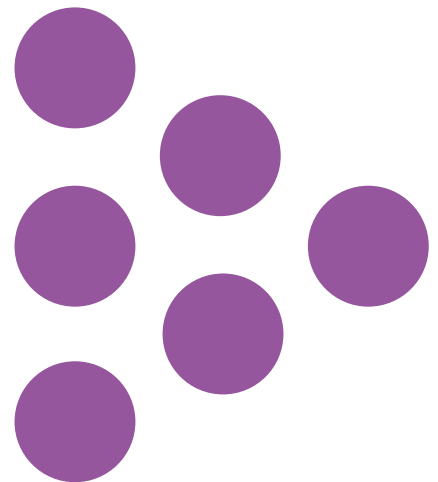# Learning recovery in Yorkshire and the Humber

National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

Learning Recovery in Yorkshire and the Humber

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Executive Summary

Introduction

White Rose Maths (WRM) commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to conduct research to explore evidence that suggested a wider Covid-19 attainment gap in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region in Autumn 2020[1], to understand the challenges that schools face, and how recovery in the region can best be supported. This study explores the Covid-19 attainment gap in terms of the difference between attainment before the Covid-19 pandemic compared to during the pandemic.

The study involved a bespoke survey conducted in Autumn 2021 and completed by 304 senior leaders and subject leaders of maths/numeracy and English/literacy in mainstream primary and secondary schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region. The survey asked respondents about their views covering the period from March 2020 to Autumn 2021, which involved two sets of school closures as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (March to June 2020, and January to March 2021). The study also involved a review of existing evidence on the attainment gap during the Covid-19 pandemic and regional factors that may underpin any variation.

Key findings

Did the region experience unique challenges?

- While schools in Yorkshire and the Humber may not have experienced entirely *unique* challenges during the pandemic, there is evidence that they faced numerous *additional* challenges – along with other northern regions of England – that may have contributed to a wider Covid-19 attainment gap: high levels of pupil wellbeing and mental health needs; less conducive home-learning environments (limited IT access, lower parental engagement, and lacking a quiet space to work); high rates of Covid-19; and high rates of pupil and staff absence when schools reopened. These challenges may be particularly exacerbated for schools with high proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM).

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[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/994350/Understanding_Prog,ress_in_the_2020_21_Academic_Year_Report_2.pdf

Was teaching and learning during school closures different to other areas?

- There is little evidence to indicate that teaching and learning during school closures in Yorkshire and the Humber was *systematically* different to other regions. However, there are several areas where teaching and learning may have differed, particularly during the first school closures (March – June 2020) when it was characterised by: lower pupil access to technology; less senior leader direction on the amount of home learning to set; lower use of strategies associated with higher pupil engagement, such as live or pre-recorded lessons and online conversations with pupils; and lower pupil and parent engagement with learning.

- Schools rated their provision during the second school closures (January to early March 2021) as much more effective than the first closures, which is consistent with the pattern of progression in remote teaching and learning approaches between the closure periods nationally.

Are there recovery activities the region should be focusing on?

- Schools in the region report that pupils remain substantially behind age-related expectations in maths/numeracy and English/literacy (at Autumn 2021), as well as in terms of skills for learning, confidence, social skills and wellbeing and mental health. However, there are signs of a reduction in the attainment gap[2].

- In academic year 2021-22, schools are prioritising recovery strategies focusing on wellbeing and mental health support and additional small group and one-to-one support for pupils, which is consistent with other regions. There is no indication of a change in focus to the detriment of particular areas of learning.

- Schools report that the greatest barriers to learning recovery are: school funding and budget constraints; limited staffing capacity; staff absence/illness/isolation; and pupil absence/illness/isolation.

- Schools' most pressing needs for additional support to aid pupils' learning recovery are: funding; support from specialist services/providers; additional teaching/support staff; support for pupils' mental health; flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding; and evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery.

- There is some tentative indication that schools with high proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals may require more targeted support (e.g. tutoring, dealing with unauthorised pupil absence and lack of parental engagement and support) and a greater range of strategies to meet the more complex needs of their pupils.

Conclusions and recommendations

The study concludes that the region should continue to focus on existing learning recovery activities, particularly as there is recent evidence from summer 2021 that the attainment gap is reducing in the region[2] despite additional challenges of the pandemic. The learning recovery strategies deployed in Yorkshire and the Humber are also consistent with approaches and priorities in other regions and are underpinned by empirical evidence of effectiveness, where this exists.

However, the region faces exacerbated challenges related to deprivation and a disproportionately adverse impact of Covid-19, and on average pupils remain substantially behind in maths and reading attainment in terms of both comparison to age-related expectations and to prior attainment[3], as well as being behind where they might be expected to be for their age in terms of skills and confidence. Hence, the study concludes with the following recommendations for additional support that is required to continue learning recovery in the region.

- Schools' most pressing needs for additional support to aid pupils' learning recovery are: funding; support from specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists); additional teaching/support staff; and support for pupils' mental health. Yorkshire and the Humber, along with other specific regions of England, require additional support to achieve the government's aims of 'levelling up'[4] and to prevent long-lasting exacerbation of geographical inequalities due to the pandemic on earnings, health and life chances[5].

- Schools serving the most deprived communities of pupils with more challenging needs require access to a wider range of support strategies in general and additional staffing capacity. Schools with higher proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals face particular ongoing challenges with unauthorised pupil absence and poor parental engagement with school and may require targeted support for these issues. A recent Ofsted report may provide ideas for improving attendance[6]. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit[7] may provide a source of ideas for improving parental engagement (e.g. enhancing communication with parents through regular text messages; and supporting parents to develop skills such as literacy and IT).

- Schools need evidence of what works in delivering the greatest gains in learning recovery to inform the investment of limited resources. Subject leaders particularly requested evidence of what works in learning recovery strategies, suggesting the need to more

[2] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1029841/Understanding_progress_in_the_2020-21_academic_year_Report_4_October2021.pdf
[3] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1029841/Understanding_progress_in_the_2020-21_academic_year_Report_4_October2021.pdf
[4] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052046/Executive_Summary.pdf
[5] https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/EPI-Education-Recovery-Report-2___.pdf
[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence
[7] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit

effectively target evidence-based knowledge within schools and to support implementation of these strategies in practice with pupils. The EEF Toolkit provides evidence-based strategies for narrowing the attainment gap (e.g. feedback, peer tutoring, oral language interventions, and reading comprehension strategies), and further research could explore examples of practices in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber that are successfully narrowing the Covid-19 attainment gap.

- Support for pupils' skills for learning (e.g. concentration, persistence, thinking skills, metacognition) is a priority. Schools in the region could be particularly supported to strengthen approaches to develop such skills by using evidence-based strategies identified on the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Metacognition and self-regulation approaches can be taught and modelled to pupils to help them effectively evaluate their learning and are associated with substantial gains in attainment.

- Support for pupils' wellbeing, social skills and confidence is crucial given the impact on educational outcomes[8], and schools need funding and improved support for this, including from specialist and statutory services (e.g. social services/family support, speech and language support, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)).

- The majority of senior leaders and subject leaders require additional support for pupils' learning recovery, to at least some degree, from tutoring. However, relative to other requirements for additional support, such as for mental health and wellbeing - demand in schools in the region for tutoring and mentoring through the Government's funded National Tutoring Programme (NTP) is modest – which may indicate issues with the perceived effectiveness and/or accessibility of the programme. This also indicates a degree of disconnect between what teachers in Yorkshire and the Humber region require to aid learning recovery of their pupils, and what the Government is providing. There is tentative evidence that secondary schools in the region are more likely to be using tutoring already and they, and schools with higher FSM, are slightly more likely to request further support in this regard. This issue may warrant further exploration to ensure any barriers to the programme in Yorkshire and the Humber region can be overcome and these strategies more widely promoted and accessed by all schools and to a greater extent. Schools in the region may be encouraged to review the range of support offered through the NTP, which includes 95% subsidised funding to employ an academic mentor; school-led tutoring funded via a ring-fenced grant for locally sourced tutoring provision; and 70% subsidised funding for accredited tutoring services provided by Tuition Partners. Further research could identify examples of where these programmes are being successfully implemented in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber.

- Senior leaders and subject leaders are reasonably satisfied with the support they receive from professional services and associations, such as maths and English hubs. However,

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[8] https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-british-journal-of-psychiatry/article/educational-attainment-trajectories-among-children-and-adolescents-with-depression-and-the-role-of-sociodemographic-characteristics-longitudinal-datalinkage-study/E246BE33DB53DCDC1509C3012149C258; https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10649-021-10084-7.

catch-up in specific subject areas is key and can be supported further by subject and professional support services, including with the provision of teaching and learning resources for core teaching, extended learning opportunities and small group and one-to-one teaching, as well as staff training.

- As senior leaders identified implementing more pupil learning and wellbeing recovery strategies than subject leaders, it may be worth ensuring subject leaders are aware of where to access support and encouraging school leaders to engage all their school staff in learning recovery efforts beyond specific core subject areas.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

White Rose Maths (WRM) commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to conduct research to explore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on pupils in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region. There is some evidence to suggest that the pandemic has had a particularly adverse impact on pupils' learning in the region compared to other areas in England. For example, analysis by the Education Policy Institute (2021a) using Renaissance Learning assessments revealed that in Yorkshire and the Humber pupil attainment was 0.6 of a month more behind than the national average Covid-19 attainment gap for reading, and 1.3 months more behind for maths. This study concerns the Covid-19 attainment gap in terms of the difference between attainment before the Covid-19 pandemic compared to during the pandemic. It explores the evidence of a wider Covid-19 attainment gap in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber and possible factors underpinning it. We aim to understand the challenges that schools in the region faced, any continuing needs, and how recovery in the region can best be supported.

The study had three research questions:

- Did the region experience unique challenges that can explain the evidence of a wider attainment gap?
- Was teaching and learning during partial school closures systematically different to other areas?
- Are there specific recovery activities the region should be focusing on given the particular challenges it faces?

1.1.1 Context of the study

As a result of rising Covid-19 cases, all schools in England closed to the majority of pupils on 20th March 2020 (though they remained open for vulnerable pupils and the children of keyworkers). Most schools then partially reopened to pupils in Years 1 and 6, and to GCSE and A Level students on 1st June 2020. However, pupils in other year groups did not return and were learning remotely until schools fully reopened in September 2020. A second set of national school closures was implemented for all pupils from 4th January 2021 until 8th March 2021.

The Government has implemented a range of measures to support learning recovery. The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) was introduced in November 2020, providing tuition from verified providers at subsidised rates. Academic mentors were also introduced alongside tutoring. These have continued into the 2021/22 academic year, with the addition of School-Led Tutoring, where schools receive funding to select and use their own tutors, including existing school staff. In February 2021, the government announced extra funding for all pupils in England through a recovery premium to support disadvantaged pupils in all state-funded primary and secondary schools (Gov.uk, 2021d). In March 2021, the government released guidance on summer schools, which included funding for state-funded secondary schools. The government has also provided

some resources for schools to support with issues such as wellbeing, and guidance on health and safety during the pandemic.

1.2 About the study

The study involved a bespoke survey with senior leaders and subject leaders of maths/numeracy and English/literacy in mainstream primary and secondary schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region. The study also involved a review of existing recent evidence to explore the attainment gap during the Covid-19 pandemic and evidence of regional factors that may underpin any variation.

