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University of Exeter: Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme

IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT (FINAL)

JUNE 2024

Contents

Executive Summary

The University of Exeter partnered with ImpactEd Evaluation in June 2023 to conduct an evaluation of the university-led Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme. The Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme is a 9-session tutoring intervention run over 9 to 10 weeks. The intervention is delivered by university students for year 8 students with a focus on those from under-resourced backgrounds who require further support with their literacy skills, specifically writing accurate sentences.

The partnership began with an outcomes workshop run by ImpactEd Evaluation where both ImpactEd Evaluation and the University of Exeter agreed upon the key outcomes to be measured as part of the evaluation as well as the overarching aims. The University of Exeter wanted the evaluation to be primarily focussed on student outcomes as a priority, but they also wanted to investigate tutor outcomes. The evaluation explores the outcomes from six schools over the Autumn term 2023: three schools following the University of Exeter delivery route and three schools following the Next Steps South West delivery route*.

This report provides an overview of the progress against each of the outcomes agreed in the workshop. In addition, ImpactEd Evaluation have recommended areas for further attention based on the analysis of the data collected. These findings will inform the University of Exeter's continuous improvement process and enable them to scale-up the programme and build upon its successes from this year. While the report casts a light on some strengths of the programme, it also highlights areas and considerations where ongoing support could maximise the potential of the intervention.

The findings summarised in the report include data from:

▶ A quantitative survey with the year 8 students to investigate the changes in their self-efficacy and motivation. In addition, this survey asked for students' feedback on the Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme. This was administered by schools before and after the tutoring.
▶ Pre- and post literacy assessments which were administered by schools before and after the tutoring.
▶ Student attendance to each of the tutoring sessions.
▶ A post-programme survey completed by the tutors to gather their feedback on their confidence in their ability to deliver the tutoring sessions.

Some schools finished the tutoring in early Spring term.

Key findings

1 Overall literacy assessment scores increased by an average of 9.27 percentage-points or 25.57% change suggesting the programme had a positive impact on students' ability to write accurate sentences.

2 Students' self-efficacy remained stable over course of the tutoring programme.

3 Students' motivation also remained stable throughout the course of tutoring.

4 Qualitative feedback from the post-tutoring surveys suggested that the tutors generally felt well-prepared and supported to deliver the tutoring sessions.

5 100% of tutors found managing the engagement and behaviour of the students "somewhat/sometimes easy" or "relatively easy".

6 100% of tutors said that they enjoyed the tutoring sessions with 91.67% selecting "yes-a lot" and 8.33% selected "yes-somewhat/sometimes".

1.Introduction

The Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme is a 9-session tutoring programme delivered by university students for year 8 students with a focus on those from under-resourced backgrounds who require further support with their literacy skills. The literacy course was designed by the Ted Wragg Trust's Director of Education and former Headteacher Lindsay Skinner, in Exeter, who put together the learning exercises as well as the tutor training materials. Students receive one hour of extra tuition per week on basic sentence structures and grammar through to devising complex sentences. Students are tutored in person in small groups of two or three.

This year the University of Exeter began looking into alternative delivery routes for tutoring including through paid student ambassadors. They collaborated with Next Steps South West, who now provide the tutoring programme as part of their Uni Connect Programme, funded by the Office for Students. The University of Exeter and Next Steps South West follow slightly different models. The University of Exeter delivers the programme through second, third and fourth- year undergraduates who take on the tutoring placement as part of an accredited university module. As part of the placement they also take part in classroom observation sessions in addition to the tutoring. Next Steps South West deliver the tutoring through paid Student Ambassadors from their partner institutions who are supported by Next Steps South West officers. Both the University of Exeter and Next Steps South West delivery routes were a part of this evaluation: three schools engaging with the University of Exeter and three schools with Next Steps South West.
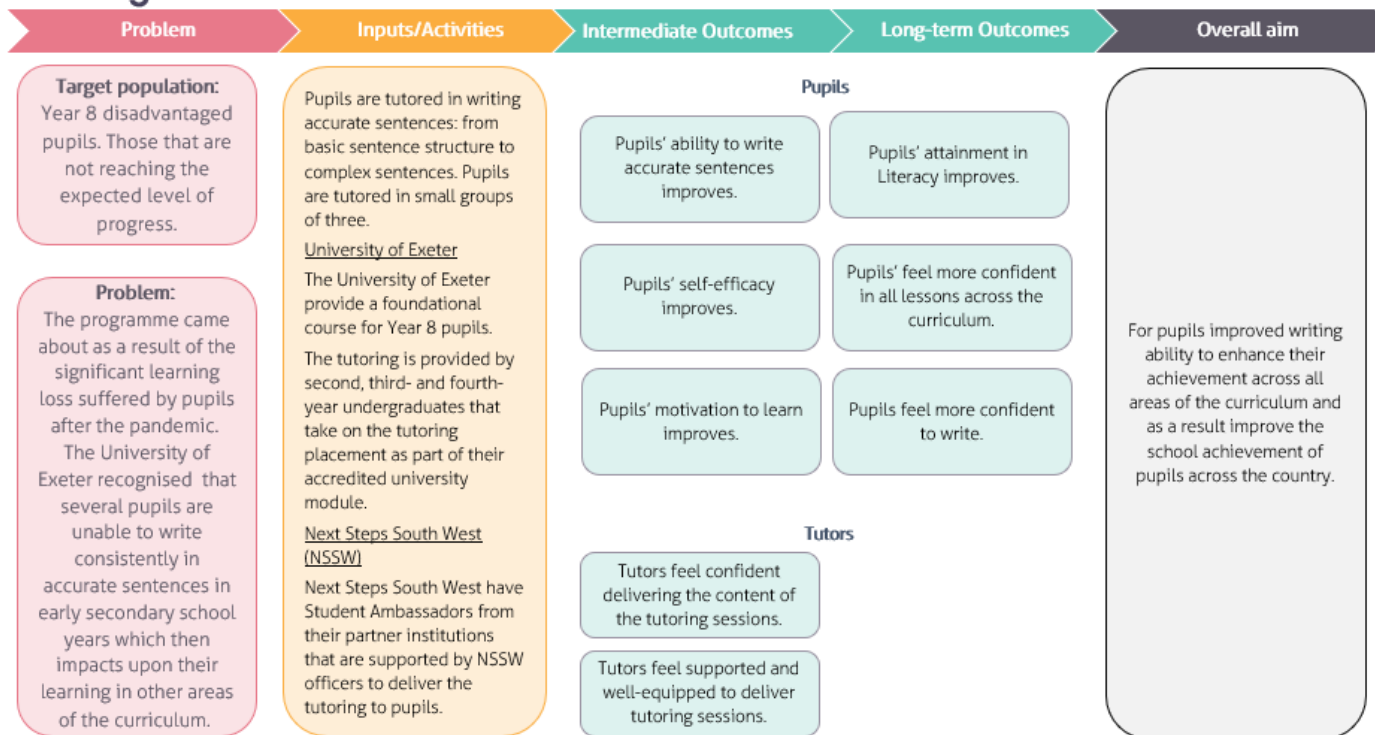
The University of Exeter partnered with ImpactEd Evaluation in June 2023 to conduct an independent evaluation of the university-led Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme over one term in six schools. The partnership began with an outcomes workshop run by ImpactEd Evaluation where both ImpactEd Evaluation and the University of Exeter agreed upon the key outcomes to be measured as part of the evaluation as well as the overarching aims. The University of Exeter wanted the evaluation to be focussed on student outcomes as a priority but also investigate tutor outcomes. Outcomes for both stakeholders are explored in this report.

2. Methodology

The University of Exeter met with ImpactEd Evaluation for a design workshop in August 2023 to identify key outcomes and research questions for the Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme. In this session we agreed priority outcomes for students and tutors and put together a streamlined Theory of Change below:

Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme- University of Exeter Theory of Change

Problem	Inputs/Activities	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Overall aim

Target population: Year 8 disadvantaged pupils. Those that are not reaching the expected level of progress.

Problem: The programme came about as a result of the significant learning loss suffered by pupils after the pandemic. The University of Exeter recognised that several pupils are unable to write consistently in accurate sentences in early secondary school years which then impacts upon their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Pupils are tutored in writing accurate sentences: from basic sentence structure to complex sentences. Pupils are tutored in small groups of three.

University of Exeter

The University of Exeter provide a foundational course for Year 8 pupils.

The tutoring is provided by second, third- and fourth-year undergraduates that take on the tutoring placement as part of their accredited university module.

Next Steps South West (NSSW)

Next Steps South West have Student Ambassadors from their partner institutions that are supported by NSSW officers to deliver the tutoring to pupils.

Pupils

Pupils' ability to write accurate sentences improves.

Pupils' self-efficacy improves.

Pupils' motivation to learn improves.

Pupils' attainment in Literacy improves.

Pupils' feel more confident in all lessons across the curriculum.

Pupils feel more confident to write.

Tutors

Tutors feel confident delivering the content of the tutoring sessions.

Tutors feel supported and well-equipped to deliver tutoring sessions.

For pupils improved writing ability to enhance their achievement across all areas of the curriculum and as a result improve the school achievement of pupils across the country.

Research Questions

Three key research questions were addressed by the evaluation:

1. Does the Crafting Accurate Sentences programme improve students' ability to write accurate sentences?
2. Does the Crafting Accurate Sentences programme have an impact upon students' social and emotional outcomes? E.g. motivation and self-efficacy.
3. How was the tutor experience of delivering the Crafting Accurate Sentences tutoring programme? Do they feel supported and equipped to deliver the sessions?

