teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes[81] (87%, n=27) reported that there had been a positive impact on their subject knowledge as a result of the programme pilot (Figure 25).

Figure 25: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot(s) had an impact on the following areas?

% positive impact

My subject knowledge
- Teachers - key stage 2 programmes: 87%
- Teachers - key stage 3 programmes: 45%

My pedagogical knowledge / approach
- Teachers - key stage 2 programmes: 65%
- Teachers - key stage 3 programmes: 60%

■ Teachers - key stage 2 programmes
■ Teachers - key stage 3 programmes
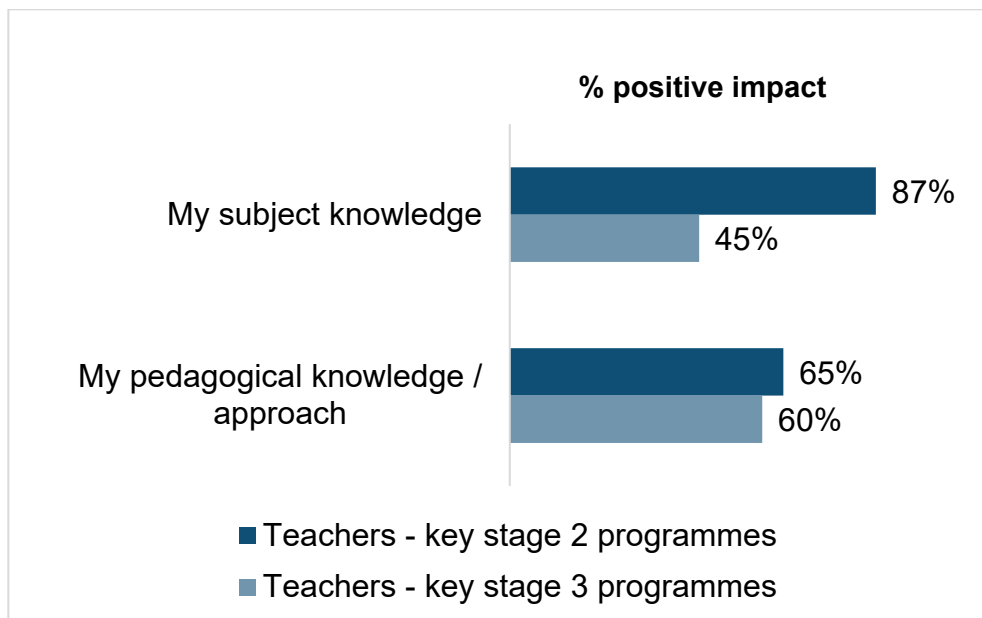
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: teachers, 31 Key Stage 2 programmes,[82] 78 Key Stage 3 programmes.

By the time of the follow-up interviews, this personal development had translated into perceived improvements in classroom practice, which again was particularly common among Key Stage 2 teachers. For example, teachers reported that their knowledge development had led to increased self-confidence in delivering curriculum content, as well as more consistency in delivery across a key stage/department. It was also perceived that the increased detail and specialist vocabulary included within the curriculum resources meant that teachers were delivering subjects at greater depth than previously, which supported their own training and development as well as pupil literacy.

6.3.3 Wellbeing and job satisfaction

The impact of the curriculum programmes on various indicators of job satisfaction was limited at the time of the follow-up research. Teachers were asked whether they felt positive, neutral or negative about aspects of their role. No statistically significant changes in teachers' perceptions were seen compared to the baseline (Figure 26). This

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[81] Note: low base, n=31.
[82] Note: low base, n=31.

was reflected during the telephone interviews, with commentary from co-ordinators and teachers focusing on the impact on workload rather than broader indicators of job satisfaction (see section 6.3.1).

Figure 26: How do you feel about the following aspects of your job?
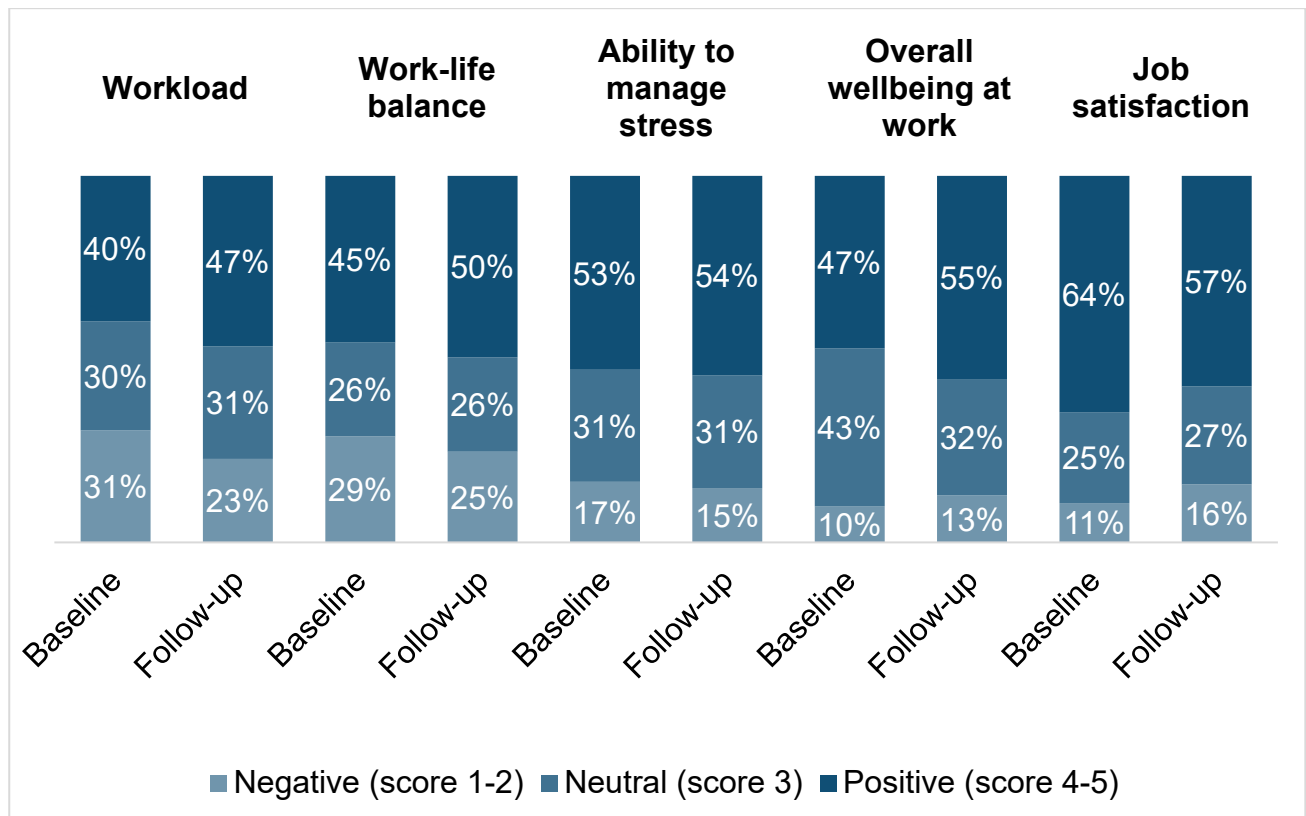
Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up).

Similarly, when asked specifically about whether these aspects of their role had increased, decreased or remained the same, most teachers said that there had been little change in their overall wellbeing at work, ability to manage stress levels, work-life balance or job satisfaction (Table 13). A minority of teachers felt there had been an increase or decrease in these aspects of their job.

Table 14: Since being involved in the curriculum pilot, would you say that the following aspects of your job have increased, decreased or stayed the same? (baseline)

Aspects of the job	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Ability to manage stress levels	15%	79%	7%
Job satisfaction	17%	73%	11%
Overall well-being at work	16%	79%	5%
Work-life balance	15%	78%	7%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline)

Table 15: Since being involved in the curriculum pilot, would you say that the following aspects of your job have increased, decreased or stayed the same? (follow-up)

Aspects of the job	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Ability to manage stress levels	12%	83%	5%
Job satisfaction	14%	72%	14%
Overall well-being at work	15%	79%	6%
Work-life balance	17%	75%	8%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Surveys. Base: 101 teachers (follow-up).