1.2.1 Survey

All mainstream primary and secondary schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region were invited to take part in an online survey in November and December 2021. The online survey was emailed to senior leaders (i.e. headteachers)[9] and school administrative addresses, and the senior leader was asked to complete their survey and forward the email and survey links to their maths/numeracy and English/literacy subject leads[10]. An incentive of a £5 charitable donation was offered for every completed survey[11]. Table 1 below shows the number of schools that were invited to complete the survey and the number of completed surveys by respondent type and school phase.

Table 1   Survey response rates

Respondent type	School phase	Schs invited to complete survey (N)	Completed surveys (N)	Response rate (%)	Total return surveys	Total analysed surveys*
Senior leaders	Primary	1662	151	9	178	158
	Secondary	313	27	9		
Subject leaders[12]	Primary	1662	142	9	166	146
	Secondary	313	24	8		

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. *= returned surveys where the respondent had only answered the first two questions to confirm their school and role were excluded from the analysis.

The achieved survey sample was smaller than anticipated, which means we can be less sure that responses on each question are representative of schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region. The achieved sample is also too small to enable analysis of all survey questions by school

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[9] It was requested that the senior leader survey be completed by a school senior leader, for example the headteacher, deputy or assistant head.

[10] It was requested that the subject leader survey be completed by the school's lead for maths/numeracy or English/literacy (or someone with responsibility for both subjects).

[11] This incentive was instigated several weeks after the initial launch of the survey in an attempt to boost response rates. The charitable donation was made for all completed surveys, including those completed prior to the advertisement of the incentive.

[12] Of the 146 completed subject leader surveys, 100 were able to comment about English/literacy and 61 were able to comment about maths/numeracy.

characteristics. While this breakdown is provided for selected survey questions, these results should be interpreted with caution.

The characteristics of schools in the sample were reasonably similar to characteristics of the population of schools in Yorkshire and the Humber as a whole, covering the following characteristics: phase (primary, secondary); school type (academy, maintained); geographic context (rural, urban); deprivation (proportion of pupils in the school eligible for free school meals (FSM)); children with special educational needs and disabilities (proportion of pupils with special educational needs); language diversity (proportion of pupils in the school with English as an Additional Language (EAL)); ethnic diversity (proportion of pupils in the school from white British backgrounds indicating the proportion of pupils from non-white British backgrounds) (see Appendix A Table 24).

The survey comprised questions on the following themes:

- teaching, learning and curriculum strategies during partial school closures[13]
- challenges supporting pupils' learning during partial school closures and reopening[14]
- assessing pupils' current needs (in Autumn 2021)
- learning and wellbeing recovery strategies
- support required to aid learning recovery.

Responses to all of the survey questions are presented in tables in this report – each table provides the survey question and frequency of answers for each of the response options.

1.2.2 Evidence review

The evidence review was conducted during September 2021 to January 2022 and identified key pieces of evidence deemed relevant to the research questions. The focus was on evidence relating to the period of the pandemic (2020-January 2022); regional variation in the Covid-19 attainment gap; and factors that may be associated with variation in experiences of the pandemic and school closures (e.g. Covid-19 cases, deprivation, information technology (IT) access, household composition, pupil absence, parental engagement in child's learning, mental health, remote teaching and learning approaches). Findings from the evidence review are discussed in relation to each of the research questions and a full list of references can be found at the end of the report.

1.3 About this report

This report presents and discusses the findings from the survey and review of existing evidence in relation to each of the research questions in the following chapters, breaking the third research question down into sub-sections:

- Chapter 2: Did the region experience unique challenges that can explain the evidence of a wider attainment gap?

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[13] First partial school closures: 23rd March 2020 to 1st June 2020; second partial school closures: 6th January 2021 to 8th March 2021.
[14] From September 2020 and April 2021.

- Chapter 3: Was teaching and learning during partial school closures systematically different to other areas?
- Chapter 4: Are there specific recovery activities the region should be focusing on given the particular challenges it faces?
    - 3a. Assessment of pupils' needs
    - 3b. Current learning and wellbeing recovery strategies
    - 3c. Support required to aid learning recovery
- Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations.

2 Did the region experience unique challenges that can explain the evidence of a wider attainment gap?

This chapter draws together the findings from the survey and evidence review to explore whether schools in Yorkshire and the Humber faced unique challenges during the pandemic that may explain the wider attainment gap.

2.1 Survey findings: challenges during school closures

Senior leaders and subject leaders from schools in Yorkshire and the Humber reported that the **main challenges faced during the periods of national partial school closures** were: balancing the needs of pupils in-school and at home, staff stress and workload, high levels of pupil wellbeing and mental health needs, and pupils lacking a quiet space to work at home (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2 **Senior leaders: Challenges to supporting pupils' learning during partial school closures**

Thinking about both periods of national partial school closures, to what extent did your school face the following challenges in supporting pupils' learning?	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Balancing the needs of pupils in-school and at home	0	11	26	31	32	156	3.85
Staff stress/workload	1	12	26	37	24	156	3.71
High level of pupil wellbeing/mental health needs	3	16	28	31	22	156	3.53
Pupils lacking a quiet space to work at home	1	16	32	31	19	156	3.51
Poor pupil access to IT devices at home	4	25	25	22	23	156	3.35
High level of pupil free school meal needs	9	21	28	20	22	156	3.26
Poor parental engagement	3	23	37	24	14	156	3.24
Poor pupil access to internet at home	2	29	33	22	14	156	3.17
Subject-specific teaching challenges	4	24	33	32	7	156	3.14

	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Poor pupil engagement	3	26	44	17	10	156	3.05
Staff shortages	17	29	28	17	8	156	2.69
Staff lack of confidence using IT	12	37	31	15	4	156	2.62
High levels of Covid-19 cases among pupils and/or staff	19	35	28	15	4	156	2.51
Lack of staff access to good quality IT	27	32	25	10	6	156	2.36

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Table 3   Subject leaders: Challenges to supporting pupils' learning during partial school closures

Thinking about both periods of national partial school closures, to what extent did your school face the following challenges in supporting pupils' learning?							
	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Balancing the needs of pupils in-school and at home	1	4	34	36	25	146	3.79
Staff stress/workload	1	10	27	37	24	146	3.72
High level of pupil wellbeing/mental health needs	0	10	32	44	15	146	3.64
Pupils lacking a quiet space to work at home	<1	15	36	31	18	146	3.50
Poor pupil access to IT devices at home	2	18	33	29	18	146	3.42
Poor pupil engagement	0	20	40	27	13	146	3.34
Poor parental engagement	0	20	42	26	12	146	3.31
Poor pupil access to internet at home	<1	25	33	27	14	146	3.30
High level of pupil free school meal needs	4	27	29	23	17	146	3.23

Subject-specific teaching challenges	3	27	38	24	8	146	3.05
Staff lack of confidence using IT	6	29	38	25	1	146	2.87
Staff shortages	17	28	33	14	8	146	2.67
High levels of Covid-19 cases among pupils and/or staff	13	40	27	14	7	146	2.62
Lack of staff access to good quality IT	20	36	25	16	2	146	2.45

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Further analysis suggests that **some challenges were exacerbated for schools with higher proportions of FSM pupils**. Tables 25 and 26 in Appendix B (reported by senior leaders and subjects leaders respectively) show that schools in higher FSM quintiles reported challenges to a greater extent in terms of:

- high level of pupil free school meals needs (e.g. organising lunch parcels for pupils not in school)
- poor pupil access to IT devices
- pupils lacking a quiet space to work at home
- poor parental engagement
- poor pupil access to internet at home
- poor pupil engagement.

However, some key issues such as pupil wellbeing and mental health, staff shortages, and managing teaching and learning for in-school and at-home pupils were experienced similarly across FSM quintiles. This analysis indicates that while all schools experienced a range of challenges during partial school closures, a number of challenges may have been amplified for schools with higher proportions of FSM pupils.

2.2   Survey findings: challenges on reopening

Senior leaders and subject leaders indicated that their **main challenges on reopening to all pupils in autumn of 2020 were: pupil absences, reduced quality of teaching due to Covid-19 safety restrictions, and staff absences** (see Table 4). Clearly, challenges to recovering pupils' learning persisted well beyond the closure periods themselves (as indicated by the low proportion of responses indicating 'not at all' to these challenges on reopening).

Table 4   Senior leaders and subject leaders: challenges to pupils' learning when schools reopened

On return to school in Autumn 2020, to what extent did you experience the following challenges to pupils' learning?	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Senior leaders							
Pupil absence/illness/isolation (authorised)	3	21	28	27	20	155	3.39
Reduced quality of teaching due to Covid-19 safety restrictions	3	24	32	25	17	155	3.29
Staff absence/illness/isolation	6	19	34	23	18	155	3.28
Pupil absence (unauthorised)	13	32	26	17	11	155	2.81
Subject leaders							
Pupil absence/illness/isolation (authorised)	0	20	33	27	20	146	3.47
Reduced quality of teaching due to Covid-19 safety restrictions	5	20	29	33	14	146	3.31
Staff absence/illness/isolation	3	27	30	28	12	146	3.18
Pupil absence (unauthorised)	11	31	34	18	7	146	2.79

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

2.3   Evidence review findings: school challenges

The review of existing evidence indicates that Yorkshire and the Humber as a region faced additional challenges during the pandemic compared to other regions.

Firstly, the region has relatively high levels of deprivation which may mean pupils have broader and more complex (non-academic) needs associated with deprivation (e.g. living in poverty, higher mental health needs). In Yorkshire and the Humber, 21.9 percent of pupils are eligible for FSM (Gov.uk, 2021a); placing the region fourth highest in the country for the proportion of pupils eligible for FSM. Yorkshire and the Humber also saw one of the biggest increases (2.5 percentage points) in the proportion of pupils eligible for FSM between spring 2019/20 and autumn 2020/21 (Gov.uk, 2021). Additionally, the region has one of the lowest Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per head in the country, along with the North East and the North West. This indicates that additional challenges of the pandemic related to higher levels of deprivation may have adversely impacted pupil attainment in Yorkshire and the Humber region as well as other regions in the north

of England with similar levels of deprivation. However, some of demographic factors that may have presented particular challenges to home-learning during the pandemic, such as larger household size, lone parent households, and multiple family households, are not particularly prevalent in Yorkshire and the Humber region compared to other region (ONS, 2021a; ONS, 2021b).

Secondly, there is some evidence that Yorkshire and the Humber were facing attainment challenges even prior to school closures. Prior to the pandemic, at Key Stage 2, the region had a slightly lower percentage of pupils reaching expected standard (63 percent) in reading, writing and maths than the England average (65 percent), and slightly lower than in other northern regions (e.g. North East 66 percent and North West 64 percent) (Gov.uk, 2019 table L1). Numbers of GCSE grades at 4 or above in Yorkshire and the Humber were the third lowest compared to other regions of England in 2019 (Gov.UK and Ofqual, 2021). This suggests that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber may have already been facing additional challenges even before the school closures.

Thirdly, there is evidence to indicate that Yorkshire and the Humber was particularly adversely impacted by Covid cases. Yorkshire and the Humber has experienced one of the highest rates in the country of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 of the population and above the rate for the UK in general[15] (Gov.uk, 2022b), and pupils will have been exposed to the many adverse consequential impacts of the disease, such as on families' health and income. The region also experienced a peak in coronavirus cases at a particularly crucial time - around November 2020 (Gov.uk, 2022b), which was between the two national school closures – when most other regions were beginning to see more pupils back in school and starting the journey of recovering learning lost during school closures. In comparison, the national peak around this time was in December and January 2021, resulting in the second school closures for all schools, leading to further disruption to learning in all regions.