Outcome Measures

In the design workshop ImpactEd Evaluation worked with The University of Exeter to articulate the following outcomes. The evaluation focussed mainly on the intermediate outcomes identified in the Theory of Change. The overview below shows each of the measures used to assess the intermediate impact of the Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring Programme:

Stakeholder	Outcome	Measurement details	Before	After
Students	Students' ability to write accurate sentences improves	A literacy assessment was designed by Lindsay Skinner who wrote the Crafting Accurate Sentences programme. The assessment was administered and marked by school staff.	✓	✓
Students	Students' self-efficacy improves	The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) - Self-Efficacy Subscale was used to measure students' belief in their ability to achieve a specific task in the future.	✓	✓
Students	Students' motivation to learn improves	The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) - Intrinsic Value Subscale was used measure students' motivational orientations and their use of different strategies. The intrinsic value subscale measure's intrinsic motivation / goal orientation.	✓	✓

Tutors	Tutors feel confident delivering the content of the tutoring sessions	This was measured through a custom survey designed by the University of Exeter and reviewed by ImpactEd Evaluation. It asks the tutors about their planning and preparation for the sessions as well as the skills they have gained and the engagement and behaviour of the tutees.		✓
Tutors	Tutors feel supported and well-equipped to deliver tutoring sessions	This was measured through a custom survey as above.		✓

Evaluation Design

A detailed description of the quantitative components of this evaluation is provided below. ImpactEd Evaluation analysed all surveys, as well as the year 8 student baseline and endline literacy assessment data and their attendance to sessions.

Quantitative Research: Students

Survey, Sample and Analysis

Year 8 students from six schools who were participating in the 9-session tutoring course were asked to complete a survey before and after the tutoring took place. The survey was designed to include both validated and custom questions. The validated questions came from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) and included the Intrinsic Value Subscale and the Self-efficacy Subscale. The custom survey was originally designed by the University of Exeter and reviewed by ImpactEd Evaluation. Some of the surveys were completed online via ImpactEd Evaluation's School Impact Platform and others were completed in paper form distributed by the University of Exeter or Next Steps South West. The University of Exeter and Next Steps South West wanted a paper format to be available for schools as they believed this would be more accessible for them. The surveys were administered and marked by the schools.

The tables below show the sample of students for each measure:

MSLQ Intrinsic Value baseline unmatched	MSLQ Intrinsic Value Endline unmatched	MSLQ Intrinsic Value Matched sample
73	57	45

Table 1 shows the sample for the motivation survey

MSLQ Self-efficacy Baseline unmatched	MSLQ Self-efficacy Endline unmatched	MSLQ Self-efficacy Matched sample
72	55	41

Table 2 shows the sample for the self-efficacy survey

For the custom survey the sample varied from question to question. Each question was analysed separately. The samples are included in the outcomes section.

The MSLQ Intrinsic Value, Self-efficacy and custom feedback survey samples were those students that had complete data sets at baseline and endline.

For students, baseline and endline averages were calculated for motivation and self-efficacy surveys and the percentage point change between these two time points was analysed. This was for students who had responded to all statements at baseline and endline. These scores were then compared to a national benchmark from ImpactEd Evaluation's School Impact Platform. This data was not broken down into subgroups (e.g. gender and EAL) due to the small sample size.

For the custom questions some of these were analysed qualitatively through comment analysis and for others frequency distributions were calculated and presented displaying common themes that arose from the data.

Literacy Assessment, Sample and Analysis

The year 8 students from the six participating schools were also asked to complete a literacy assessment before and after the tutoring took place. These were designed by the Headteacher Lindsay Skinner in Exeter. The assessments were administered and marked by the schools according to a mark scheme supplied by Lindsay Skinner. Some schools reported on overall marks and other schools reported on scores for each area of learning as well as the overall mark.

The table below shows the sample of students for the literacy assessment. The literacy assessment overall matched sample includes all students who had an overall score at baseline as well as endline and attended at least one tutoring session. The literacy assessment breakdown below excludes students who only had an overall score and no breakdown of scores for each area of learning in the assessment at baseline and endline.

Literacy assessment baseline unmatched total scores	Literacy assessment endline unmatched total scores	Literacy assessment overall matched sample	Literacy assessment breakdown into topic areas
61	54	53	43

Table 3 shows the sample for the literacy assessment

Baseline and endline averages were calculated and the percentage point change and percentage change between these two time points was analysed. This was calculated for students with complete data sets at baseline and endline. This data was not broken down into subgroups due to the small sample size.

Statistical significance testing was conducted on pre/post data to identify whether there was a significant difference between the baseline and final scores for each area of learning in the literacy assessment. When reporting the p-value, we use the t-test result unless otherwise noted. When reporting on statistical significance, we use the standard social science convention of a 'significant' p-value being less than 0.05. A p-value is a measure of the probability that an observed result could have occurred by chance alone. The lower the p-value, the greater the statistical significance of the observed difference. Typically a p-value of ≤ 0.05 indicates that the change was statistically significant. A p-value higher than 0.05 (> 0.05) is not statistically significant and indicates strong evidence for the null hypothesis; i.e. that we cannot be confident that this change did not occur due purely to chance.

Correlational analysis was also conducted between students' attendance to sessions and overall percentage point change in literacy scores. There were three outliers which were removed manually leaving a matched sample of 50 students.

Attendance Data, Sample and Analysis

Attendance data was collected by the schools on a session-by-session basis. Overall, there was a sample of 90 students for whom Next Steps South West and the University of Exeter collected attendance data. The number of sessions each student attended varied across the cohort. The percentage attendance was calculated by the number of sessions attended out of the total number of sessions run in the school.

Quantitative Research: Tutors

Survey, Sample and Analysis

Tutors were also asked to complete a survey after the course of tutoring was complete. The survey was designed by the University of Exeter and reviewed and analysed by ImpactEd Evaluation. In total 12 tutors responded to this survey. Some questions were analysed qualitatively by drawing out the key themes and others were analysed using frequency distributions.

Limitations

- ▶ **Small sample:** It is important to recognise that this report draws upon data from a small number of participants. This small sample could limit the robustness of the findings.
- ▶ **No comparison group**: The lack of comparison group responses means that it is difficult to attribute changes that are seen in the data to the programme. This has been mitigated by using a national benchmark for social and emotional outcomes: self-efficacy and motivation.
- ▶ **Limited demographic information:** Some of the data was collected through the School Impact Platform and some using paper surveys. Limited demographic information was collected via paper surveys and therefore the analysis could not be broken down further into the provider/ school.
- ▶ **Incomplete data sets:** some of the paper surveys had missing data from where students may have accidentally missed questions or statements and so these were not

included in the matched sample. This could be mitigated in the future by asking teachers to check all paper surveys have been completed accurately. In addition, there was some inconsistency between assessment data collected between schools with some schools collecting the breakdown of scores as well as overall assessment scores whilst others just collected overall scores.

3. Outcomes for students

Outcome 1: Students' ability to write accurate sentences improves

Key Finding: Average literacy assessment scores increased by 9.27 percentage-points or 25.57% change.

At baseline the average score across the cohort was 36.26%. This increased to an average of 45.53% at endline as demonstrated in figure 1. This was a total change of 9.27 percentage-points or 25.57% change suggesting a positive improvement in students' ability to write accurate sentences.
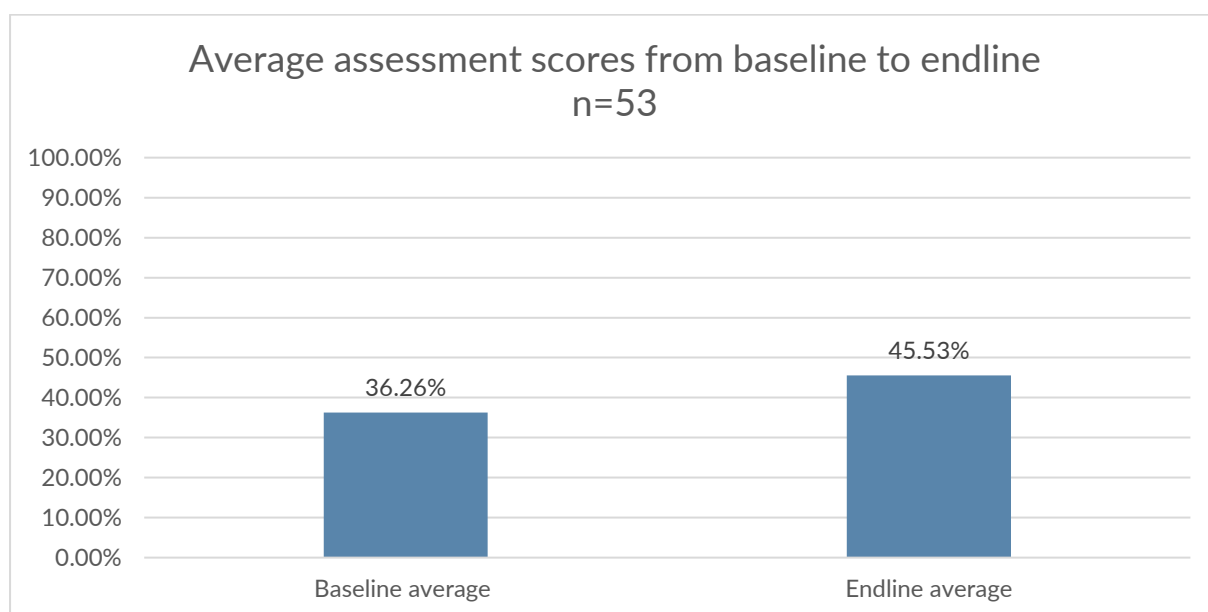
Figure 1: average literacy assessment scores at baseline and endline for matched students

Figure 2 shows average scores for each area of learning at baseline and endline. The highest scoring area at baseline was "using compound sentences" with an average score of 52.33%. The lowest scoring area at baseline was "using punctuation to create meaning" with an average percentage score of 20.00% and this was also the lowest scoring area at endline too with an average score of 27.44%. At endline the highest scoring area was "using simple sentences" with an average score of 63.95% closely followed by "using compound sentences" with an average score of 62.21%. This suggests that an area of more intensive focus for the tutoring sessions next time could be on "using punctuation to create meaning."