In the few instances where stress levels and teacher wellbeing were mentioned during the interviews, these were anecdotal examples provided by a small number of interviewees, and they offered a mixed picture. For example, some teachers reported

lower stress levels due to the reduced workload, however teachers were also perceived by co-ordinators to be less satisfied in their role because the curriculum resources had removed an element of creativity from their practice.

In some cases, Key Stage 3 teachers noted that behavioural challenges within classrooms could make the teacher-led element of the programmes very difficult to manage, and this consequently had a detrimental impact on their wellbeing. They suggested that clear training and support in relation to the required pedagogical approaches, including associated behaviour management techniques, was required in order to ensure that delivery of the programmes did not create additional stress for teachers.

At the time of the follow-up survey, teachers' perceptions of the impact of the programme pilot on various aspects of their job were more likely to have improved among those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes, compared to teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes (Table 14)[83]. Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes were statistically significantly more likely than those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes to say that their work-life balance had increased since being involved in the pilot. Most notably, teachers who felt that their work-life balance, job satisfaction, wellbeing at work or ability to manage stress levels had decreased since the start of the pilot, were all piloting Key Stage 3 programmes. This was not the case at the baseline[84], suggesting that for teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes, an initial increase in workload for a minority of teachers had, over time, been resolved.

Table 16: Since being involved in the curriculum pilot, would you say that the following aspects of your job have increased, decreased or stayed the same?

Aspects of job	Teachers - Key Stage 2 programmes : Increased	Teachers - Key Stage 2 programmes : Stayed the same	Teachers - Key Stage 2 programmes: Decreased	Teachers - Key Stage 3 programmes: Increased	Teachers - Key Stage 3 programmes: Stayed the same	Teachers - Key Stage 3 programmes: Decreased
Work-life balance	6%	94%	0%	21%	69%	10%
Job satisfaction	13%	87%	0%	15%	67%	18%

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[83] Note: low base, n=31.
[84] See Appendix 2: Table 24.

Overall wellbeing at work	6%	94%	0%	18%	74%	8%
Ability to manage stress levels	6%	94%	0%	14%	79%	6%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: teachers, 31 Key Stage 2 programmes[85], 78 Key Stage 3 programmes.

6.4 Unintended consequences

In limited cases, interviewees noted unintended consequences of participating in the pilots, which were similar during both the baseline and follow-up interviews. These were:

- Unexpected passion and enthusiasm from pupils for the subjects being taught.

- Improved behaviour as a result of increased levels of engagement in lessons and identification of pupils with behavioural issues due to new approaches being implemented.

- Teachers being given the opportunity to develop their own practice or teach different aspects of a subject that they would not have done otherwise.

- Interest from other departments in school or key stages as they became aware of the programme and would like access to something similar.

- Examples of participating schools extending the approach to teaching and learning across the whole school.

- Improved working relationships between members of teaching and support staff, for example where there has been a requirement in science-based programmes to liaise directly with technicians and ensure appropriate equipment and planning is in place for practical lessons.

- Conflict between colleagues in participating schools, for example where teachers did not agree with a decision made by leadership teams to participate in the programme, or who felt that they were losing autonomy in their teaching roles as a result of using the programme resources and pedagogical approaches.

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[85] Note: low base n=31.

- A reduction in the enjoyment of teaching among a small number of teachers delivering the programmes, where resources were perceived to be repetitive or less creative than their existing practice.

7. Challenges and improvements

Research participants highlighted several benefits and challenges of the curriculum programmes they were piloting. These are summarised in this section, followed by suggestions of how the programmes could be improved.

Summary

Challenges around the relevance or flexibility of the programme materials (44%, n=44 at follow-up) were the most common and significantly higher than at the baseline. Teachers and co-ordinators perceived there to be a lack of differentiation within resources for different attainment levels, in particular for pupils with SEND, EAL and lower attainment pupils. As a result, teachers felt the need to make adaptations to the resources to ensure they were accessible by all. As noted in section 4, lead schools typically expected teachers to differentiate the resources to ensure they met the needs of the pupils in their class.

A third (33%, n=33) of teachers experienced challenges with pupil engagement and a similar proportion found it challenging to adapt to a new way of teaching (30%, n=30). Although it was clear during the follow-up interviews that teachers had adopted the pedagogical approaches suggested (see section 4), teachers piloting humanities programmes specifically felt a sense of frustration about the rigid or repetitive nature of the resources, which were felt to stifle teacher creativity. This led to concerns about the new programmes deterring pupils from progressing to higher levels of study or not developing independent learning. It was felt that a cultural shift was required in some participating schools, in order to fully engage with the pedagogy of the programmes.

Variations in the length and content of Key Stage 3 curriculums led to difficulties in planning appropriate content for lessons for some participating schools. Ensuring that the content allowed a smooth transition from Key Stage 3 through to Key Stage 4 was also a challenge for some, and would potentially have implications for future rollout of the programmes.

A range of other challenges, less commonly reported, included pupil behaviour, incompatibility with existing curriculum and assessment resources, policies or approaches, variations in delivery both within and between participating schools, lack of teacher confidence to deliver and difficulties in working relationships between lead and participating schools.

Suggested improvements to the programmes included: improvements to resources, formats and tailored materials, additional training and support and timing of the programme so that delivery aligns with the academic year.

7.1 Key challenges

There were three challenges related to the delivery of the curriculum programme pilots that were consistently highlighted by teachers during the surveys and the telephone interviews (Figure 27). These were:

1. Relevance or flexibility of the programme materials for the school or pupil context.

2. Pupil engagement with the programme.

3. Staff adapting to a new way of teaching.

Figure 27: What have been the key challenges in setting up and implementing/delivering the curriculum programme in your teaching?
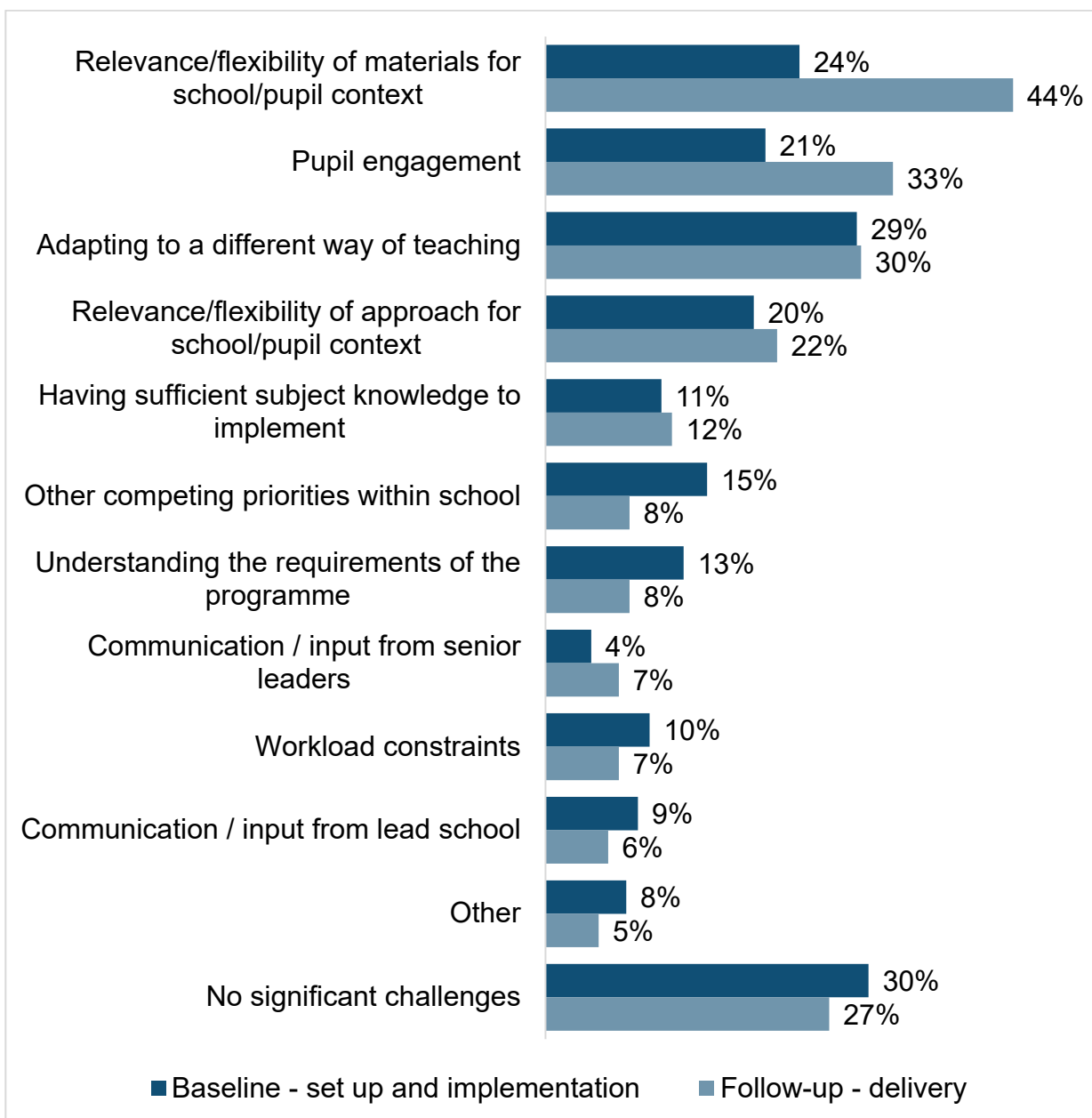
Relevance/flexibility of materials for school/pupil context — 24%, 44%