Relatedly, absence data from the autumn term 2020 indicates that the mean rate of pupil absence for Covid-related circumstances nationally was 7 percent, but in Yorkshire and the Humber this value was 8.3 percent (Gov.uk, 2021c). This echoes our survey findings (see Table 4), that school staff reported pupil and staff absences as some of the key challenges of fully reopening initially in Autumn 2020. Additionally, data from March 2021 shows that attendance in state-funded schools was lowest in Yorkshire and the Humber (86 per cent compared to 90 per cent nationally) (Gov.uk, 2021b). This means that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber may have had to implement remote learning during these periods in addition to the main closures; compounding the impact on lost learning as a result of pupils not being in school. This would have elongated the challenge of managing teaching and learning for in-school and at-home pupils concurrently, which was reported as a major challenge by surveyed school staff. It may be no coincidence that an attainment gap, between pupils in Yorkshire and the Humber and other regions, was observed in autumn of 2020 (DfE, 2021a), during this period of increased Covid cases and absences.

Finally, data on mental health shows that the region had slightly higher numbers of children with a 'probable' mental health disorder (17.7 per cent) than the national average (16 per cent) in July 2020 (Vizard *et al.*, 2020). There is also prior evidence of a general link between deprivation and

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[15] This was the case at the time of writing this report, February 2022.

mental health needs (Delgadillo *et al*., 2016) and, as Yorkshire and the Humber has higher rates of deprivation than some other regions, this means they may have faced additional challenges in relation to pupils' mental health.

It is clear that Yorkshire and the Humber as a region has faced many challenges in relation to schooling over the course of the pandemic and this may have contributed to a wider gap in maths and reading attainment compared to other regions in England.

3 Was teaching and learning during partial school closures systematically different to other areas?

This section explores the survey and evidence review findings on the teaching and learning strategies deployed during partial school closures.

3.1 Survey findings: teaching and learning during first and second national partial school closures

Senior leaders and subject leaders reported very **low usage of live online lessons during the first partial school closures** (see Tables 5 and 6, left side of the tables). Indeed, 71 per cent of the respondents reported not using live online lessons at all during this time. Pre-recorded/videos of lessons were used to some extent. However, more common strategies during the first closures were: signposting to educational websites or apps and interactions between teachers and parents online or via telephone. Interactions between teachers and pupils were also used to a reasonable extent, as was providing workbooks/physical resources.

Both senior leaders and subject leaders reported using different and more varied teaching and learning strategies in the second partial school closures compared to the first. Firstly, both groups of respondents rated that they used live online lessons and pre-recorded/videos of lessons to a much greater extent during the second partial school closures than the first (see Tables 5 and 6, right side of the tables). The most common teaching and learning strategy during the second school closures was interaction between teachers and pupils online or via telephone and, again, the use of this strategy increased substantially from the first closures. Teachers providing feedback on work was also much more frequent during the second closures than the first. These findings indicate that schools were engaging with a range of strategies for home learning to a much greater extent in the second closures, particularly those with an interactive element.

Table 5   Senior leaders: teaching and learning approaches during first and second partial school closures

Thinking back to the national partial school closures (23rd March 2020 to 1st June 2020, and 6th January 2021 to 8th March 2021) to what extent did your school implement the following remote learning approaches?	First national partial school closure							Second national partial school closure						
	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Live online lessons	71	18	8	2	1	157	1.45	20	5	15	18	42	158	3.56
Pre-recorded/videos of lessons (including teachers' own and/or other providers)	31	24	20	14	11	157	2.50	6	11	11	23	49	158	3.97
Interactions between teachers and pupils (e.g. online, telephone)	6	24	30	13	26	157	3.29	0	3	4	20	72	158	4.61
Interactions between pupils and other pupils (e.g. online, telephone)	46	25	17	5	7	157	2.01	7	11	22	26	34	158	3.69
Interactions between teachers and parents (e.g. online, telephone)	<1	20	29	20	30	157	3.58	0	2	15	34	50	158	4.32
Coordination of learning (e.g. via a VLE platform)	27	15	25	14	20	157	2.85	4	3	8	16	69	158	4.43
Teachers providing feedback on pupils' work	14	29	30	12	15	157	2.86	0	3	9	28	60	158	4.46
Providing workbooks, sheets or other physical resources	1	11	23	20	45	156	3.96	4	23	27	20	26	158	3.41
Access to/signposting to educational websites or apps	2	7	21	28	42	156	4.01	0	8	12	27	54	157	4.26

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Table 6   Subject leaders: teaching and learning approaches during first and second partial school closures

Thinking back to the national partial school closures (23rd March 2020 to 1st June 2020, and 6th January 2021 to 8th March 2021) to what extent did your school implement the following remote learning approaches?	First national partial school closure							Second national partial school closure						
	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Live online lessons	68	16	8	3	5	146	1.62	21	12	10	15	42	146	3.47
Pre-recorded/videos of lessons (including teachers' own and/or other providers)	32	29	16	10	13	146	2.43	6	9	11	20	54	146	4.07
Interactions between teachers and pupils (e.g. online, telephone)	3	30	24	24	19	145	3.26	0	2	7	15	76	144	4.65
Interactions between pupils and other pupils (e.g. online, telephone)	37	26	18	10	10	146	2.29	5	12	15	23	44	145	3.90
Interactions between teachers and parents (e.g. online, telephone)	1	24	29	25	21	146	3.40	0	5	21	25	49	146	4.17
Coordination of learning (e.g. via a VLE platform)	14	27	20	14	25	145	3.08	3	2	5	16	75	146	4.58
Teachers providing feedback on pupils' work	7	32	34	16	12	146	2.93	0	2	10	34	54	146	4.40
Providing workbooks, sheets or other physical resources	4	16	27	26	27	145	3.56	4	16	24	19	37	145	3.69
Access to/signposting to educational websites or apps	0	11	23	28	38	146	3.94	0	4	13	21	62	146	4.40

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

3.2 Survey findings: effectiveness of remote learning provision

Both **senior leaders and subject leaders rated remote learning provision as being substantially more effective in the second closures compared to the first,** for enabling pupils to cover the curriculum (see Table 7). This perception of increased effectiveness over time may also relate to the increased use of a wider range of home learning strategies during the second closures (as discussed in section 3.1).

Table 7   Senior leaders and subject leaders: effectiveness of remote learning provision

Overall, how effective do you feel your school's remote learning provision was for enabling pupils to cover the curriculum...?	1 'Not at all effective' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'Very effective' (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Senior leaders							
...during the first national partial school closures	8	34	41	14	3	157	2.69
...during the second national partial school closures	0	0	8	40	52	157	4.45
Subject leaders							
...during the first national partial school closures	8	36	32	15	10	146	2.84
...during the second national partial school closures	0	<1	8	43	48	146	4.38

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021.

3.3 Evidence review findings: remote teaching and learning approaches

The review of existing evidence indicates that **remote teaching and learning approaches during partial school closures were broadly similar in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber and other regions of England, with several notable exceptions.**

Research by Rose *et al.* (2021), Lucas *et al.* (2020) and Eivers *et al.* (2020) found similar low use of online and live lessons nationally in the first school closures as found in this present survey with schools in Yorkshire and the Humber (e.g. in the survey by Lucas *et al.* (2020), only 14 percent of headteachers reported use of online, live lessons in the first closures). Whereas, signposting to educational websites was reported as a very common strategy in the first closures (Rose *et al.*, 2021; Lucas *et al.*, 2020), as found in the present survey. With regard to the second closures, an

NFER Teacher Voice panel in March 2021 (Nelson *et al*., 2021a) found that the use of live teaching had increased to around 54 percent, which is, again, very similar to the increase in this approach identified in the present survey. This indicates that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber were generally employing similar strategies during home learning, though it must be noted that, due to different questions and samples, the data is not directly comparable and can be used as an indication only.

However, Lucas *et al*. (2020) also found that teachers in northern regions of England reported lower levels of pupil access to IT than other regions. This may have impacted the decisions of some schools in the present sample to not use live lessons or virtual learning environments (VLE), as some pupils would not have been able to access them. Lucas *et al*. (2020) also found that using a VLE to communicate with pupils and parents, and having online conversations with pupils were strategies associated with higher engagement. Weidmann *et al*. (2021) reported tentative evidence that providing video and live lessons to pupils while absent from school was associated with reductions in attainment gaps. Julius and Sims (2020) also reported that schools in southern regions of England were more likely than northern regions to provide pupils with computers.

Furthermore, Lucas *et al*. (2020) found that during the first closures, senior leaders in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber were significantly less likely than those in London and the South East to advise staff on the amount of home-learning work to set. This may have resulted in lower or differing amounts of work being set for pupils during the first closures. The study also found instances of lower use in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region of strategies associated with higher pupil engagement in remote learning, particularly in the first closures, such as lower use of pre-recorded lessons and online conversations with pupils.

An NFER survey in March 2021 (Nelson *et al*., 2021) indicated that pupils in the most deprived schools were much less likely to be returning their last piece of set work to teachers, than pupils in the least deprived schools. As Yorkshire and the Humber has the fourth highest percentage of pupils eligible for FSM, it is possible that, during closures, schools may have experienced pupils not returning work to a greater extent when compared to other areas with low FSM, such as the South East. This could indicate lower pupil engagement and may have reduced opportunities for teacher feedback and subsequent tailoring of remote learning delivery.

Evidence also suggests that parental engagement with remote learning may have been lower for some pupils in Yorkshire and the Humber region. Although pupils eligible for FSM may be more likely to have parents who are out of work (Green, 2020), parents of FSM-eligible children felt less confident and were less likely to understand learning tasks set as part of their child's remote learning (Allen and Wespieser, 2021). Additionally, the region has higher numbers of people in essential and key worker roles, or jobs where working from home is not possible (BBC, 2021). Therefore, some parents would not have been able to support their children at home, though key worker children were likely to have been in school if they were not isolating. With regard to parental engagement more generally, findings from an NFER survey in spring 2020 (Lucas *et al*., 2020) show that the northern regions of England saw slightly lower levels of parental engagement (Yorkshire and the Humber: 50 percent) than the south and east of England (excluding London: 59 percent).

Schools in northern regions with higher levels of deprivation may have had to provide more welfare-related support to pupils during school closures than other regions, potentially distracting from the focus on curriculum delivery. As mentioned, high FSM rates in the region mean that lunch parcels would have needed to be delivered to some pupils. Julius and Sims (2020) reported that senior leaders and teachers from schools in northern regions were more likely than their counterparts in the south to report their main approach during remote provision was non-curriculum based activities for pupils and conducting welfare visits to pupils' homes.

In summary, there is little evidence from the review to indicate that remote teaching and learning in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber was systematically different to other regions. However, there are several areas where teaching and learning may have been different, particularly in the first school closures, and this may well have been driven by the different needs of pupils in the region.

4 Are there specific recovery activities the region should be focusing on given the particular challenges it faces?

This chapter presents the survey and evidence review findings on the learning recovery strategies that may be required in Yorkshire and the Humber to address the challenges it faces. It explores the findings in three sub-sections:

- assessment of pupils' needs
- current learning and wellbeing recovery strategies
- support required to aid learning recovery.