When looking at the overall change for each area of the assessment the most progress was made in the section "using complex sentences with subordinate clauses." In this section there was a positive change of 17.21 percentage-points or 52.11% change from 33.02% to 50.23%. This suggests that the students' made the most progress on using complex sentences with subordinate clauses throughout the tutoring sessions. The smallest change in scores was in the section on "using punctuation to create meaning" with an increase of 7.44 percentage-points or 37.21% change from an average of 20.00% to 27.44%. This again emphasises a

need for further resource to be allocated to "using punctuation to create meaning" during the tutoring sessions to increase the scores in this area. Overall, scores increased on average in all areas of the literacy assessment.
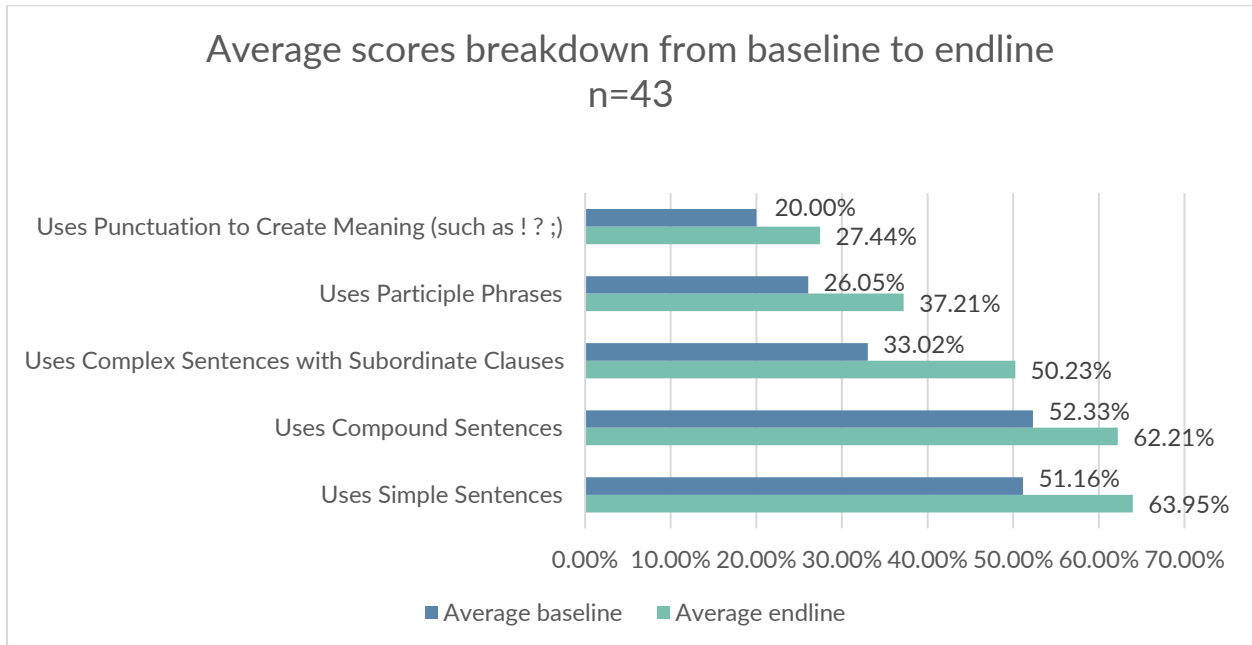

Figure 2 average score breakdown for the literacy assessment from baseline to endline for matched students

Statistical significance testing was carried out on pre- and post- intervention scores for each area of learning within the literacy assessment.

The table below notes the p- values calculated through a paired t-test for each area of learning:

Area of learning	P value
Uses simple sentences	P=0.001
Uses compound sentences	P= 0.013
Uses complex sentences with subordinate clauses	P=0.000
Uses participle phrases	P= 0.000
Uses punctuation to create meaning (such as " ? ;)	P=0.006

Table 4 shows the p value for each area of learning in the literacy assessment

The table shows that the change in pre- and post- intervention scores for each area of learning is statistically significant (p<0.05). This suggests that the changes observed were likely an effect of the Crafting Accurate Sentences Tutoring programme, and not simply by chance. However, it should be noted that in the absence of a control group or academically validated measures, the change between pre-intervention and post-intervention scores cannot be wholly attributed to the Crafting Accurate Sentences Programme over other background factors.

When looking to see if there was any correlation between students' attendance to sessions and change in scores for the literacy assessment there was no correlation (R=0.07). This indicates that there was no linear relationship between the number of sessions attended and change in student scores. Further research with a larger sample could help to explore further relationships between students' attendance to sessions and change in literacy assessment scores.

Outcome 2: Students' self-efficacy improves

Key Finding: Students' self-efficacy remained stable over course of the tutoring programme.

Students scored an average of 4.17 out of 7 in the MSLQ Intrinsic Value Scale before the tutoring took place and this increased slightly to 4.28 at the end of the course of tutoring as shown in figure 3. This was an increase of 0.02 percentage points.
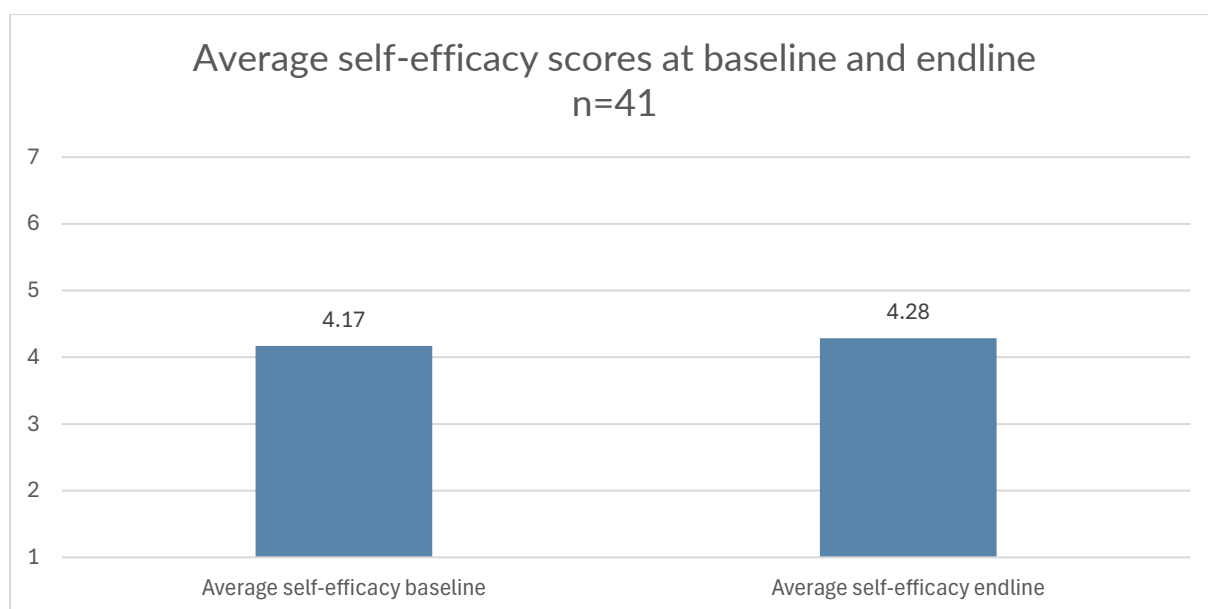

Average self-efficacy scores at baseline and endline
n=41

Figure 3 shows the average change in self-efficacy from baseline to endline

Despite this increase being very slight, when the endline average (4.28) is compared to the national benchmark (4.64), as highlighted in figure 4, the difference in scores could suggest that the schools are targeting the right students as the scores still remain below the national average after the programme is completed. This could suggest that a change in students' self-efficacy might be more evident after a longer period of tutoring.
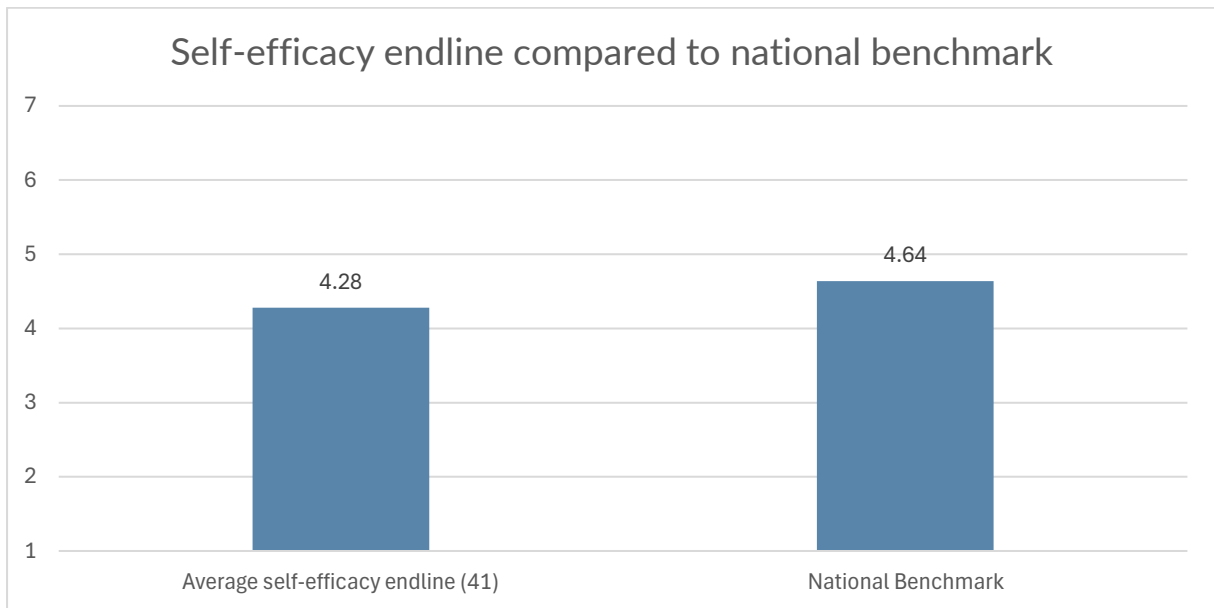
Self-efficacy endline compared to national benchmark

Figure 4 shows the average self-efficacy score compared to the national benchmark

Outcome 2: Students' motivation to learn improves

Key Finding: Students' motivation also remained stable throughout the course of tutoring.