Pupil engagement — 21%, 33%

Adapting to a different way of teaching — 29%, 30%

Relevance/flexibility of approach for school/pupil context — 20%, 22%

Having sufficient subject knowledge to implement — 11%, 12%

Other competing priorities within school — 15%, 8%

Understanding the requirements of the programme — 13%, 8%

Communication / input from senior leaders — 4%, 7%

Workload constraints — 10%, 7%

Communication / input from lead school — 9%, 6%

Other — 8%, 5%

No significant challenges — 30%, 27%

■ Baseline - set up and implementation ■ Follow-up - delivery

Relevance or flexibility of the programme materials was the most common challenge mentioned by teachers piloting both Key Stage 2 and 3 programmes who responded to the follow-up survey (44%, n=44). It was statistically significantly higher than at the baseline as teachers continued to experience challenges with the suitability of materials for meeting a range of pupil needs. Teachers and co-ordinators in participating schools commonly perceived there to be a lack of differentiation within resources for different attainment levels. This included the need to be able to support pupils with SEND, accessibility for lower-attaining pupils and those with EAL, offering stretch and challenge to higher attaining pupils, and ensuring that all pupils in one class could access the materials effectively. It was also very common for interviewee participants across both Key Stage 2 and 3 to provide detail about the adaptations that had been made to materials (see section 4.2 for detail on adaptations).

> [This school has] large EAL and SEND cohorts…which is very different to the lead school context. Some of [our]…students have therefore struggled with the [resources]. We have attempted to address this through incorporating a word bank, which the pupils have to revise, with the aim of limiting the barriers for them in the next lesson…Tiered [resources] for different levels of [attainment] would be better, but that this could go against the principle of a knowledge rich curriculum. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Pupil engagement was a challenge for one third (33%, n=33) of teachers at the time of the follow-up survey. Interviewees in secondary schools noted that during the early stages of implementation it was challenging to engage their pupils with the changes in approach to learning. They felt that this required a cultural shift within the participating schools towards an acceptance of teacher-led, knowledge rich curriculum programmes. Similar feedback was provided during the follow-up interviews, and teachers felt that this lack of engagement with the new resources risked deterring pupils from progressing to higher levels of study or not developing skills in independent learning.

> All students at GCSE, A Level and degree have to be able to take their own notes, and revise independently. These booklets remove that skill. They are not having to research anything or take down notes, everything is done for them in the booklet…knowledge rich doesn't have to [mean] that. Many aren't taking [the resources] home after the topic is [completed], so we don't know how useful they actually are in the long-term. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

In addition, some teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes reported that the curriculum resources were dominated by worksheets, which were felt to be restrictive for young pupils[86] – '[Worksheets are] not ideal. You want to have chances for pupils to do extended writing and think more freely'. (Participating school teacher, primary school)

Adapting to a different way of teaching also remained a challenge at the time of the follow-up survey for almost one third (30%, n=30) of teachers. At the start of the pilots, leads and participating school co-ordinators spoke of the apprehension of some teachers to change their approaches to delivery. Although it was clear during the follow-up interviews that teachers had adopted the pedagogical approaches suggested (see [section 4](#)) those piloting humanities-based programmes specifically raised concerns that adopting the pedagogy and using the programme resources had a detrimental impact on staff creativity. They described a lack of opportunities to use their own expertise and skills to develop their own lessons, and a sense of frustration with the rigid or repetitive nature of resources.

7.1.1 Challenges for specific key stages

Secondary schools can deliver Key Stage 4 curriculums of varying durations (from one-year courses in some subject areas, up to three-year curriculums starting in year 9). This was generally not factored into the initial design of the Key Stage 3 curriculum programmes by leads, which had created challenges in terms of developing appropriate levels of content for all participating schools.

> There are challenges in dealing with the content for the year 8 curriculum for schools that had a three-year Key Stage 4, because there is a tension of schools having different ideas about what content needs to be covered by the end of year 8. (Project lead, secondary school)

Thus, this issue had created some challenges for staff in participating secondary schools, as it was necessary for each to be able to merge a standard set of pilot resources with curriculum plans of varying durations. Consequently, staff in secondary schools who were delivering a three-year Key Stage 4 curriculum highlighted particular challenges due to the necessity to have covered specific topics within years 7 and 8, prior to the start of Key Stage 4.

> As the school [delivers] an extended Key Stage 4, we have not been able to use the pilot with year 8 – this is because we knew that we needed to cover [designated topics] in year 8, and the units produced

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[86] The relevance or flexibility of approach for their school or pupil context was similarly a challenge for one in five teachers (20%, n=18) – baseline survey.

by the lead school [either] didn't match with this, or weren't ready. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Several co-ordinators in secondary schools noted that there were no similar programme resources available for Key Stage 4 (although this was not a requirement of the pilot). As a result, co-ordinators had felt unable to make longer-term plans or ensure that the content of the Key Stage 3 pilot was able to transition smoothly with Key Stage 4 delivery,should they choose to extend delivery beyond the pilot.

To a lesser extent, it was also noted by co-ordinators that any rollout of the curriculum programmes beyond the pilot would potentially have major implications for provision planning across all year groups, and there would be limited resources to be able to undertake that work.

> The key stages at moment match up thematically… [it is a] whole school curriculum. To change Key Stage 3, we would need to change the whole curriculum. (Participating school co-ordinator, secondary school)

There were also some other challenges which were exclusively mentioned in the follow-up survey by teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes;

- Communication or input from the lead school (8%, n=6).

- Communication or input from senior leaders (9%, n=7).

- Understanding the requirements of the programme (10%, n=8).[87]

The cost implications and sustainability of long-term delivery remained a concern throughout the pilot amongst those delivering Key Stage 3 programmes. In a small number of cases, they felt that they may stop using the resources because the printing and photocopying costs were too expensive for schools to maintain.

7.1.2 Other challenges and barriers to success

A range of other challenges were less commonly reported by participating school co-ordinators and teachers, with the feedback remaining fairly consistent across the baseline and follow-up interviews, and during the focus groups.

- **Challenging behaviours**: leading to a lack of engagement among pupils, or less time for teachers to deliver units. Two co-ordinators involved in one programme explained how it was important to work with participating schools on behaviour

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[87] Note: whilst these issues were exclusively mentioned by teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes, their incidence remains low overall.

management and school routines to ensure that the programme could be delivered efficiently and appropriately.

- **Incompatibility with existing resources, policies or approaches:** For example, a lack of correct equipment in participating schools to complete practical experiments included in science-based programmes, or outdated atlases being used for geography-based programmes. In addition, some Key Stage 3 assessment materials were reported to be incompatible with participating school policies/practices. One coordinator reported concern that the number of trainees from a local teacher training provider may reduce, due to the change in pedagogical approach to one which the training provider did not endorse.

- **Barriers to content:** Teachers reported that in some programmes there was a lot of content to cover within lessons, and as a result the time in class felt stretched. This had required some content to be missed in order to complete the units. In addition, lower attainment in literacy was reported to create a barrier for some pupils in being able to access the curriculum resources effectively due to the technical vocabulary used throughout, and the lack of differentiation of materials for pupils of different abilities.