4.1 Survey findings: assessment of pupils' needs

4.1.1 Pupils' current levels of attainment

Most senior leaders and subject leaders reported that their **pupils' current level of attainment in maths/numeracy and English/literacy was behind where they would normally expect** by one to two months or more (as of the Autumn term 2021) (see Table 8). This suggests that, while there is emerging evidence of more recent learning recovery in these core subjects (DfE, 2021b), perceptions on the ground in schools are that gaps in learning persist. Senior leaders reported a slightly larger attainment gap between pupils' current levels of attainment and where they would expect them to be for their age, than subject leaders; a higher proportion of senior leaders than subject leaders indicated that pupils were two or more months behind in maths and English.

Table 8   Senior leaders and subject leaders: pupils' current levels of attainment

Thinking about all your pupils' current levels of attainment, where would you say they are now, in general, in relation to where you would normally expect them to be at this time of year in...						
	2 or more months behind (%)	1 to 2 months behind (%)	Not behind at all (%)	1 to 2 months ahead (%)	2 or more months ahead (%)	N
Senior leaders						
...maths/numeracy attainment	66	31	3	0	0	154
...English/literacy attainment	71	26	3	0	0	154
Subject leaders						
...maths/numeracy attainment	54	39	7	0	0	100
...English/literacy attainment	62	34	3	0	0	61*

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. Questions in the subject leaders' survey relating to maths/numeracy and English/literacy attainment were only answered by respondents with responsibility for those fields. *N=<100 so percentages should be interpreted with caution.

4.1.2 Pupils' skills and confidence

Senior leaders and subject leaders indicated that **pupils had ongoing needs in terms of recovering their skills and confidence**. Around two-thirds or more of senior leaders and subject leaders responded that pupils were behind the level they would expect for their age in terms of social skills, wellbeing and mental health, skills for learning, and confidence in maths/numeracy and English/literacy (see Table 9). **The biggest perceived delay was in terms of skills for learning** (e.g. concentration, persistence, thinking skills, metacognition). The views of senior leaders and subject leaders were similar, although subject leaders were a little more likely to identify pupils as 'behind' the level they would expect for their age in terms of behaviour. These are concerning findings with implications for learning recovery given the link between such factors as confidence and attainment (Foster *et al*., 2021).

Table 9   Senior leaders and subject leaders: pupils' skills and confidence

Thinking about all your pupils generally, where would you say they are now in terms of the following aspects, compared to where you would normally expect them to be for their age?	Senior leaders				Subject leaders			
	Behind (%)	At (%)	Above (%)	N	Behind (%)	At (%)	Above (%)	N
Social skills	73	26	<1	154	66	34	0	146
Wellbeing and mental health	67	32	<1	154	64	36	0	146
Behaviour	37	60	3	154	47	52	1	146
Skills for learning	79	21	<1	154	84	15	<1	146
Confidence in maths/numeracy	63	37	0	154	70	30	0	100
Confidence in English/literacy	70	30	0	154	74	26	0	61*

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. Questions in the subject leader survey relating to maths/numeracy and English/literacy attainment were only answered by respondents with responsibility for those fields. *N=<100 so percentages should be interpreted with caution.

4.1.3 Approaches to assessing gaps in pupils' learning

Assessment appears to be crucial to informing learning recovery, as all senior leaders and subject leaders reported undertaking some form of assessment of the gaps in pupils' learning as a result of the pandemic. Most typically assessment methods involved: teacher judgements, followed by in-house tests, and external assessments with national benchmarks (see Table 10).

Table 10   Senior leaders and subject leaders: Approaches to assessing gaps in pupils' learning

Which of the following approaches have you used in your school to assess gaps in pupils' learning as a result of the pandemic?	Senior leaders		Subject leaders	
	(%)	N	(%)	N
Teacher judgement	100	155	98	146
In-house tests	83	155	86	146
External assessments with national benchmarks	63	155	53	146
No assessment	0	155	0	146

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. Note: More than one answer could be given so percentages may not sum to 100.

4.2   Survey findings: current learning and wellbeing recovery strategies

Senior leaders and subject leaders were asked about additional recovery strategies they were implementing in the 2021/22 academic year to aid pupils' learning recovery. **Almost all survey respondents were providing wellbeing and mental health support, and using additional small groups or one-to-one support for specific pupils**. It is striking to note that wellbeing has such a priority, particularly so for subject leaders in relation to other strategies – indicating that this is a pressing recovery need for pupils in classrooms and one that perhaps requires substantial additional focus to subject teaching and learning compared to pre-pandemic.

Staff deployment, such as greater use of teaching assistants (TAs) for targeted support, was also reported to a large extent, particularly by senior leaders. The majority of senior leaders and subject leaders also reported using maths/numeracy and English/literacy subject specific support, particularly senior leaders. Overall, senior leaders identified implementing more pupil learning recovery strategies than subject leaders – perhaps because they were more aware of strategies used across the school rather than in a particular subject area. It is also interesting to note the disparity of views between senior leaders and subject leaders in terms of both staff training and extra-curricular activities – perhaps indicating that where these strategies are implemented it may be more likely in relation to non-subject areas, rather than focused on maths/numeracy and English/literacy. It is also interesting to note that tutoring and academic mentors through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) is a relatively less used recovery strategy. Table 11 shows the full list of strategies and responses.

Table 11   Senior leaders and subject leaders: strategies implementing to support pupils' learning recovery

What additional strategies, if any, is your school implementing this academic year to support pupils' learning recovery?	Senior leaders		Subject leaders	
	N	%	N	%
Wellbeing/mental health support	144	94	131	90
Additional small group work/one-to-one support for specific pupils	143	93	120	82
Staff deployment (e.g. greater use of TAs to support pupils in need of targeted support)	122	80	101	69
Maths/numeracy subject specific support	123	80	98	67
English/literacy subject specific support	122	80	88	60
Additional staff training	111	73	66	45
Evidence-based interventions/teaching and learning approaches (e.g. EEF's promising projects)	100	65	82	56
Subscription to resources	87	57	75	51
Additional extra-curricular activities (e.g. trips, clubs)	85	56	55	38
Parental engagement	73	48	54	37
Using more technology for teaching and learning	66	43	50	34
Tutoring/academic mentors through the NTP programme	64	42	47	32
Increased time for some subject areas and reduced time for others	37	24	32	22
Reduced content within subject areas	30	20	30	21
Summer school	17	11	18	12
Extended school time (e.g. longer school day, weekend opening)	15	10	9	6
We are not implementing any additional strategies/returned to pre-pandemic approaches	0	0	0	0

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. Note: More than one answer could be given so percentages may not sum to 100. Note: N=153 senior leaders and N=146 subject leaders answered at least one item on this question. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected by senior leaders (>80% dark grey; 50-79% light grey; <50% white).

Responses to this question were largely similar across primary and secondary senior leaders and subject leaders – with both phases tending to use the same main approaches with similar

frequency. There were several potential differences in views on the less frequently selected strategies (although as this was a multiple choice question, the frequencies for some items when broken down by phase are very small indeed and may just reflect natural variation in responses rather than systematic differences).

- Secondary schools were more likely than primary to report using extended school time; summer schools; tutoring/academic mentors through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP); and using more technology for teaching and learning
- Primary schools reported greater use of staff deployment strategies to support pupils' learning recovery.

These indications of differences may reflect strategies that are more appropriate for different age groups, such as older pupils being able to cope with a longer school day.

Tables 27 and 28 in Appendix B show the survey responses for primary and secondary schools.

Analysis was also conducted to explore whether schools' recovery strategies varied by FSM quintile. Table 29 in Appendix B shows that overall schools across the FSM quintiles are using the same top five strategies outlined in Table 11 above. However, for most recovery strategies, a greater percentage of respondents from schools in the highest FSM quintile reported using the strategy, perhaps indicating a greater need for catch-up. Notably, respondents from schools in the highest FSM quintile were using the following strategies to a greater extent:

- extended school time
- tutoring/academic mentors through the NTP programme
- evidence-based interventions/teaching and learning approaches (e.g. EEF's promising projects).

A follow-up question asked respondents who selected more than five strategies to identify the *main* strategies being used to support learning recovery. Priority strategies included the top five outlined in Table 11 above (with the exception of staff deployment), but also tutoring and academic mentors through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) was identified as a *main* strategy by 61 percent of senior leaders and 51 percent of subject leaders – placing it in the top five main strategies where schools used more than five recovery strategies overall (see Table 30 in Appendix B for further details). This perhaps reflects that schools are implementing a range of recovery strategies to approach learning recovery from different angles, but that the strategies that are considered as making the *main* contribution to learning recovery are slightly different, with the top three strategies being: additional small group work/one-to-one support for specific pupils and English/literacy and maths/numeracy subject specific support.

4.2.1 Changes in focus

Senior leaders and subject leaders' survey responses suggest that for many schools there have been **no changes in focus since before the pandemic, with the exception of increased attention on wellbeing support**. Table 12 shows senior leader responses and Table 13 shows subject leader responses. Most notably, wellbeing support has received either a little or a lot more attention than before the pandemic. For most other areas, on average, participants reported no

change in the attention and priority given to these areas. Physical education and focus on transitions were reported to have been given a little more attention, though over half reported no change.

Table 12   Senior leaders: change in focus

In your school, has there been any change in the attention currently given to the following areas, compared to before the pandemic?							
	A lot less attention (%)	A little less attention (%)	No change (%)	A little more attention (%)	A lot more attention (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Particular subjects (e.g. languages, humanities, arts)	<1	11	67	20	2	152	3.12
Extra-curricular activities (e.g. clubs and trips)	10	16	33	34	7	152	3.12
Practical aspects of subjects (e.g. science experiments, design and technology or art projects)	2	7	59	26	7	152	3.30
Physical education	0	2	55	33	10	152	3.51
Wellbeing and pastoral support/PSHE	0	<1	4	55	41	152	4.36
Transition to a different year/key stage/phase of education	1	7	49	35	8	152	3.41
Preparation for national assessments/exams	5	11	58	22	4	152	3.09

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021.

Table 13   Subject leaders: change in focus

In your school, has there been any change in the attention currently given to the following areas, compared to before the pandemic?							
	A lot less attention (%)	A little less attention (%)	No change (%)	A little more attention (%)	A lot more attention (%)	Total N	Mean rating (1 to 5 scale)
Particular subjects (e.g. languages, humanities, arts)	1	8	68	21	2	145	3.14
Extra-curricular activities (e.g. clubs and trips)	2	13	46	32	7	145	3.29
Practical aspects of subjects (e.g. science experiments, design and technology or art projects)	3	10	57	27	4	145	3.20
Physical education	<1	3	60	28	8	145	3.39
Wellbeing and pastoral support/PSHE	<1	<1	10	53	36	145	4.23
Transition to a different year/key stage/phase of education	1	13	45	32	9	145	3.34
Preparation for national assessments/exams	<1	12	59	23	6	145	3.21

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021.

4.2.2   Confidence in current learning, skills and wellbeing recovery strategies

Most senior leaders and subject leaders felt confident in their current learning, skills and wellbeing recovery strategies, at least to some degree, although less than a quarter were 'very' confident. This perhaps indicates a degree of reservation and suggests some schools require further support to enable them to be fully confident in closing the gaps in learning, skills and wellbeing created by the pandemic. The views of senior leaders and subject leaders were very similar (see Table 14 and 15).

Table 14   Senior leaders: Confidence in current learning, skills and wellbeing recovery strategies

Overall, how confident do you feel that your current strategies will help pupils'...?							
	1 'Not at all confident' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'Very confident' (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
...learning recovery (overall)?	<1	3	23	58	15	3.84	152
...learning recovery in maths/numeracy?	<1	4	22	59	15	3.84	152
...learning recovery in English/literacy?	<1	5	22	56	17	3.84	152
...wellbeing and mental health recovery?	<1	5	26	47	21	3.83	152
...behaviour*?	0	3	24	45	23	3.92	152
...skills for learning?	<1	3	28	51	16	3.80	152

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. *=5% of respondents selected 'not applicable' to this item.