Students scored an average of 4.19 out of 7 before the tutoring began and an average of 4.16 at endline. This is displayed in figure 5 below. This indicates no change from the start to the end of the tutoring programme suggesting that the students' motivation remained steady throughout.
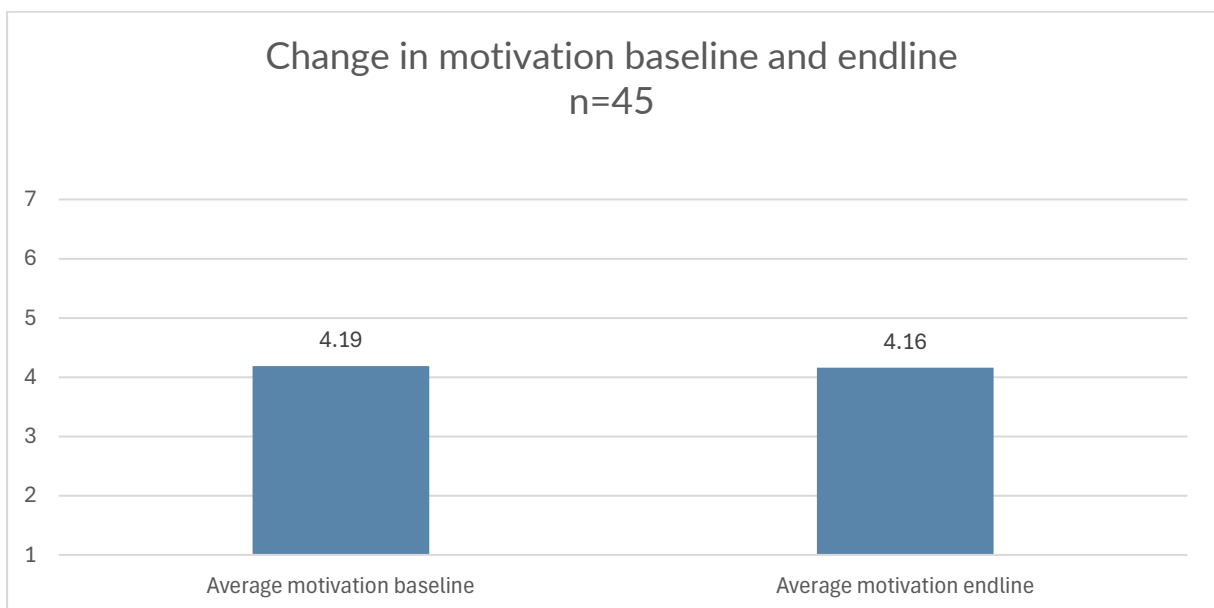
Change in motivation baseline and endline
n=45

Figure 5 shows the average scores in motivation scores from baseline to endline for matched students

When looking at the endline motivation average compared to the national average (figure 6) it is evident that the students' motivation scores on average are below the national benchmark. Similar to the findings for self-efficacy, this could suggest that the tutoring is targeting the right students as their motivation appears to be lower than the national benchmark even after completing the course of tutoring.
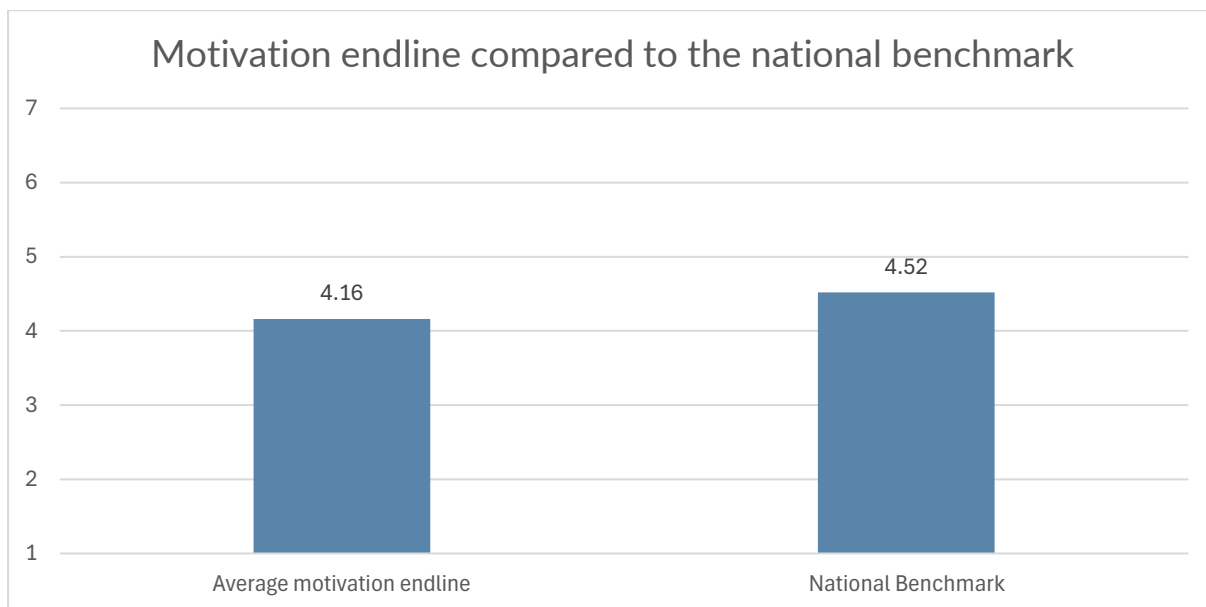
Motivation endline compared to the national benchmark

	Average motivation endline	National Benchmark
	4.16	4.52

Figure 6 shows average score at endline for motivation compared to the national benchmark

Student Feedback

Enjoyment of the tutoring sessions

Students were asked to give their thoughts and feedback on the tutoring sessions through a custom survey that took place at the start and at the end of the course of tutoring.

At baseline students were asked if they were looking forward to the tutoring (figure 7). Most students responded with 'yes' (46.15%) and the fewest number of students responded with 'no' (19.23%). Of the students who responded with yes, they said that they were looking forward to the tutoring because they were excited to learn more and receive extra help to achieve the grades they need. One student said:

❝ *Then it can bring me closer to being able to get good levels and be able to go to college and get my dream job."*

Those that said no said that they do not enjoy English, they are not very good at it, or they think the sessions will be hard. Another student mentioned that they are not very good at talking to new people and so this was one of the reasons they were not looking forward to it. Those that said they were unsure said that they felt nervous and were unsure what the sessions would be like. This could suggest that a detailed briefing on the content of the sessions might help the students to prepare for the tutoring programme.
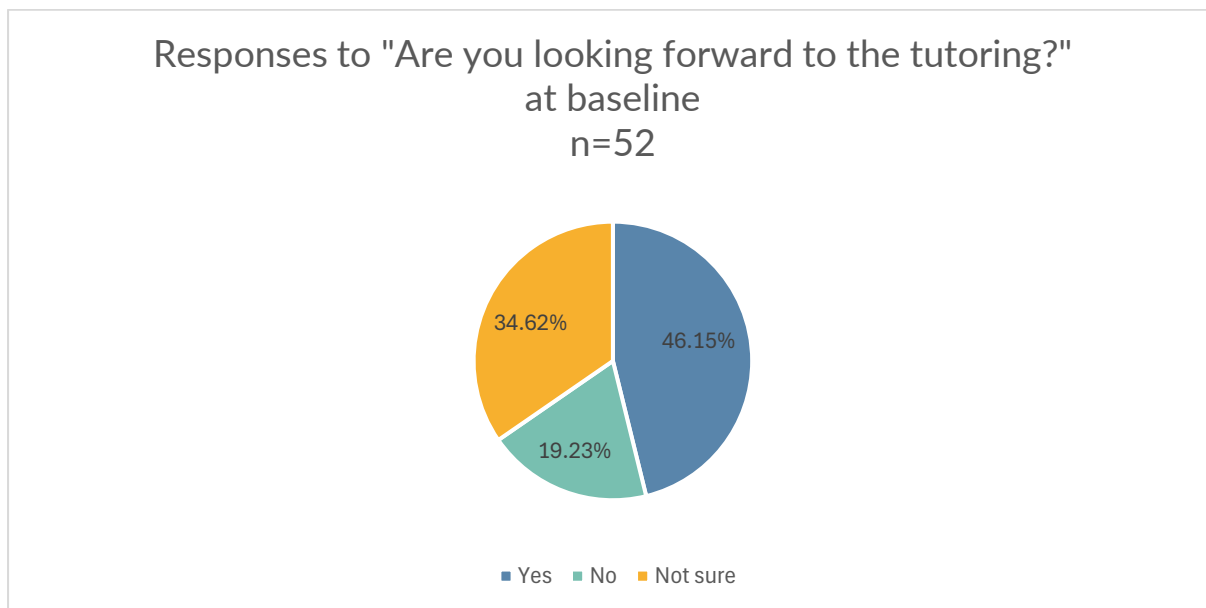
**Responses to "Are you looking forward to the tutoring?"
at baseline
n=52**

46.15%
19.23%
34.62%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

Figure 7 shows the percentage of student responses to the statement "Are you looking forward to the tutoring?" at baseline

After the programme the students were asked if they enjoyed the sessions (figure 8). 84.09% of students said that they enjoyed the sessions "Most of the time" or "All of the time" with only 13.64% of students enjoying the sessions "Some of the time" and only 2.27% who selected 'Never.'