- **Difficulties in working relationships:** These were reported to be due to contextual differences between the lead and participating schools (for example pupil demographics), or because they did not receive as much support as anticipated.

- **Inconsistent approaches taken to programme delivery**: For example, there was variation between different participating schools in the way that the curriculum resources were used. The adaptations made to resources were perceived by some leads to reduce fidelity towards the intention of the curriculum programme (e.g. chunking up delivery into many separate activities rather than a predominantly teacher-led approach). Leads suggested that such adaptation risked the ethos of the programme and its aims.

- **Lack of teacher confidence:** The lack of lesson plans was perceived to pose a potential problem for teachers who were not used to working without them, and who may not feel as confident in adopting new teaching styles.

7.2 Suggested improvements

When asked what they felt could be improved about the curriculum programmes, there were three key areas of focus that remained very common throughout all surveys and interviews:

- More resource formats and tailored materials.

- Additional training and support.

- Timing of the programme.

7.2.1 Resource formats

This was a key theme emerging from participating school teachers responding to the follow-up survey in particular, with over three out of five (63%, n=64) making a suggestion for how the resources could be improved. Mentions were somewhat less frequent amongst co-ordinators (36%, n=16).

The most common suggestions mentioned by teachers and co-ordinators responding to the follow-up survey included:

- Greater or clearer differentiation of materials for pupils and to support teachers with differentiation in the classroom.

- Improvements to resource content and making them more engaging, relevant, useable and flexible and ensuring they are suitable for the key stage.

- Ensuring resources do not contain errors.

- More plenary tasks to assist teachers in assessing pupil understanding.

- Increased consistency across resources in a programme, for example in the look and feel of the materials.

- Developing resources for other keys stages (i.e. key stage 1 and Key Stage 4).

Participating school co-ordinators and teachers who were interviewed expressed concerns that the resources were formulaic, or would benefit from additional formats both to maintain pupil and teacher engagement, and to provide tailored resources for a range of abilities and pupil needs.

> [What] I want to do going forward with the programme is to try make it a bit more creative. I'm going to trial getting them to write a newspaper article, I'm going to trial getting them to write posters. Rather than reading and writing answers to the questions. I've got success criteria so they can do the comprehension questions, but just do it in a different form, as opposed to just writing it down. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

Teachers also made specific suggestions during the interviews as to where improvements to resource formats could be focused. These were:

- Developing digital content, for example: providing digital materials to enable ease of adaption, and to reduce the environmental impact of using paper; including more video clips and digital files to offer interactive content and break up lessons;

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offering CPD webinars, or online/virtual meetings between teachers, so that there was a sense of being part of a team/network of schools; delivering training videos for teachers to observe pedagogical approaches in action, or access subject knowledge development opportunities.

- Broadening the range of topics included in the curriculum programmes.

- Including more extension tasks to provide opportunities for stretch and challenge for higher attainers.

- Using fonts that were accessible for pupils with dyslexia.

- Providing different levels of complexity in text and visual imagery (including diagrams) to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment.

7.2.2 Training and support

In the follow-up survey, co-ordinators (23%, n=10) and teachers (12%, n=12) suggested improvements to training, support and guidance and this was a strong theme emerging from the interviews. Overall, staff in participating schools piloting Key Stage 3 programmes reported the need for additional training and support generally. More specifically, requests for support related to key areas of the programme:

- **Increased planning time:** This included more opportunities to explain to participating teachers the structure of the programme and how to use the resources. This was often requested from teachers who did not feel that they had been involved in the initial set-up or had not attended training sessions.

- **More training and development for teachers:** It was perceived by both lead and participating schools that adopting new pedagogical approaches was a practice that needed to be developed and supported over time, and adequate time had not been given to this element of the pilot. In particular, teachers requested more support regarding direct instruction and how this worked in practice. It was felt that videos showing resources in use would be helpful reference sources, particularly for teachers unable to visit the lead school directly.

- **Increased collaboration with other schools:** Teachers and co-ordinators said that they would like more opportunities to communicate with other participating schools, share experiences, examples of practice and support each other in implementing the programmes. Two leads mentioned that they would like to conduct joint training for participating schools. Participants within the focus groups also discussed the value of sharing resources and ideas with others. The pilot was felt to have been a very useful way to meet other teachers and create subject-specific peer networks as a result.

- **Written teacher guidance:** This was requested for both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 programmes. These requests increased during the follow-up interviews. Teachers and co-ordinators felt that such guidance should be provided in a separate document for teachers to use alongside the resources, to help support their planning and delivery. Common suggestions for this guidance included: a broad overview of each unit, how knowledge and understanding should develop through the course of delivery, approaches to implementing assessment activities. Additionally, for science-based programmes specifically, it was suggested that teacher guidance materials should contain clear information regarding the resources and equipment required. It was reported that this would help technicians or teaching assistants prepare and set up in advance for practical lessons.

7.2.3 Timing

Interviewees often suggested, during both the baseline and follow-up interviews, that delivery needed to start at the beginning of an academic year to enable both effective delivery, and accurate monitoring and assessment. They felt that this would be simpler to manage, less disruptive to planning and enable teachers to deliver a full year of the programmes before being asked to provide feedback on their impact. At the start of the pilot, leads were commonly concerned about the short lead-in time, which had created challenges in recruiting participating schools. Indeed, the timeframes for delivery remained a key challenge for them throughout. In the follow-up survey, six of nine leads indicated that the timeframes were difficult (the same as at the baseline), compared to two who thought that the timeframes were easy or very easy.[88] During the interviews, leads spoke about having a short turnaround in terms of starting the pilot and recruiting schools. They also reported that it had been challenging to find the appropriate time to make visits to all participating schools, observe delivery of the programmes and provide face-to-face training and support.

Other suggested improvements (noted less commonly) were: involving primary teaching specialists in the development of curriculum programmes aimed at Key Stage 2, ensuring that schools working in partnership were close geographically so as to enable ease of travel, and embedding approaches and topics from the programmes into English lessons to support the development of literacy skills.

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[88] The remaining project lead gave a 'neither' response.

8. Sustainability of programme delivery

This final section examines the ways in which leads and co-ordinators felt that the curriculum programmes would be used following the end of the pilot after two-terms, and the potential ongoing impact of the pilot once it had been completed. As mentioned previously for nine of the 11 schools the pilot period has been extended for up to three terms.

Summary

There is good evidence to suggest that the curriculum programmes would be used to some extent within participating schools after the pilot had finished. Teachers piloting Key Stage 2 programmes were significantly more likely to report that they would continue to use the full programme compared to those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes (Key Stage 2, 45%, n=14; Key Stage 3, 18%, n=14). The pilot had helped facilitate the development of positive peer-to-peer support networks between the lead and participating schools that there was a desire to continue after the pilot.

Staff at participating schools were also positive about the potential longevity of impact after the pilot had finished. Teacher workload was the area where impact was thought to be most likely to continue. Although it was felt that there would also be a continued impact on the quality of teaching and learning, co-ordinators were more positive about this than teachers.

8.1 End of the programme

Staff in most participating schools thought that they would continue to use the curriculum programmes to some extent beyond the end of the pilot. Nearly all co-ordinators (95%, n=42) and around three-quarters (77%, n=77) of teachers reported during the follow-up survey that they would continue to use materials beyond the end of the pilot. Nearly three-quarters (73%, n=32) of co-ordinators and over half (54%, n=54) of teachers would adapt or supplement them to suit their needs (Figure 28). They tended to suggest during the interviews that they would adopt the concept of a knowledge rich curriculum, and the pedagogical approach, but generate more of their own internal resources that were tailored to the context of the individual school and its profile of pupils.

Where they were intending to maintain delivery, a small number of teachers and co-ordinators – and particularly those delivering humanities-based programmes – said during the interviews that they would be maintaining delivery of the programme plus rolling out the pedagogical approaches to other departments, curriculum areas or key stages across their schools. In one example, participating

school staff suggested that they were looking at the possibility of rolling out the approach across multiple schools within a multi-academy trust (MAT).