Table 15   Subject leaders: Confidence in current learning, skills and wellbeing recovery strategies

Overall, how confident do you feel that your current strategies will help pupils'...?							
	1 Not at all confident (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 Very confident (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
...learning recovery in maths/numeracy?	1	5	22	57	15	3.80	100
...learning recovery in English/literacy?	0	3	23	65	8	3.78	60
...wellbeing and mental health recovery?	<1	6	28	52	13	3.72	145
...behaviour?	1	7	32	44	14	3.63	145
...skills for learning?	<1	6	29	53	11	3.68	145

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. <1% of respondents selected 'not applicable' to these items.

4.2.3   Preparedness to deliver home learning again in future

Senior leaders and subject leaders felt their schools were well prepared to deliver home learning again in future if required (see Table 16). This reiterates how schools progressed and

adapted rapidly to provide home learning provision following the first partial school closures, leaving them in a strong position should this be required again in the future. Subject leaders with responsibility for English/literacy were a little less likely than their peers in maths to indicate feeling 'very prepared' for future home learning, which may indicate the need for additional support required in English/literacy particularly for teachers of this subject area.

Table 16   Senior leaders and subject leaders: Preparedness to deliver home learning again in future

If it were necessary to deliver effective home learning again, how well prepared do you feel your school is to do so in...							
	1 Not at all prepared (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 Very prepared (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
Senior leaders							
maths/numeracy?	0	2	7	46	45	4.35	152
English/literacy?	0	3	8	45	45	4.32	152
Subject leaders							
maths/numeracy?	0	3	5	39	53	4.42	100
English/literacy?	0	3	15	43	38	4.17	60*

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. Questions in the subject leaders' survey relating to maths/numeracy and English/literacy attainment were only answered by respondents with responsibility for those fields. *N=<100 so percentages should be interpreted with caution.

4.3   Survey findings: support required to aid learning recovery

4.3.1   Continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress

Senior leaders and subject leaders were in agreement that the most salient continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress are:

- school funding and budget constraints
- limited staffing capacity
- staff absence/illness/isolation
- and pupil absence/illness/isolation (see Tables 17 and 18).

One notable difference in views between senior leaders and subject leaders is that subject leaders were more likely than senior leaders to identify that poor pupil attitudes, engagement and/or behaviour were a challenge to pupils' learning recovery and progress.

Table 17   Senior leaders: Continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress

To what extent are the following factors presenting continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress?	1 Not at all (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 To a great extent (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
School funding and budget constraints	7	15	16	24	38	3.70	153
Limited staffing capacity	7	16	24	25	27	3.48	153
Staff absence/illness/isolation	5	20	29	23	24	3.42	153
Pupil absence/illness/isolation (authorised)	5	19	27	33	16	3.36	153
Relatively high prevalence of Covid-19 in the local area	9	26	20	31	14	3.14	153
Limited access to/availability of providers of external support for pupils	14	18	30	18	20	3.12	153
Pupil absence (unauthorised)	12	27	29	21	10	2.91	153
Lack of parental engagement/support	11	41	27	16	6	2.65	153
Limited school facilities and resources	20	27	32	12	9	2.63	153
Poor pupil attitudes, engagement and/or behaviour	20	38	25	12	5	2.42	153
Staff recruitment and retention	37	23	16	10	14	2.40	153
Lack of subject-specialist teachers/teachers with particular skills/specialisms	35	37	18	7	3	2.04	153
Covid-19 related partial school closure	63	18	12	3	3	1.64	153

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Table 18   Subject leaders: Continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress

To what extent are the following factors presenting continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress?	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
School funding and budget constraints	6	8	21	26	28	3.52	145
Staff absence/illness/isolation	3	25	26	28	18	3.32	145
Limited staffing capacity	6	23	25	27	19	3.28	145
Pupil absence/illness/isolation (authorised)	2	29	29	27	12	3.19	144
Poor pupil attitudes, engagement and/or behaviour	8	27	26	24	14	3.10	145
Relatively high prevalence of Covid-19 in the local area	5	28	34	26	7	3.01	145
Limited access to/availability of providers of external support for pupils	10	26	34	19	11	2.96	145
Lack of parental engagement/support	6	30	39	14	10	2.92	145
Pupil absence (unauthorised)	14	30	26	19	11	2.84	144
Limited school facilities and resources	18	37	19	19	7	2.59	145
Staff recruitment and retention	37	24	20	14	6	2.28	145
Lack of subject-specialist teachers/teachers with particular skills/specialisms	34	41	15	8	3	2.05	145
Covid-19 related partial school closure	51	23	14	8	3	1.90	145

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Senior leaders and subject leaders in schools with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for FSM reported facing greater challenges than those with the lowest FSM eligibility in terms of unauthorised pupil absence and lack of parental engagement and support (See Appendix B Tables 31 and 32) – indicating that schools with high FSM may benefit from tailored support for these challenges.

4.3.2   Satisfaction with support for pupils' learning recovery

Senior leaders and subject leaders are **most satisfied with the support available from their school leadership teams** and **least satisfied with support from statutory services** to support pupils' learning recovery (see Tables 19 and 20). Support for maths/numeracy and English/literacy from professional services appears to be reasonably satisfactory – particularly for leaders of these subject areas - although there may be scope for increasing this support.

Table 19   Senior leaders: Satisfaction with support for pupils' learning recovery

How satisfied are you with the support available from the following sources to help you support your pupils' learning recovery?	1 'Not at all satisfied' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'Very satisfied' (%)	N/A	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
Our school leadership team	<1	<1	5	28	57	9	4.54	152
Academy (colleagues/leadership/Regional Schools Commissioners)	1	6	13	12	18	50	3.78	152
Professional services support for maths/numeracy teaching (e.g. subject associations, Maths hubs)	3	12	43	24	12	5	3.31	152
Other schools (e.g. feeder/partner/federation schools)	3	14	30	27	9	18	3.29	152
Local authority	6	14	38	26	12	4	3.25	152
Professional services support for English/literacy teaching (e.g. subject associations)	5	14	42	24	7	7	3.14	152
Charities	11	15	28	12	7	28	2.86	152
Teaching unions	13	27	29	14	9	9	2.76	152
Government and government-funded schemes	18	30	36	14	2	<1	2.51	152
Statutory services (e.g. social services/family support, speech and language support, CAMHS)	31	36	25	7	<1	0	2.11	152

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Table 20   Subject leaders: Satisfaction with support for pupils' learning recovery

How satisfied are you with the support available from the following sources to help you support your pupils' learning recovery?	1 'Not at all satisfied' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'Very satisfied' (%)	N/A	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
Our school leadership team	<1	<1	10	31	55	2	4.42	144
Professional services support for maths/numeracy teaching (e.g. subject associations, Maths hubs)	3	10	26	32	20	9	3.63	143
Academy (colleagues/leadership/Regional Schools Commissioners)	4	4	25	15	11	40	3.42	143
Professional services support for English/literacy teaching (e.g. subject associations)	3	17	26	26	9	19	3.24	144
Local authority	7	16	31	24	6	17	3.06	144
Other schools (e.g. feeder/partner/federation schools)	6	14	33	17	4	27	3.00	143
Teaching unions	10	22	35	16	5	12	2.81	143
Government and government-funded schemes	13	27	37	13	3	8	2.62	143
Charities	7	16	29	5	1	42	2.61	143
Statutory services (e.g. social services/family support, speech and language support, CAMHS)	17	31	31	13	1	7	2.47	143

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

4.3.3   Additional support schools require to help pupils make progress

Senior leaders and subject leaders agree that the **most pressing need for additional support to aid pupils' learning recovery is funding** (see Tables 21 and 22). This is followed by the need for additional support in terms of: specialist services/providers, additional teaching/support staff, and support for pupils' mental health. For senior leaders, flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding is a high priority. Whereas, for subject leaders, evidence of what works in supporting pupils learning recovery is required. Overall, both senior leaders and subject leaders identified a wide range of additional support that is required to help pupils make good progress.

Table 21   Senior leaders: additional support schools require to help pupils make progress

To what extent does your school require additional support in the following ways to help pupils make good progress?	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
Funding	<1	7	13	25	55	4.26	150
Specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists)	3	6	19	36	37	3.98	150
Additional teachers/support staff	3	9	19	31	38	3.92	150
Flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding	7	11	12	27	42	3.85	150
Support for pupils' mental health	2	14	27	26	31	3.69	150
Evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery	5	20	32	30	13	3.28	149
Support from professional services/associations	5	19	38	25	13	3.22	150
Teaching and learning resources	4	27	32	24	13	3.16	150
Staff training	4	20	41	28	7	3.15	150
Guidance from Government (e.g. regarding Covid-19 safety, assessment expectations)	9	27	29	25	11	3.02	150
Subject-specific support for English/literacy	5	24	43	20	8	3.01	150
Subject-specific support for maths/numeracy	6	27	40	20	7	2.94	150
Subject-specific support (other subject area/s)	6	27	42	19	6	2.92	149
Staff expertise/specialisms	9	28	39	19	5	2.85	150
Assessment services and resources	6	30	44	15	5	2.83	150
Tutors	19	27	29	17	9	2.70	149
Staff recruitment and retention	26	27	22	11	13	2.59	150

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >4 very dark grey; >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Table 22   Subject leaders: additional support schools require to help pupils make progress

To what extent does your school require additional support in the following ways to help pupils make good progress?	1 'Not at all' (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 'To a great extent' (%)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	N
Funding	3	6	19	30	42	4.03	140
Additional teachers/support staff	4	12	21	34	29	3.73	141
Evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery	3	16	27	28	26	3.58	139
Specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists)	3	13	29	35	20	3.56	140
Support for pupils' mental health	4	14	26	43	13	3.49	141
Flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding	9	17	24	30	21	3.37	141
Teaching and learning resources	5	15	36	29	15	3.34	140
Support from professional services/associations	6	18	38	23	14	3.22	138
Staff training	4	21	35	34	6	3.17	140
Guidance from Government (e.g. regarding Covid-19 safety, assessment expectations)	11	19	33	26	11	3.05	140
Subject-specific support for maths/numeracy	7	23	38	22	10	3.05	97
Subject-specific support for English/literacy	5	26	39	19	11	3.04	57
Tutors	11	23	33	26	8	2.98	141
Assessment services and resources	8	29	31	26	6	2.94	140
Staff expertise/specialisms	11	30	36	15	9	2.81	138
Staff recruitment and retention	22	24	21	22	11	2.77	140

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. N=149 minimum responded to at least one part of the question. The degree of shading denotes the frequency with which the item was selected (mean ratings >4 very dark grey; >3.5 dark grey; 3-3.5 light grey; <3 white).

Overall, respondents from primary and secondary schools indicated similar needs for support (see Appendix B Tables 33 and 34). The requirements for additional support were also generally consistent across senior leaders and subject leaders from schools with different levels of FSM eligibility (see Appendix B Tables 35 and 36).

Very occasionally, respondents identified 'other' additional support requirements, such as: access to technology for staff and pupils (N=4); reduced accountability (statutory assessments and inspections) (N=4); support for staff and parents' mental health (N=2); improved support from

social care (N=1); support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) (1); reduced teacher workload (N=1); and support with pupil attendance (N=1).