When students were asked what they enjoyed the most many commented that they liked the tutor they had, and they enjoyed working in small groups. Some students said that they liked practising what they had learnt:

📕 *The writing parts, where we got to exercise our new skills."*

Others mentioned that they liked the change as it was different to their normal routine and classes. Some students mentioned specific activities such as *"writing on whiteboards"* and *"rhythm games"* and learning about specific terminology including *"adverbs"* and *"abstract nouns"*.

On the other hand, when students were asked what they enjoyed the least a couple of students said that they didn't like *"missing out on other lessons"* suggesting that the timing of the sessions meant that they were missing out on other learning taking place. This varied across providers as sessions provided by the University of Exeter were after school only whereas the timings of the sessions provided by Next Steps South West ambassadors varied. Some students also said that they least enjoyed learning about the more difficult content for example: *"participles"* was mentioned as well as *"feeling nouns"*. Others said they did not like going over things that they already knew. A few students mentioned that they least enjoyed the large writing assessment out of all of the activities that took place.
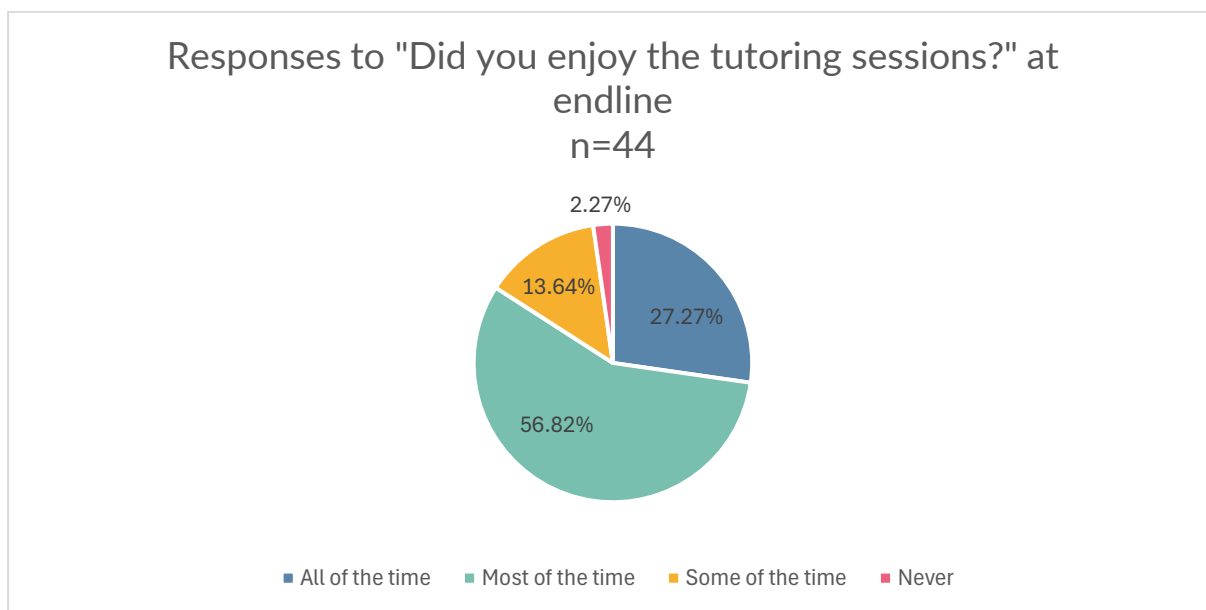
Responses to "Did you enjoy the tutoring sessions?" at endline
n=44

- All of the time
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Never

2.27%
13.64%
27.27%
56.82%

Figure 8 shows the percentage of student responses to "Did you enjoy the tutoring sessions?" at endline

Before the tutoring commenced students were asked if there was anything that worried them about the tutoring. A couple of students commented on being worried about meeting people that they did not know. Others were worried about *"not being able to do it"* or *"getting something wrong when people get it right"*. One student said they were worried about:

❝ *Learning things too quickly and jumping from one subject to another before I can take in what we have just been taught."*

These comments suggest that their limited understanding of what the content of the sessions would be like made them feel worried about what was to come.

Benefits of the tutoring sessions

Students were also asked what they would most like to achieve prior to participating in the tutoring. Many commented on specific literacy skills such as *"structured sentences"*, *"neater handwriting"*, *"clauses"* and *"nouns"*. Others commented on getting better at English and achieving better grades. After the tutoring the students were asked if the sessions had helped with their writing (figure 9). 75% of students responded with "yes". When they were asked how it had helped them with their writing, many students commented on specific skills such as *"re-wording sentences"*, *"expanding sentences"*, *"using better vocabulary"*, *"handwriting"* and *"punctuation"*. Others commented on specific terminology for example one student said it helped them to*:*

❝ W*rite more improved sentences, and knowing what nouns, verbs, subordinating, main clauses...when writing sentences."*

These responses suggest that despite some of their worries the students had a good idea of what they wanted to achieve and the improvements they had made to their writing after attending the tutoring sessions.
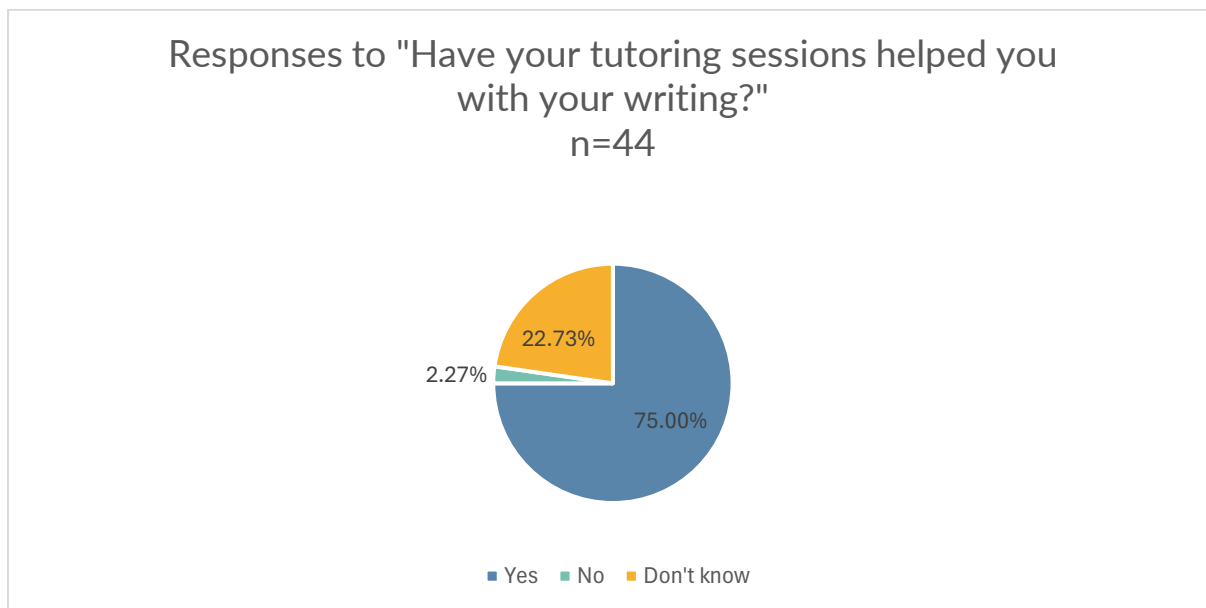
Responses to "Have your tutoring sessions helped you with your writing?" n=44

22.73%

2.27%

75.00%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

Figure 9 shows responses to "Have your tutoring sessions helped you with your writing?" at endline

Student thoughts on next steps

Students were also asked what they would like to do in the future. For this question many responded with future career options. These were categorised into themes. At baseline the majority of students selected careers related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) such as a *"plumber"* or a *"mechanical engineer"* as shown in figure 10 below:

Health professions 14.3%

Sports 7.1%

Education 7.1%

Undecided 23.8%

STEM 31.0%

Arts 16.7%

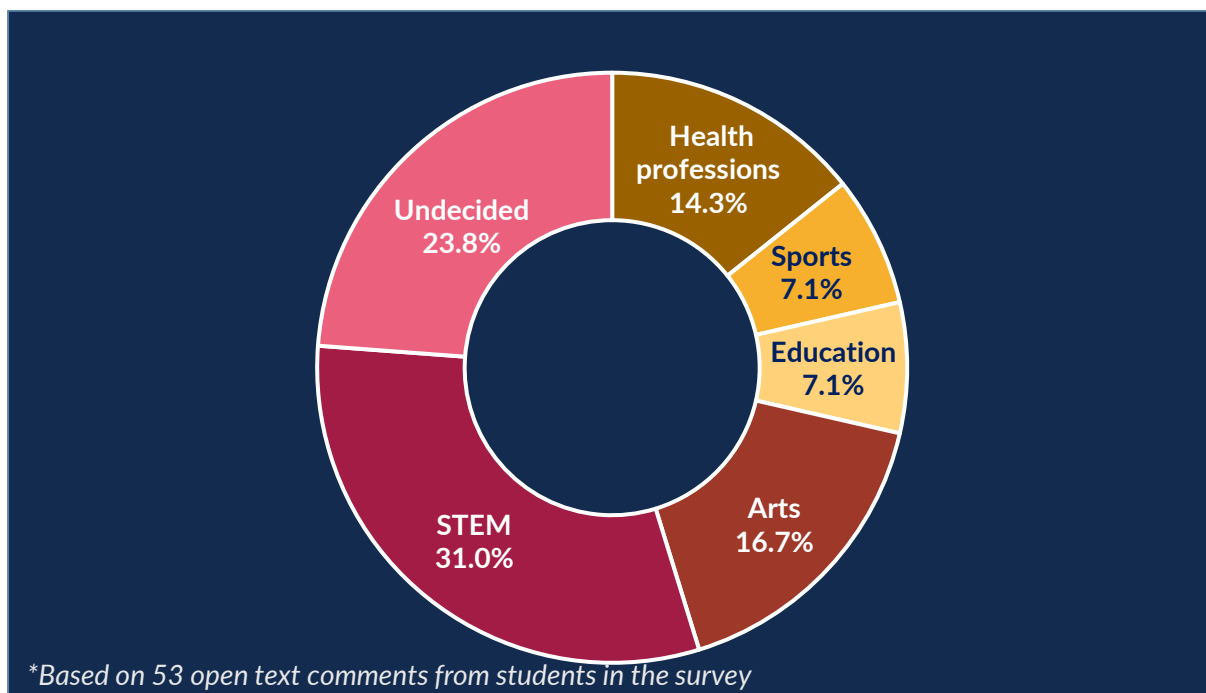*Based on 53 open text comments from students in the survey*

Figure 10 shows the themed responses to "What would you like to do in the future?" at baseline

At endline similar themes arose again with the majority of students noting careers related to STEM. Fewer students (16.1%) were undecided at endline compared to baseline (23.8%). More students mentioned careers related to Education such as an *"English teacher"* after the course of tutoring which could reflect their enjoyment of the sessions as highlighted in figure 11 below:
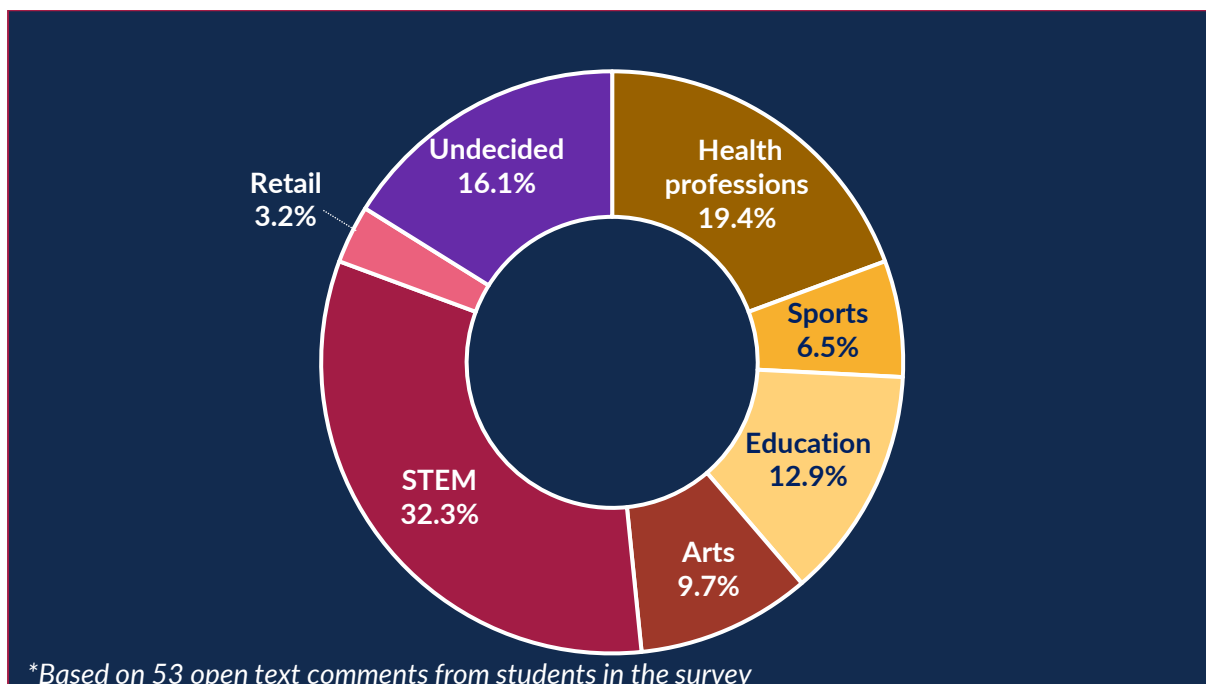

Based on 53 open text comments from students in the survey

Figure 11 shows the themed responses to "What would you like to do in the future?" at endline

When students were asked if they wanted to attend university in the future at baseline and endline this decreased (figure 12). At baseline 55.77% said "yes" to going to university whilst after the programme only 36.96% said that they wanted to go to university. More students were unsure after the course of tutoring and more students said that they did not want to attend university after the course of tutoring.
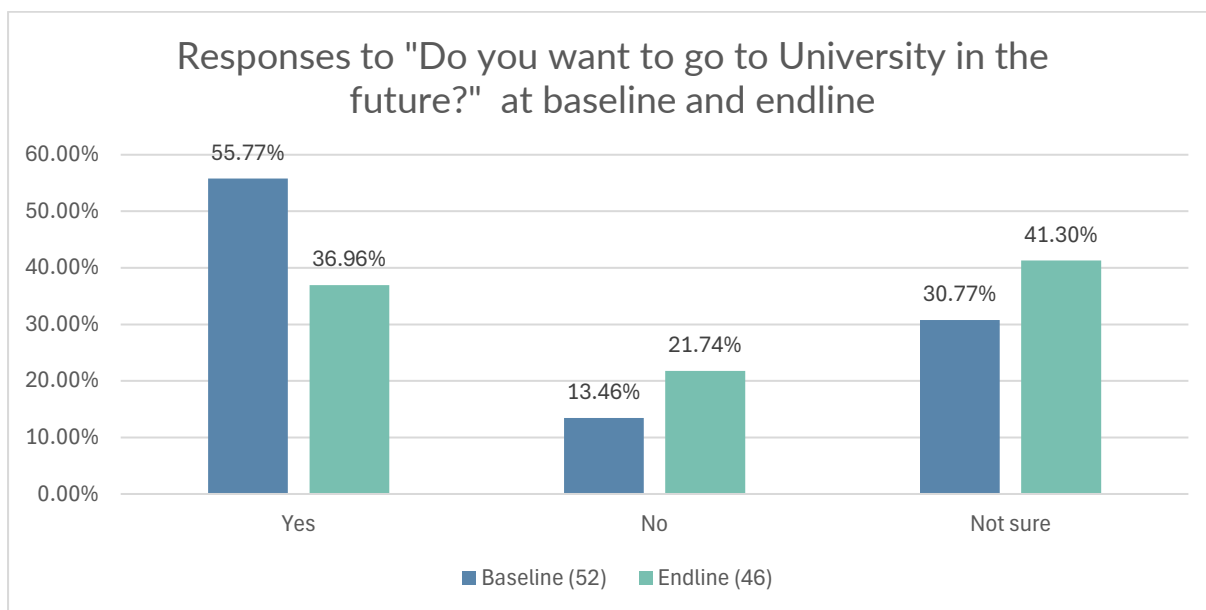
Figure 12 shows students responses to "Do you want to go to university in the future?" at baseline and endline

Those that said they did want to go to university at baseline said it was because they wanted to get a good job. They felt as though university would *"open a wider space of job opportunities"* for them or they wanted to learn more and continue to have a *"good education"* learning specialised subjects that they enjoy. These responses were similar at endline. Students said that they wanted to get a good job and learn skills that they are interested in:

I would want to go to university so I can learn everything I need to know to get good jobs and have a better future."

Those students that said they did not want to go to university at baseline said this was because they did not need to go for the careers they wanted to pursue. Some of the comments also mentioned the high cost of university. This was similar for the comments at endline for example one student said: *"no because it costs lots of money"*. Others said they were still unsure about what they wanted to do with their career. Those that said they were unsure whether they wanted to go to university or not said it was because they did not know what career they wanted to do yet. Others said that it is expensive and they were worried it might be hard despite it seeming like a lot of fun. Similar comments emerged at baseline and endline suggesting the reasons for wanting or not wanting to go to university did not change after the course of tutoring.

91.11% of students said that they would recommend the programme to students in the year below (figure 13). Those who said that they would recommend the programme mentioned that they found it useful learning new content and going over their learning in further detail. Many said it helped them to improve their English skills and said it was *"fun"* or *"interesting"*. One student who said that they did not know if they would recommend the tutoring programme said:

If they're confident - no. If not confident - yes. Because it does help you remember it."