Participating school teachers piloting a Key Stage 2 programme[89] were statistically significantly more likely to state during the follow-up survey that they would continue to use the full programme, compared to those piloting Key Stage 3 (45%, n=14 and 18%, n=14 respectively), reflecting that those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes reported greater satisfaction with all aspects of the pilot throughout the baseline and follow-up surveys. During the interviews, this tended to be related to concerns within participating schools regarding the subject coverage of the Key Stage 3 programmes, and the need to ensure effective transition between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 curriculums (see section 7.1.1). Those piloting Key Stage 3 programmes were also most likely during the interviews to say that delivery of the programmes would stop altogether at the end of the pilot; this was attributed to a lack of staffing capacity to monitor rollout, or because teachers had perceived the resources to be too formulaic to make the programmes sustainable and engaging for pupils over the long term.

In a few examples, teachers suggested that the delivery of a curriculum programme would stop at the end of the pilot, and the co-ordinator in the same school reported that the approach would be rolled out more widely. This lack of clear understanding across different staff groups pointed towards the gaps in consistent communications that were reported by some teachers during the interviews, and the need for participating schools to ensure that all teachers were aware of expectations for delivery.

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[89] Note: low base, n=31.

Figure 28: **Will you continue to use the curriculum programme(s) in your teaching/school after the pilot has finished?[90]**
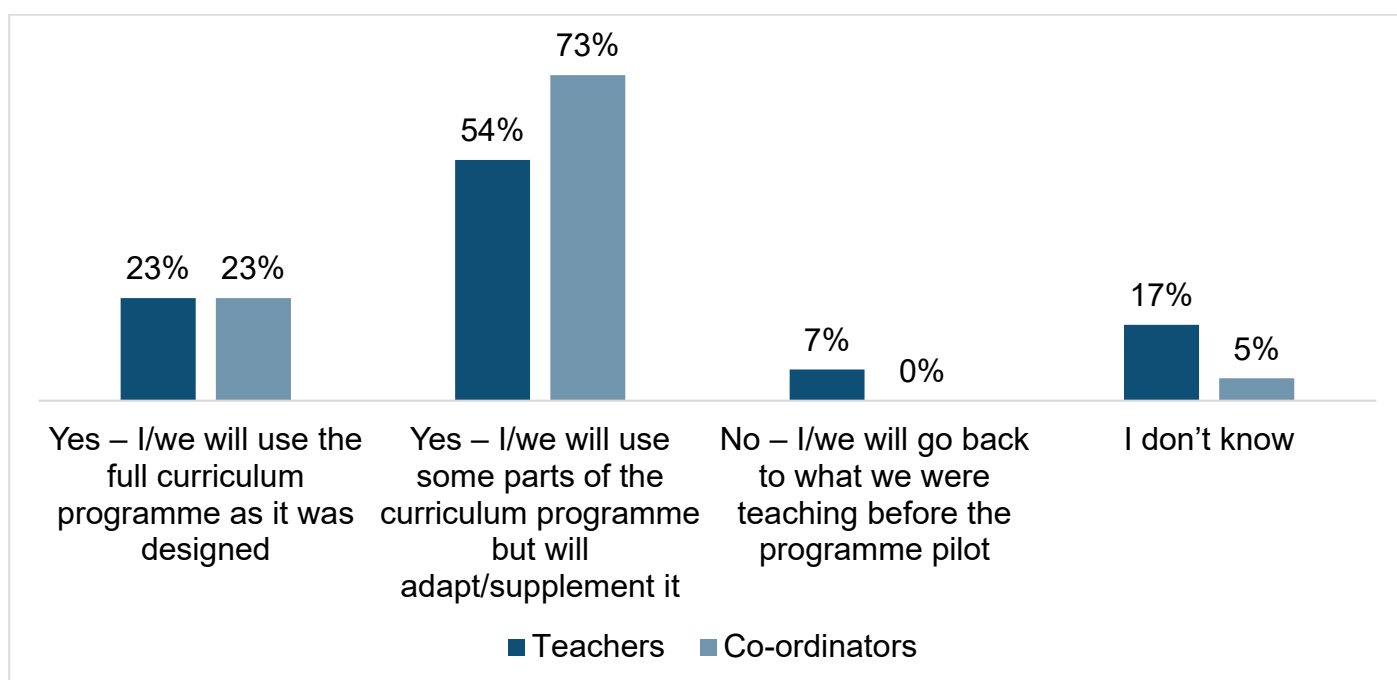
Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators.

8.2 Working relationships

The curriculum programme pilot facilitated the development of positive peer-to-peer support networks between schools and individual staff members. Commonly, interview participants of all types signalled a wish to continue to build on the working relationships that had developed between lead and participating schools throughout the course of the curriculum programme pilot. In particular, those piloting the Key Stage 3 most frequently spoke about wanting to further develop the collaborative partnerships that they had forged.

> [Delivery of the curriculum programme] is carrying on. I think again [the lead school] will be there in a supportive role. I was speaking to our lead teacher…and [they] said I could [send them] an email if there were any specific things that I wanted [them] to look at….[They also] said [that they were] more than happy to either help me arrange [fieldwork trips] or a member of [the lead school] team could come along and help run the trip. So going forward…it is more of a two-way relationship…[because the lead school] said it was really beneficial to

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[90] Note: No ratings were given by co-ordinators to the statement: 'Yes – we will develop similar programmes for other subjects or key stages'.

[them as well], to come in and see a lesson within [this context] and
how it works. (Participating school teacher, secondary school)

In addition, seven of the nine leads reported that they would continue to work with the current participating schools after the pilot had finished. During the follow-up survey:

- Five of the nine leads reported that they would extend the reach of their programme to work with other schools.

- Five leads reported that they would develop the current programme further.

- Four leads reported that they would develop new programmes for different subjects.

- Three stated that they would develop new programmes for different key stages.

- Just two leads reported that they would share the programme commercially.

8.3 Continued impact after pilot completion

Overall, most teachers and co-ordinators believed the pilot would continue to have a positive impact in their schools after it had finished (see Table 15), especially in reducing teacher workload (60%, n=61 of teachers and 89%, n=39 of co-ordinators).

If we carry on using the materials and resources, the plan would be
to carry on with year 8 next year, plus year 7. [I think that] this would
significantly reduce teachers' workload. (Participating school teacher,
secondary school)

Teacher workload was reported as the area where impact was thought to be most likely to continue, by both teachers and co-ordinators. Notably, co-ordinators were much more positive about the ongoing impact of the programmes on the quality of teaching and learning, compared to teachers. A continued positive impact was least likely to be mentioned by both teachers and co-ordinators for making lessons more interesting and pupil engagement, reflecting the concerns expressed about the content and format of some of the resources and the need to adapt these accordingly (see section 4).

Table 17: Are there any areas where you believe the curriculum programme pilot(s) will continue to have positive impact on after the pilot has finished?

Area of work	Teachers	Co-ordinators
Teacher workload	60%	89%
Quality of teaching and learning	45%	82%
Teachers' pedagogical knowledge / approach	45%	61%
Pupil attainment	41%	59%
Teacher subject knowledge	40%	57%
Effective implementation of the curriculum	40%	57%
Whole-class teaching	36%	59%
The complexity of planning	33%	61%
Understanding of a more effective way to teach the curriculum and subject	33%	55%
Pupils' engagement in learning	29%	48%
Making lessons more interesting	22%	34%
Other area	1%	2%
None	5%	0%
Don't Know	2%	0%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators.

During the interviews, a common perception emerging from discussions with those involved in piloting both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 programmes was that the delivery of the curriculum programmes would continue to have an impact on teaching and learning (supporting the survey, see Table 15), and pupil attainment. Interviewees of all types suggested that the delivery of the pilot had enabled teachers to develop their understanding of different pedagogical approaches and effective ways to deliver knowledge rich curriculums. They therefore perceived that future rollout of the programmes would help teachers embed the approaches into their practice, and support the development of in-depth subject knowledge among pupils.

> [The programme will] improve the quality of teaching using stretch
> and challenge. By using key words and improving the vocabulary of

students, it should have a positive impact on future users.
(Participating school teacher, secondary school)

9. Conclusions

Overall, the curriculum programmes were regarded by leads, co-ordinators and teachers to provide a high quality range of knowledge rich resources, developed by subject specialists, which were flexible and adaptable to school and pupil contexts. The pedagogical approaches suggested by leads, including teacher-led instruction and the use of knowledge recall exercises at the start and end of each lesson, were received particularly well and were generally perceived to have helped to engage pupils and provide a clear structure to classroom activities. Pupils' knowledge and application of specialist vocabulary was very commonly reported to have improved as a result of using the resources, with extended writing assignments reported by teachers and co-ordinators to have had a positive impact on pupil literacy overall. However, there were challenges encountered, particularly among those piloting the Key Stage 3 programmes.