4.4 Evidence review findings: learning and wellbeing recovery strategies

The review of existing evidence substantiates senior leaders' and subject leaders' assessments of the Covid-19 attainment gap in maths and English; a recent report indicated that primary pupils (in summer 2021) in Yorkshire and the Humber region were behind expected attainment levels compared to what would be expected based on their prior attainment, by 1.9 months in maths and 0.5 months in reading, and in secondary behind by 1.7 months in reading[16] (DfE, 2021b).

From a review of broader existing evidence, **the learning recovery strategies being used in Yorkshire and the Humber schools appear similar to those being used by schools in other regions**. A recent NFER report on the impact of closures on Key Stage 1 children (Rose *et al*., 2021) indicated that catch-up strategies used for this age group in the 2020/21 academic year and planned for the future were small group work, staff deployment and a revised curriculum, along with increased wellbeing support. This mirrors the main findings from the present survey and, whilst the Rose *et al*. (2021) report is focused on Key Stage 1, it indicates that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber are employing similar catch-up strategies to schools across England.

Further evidence indicates similar consistency in learning recovery strategies across the country. A study by Nelson *et al*. (2021a) surveying a representative sample of schools across England in March 2021 indicated that headteachers were most often using small group and one-to-one tutoring or interventions within the school day, echoing the survey findings here. Furthermore, in the same study, parental engagement (e.g. increasing interaction with them or providing educational resources to use at home) was reported as a learning recovery strategy (by 49 per cent of headteachers) (Nelson *et al*., 2021a) to a similar extent as in this present survey (48 percent of senior leaders reported using this strategy). However, it is worth noting that the present survey was a bespoke survey and was completed only by school staff in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region, so responses are not directly comparable to other surveys exploring the same themes. Yet, as a broad indication, these other studies show that Yorkshire and Humber schools are implementing similar catch-up strategies to those being used nationally.

While there have been concerns about whether aspects of learning will be reduced to make room for catch-up (e.g. Howard *et al*., 2021), that does not appear to be the case in Yorkshire and the Humber. In the present survey most senior leaders and subject leaders reported no change in the focus on subjects, extra-curricular activities, practical activities, physical education, and preparation for transition and assessments. They did, however, report a greater emphasis on wellbeing and mental health needs because of the adverse impact of the pandemic on this aspect of pupils' development.

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[16] The authors state that due to sample sizes, robust estimates could only be given for secondary reading and not maths.

The current challenges that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber reported facing are also similar to those identified in broader literature. Schools nationally continue to face challenges with pupil attendance, and recent Ofsted evidence indicates the reasons for inflated pupil absence are: pupil anxiety; pupil or parent health needs making them vulnerable to Covid-19; and pupils disengaging from education during the pandemic (Ofsted, 2022). As indicated in the present study, these attendance challenges and related mental health issues, are likely to be accentuated for schools serving the most deprived communities.

There are also signs from recent broader evidence that the learning recovery strategies being deployed in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region are beginning to reduce the Covid-19 attainment gap (DfE, 2021b). The DfE (2021a) report on assessment in the first half of the autumn term 2020, found that pupils in Yorkshire and the Humber were behind by around 2.6 months in primary reading, and around 2.4 months in secondary, and in primary maths, pupils in Yorkshire and the Humber were 5 months behind. However, by summer 2021, primary pupils in Yorkshire and the Humber were behind by 0.5 months in reading, and in secondary, pupils were behind in reading by 1.7 months, and in primary maths, pupils in the region were 1.9 months behind (DfE, 2021b)[17]. This reduction suggests that the region is focusing on appropriate learning recovery activities and is reducing the attainment gap despite additional challenges of the pandemic. The reduction in the Covid-19 attainment gap in reading and maths in primary is also more substantial in Yorkshire and the Humber than several other regions, although in summer 2021, Yorkshire and the Humber continues to have the largest Covid-19 attainment gap in terms of reading attainment in secondary schools (DfE, 2021b). Nevertheless, pupils remain substantially behind pre-pandemic attainment levels in maths and reading in Yorkshire and the Humber. Hence, strategies focused on catch up in these subjects remain a priority.

There is some tentative indication of regional variation in the take up of the National Tutoring Programme, at least in its early stages of implementation in Spring 2021. An article in Schoolsweek (Booth, 2021) suggested, based on data provided by the NTP, that tutoring had only reached 58.9 percent of 'target' disadvantaged schools (for the programme this was schools with over 24 percent of pupils eligible for free school meals) in Yorkshire and the Humber compared to 100 percent in the South-West and 96.1 percent in the South-East. This suggests that tutoring is not being used to the same extent in Yorkshire and the Humber as in other regions. Evidence was also seen of a broader north-south divide in tutoring (e.g. Andrews *et al*., 2021). The article quotes an NTP spokesperson as suggesting it might be that the existing tutoring workforce and market in the region is less extensive than in other regions (e.g. in the south). Alternatively, this early variation in the take up of tutoring may reflect that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region were focusing on additional wellbeing needs to improve access to, and engagement with, academic catch-up interventions, or perhaps prioritising other strategies and intervention provided by staff known to their pupils. This may indicate the need to explore whether this is still the case and, if so, the reasons for variation and how these could be overcome to ensure all regions access this evidence-based strategy for improving attainment. Certainly, as discussed in Section 4.2 (see Tables 21 and 22), the survey findings of this study indicate that the majority of senior leaders and

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[17] The authors state that due to sample sizes, robust estimates could only be given for secondary reading and not maths.

subject leaders required additional support for pupils' learning recovery, to at least some degree, from tutoring.

The needs of schools in Yorkshire and the Humber are also similar to those seen nationally for schools serving deprived communities – wellbeing and mental health being a major need for support (and particularly commanding the attention of subject leaders according to our survey), along with funding and flexibility in funding to enable leaders to deploy according to the needs of their pupils and settings (Nelson *et al*., 2021b).

5 Conclusions and recommendations

This study set out to explore the evidence that the gap between pupils' attainment before the Covid-19 pandemic and during it - the Covid-19 attainment gap - is wider in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region compared to other regions, and to understand the factors that may have contributed to this. The study has compiled evidence from a bespoke survey with senior leaders and maths and English subject leaders in primary and secondary schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region, and a broader review of recent evidence on regional characteristics that may be relevant to understanding the Covid-19 attainment gap.

There is some evidence of an increased Covid-19 attainment gap in Yorkshire and the Humber (DfE 2021a). However, while there have been numerous studies on the magnitude of the Covid-19 attainment gap, and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils during the pandemic (e.g. Weidmann *et al.*, 2021; Rose *et al.*, 2021; Twist *et al.*, 2022), there have not been many large scale studies that have analysed attainment data by region. In some studies that do analyse attainment by region, such as a study by Blainey and Hannay (2020) (which analysed the difference in pupils' assessment scores between summer 2019 and autumn 2020), there appears to be a trend of an increased Covid-19 attainment gap in the north of England compared to the south, rather than a singular anomaly for Yorkshire and the Humber region.

This study concludes that there is evidence that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region faced some additional challenges during the pandemic that may have contributed to a wider attainment gap. Primarily, these challenges relate to high levels of deprivation, a higher proportion of Covid-19 cases compared to other regions, and higher pupil and staff absence from school, both particularly during the autumn term 2020 and potentially delaying the start of learning recovery compared to other regions. There is also evidence that schools in Yorkshire and the Humber region faced greater challenges compared with some other regions, particularly in the south, in terms of pupils' wellbeing and mental health needs, reduced resources and access to technology in pupils' homes, and lower parental engagement in home-based learning. All these factors may have compounded the extent of lost learning in maths and reading during the pandemic. As found in previous evidence, the challenges of the pandemic have been exacerbated for schools serving the most deprived communities (e.g. Julius and Sims, 2021; Nelson *et al.*, 2021a; Nelson *et al.*, 2021b). This trend was also indicated in the current survey, with schools with higher proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals reporting challenges to a greater extent in terms of low IT access, poor pupil and parental engagement with learning, and unauthorised pupil absence. Many of these additional challenges of the pandemic were also faced by other northern regions.

The study found little evidence of systematic differences in teaching and learning during partial school closures in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber compared to other regions. However, this study found occasional inconsistencies in relation to the first school closures (23rd March 2020 to 1st June 2020) which may have contributed to a wider Covid-19 attainment gap in the region. These differences related to the need to provide more welfare-related support, and difficulties in supporting conducive home-learning environments due to lower IT access and parental engagement in remote learning. Furthermore, there is evidence of lower use in the first closures of some of the remote learning approaches associated with better pupil engagement and attainment,

in Yorkshire and the Humber compared to other regions (Weidmann *et al*., 2021; Lucas *et al*., 2020). However, the present survey indicates such approaches were a much stronger feature of the second school closures. This pattern of development of teaching and learning and support approaches between the two school closure periods is consistent with other regions (e.g. Nelson, 2021).

The study concludes that the region should continue to focus on existing learning recovery activities, particularly as there is recent evidence from summer 2021 that the attainment gap is reducing in the region (DfE, 2021b) despite additional challenges of the pandemic. A recent study reviewing the evidence of the impact of the pandemic in primary schools across England also found that while reading and maths attainment was lower than expected levels in autumn 2020 and dropped further in spring 2021, by the summer of 2021, all primary year groups saw the Covid gap become narrower (Twist *et al*., 2022). The learning recovery strategies deployed in Yorkshire and the Humber are also consistent with approaches and priorities in other regions and are underpinned by empirical evidence of effectiveness, where this exists.

However, the region faces exacerbated challenges related to deprivation and a disproportionately adverse impact of Covid-19, and on average pupils remain substantially behind in maths and reading attainment in terms of both comparison to age-related expectations and to prior attainment (DfE, 2021b), as well as being behind where they might be expected to be for their age in terms of skills and confidence. Hence, the study concludes with the following recommendations for additional support that is required to continue learning recovery in the region.

- Schools' most pressing needs for additional support to aid pupils' learning recovery are: funding; support from specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists); additional teaching/support staff; and support for pupils' mental health. Yorkshire and the Humber, along with other specific regions of England, require additional support to achieve the government's aims of 'levelling up' (Gov.UK, 2022c) and to prevent long-lasting exacerbation of geographical inequalities due to the pandemic on earnings, health and life chances (Andrews *et al*., 2021).

- Schools serving the most deprived communities of pupils with more challenging needs require access to a wider range of support strategies in general and additional staffing capacity. Schools with higher proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals face particular ongoing challenges with unauthorised pupil absence and poor parental engagement with school and may require targeted support for these issues. A recent Ofsted report may provide ideas for improving attendance (Ofsted, 2022). The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit (EEF, 2022) may provide a source of ideas for improving parental engagement (e.g. enhancing communication with parents through regular text messages; and supporting parents to develop skills such as literacy and IT).

- Schools need evidence of what works in delivering the greatest gains in learning recovery to inform the investment of limited resources. Subject leaders particularly requested evidence of what works in learning recovery strategies, suggesting the need to more effectively target evidence-based knowledge within schools and to support implementation

of these strategies in practice with pupils. The EEF Toolkit provides evidence-based strategies for narrowing the attainment gap (e.g. feedback, peer tutoring, oral language interventions, and reading comprehension strategies), and further research could explore examples of practices in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber that are successfully narrowing the Covid-19 attainment gap.

- Support for pupils' skills for learning (e.g. concentration, persistence, thinking skills, metacognition) is a priority. Schools in the region could be particularly supported to strengthen approaches to develop such skills by using evidence-based strategies identified on the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Metacognition and self-regulation approaches can be taught and modelled to pupils to help them effectively evaluate their learning and are associated with substantial gains in attainment.