The student who said that they would not recommend the programme to the year below said that they felt lonely.
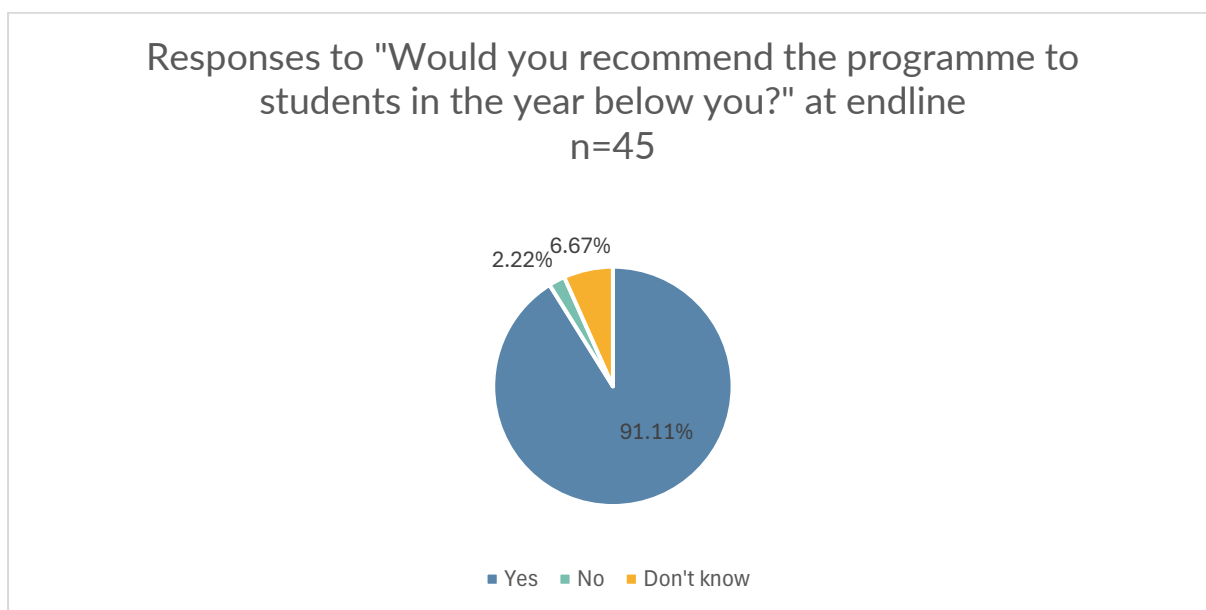

Figure 13 shows students' responses to "Would you recommend the programme to students in the year below you?" at endline

Suggestions to improve the programme included the option for students to pick their groups or make sure that they work well with others in the group. Some students said they would like to do less writing despite the course being aimed at improving basic sentence structures and grammar and devising complex sentences. One student said:

Make the repeated practice sections shorter or make it optional if you've already got a good grasp on the subject."

A couple of students said they would prefer it if the sessions were not after school and maybe during lessons so that they are more likely to attend. This counteracts with previous worries about missing out on other lessons which suggests a balance of the two could work across all providers (University of Exeter schools and Next Steps South West schools). One student suggested making it more active and another said they would prefer sessions 1-1.

4. Outcomes for tutors

Outcomes 3: Tutors feel confident delivering the content of the tutoring sessions

Outcome 4: Tutors feel supported and well-equipped to deliver tutoring sessions

Key Finding: Qualitative feedback suggested that the tutors generally felt well-prepared and supported to deliver the tutoring sessions.

Tutors were asked how well they felt the training prepared them for the tutoring in school (figure 14). 100% of tutors said it prepared them "very well" or "somewhat well". When they were asked what other preparation may have been helpful a couple of the tutors mentioned an in-person training session would have been helpful:

❝ I*n the training videos there was talk of a live session where any questions we had could be answered, this didn't happen although it would have been very helpful for it to go ahead."*

Others mentioned some training on how to keep the students engaged would have been useful as well as some safeguarding or wellbeing training. One student mentioned it would have been helpful to have been sent the materials in advance.
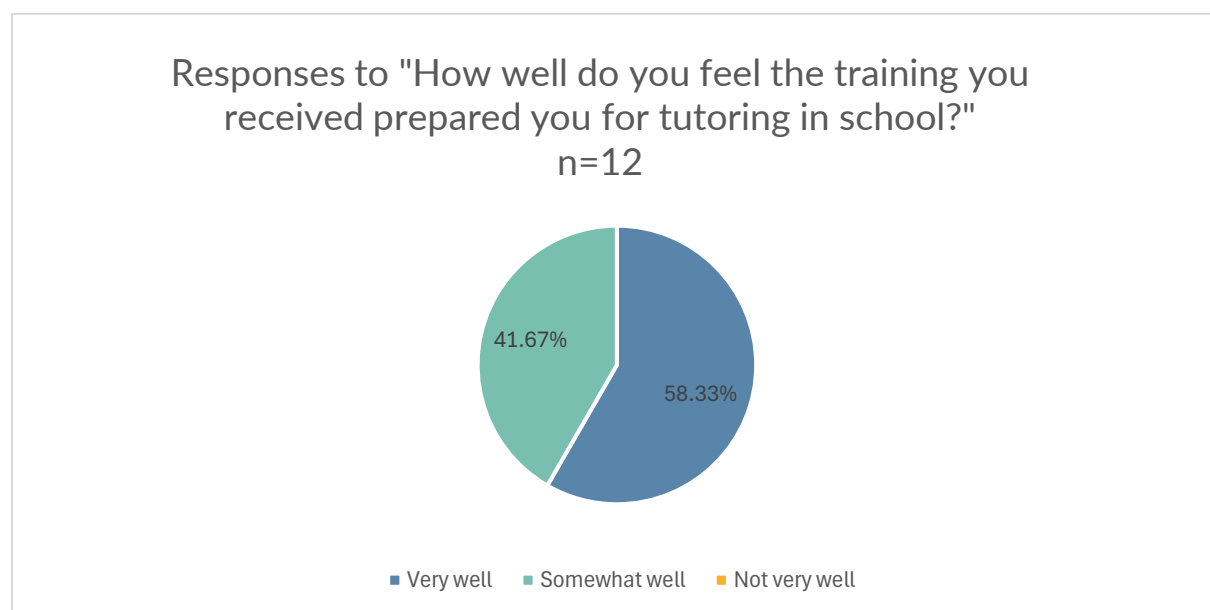

Responses to "How well do you feel the training you received prepared you for tutoring in school?"
n=12

41.67%

58.33%

■ Very well   ■ Somewhat well   ■ Not very well

Figure 14 shows tutor responses to "How well do you feel the training you received prepared you for tutoring in school?" at endline

91.67% of tutors said that they had enough support throughout the placement (figure 15). When they were asked what other communication or support, they would have liked to receive they suggested in person lectures/meetings, having someone check in halfway through the sessions, and a couple of suggestions highlighted better communication with schools. Better communication with the schools would have helped them to alleviate

concerns around lateness to sessions when transport was unreliable or given them the opportunity to discuss issues that might arise in class.
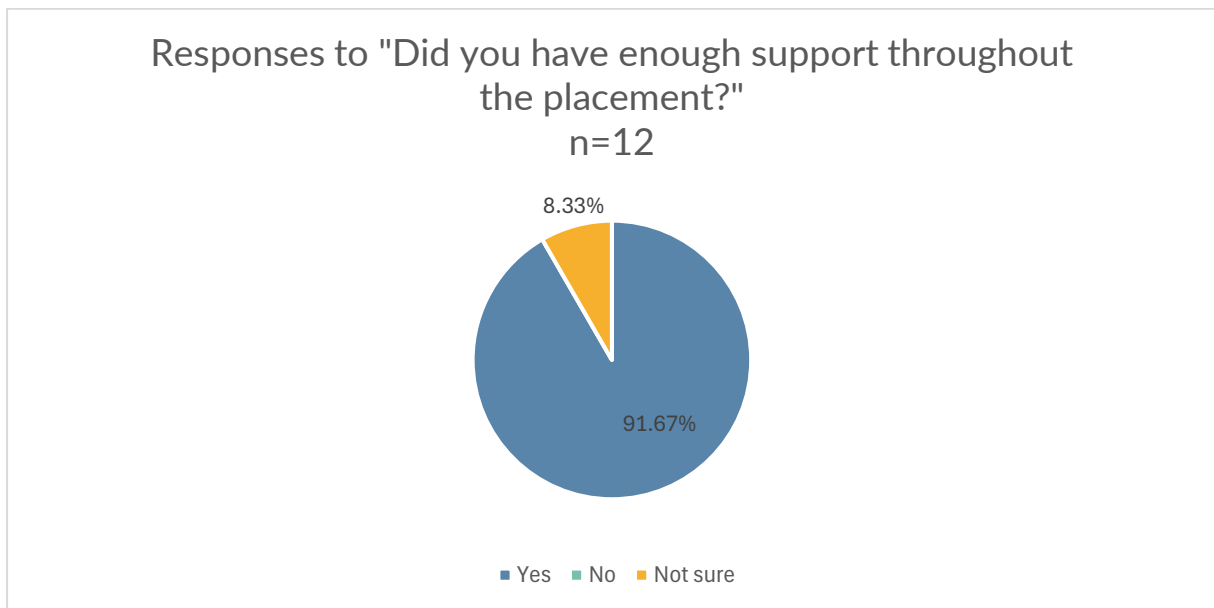

Responses to "Did you have enough support throughout the placement?"
n=12

8.33%

91.67%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

Figure 15 shows tutor responses to "Did you have enough support throughout the placement?" at endline

Key Finding: 100% of tutors found managing the engagement and behaviour of the students "somewhat/sometimes easy" or "relatively easy".