9.1 Key messages: successes

It was clear that the curriculum programmes had a sustained positive impact on teacher workload over the duration of the pilot, with over half (52%, n=52) of teachers at the follow-up stating that their workload had decreased whilst being involved in the pilot. However, the pilot was also able to contribute to how teachers used their time to plan and prepare for lessons. Whilst most teachers reported that they saved time on identifying resources and planning lessons, they also suggested that they used this time to focus more on activities that they felt were meaningful to their role, such as differentiating materials for pupils, planning delivery of lessons and research to develop their subject knowledge. As such, whilst curriculum programmes have clear potential to reduce teacher workload, they can also contribute to improvements in teaching effectiveness.

Co-ordinators felt that teacher engagement in the pilot had been positive overall, and they had found it easy to recruit teachers to trial the programme. Although, there had been resistance to change at the start of the pilot amongst some teachers, their concerns regarding the requested pedagogical approaches and ways in which resources could be implemented in their classrooms lessened over time. This was felt to have been particularly the case where teachers in participating schools felt well supported by staff in lead schools and in their own schools, and where peer-to-peer relationships had developed into collaborative partnerships. This suggests that school-to-school models of curriculum programme development and implementation can also have positive impacts on school networks and support systems.

Overall, those piloting the curriculum programmes – namely co-ordinators and teachers – had engaged with the pedagogical approaches as intended and were most positive about them when they understood their rationale and how to deliver them. Face-to-face training, reciprocal visits between lead and participating schools, and modelling the use

of resources in practice were extremely valuable for engaging teachers and embedding the curriculum programmes into school delivery. Where teachers attended information and training events directly delivered by the lead school, this helped to alleviate concerns, secured buy-in and helped provide clarity regarding the rationale for the programme and how it was developed. As delivery progressed, relationships between lead and participating schools became more reciprocal and increasingly valued, as peer networks were developed and wider practice was shared. Accessibility of face-to-face training and support therefore has implications for future roll out of curriculum programmes, both for schools developing programmes and those implementing them.

Participating schools believed that they had adhered well to the knowledge-rich, teacher-led, whole-class teaching aspects of the pedagogy. Sequencing of the units was identified by lead schools as the most important aspect of the programmes to be followed and participating schools understood the need to follow topics in order to build upon prior knowledge. The majority of participating schools, intended to continue to use the curriculum programmes to some extent after the pilot had finished although most teachers and co-ordinators noted that they would adapt or supplement them to suit their needs. This was reflected in the high proportion of teachers who reported that they had adapted or would adapt the programme to some extent in their teaching (baseline survey, 95% of teachers who had received programme materials, n=109). It was important for the success of the curriculum programmes to achieve a balance of teacher autonomy whilst providing a consistent, clear structure for delivery. Some flexibility in design was required in order to ensure that scaffolding to provide additional support, and stretch and challenge for higher attainers, were possible for teachers to implement.

There was some evidence that the curriculum programmes could help to support non-subject specialists, as they allowed for the development of subject knowledge, making it easier for non-specialists to deliver lessons in a consistent manner. Further, evidence from the pilot suggests that curriculum programmes with knowledge rich, teacher-led, whole class teaching elements lead to improvements in pupil knowledge and skills. Early indications suggest particular improvements in: technical vocabulary, comprehension and extended writing.

Almost half (48%, n=48) of teachers also agreed that the programme had challenged their beliefs about what pupils could achieve and the majority (70%, n=71) agreed that the knowledge rich aspect of the programme had stretched their pupils. Pupil engagement and behaviour was often felt to have improved as a result of using the resources.

9.2 Key messages: areas for development

Key Stage 3: Teachers delivering Key Stage 3 programmes were generally less positive about the curriculum programmes than those piloting Key Stage 2 programmes, including around impact on workload, teaching and learning (except whole class teaching), and satisfaction with the pedagogical approach and training and support. They were more likely to request additional training and support, reflecting that it could be more difficult for subject specialists to introduce a new way of teaching their subject.

Non-specialists: The follow-up research highlighted that the programme resources had created challenges for non-specialists, due to some assumptions within the materials regarding pre-existing teacher knowledge. This suggests a need to consider the specific types of training and support required for those delivering Key Stage 3 programmes and for non-subject specialists. Senior leader engagement was perceived to be essential to obtaining buy-in from teachers, and helping them to feel supported, informed and clear on the programmes before having to implement them within their teaching.

Access to training and support: The importance of training and development was a strong theme emerging from all strands of the research. However, 14% (n=11) of teachers piloting Key Stage 3 programmes had received no training or support by the time of the follow-up.

Some teachers reported a lack of awareness of training opportunities, or of feedback not being cascaded to all teachers participating in the pilot. In these contexts, perceptions of the support received was less positive, and this cohort of teachers reported feeling isolated throughout the delivery of the pilot. Additionally, there were frequent requests for more written teacher guidance that could be used alongside the materials, as well as increased opportunities to observe the use of the materials in practice (either through reciprocal visits or videoed lessons).

Difficulties in releasing staff for training were further exacerbated by distance from lead schools. This has implications for future roll out of curriculum programmes as participating schools will need to consider whether they have the capacity to release staff for the necessary training and lead schools need to consider the type and availability of training and support they offer.

Pedagogical fidelity: In a minority of cases, leads were concerned that schools had not adopted the pedagogical approach fully or had made extensive adaptions to the sequencing of units or content of resources. Clear messages on the pedagogy and rationale of each programme, disseminated to all teachers using the materials is important.

Pupil engagement: Teachers were concerned about accessibility for lower attaining pupils or those with SEND or EAL. They were least likely to report a positive impact on pupils with SEND or EAL and some thought that higher-attaining pupils would not be adequately stretched. The appropriateness of the materials was open to debate, particularly in relation to Key Stage 3 and some pupil groups. Ensuring programmes are adaptable, that participating schools understand they are expected to differentiate for pupil need, how they can differentiate and what is acceptable or not acceptable in terms of differentiation, should be considered in any further roll-out or development of the curriculum programmes.

Teachers (most commonly those at Key Stage 3) also spoke about a lack of teacher creativity and autonomy when delivering rigid and repetitive resources and that this had ultimately had a detrimental impact on pupil engagement. It is possible that these concerns would be alleviated with more specific training and support or guidance materials on how the curriculum programme materials could be best utilised with different groups of pupils.

Communication: Differences in perceptions of the training and support, ease of ensuring pedagogical fidelity and impact of the programmes were noted between leads, co-ordinators and teachers. These differences highlight the need for regular, open communication between all stakeholders, to ensure new curriculum programmes can be implemented most effectively and impacts fully realised.

Timescales: It was perceived that running curriculum programmes across a full academic year would to help alleviate some issues in terms of sequencing of units and aligning the programme content with other curriculum delivery. This included the need to consider the implications for other key stages and particularly those with a three-year Key Stage 4 programme.

Monitoring and evaluation: Leads and co-ordinators had used observations and work scrutiny, formal outcomes data and staff and pupil voice to assess the ongoing progress and impact of the curriculum programmes. However, they suggested that exploring whether accurate benchmarks (for example, pupil attainment, teacher workload levels and soft measures such as engagement), could be put in place at a school level and tracked over time to assist in providing more detailed evidence on the impact of the curriculum programmes in the longer-term.

Appendix 1: Methodology and sample details

Survey methodology

Survey process

Contact details for all lead schools and participating schools were collated by the research team directly from the lead schools, by email. The online baseline surveys and follow-up surveys were disseminated by email to all lead and participating schools to maximise responses across curriculum programmes. For the participating schools, the baseline and follow-up surveys were sent to the co-ordinator at each participating school who was then encouraged to forward the survey to two to three teachers who were implementing the curriculum programme in their teaching. This was followed-up by reminder emails and telephone calls to the participating schools by the research team to encourage response. The surveys were staggered to account for differences in delivery start dates across the programmes

Baseline and follow-up survey sample

The baseline survey was disseminated to co-ordinators at 79 participating schools at a programme level. Only the participating schools that had started in-school delivery prior to July 2019 were sent an online survey. Lead schools that were starting in-school delivery until September (involving 12 participating schools) were not included in the baseline or follow-up surveys.

Responses were received from 62 participating schools (out of 79), representing an 78% response rate at a school level.