- Support for pupils' wellbeing, social skills and confidence is crucial given the impact on educational outcomes (e.g. Wickersham *et al*., 2020; Foster *et al*., 2021), and schools need funding and improved support for this, including from specialist and statutory services (e.g. social services/family support, speech and language support, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)).

- The majority of senior leaders and subject leaders require additional support for pupils' learning recovery, to at least some degree, from tutoring. However, relative to other requirements for additional support – such as for mental health and wellbeing, demand in schools in the region for tutoring and mentoring through the Government's funded National Tutoring Programme (NTP) is modest – which may indicate issues with the perceived effectiveness and/or accessibility of the programme. This also indicates a degree of disconnect between what teachers in Yorkshire and the Humber region require to aid learning recovery of their pupils, and what the Government is providing. There is tentative evidence that secondary schools in the region are more likely to be using tutoring already and they, and schools with higher FSM, are slightly more likely to request further support in this regard. These findings may warrant further exploration to ensure any barriers to the programme in Yorkshire and the Humber region can be overcome and these strategies more widely promoted and accessed by all schools and to a greater extent. Schools in the region may be encouraged to review the range of support offered through the NTP, which includes 95% subsidised funding to employ an academic mentor; school-led tutoring funded via a ring-fenced grant for locally sourced tutoring provision; and 70% subsidised funding for accredited tutoring services provided by Tuition Partners. Further research could identify examples of where these programmes are being successfully implemented in schools in Yorkshire and the Humber.

- Senior leaders and subject leaders are reasonably satisfied with the support they receive from professional services and associations, such as maths and English hubs. However, catch-up in specific subject areas is key and can be supported further by subject and professional support services, including with the provision of teaching and learning resources for core teaching, extended learning opportunities and small group and one-to-one teaching, as well as staff training.

- As senior leaders identified implementing more pupil learning and wellbeing recovery strategies than subject leaders, it may be worth ensuring subject leaders are aware of where to access support and encouraging school leaders to engage all their school staff in learning recovery efforts beyond specific core subject areas.

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Appendix A: Survey sample characteristics

The following tables provide details about who responded to the survey and characteristics of the schools where a senior leader and/or subject leader/s completed the survey.

Table 23   Role of survey respondents

Number of schools that provided a survey response from...		
	N	**%**
...a senior leader	158	69
...a subject leader (maths/numeracy *or* English/literacy *or* 'other' role with responsibility for both maths/numeracy and English/literacy)	146	63
...a senior leader and a subject leader (maths/numeracy *or* English/literacy *or* 'other' role with responsibility for both maths/numeracy and English/literacy)	74	32
...a maths/numeracy subject leader (includes 'other' role with responsibility for both maths/numeracy and English/literacy)	61	27
...an English/literacy subject leader (includes 'other' role with responsibility for both maths/numeracy and English/literacy)	100	43
...a senior leader and 'other' role with responsibility for both maths/numeracy and English/literacy	11	5

More than one category could apply so percentages do not sum to 100. In total there were 304 responses from 230 schools. Responses were received from no more than one senior leader and one subject leader per school – so there were no schools that returned a survey for each of the three roles (i.e. from a senior leader *and both* maths/numeracy and English/literacy subjects).

Table 24   Survey school characteristics

Categorical variables	Senior leaders		Heads of department		Population*	
	n/N (missing)	%	n/N (missing)	%	n/N (missing)	%
School phase						
Primary	136/158 (0)	86.1%	123/146 (0)	84.2%	1774/2073 (0)	85.6%
Secondary	22/158 (0)	13.9%	23/146 (0)	15.8%	299/2073 (0)	14.4%
Urban/rural						
Rural	38/158 (0)	24.1%	31/146 (0)	21.2%	546/2073 (1)	26.3%
Urban	120/158 (0)	75.9%	115/146 (0)	78.8%	1526/2073 (1)	73.6%
School type						
Academy or Free school	69/158 (0)	43.7%	79/146 (0)	54.1%	997/2073 (0)	48.1%
Maintained	89/158 (0)	56.3%	67/146 (0)	45.9%	1076/2073 (0)	51.9%
Continuous variables						
% pupils eligible for free school meals 2018/19	153/158 (5)	17.3 (11.5)	142/146 (4)	17.2 (12)	2025/2073 (48)	16.8 (11.8)
% pupils with special educational needs 2018/19	148/158 (10)	1.4 (1.1)	137/146 (9)	1.4 (1.1)	1964/2073 (109)	1.5 (1.4)
% students that speak English as an additional language 2018/19	148/158 (10)	14.7 (23.2)	136/146 (10)	13.9 (20.3)	1910/2073 (163)	13.8 (21.5)
% white British pupils 2018/19	157/158 (1)	76.3 (27)	145/146 (1)	77.1 (25.3)	1964/2073 (109)	76.8 (26.2)

*Population figures were obtained from NFER's Record of Schools. Schools were filtered based on the target population for this study: primary and secondary schools in Yorkshire and the Humber only, with no independent or special schools included. The target sample of 1975 schools sent the survey was slightly smaller than this overall population sample of 2073 due to additional sampling criteria being applied (e.g. to remove schools that have indicated they do not want to be contacted for research). 'n' is the number of non-missing values in each category, 'N' is the column total of schools (missing and non-missing values).

Appendix B: Survey responses by FSM quintiles and school phase

This Appendix presents tables on survey responses to a selection of questions broken down by FSM quintiles and school phase (primary and secondary). Any notable differences by these variables are discussed in relevant sections in the body of the report.

Table 25   Senior leaders: Challenges to supporting pupils' learning during partial school closures – mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school FSM quintile

Thinking about both periods of national partial school closures, to what extent did your school face the following challenges in supporting pupils' learning?	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
Poor parental engagement	2.18	2.85	3.48	3.62	3.73
Poor pupil engagement	2.09	2.73	3.37	3.33	3.47
High level of pupil wellbeing/mental health needs	3.18	3.42	3.52	3.77	3.60
Poor pupil access to IT devices at home	2.23	2.91	3.41	3.67	4.07
Poor pupil access to internet at home	2.68	2.70	3.11	3.49	3.70
Pupils lacking a quiet space to work at home	2.77	3.06	3.59	3.79	4.03
Balancing the needs of pupils in-school and at home	3.95	3.97	3.96	3.90	3.43
Staff shortages	2.77	2.42	3.04	2.90	2.40
Staff stress/workload	3.86	3.82	3.63	3.87	3.30
High levels of Covid-19 cases among pupils and/or staff	2.27	2.36	2.59	2.56	2.73
Lack of staff access to good quality IT	2.36	2.12	2.44	2.38	2.47
Staff lack of confidence using IT	2.64	2.58	2.78	2.46	2.70
High level of pupil free school meal needs	1.95	2.36	3.19	3.87	4.40
Subject-specific teaching challenges	2.73	3.00	3.44	3.28	3.20
N total	**22**	**33**	**27**	**39**	**30**

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. The 'N total' row is the number of respondents in each FSM quintile that provided at least one response to this question.

Table 26   Subject leaders: Challenges to supporting pupils' learning during partial school closures – mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school FSM quintile

Thinking about both periods of national partial school closures, to what extent did your school face the following challenges in supporting pupils' learning?	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
Poor parental engagement	2.78	2.83	3.12	3.69	3.88
Poor pupil engagement	2.96	3.07	3.19	3.34	3.91
High level of pupil wellbeing/mental health needs	3.61	3.52	3.65	3.59	3.81
Poor pupil access to IT devices at home	2.43	2.97	3.27	3.91	4.03
Poor pupil access to internet at home	2.65	2.83	3.15	3.66	3.84
Pupils lacking a quiet space to work at home	2.96	3.21	3.27	3.75	3.97
Balancing the needs of pupils in-school and at home	4.22	3.90	3.62	3.66	3.62
Staff shortages	2.30	2.48	2.77	2.91	2.75
Staff stress/workload	3.83	3.93	3.46	3.81	3.56
High levels of Covid-19 cases among pupils and/or staff	2.22	2.34	2.58	2.72	3.06
Lack of staff access to good quality IT	2.61	2.31	2.50	2.50	2.38
Staff lack of confidence using IT	2.70	2.93	3.12	2.78	2.81
High level of pupil free school meal needs	2.22	2.59	3.08	3.72	4.06
Subject-specific teaching challenges	2.96	2.97	3.12	3.16	3.09
N total	**23**	**29**	**26**	**32**	**32**

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. The 'N total' row is the number of respondents in each FSM quintile that provided at least one response to this question.

Table 27   Senior leaders: strategies implementing to support pupils' learning recovery – frequency of responses by school phase

What additional strategies, if any, is your school implementing this academic year to support pupils' learning recovery?	Primary		Secondary	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
We are not implementing any additional strategies/returned to pre-pandemic approaches	0	0	0	0
Wellbeing/mental health support	124	95	20	91
Additional small group work/one-to-one support for specific pupils	123	94	20	91
Staff deployment (e.g. greater use of TAs to support pupils in need of targeted support	107	82	15	68
Maths/numeracy subject specific support	106	81	17	77
English/literacy subject specific support	104	79	18	82
Additional staff training	97	74	14	64
Evidence-based interventions/teaching and learning approaches (e.g. EEF's promising projects)	83	63	17	77
Subscription to resources	75	57	12	55
Additional extra-curricular activities (e.g. trips, clubs)	70	53	15	68
Parental engagement	61	47	12	55
Using more technology for teaching and learning	53	40	13	59
Tutoring/academic mentors through the NTP programme	51	39	13	59
Increased time for some subject areas and reduced time for others	34	26	3	14
Reduced content within subject areas	24	18	6	27
Extended school time (e.g. longer school day, weekend opening)	8	6	7	32
Summer school	4	3	13	59

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. Note: More than one answer could be given so percentages may not sum to 100. Note: N=131 senior leaders and N = 123 Subject Leaders answered at least one item on this question.

Table 28   Subject leaders: strategies implementing to support pupils' learning recovery – frequency of responses by school phase

What additional strategies, if any, is your school implementing this academic year to support pupils' learning recovery?	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
We are not implementing any additional strategies/returned to pre-pandemic approaches	0	0	0	0
Wellbeing/mental health support	111	90	20	87
Additional small group work/one-to-one support for specific pupils	102	83	18	78
Staff deployment (e.g. greater use of TAs to support pupils in need of targeted support)	92	75	9	39
Maths/numeracy subject specific support	86	70	12	52
English/literacy subject specific support	73	59	15	65
Additional staff training	53	43	13	57
Evidence-based interventions/teaching and learning approaches (e.g. EEF's promising projects)	72	59	10	43
Subscription to resources	62	50	13	57
Additional extra-curricular activities (e.g. trips, clubs)	46	37	9	39
Parental engagement	45	37	9	39
Using more technology for teaching and learning	38	31	12	52
Tutoring/academic mentors through the NTP programme	34	28	13	57
Increased time for some subject areas and reduced time for others	28	23	4	17
Reduced content within subject areas	19	15	11	48
Extended school time (e.g. longer school day, weekend opening)	6	5	3	13
Summer school	7	6	11	48

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. Note: More than one answer could be given so percentages may not sum to 100. Note: N= 22 Senior leaders and N = 23 Subject leaders answered at least one item on this question.