In total, 162 responses were received to the baseline survey of participating schools. Of these, 121 were from teachers who were using the curriculum resources in their teaching; 111 of these responded about individual programmes and ten of these responded about two programmes (representing 131 mentions across programmes). There were 41 responses received from participating school co-ordinators; 39 participating school co-ordinators responded about one programme and two co-ordinators responded about more than one programme (representing 47 mentioned across programmes).

The follow-up survey was disseminated to co-ordinators at 79 participating schools. Responses were received from 61 participating schools (out of 79), representing an 77% response rate at a school level.[91]

In total, 145 responses were received to the follow-up survey of participating schools. Of these, 101 were from teachers that were using the curriculum resources in their teaching; 93 of these reported on individual programmes and eight of these responded about two programmes (representing 109 mentions). There were 44 received from the co-ordinators; 41 of these responded about one programme and three co-ordinators responded about more than one programme (representing 48 mentions).

A separate baseline and follow-up survey questionnaire was completed by all nine leads (as above, two lead schools were not involved in the surveys).

Table 16 below gives a breakdown of responses to the baseline survey across each of the curriculum programmes. Table 17 gives a breakdown of responses to the follow-up survey.

Table 18: Baseline survey responses (by curriculum programme)

Curriculum programme	Teachers: Number of mentions[92]	Teachers: % of mentions	Co-ordinators: Number of mentions	Co-ordinators: % of mentions	Leads: Number of mentions
Science KS3	53	44%	21	51%	4
History KS2	12	10%	3	7%	2
History KS3	20	17%	12	29%	2
Geography KS2	31	26%	4	10%	3
Geography KS3	15	12%	7	17%	2
Total mentions	**131**		**47**		**13**

Source: Curriculum Programme Baseline Survey. Base: 121 teachers, 41 co-ordinators, 9 leads.

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[91] Surveys were disseminated through co-ordinators at each lead school. They were asked to send the survey to all relevant staff involved in the programme. As such, it is difficult to provide a response rate at an individual school level as the number of staff involved in delivery differed at each school. The response rate has therefore been calculated at an individual school level.

[92] Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes. As such 'mentions' refers to the number of responses to the questions on each specific curriculum programme.

Table 19: Follow-up survey responses (by curriculum programme)

Curriculum programme	Teachers: Number of mentions[93]	Teachers: % of mentions	Co-ordinators: Number of mentions	Co-ordinators: % of mentions	Leads: Number of mentions
Science KS3	50	48%	17	35%	4
History KS2	10	10%	4	8%	2
History KS3	12	12%	13	27%	2
Geography KS2	21	20%	7	15%	3
Geography KS3	16	11%	7	15%	2
Total mentions	**109**		**48**		**13**

Source: Curriculum Programme Follow-up Survey. Base: 101 teachers, 44 co-ordinators, 9 leads.

The school characteristics of teachers and co-ordinators at participating schools are detailed in Table 18 below.[94]

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[93] Respondents were sometimes involved in more than one curriculum programme and were therefore asked questions on all of these programmes. As such 'mentions' refers to the number of responses to the questions on each specific curriculum programme.

[94] Some schools submitted responses from multiple staff members, therefore this data represents the school characteristics of those responding to the survey and characteristics may therefore be over-represented compared to the profile of schools.

Table 20: School profile of baseline and follow-up survey responses (phase)

Phase	Baseline survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Baseline survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)
Primary/middle	30	19%	24	17
Secondary/middle	104	64%	99	68
All through	27	17%	22	15
Other	1	<1%	0	0

Source: Curriculum Programme Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Table 21: School profile of baseline and follow-up survey responses (region)

Region	Baseline survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Baseline survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)
North East	20	12%	15	10%
North West	5	3%	8	6%
East Midlands	28	17%	28	19%
West Midlands	36	22%	29	20%
East of England	11	7%	5	3%
Yorkshire and the Humber	6	4%	4	3%
London	21	13%	20	14%
South East	24	15%	22	15%
South West	11	7%	14	10%

Source: Curriculum Programme Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Table 22: School profile of baseline and follow-up survey responses (school size)

School size (number of pupils)	Baseline survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Baseline survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)
Under 200	2	1%	1	1%
201-400	19	12%	19	13%
201-1000	54	33%	52	36%
Over 1000	87	54%	73	50%

Source: Curriculum Programme Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Table 23: School profile of baseline and follow-up survey responses (Ofsted rating)

Ofsted rating	Baseline survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Baseline survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: Number of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)	Follow-up survey: % of responses (participating school co-ordinators and teachers)
Outstanding	11	7%	11	8%
Good	85	53%	68	47%
Requires Improvement	16	10%	18	12%
Inadequate	21	13%	23	16%
No current Ofsted rating	29	18%	25	17%

Source: Curriculum Programme Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Table 24: Baseline survey responses – participating school co-ordinators and teachers

Role	Number of responses	% of responses
Headteacher/principal/head of school	2	1%
Vice principal/deputy headteacher	4	3%
Assistant headteacher/assistant principal	7	4%
Head of subject/department/key stage/curriculum	65	40%
Other middle leadership responsibility	1	<1%
Classroom teacher	83	51%

Source: Curriculum Programme Surveys. Base: 121 teachers (baseline), 41 co-ordinators (baseline), 101 teachers (follow-up), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Table 25: Follow-up survey responses – participating school co-ordinators and teachers

Role	Number of responses	% of responses
Headteacher/principal/head of school	3	2%
Vice principal/deputy headteacher	3	2%
Assistant headteacher/assistant principal	7	5%
Head of subject/department/key stage/curriculum	52	36%
Other middle leadership responsibility	8	6%
Classroom teacher	72	50%

Source: Curriculum Programme Surveys. Base: 101 teachers (follow-up), 44 co-ordinators (follow-up).

Depth telephone interviews

As with the surveys, the baseline and follow-up in-depth telephone interviews were staggered to account for the differences in delivery timescales across the lead schools. In addition, some follow-up interviews took place with those starting delivery in September during November and December 2019.

Interview sampling

Lead schools were initially selected for involvement in the baseline telephone interviews. Selection considered the number of curriculum programmes they were delivering, subject, key stage focus, geography and school type, to ensure representation where possible across the programmes. For each lead school, five of their participating schools were then sampled to be involved in the telephone interviews.[95] When selecting schools, it was important to include a range of participating schools to ensure that different school

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[95] If lead schools did not have a minimum of five participating schools, then additional participating schools were sampled from other lead schools involved in the interviews to account for this.

contexts were accounted for. The sampling therefore where possible, included a range of school types (maintained and academy schools), Ofsted rating and school sizes. The sampling also considered the different types of curriculum programme, ensuring these were covered across subject and key stage.

For each lead and participating school, two teachers involved in the curriculum programme pilots were asked to participate in an interview. For lead schools it was specified that this should be the overall programme lead, and another member of staff with some involvement in the programme. For participating schools, it was suggested that this should be the co-ordinator for the programme at the school, in addition to a teacher who was using the resources from the programme in their teaching. All lead and participating schools selected for involvement were initially invited to take part by email, with telephone calls made to schools to encourage participation where required.

The follow-up stage involved, where possible, an interview with all those at the lead and participating schools that had been interviewed at the baseline. This allowed for perceptions and views on the programme to be tracked over time. In some instances there had been a change in personnel in schools between the baseline and follow-up survey. In such cases, the school were asked to nominate another member of staff involved in the programme to take part in the follow-up interview.[96]

To ensure that the sample was weighted to the follow-up stage, an additional two lead schools and ten participating schools (that were not involved in the baseline) were sampled for involvement in the follow-up stage.[97] For each of these lead and participating schools, two teachers involved in the curriculum programme pilots were asked to participate in an interview.

Telephone interview sample

A total of 48 baseline and 68 follow-up interviews were conducted across a sample of lead and participating schools (as shown in Tables 30 to 21 below).

The original target for the follow-up interviews was 72. However, at the follow-up stage it was found that there had been some delivery changes in participating schools which meant that the follow-up interviews could no longer take place, meaning that only 68 could be completed in total. Reasons for this were:

- One teacher being on paternity leave and no-one else being involved in the pilot.

- One school no longer piloting the programme (two interviews).

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[96] It was necessary to undertake interviews with five replacement teachers at the follow-up because the teachers who were interviewed at the baseline were no longer involved in the programme.
[97] The interview sample was weighted to the follow-up to allow for a greater amount of data to be collected from a wider range of schools on the impact and effectiveness of the pilot.

- One teacher interviewed at the baseline had left and nobody else at the school was using the resources.

Table 26: Baseline telephone interviews – January, April and September starts

Start of programme	Lead schools No. of interviews	Participating schools No. of interviews
January/February starts	4	20
April/May starts	5	19
September starts	0	0
Total	**9**	**39**

Source: Baseline Telephone Interviews.

Table 27: Follow-up telephone interviews – January, April and September starts

Start of programme	Lead schools No. of interviews	Participating schools No. of interviews
January/February starts	9	27
April/May starts	4	16
September starts	2	10
Total	**15**	**53**

Source: Follow-up Telephone Interviews.

Table 28: Baseline interviews (by curriculum programme)

Curriculum programme	Teachers	Co-ordinators	Leads
Science KS3	4	6	2
History KS2	2	2[98]	2
History KS3	6	6	2
Geography KS2	9	4	3
Geography KS3	0	0	0
Total	**21**	**18**	**9**

Source: Baseline Telephone Interviews

Table 29: follow-up telephone interviews (by curriculum programme)

Curriculum programme	Teachers	Co-ordinators	Leads
Science KS3	5	2	3
History KS2	3	3	2
History KS3	9	11	4
Geography KS2	6	5	3
Geography KS3	4	5	3
Total	**27**	**26**	**15**

Source: Follow-up Telephone Interviews.

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[98] Two lead schools were piloting history Key Stage 2 programmes and nine out of 24 participating schools implementing Key Stage 2 programmes were piloting history Key Stage 2. Two lead schools were piloting history alone and seven were piloting both history and geography. The telephone interview sample therefore included a mix of history and geography in those schools.

Table 30: School profile of baseline telephone interviews (participating schools)

Phase	Baseline: Number of participating schools	Baseline: % of participating schools	Follow-up: Number of participating schools	Follow-up: % of participating schools
Primary/middle	7	35%	7	25%
Secondary/middle	10	50%	18	64%
All through	3	15%	3	11%
School size (number of pupils)	**Baseline: Number of participating schools**	**Baseline: % of participating schools**	**Follow-up: Number of participating schools**	**Follow-up: % of participating schools**
Under 200	3	15%	3	11%
201-400	5	25%	4	14%
401-1000	5	25%	10	36%
Over 1000	7	35%	11	39%
Ofsted rating	**Baseline: Number of participating schools**	**Baseline: % of participating schools**	**Follow-up: Number of participating schools**	**Follow-up: % of participating schools**
Outstanding	2	10%	3	11%
Good	8	40%	11	39%
Requires Improvement	3	15%	4	14%
Inadequate	2	10%	3	11%
No current Ofsted rating	5	25%	7	25%

Staff at varying levels were involved in the baseline telephone interviews:

- At lead schools, interviews were conducted with principals (n=2), other senior leadership team (SLT) members (n=2) and heads of department (n=5).

- At participating schools, interviews were conducted with headteachers (n=2), other SLT members (n=4), heads of department (n=9), progress leaders/subject co-ordinators (n=2) and teachers (n=21).

Staff at varying levels were involved in the follow-up telephone interviews:

- At lead schools, interviews were conducted with executive principals/headteachers (n=1), headteachers/principals (n=4), other senior leadership team (SLT) members (n=5), heads of department (n=3) and teachers (n=2).

- At participating schools, interviews were conducted with headteachers (n=3), other SLT members (n=7), heads of department (n=15), progress leaders/subject co-ordinators (n=1) and teachers (n=27).

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were undertaken with teachers from participating schools who were using the curriculum programme resources in their teaching.

The focus groups brought together teachers from different participating schools who were involved in delivering the same curriculum programme. Co-ordinators were discouraged from participating in the focus groups to allow teachers to provide an honest viewpoint on their experience of the curriculum programme pilot.

There were some challenges in the logistics of arranging the focus groups face-to-face due to the distance of participating schools from one another; and difficulties in staff being able to be released to attend the groups. Due to these challenges two of these focus groups were facilitated online and three were held face-to-face.

Focus groups were held with participating school teachers from two January/February start lead schools; two April/May start lead schools and one September start lead school. All of these focus groups involved Key Stage 3 programmes. The focus groups were staggered to take account of the phased delivery.

The online focus groups took place in July 2019 (January/February starts) and the face-to-face focus groups took place in October/November 2019 (April/May and September starts).

Across all five focus groups 23 participating school teachers were involved.

Appendix 2: Baseline survey data

Figure 29: To what extent has the curriculum programme pilot had an impact on the following areas?
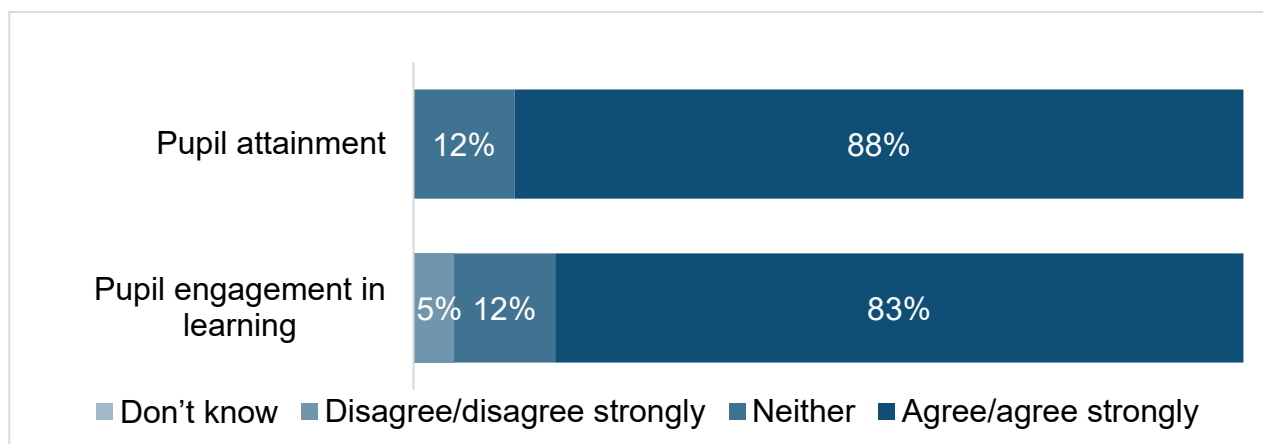
Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 41 participating school co-ordinators.

Table 31: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the curriculum programme pilot will have a positive impact on the following areas?

Areas of impact	Teachers: % Agree	Teachers: % Disagree	Coordinators: % Agree	Coordinators: % Disagree
Reducing the complexity of planning	79%	7%	93%	5%
Teacher workload	72%	7%	88%	5%
More effective implementation of the curriculum	70%	4%	90%	0%
Teacher subject knowledge	61%	13%	80%	7%
Quality of teaching and learning	60%	14%	93%	5%

Teacher pedagogical knowledge / approach	57%	10%	83%	5%
Improved whole-class teaching	57%	7%	83%	2%
Teachers' understanding of a more effective way to teach the curriculum and subject	54%	7%	83%	5%
Making lessons more interesting	34%	24%	63%	15%

Data not shown = 'Neither' and 'Don't know'

Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 121 teachers, 41 co-ordinators.

Table 32: Since being involved in the curriculum pilot, would you say that the following aspects of your job have increased, decreased or stayed the same?

Aspects of job	Key Stage 2 programmes: % Increased	Key Stage 2 programmes: % Stayed the same	Key Stage 2 programmes: % Decreased	Key Stage 3 programmes: % Increased	Key Stage 3 programmes: % Stayed the same	Key Stage 3 programmes: % Decreased
Work-life balance	18%	76%	7%	16%	76%	8%
Job satisfaction	22%	73%	4%	15%	70%	15%
Overall wellbeing at work	24%	76%	0%	14%	79%	7%
Ability to manage stress levels	24%	69%	7%	13%	80%	7%

Source: Curriculum Programmes Baseline Survey. Base: 121 teachers, 41 co-ordinators, 45 Key Stage 2 programmes, 86 Key stage 3 programmes.

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

For any enquiries regarding this publication, contact us at:
eve.schofield@education.gov.uk or www.education.gov.uk/contactus

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