Table 29   Senior leaders and subject leaders: strategies implementing to support pupils' learning recovery – percentage that selected each strategy by school FSM quintile

What additional strategies, if any, is your school implementing this academic year to support pupils' learning recovery?	Senior Leaders					Subject Leaders				
	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
We are not implementing any additional strategies/returned to pre-pandemic approaches	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wellbeing/mental health support	95	97	89	92	100	91	97	88	84	91
Additional small group work/one-to-one support for specific pupils	91	97	89	95	93	83	86	73	84	84
Staff deployment (e.g. greater use of TAs to support pupils in need of targeted support)	82	78	74	78	87	70	66	69	72	72
Maths/numeracy subject specific support	68	81	70	86	93	83	66	62	62	69
English/literacy subject specific support	68	81	74	86	87	52	55	69	62	62
Additional staff training	77	75	67	76	77	26	48	58	47	44
Evidence-based interventions/teaching and learning approaches (e.g. EEF's promising projects)	45	66	63	78	60	52	59	46	47	72
Subscription to resources	64	62	67	43	60	39	52	50	50	66

Additional extra-curricular activities (e.g. trips, clubs)	36	53	59	51	73	30	28	46	41	41
Parental engagement	32	69	44	27	63	26	28	62	28	41
Using more technology for teaching and learning	36	34	44	41	60	35	21	35	44	41
Tutoring/academic mentors through the NTP programme	27	44	48	35	53	22	31	31	41	34
Increased time for some subject areas and reduced time for others	14	25	37	32	13	26	24	23	9	31
Reduced content within subject areas	18	16	19	27	20	13	28	4	22	34
Extended school time (e.g. longer school day, weekend opening)	0	9	11	5	23	0	0	4	9	12
Summer school	5	19	4	5	17	4	10	4	12	22
N total	**22**	**32**	**27**	**37**	**30**	**23**	**29**	**26**	**32**	**32**

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. The 'N total' row is the number of respondents in each FSM quintile that provided at least one response to this question.

Table 30   Senior leaders and subject leaders: five *main* strategies implementing to support pupils' learning recovery – frequency of responses

Which of these are your main strategies to support pupils' learning recovery?				
	Senior leaders		**Subject leaders**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
Additional small group work/one-to-one support for specific pupils	103	78	74	74
English/literacy subject specific support	88	76	59	74
Maths/numeracy subject specific support	82	69	64	77
Wellbeing/mental health support	84	64	60	57
Tutoring/academic mentors through the NTP programme	38	61	20	51
Staff deployment (e.g. greater use of TAs to support pupils in need of targeted support)	54	48	48	56
Evidence-based interventions/teaching and learning approaches (e.g. EEF's promising projects)	39	41	21	30
Extended school time (e.g. longer school day, weekend opening)	6	40	3	38
Increased time for some subject areas and reduced time for others	12	33	10	36
Additional staff training	28	26	17	28
Additional extra-curricular activities (e.g. trips, clubs)	18	22	13	25
Using more technology for teaching and learning	12	20	12	26
Reduced content within subject areas	5	17	11	39
Subscription to resources	13	16	18	29
Parental engagement	10	14	16	33
Summer school	2	12	3	19

Source: NFER surveys, senior leaders and subject leaders, 2021. More than one answer could be given so percentages may not sum to 100. N=138 answered at least one item on this question. N=47 selected five or fewer strategies for the previous question and so were not shown this question.

Table 31   Senior leaders: Continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress – mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school FSM quintile

To what extent are the following factors presenting continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress?	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
Pupil absence/illness/isolation (authorised)	3.23	3.12	3.63	3.32	3.57
Pupil absence (unauthorised)	2.27	2.53	3.30	3.00	3.30
Limited staffing capacity	3.91	3.38	3.70	3.49	3.23
Staff absence/illness/isolation	3.36	3.41	3.63	3.43	3.37
Limited school facilities and resources	2.95	2.41	2.59	2.68	2.70
Poor pupil attitudes, engagement and/or behaviour	2.23	2.41	2.56	2.59	2.30
Lack of parental engagement/support	2.00	2.28	2.78	2.95	3.03
Lack of subject-specialist teachers/teachers with particular skills/specialisms	2.09	1.88	2.26	1.95	2.20
School funding and budget constraints	3.86	3.59	3.89	3.81	3.47
Limited access to/availability of providers of external support for pupils	3.18	2.88	3.04	3.22	3.17
Staff recruitment and retention	2.64	2.06	2.48	2.49	2.43
Relatively high prevalence of Covid-19 in the local area	3.59	3.03	3.41	2.89	3.07
Covid-19 related partial school closure	2.23	1.34	1.78	1.43	1.67
N total	**22**	**32**	**27**	**37**	**30**

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021. A series of single response items. The 'N total' row is the number of respondents in each FSM quintile that provided at least one response to this question.

Table 32   Subject leaders: Continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress – mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school FSM quintile

To what extent are the following factors presenting continuing challenges to pupils' learning recovery and progress?	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
Pupil absence/illness/isolation (authorised)	3.22	2.66	3.24	3.39	3.44
Pupil absence (unauthorised)	2.17	2.38	2.72	3.26	3.38
Limited staffing capacity	3.43	2.69	3.35	3.48	3.47
Staff absence/illness/isolation	3.13	2.86	3.38	3.87	3.31
Limited school facilities and resources	2.87	2.45	2.58	2.58	2.38
Poor pupil attitudes, engagement and/or behaviour	2.96	2.83	2.88	3.10	3.59
Lack of parental engagement/support	2.43	2.48	2.58	3.32	3.56
Lack of subject-specialist teachers/teachers with particular skills/specialisms	1.91	1.97	2.08	2.00	2.16
School funding and budget constraints	3.96	3.28	3.81	3.39	3.31
Limited access to/availability of providers of external support for pupils	2.78	2.83	2.92	3.39	2.81
Staff recruitment and retention	1.96	1.83	2.35	2.39	2.50
Relatively high prevalence of Covid-19 in the local area	2.96	2.66	2.85	3.23	3.31
Covid-19 related partial school closure	1.65	1.72	1.85	1.97	2.22
N total	**23**	**29**	**26**	**31**	**32**

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. A series of single response items. The 'N total' row is the number of respondents in each FSM quintile that provided at least one response to this question.

Table 33   Senior leaders: additional support required - mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school phase

To what extent does your school require additional support in the following ways to help pupils make good progress?	Primary	Secondary
	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)
Funding	4.29	4.09
Flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding	3.91	3.50
Assessment services and resources	2.84	2.82
Teaching and learning resources	3.24	2.68
Staff training	3.19	2.91
Staff expertise/specialisms	2.84	2.86
Staff recruitment and retention	2.50	3.09
Subject-specific support for maths/numeracy	2.91	3.09
Subject-specific support for English/literacy	3.05	2.77
Subject-specific support (other subject area/s)	2.91	2.95
Support for pupils' mental health	3.64	4.00
Tutors	2.62	3.19
Specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists)	3.98	3.95
Support from professional services/associations	3.23	3.14
Additional teachers/support staff	3.93	3.86
Guidance from Government (e.g. regarding Covid-19 safety, assessment expectations)	3.05	2.82
Evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery	3.28	3.23

Source: NFER survey, senior leaders, 2021.

Table 34 Subject leaders: additional support required - mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school phase

To what extent does your school require additional support in the following ways to help pupils make good progress?	Primary	Secondary
	Mean rating (1-5 scale)	Mean rating (1-5 scale)
Funding	4.06	3.86
Flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding	3.35	3.48
Assessment services and resources	2.85	3.43
Teaching and learning resources	3.33	3.35
Staff training	3.14	3.35
Staff expertise/specialisms	2.79	2.91
Staff recruitment and retention	2.66	3.35
Subject-specific support for maths/numeracy	3.02	3.25
Subject-specific support for English/literacy	2.87	3.80
Support for pupils' mental health	3.46	3.65
Tutors	2.92	3.26
Specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists)	3.62	3.27
Support from professional services/associations	3.24	3.14
Additional teachers/support staff	3.70	3.87
Guidance from Government (e.g. regarding Covid-19 safety, assessment expectations)	3.04	3.09
Evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery	3.54	3.78

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. A series of single response items. Questions related to maths/numeracy and English/literacy support were only answered by respondents with responsibility for those fields.

Table 35   Senior leaders: additional support required - mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school FSM quintile

To what extent does your school require additional support in the following ways to help pupils make good progress?	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
Funding	4.32	4.25	4.19	4.47	3.97
Flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding	3.64	3.69	4.04	4.00	3.76
Assessment services and resources	3.27	2.59	2.96	2.72	2.69
Teaching and learning resources	3.32	2.84	3.19	3.44	2.93
Staff training	3.14	2.97	3.11	3.36	3.10
Staff expertise/specialisms	2.95	2.56	2.63	3.08	2.83
Staff recruitment and retention	2.64	2.31	2.78	2.50	2.59
Subject-specific support for maths/numeracy	2.86	2.81	2.93	3.00	3.00
Subject-specific support for English/literacy	3.18	2.94	3.11	3.17	2.72
Subject-specific support (other subject area/s)	3.09	2.78	2.77	3.03	2.93
Support for pupils' mental health	3.68	3.69	3.89	3.78	3.38
Tutors	2.41	2.65	2.74	2.67	2.86
Specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists)	3.95	3.81	4.15	4.19	3.66
Support from professional services/associations	3.23	3.06	3.30	3.17	3.28
Additional teachers/support staff	4.23	3.56	3.93	4.08	3.79
Guidance from Government (e.g. regarding Covid-19 safety, assessment expectations)	3.14	2.91	3.33	3.03	2.83
Evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery	3.38	2.94	3.22	3.56	3.24
N total	**22**	**32**	**27**	**36**	**29**

Table 36   Subject leaders: additional support required - mean rating on scale 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a great extent') by school FSM quintile

To what extent does your school require additional support in the following ways to help pupils make good progress?	Lowest 20% FSM	2nd Lowest 20% FSM	Middle 20% FSM	2nd Highest 20% FSM	Highest 20% FSM
Funding	3.91	4.07	4.15	3.96	4.03
Flexibility and autonomy over how to spend available funding	3.23	3.24	3.50	3.54	3.19
Assessment services and resources	2.73	2.72	2.84	3.04	3.22
Teaching and learning resources	3.41	3.21	3.19	3.41	3.34
Staff training	2.68	3.07	3.28	3.32	3.31
Staff expertise/specialisms	2.50	2.52	3.17	2.71	3.00
Staff recruitment and retention	2.32	2.28	3.00	2.82	3.09
Subject-specific support for maths/numeracy	2.60	3.12	3.05	3.10	3.15
Subject-specific support for English/literacy	3.17	3.00	2.88	3.08	3.07
Support for pupils' mental health	3.27	3.34	3.58	3.57	3.56
Tutors	2.77	2.69	2.96	3.36	3.00
Specialist services/providers (e.g. counsellors, speech and language specialists)	3.23	3.10	3.68	3.82	3.84
Support from professional services/associations	3.10	2.86	3.08	3.46	3.44
Additional teachers/support staff	3.73	3.28	3.81	3.93	3.91
Guidance from Government (e.g. regarding Covid-19 safety, assessment expectations)	2.77	3.00	2.92	3.32	3.19
Evidence of what works in supporting pupils' learning recovery	3.05	3.59	3.62	3.89	3.55

N total	22	29	26	28	32

Source: NFER survey, subject leaders, 2021. Questions related to maths/numeracy and English/literacy support were only answered by respondents with responsibility for those fields. The 'N total' row is the number of respondents in each FSM quintile that provided at least one response to this question.

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