Tutors were also asked about the students' behaviour and engagement within the sessions (figure 16). 100% of tutors found managing the students' behaviour "relatively easy" or "sometimes easy". Tutors suggested teachers overseeing the sessions would have helped managing behaviour easier. Some commented that when teachers were always present behaviour was better whereas when the teachers did not engage at all the students tended to push boundaries. Other suggestions included: teaching the tutors techniques to deal with bad behaviour should it arise, tutoring the students in a larger room or in groups that are more spaced out or in separate rooms to help the students focus. Another tutor said,

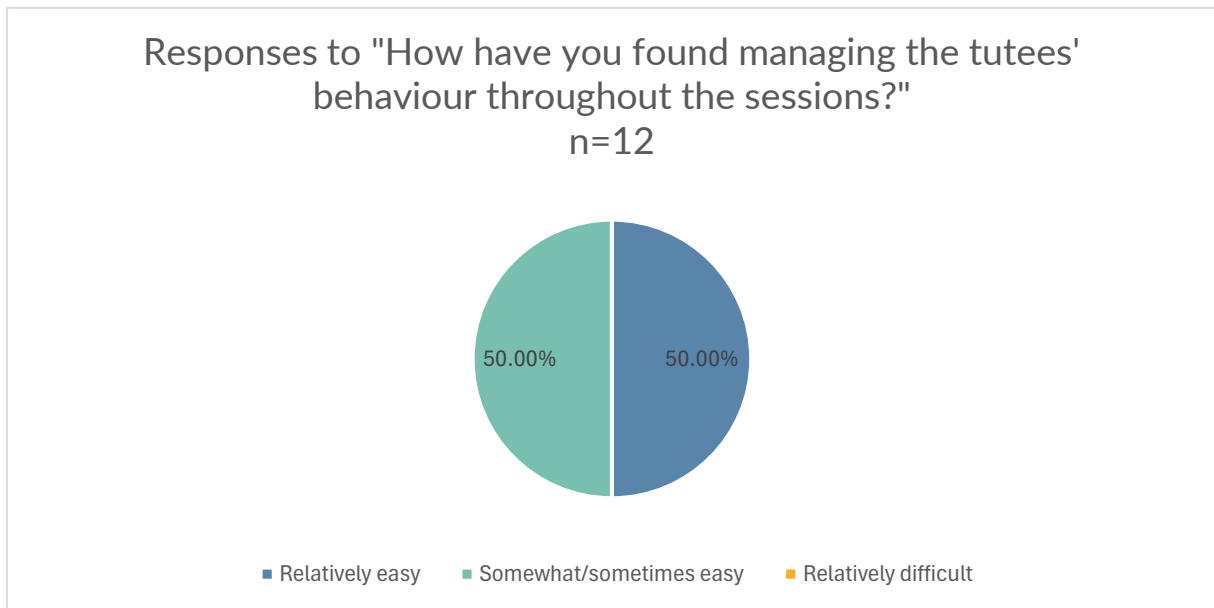🔖 *I think more materials to engage with, would keep them more focused and this would reduce disruptive behaviour."*

Responses to "How have you found managing the tutees' behaviour throughout the sessions?"
n=12

Relatively easy ■ Somewhat/sometimes easy ■ Relatively difficult

Figure 16 shows tutor responses to "How have you found managing the tutees behaviour throughout the sessions?" at endline

All of the tutors found it "relatively easy" or "sometimes easy" to keep the tutees engaged (figure 17). This was reflected in some of the comments where one tutor said:

They were as engaged as I would expect considering the subject matter, they did really enjoy creating their own sentences about topics."

Others suggested including more games and hands-on activities and using more variety of activities as sometimes the students got bored. Another student suggested using rewards. It was also mentioned that more informal tasks would have been helpful to get to know the tutees better. One tutor said when they were more confident teaching the content they felt that the engagement from students was better:

The students' engagement was very much dependent on the ability of us teachers to know the content. Whenever I felt I wasn't 100% confident is when engagement would drop."
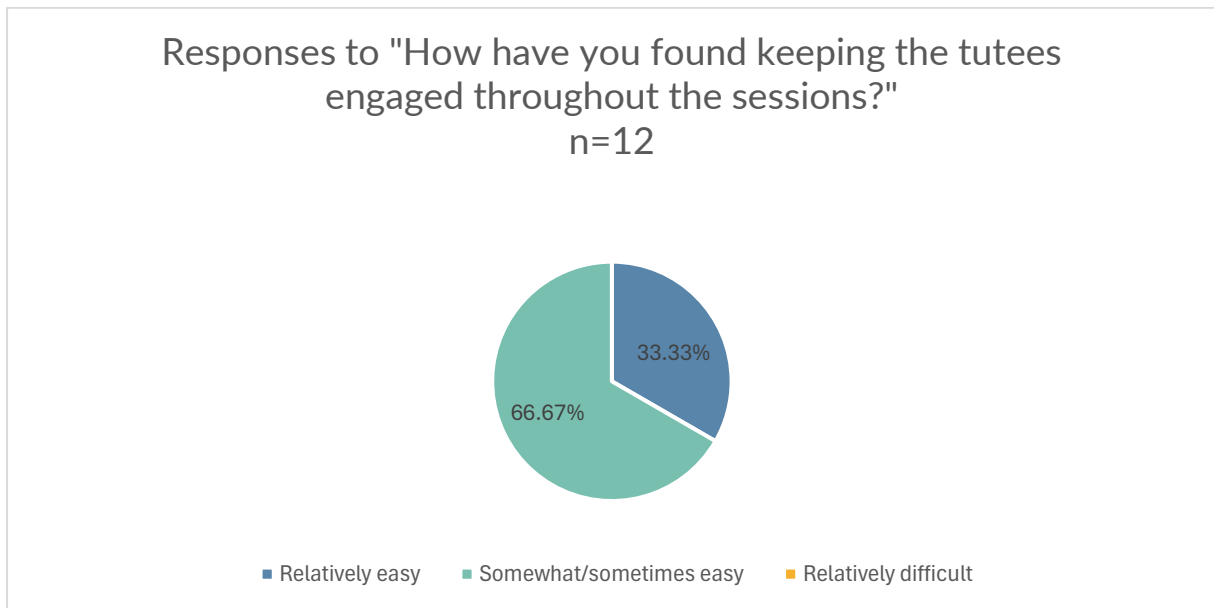
Responses to "How have you found keeping the tutees engaged throughout the sessions?"
n=12

Legend: ■ Relatively easy ■ Somewhat/sometimes easy ■ Relatively difficult

Figure 17 shows tutor responses to "How have you found keeping the tutees engaged throughout the sessions?" at endline

All of the tutors found the workload "very manageable" or "mostly manageable" with 91.67% selecting "very manageable" and 8.33% selecting "mostly manageable".

Key Finding: 100% of tutors said that they enjoyed the tutoring sessions with 91.67% selecting "yes-a lot" and 8.33% selected "yes-somewhat/sometimes".

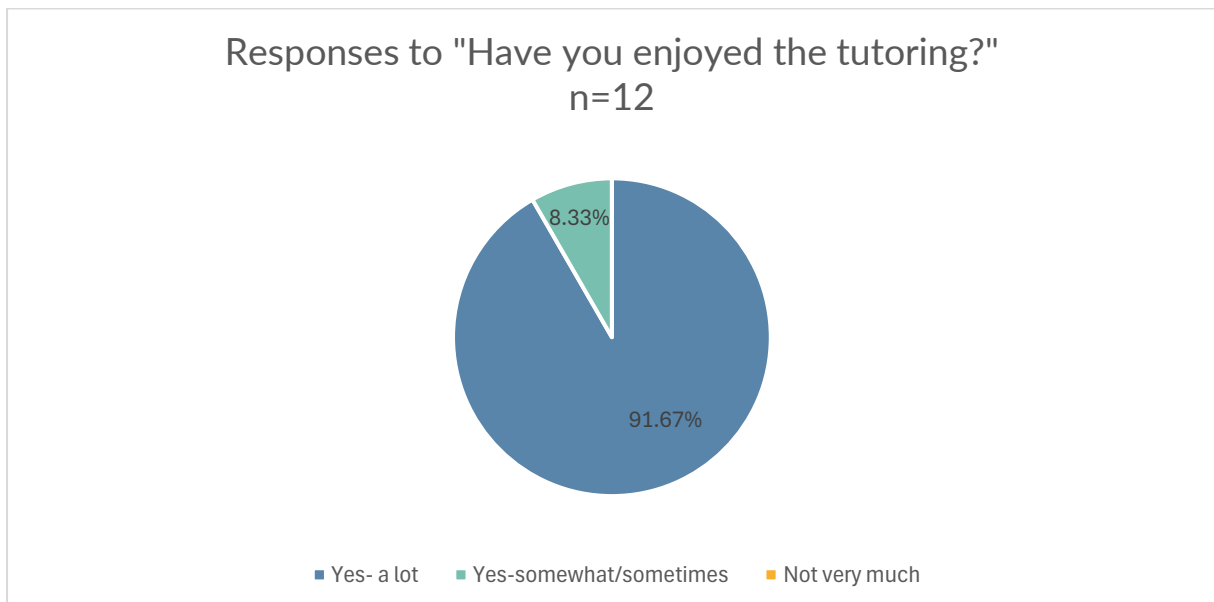100% of tutors enjoyed the tutoring as shown in figure 18 below:

Responses to "Have you enjoyed the tutoring?"
n=12

Legend: ■ Yes- a lot ■ Yes-somewhat/sometimes ■ Not very much

Figure 18 shows tutor responses to "Have you enjoyed the tutoring?" at endline

When the tutors were asked what they had enjoyed the most many commented upon the students' progress and that they found this very rewarding. One tutor said:

❝ *The progression of my tutees was really satisfying to observe, both in terms of confidence and ability."*

Others said they enjoyed gaining school experience and the classroom observations *"seeing how the teachers communicate and engage with the class"*. A couple of tutors said that they enjoyed engaging with the students and getting to know them throughout the sessions. One tutor said that this experience was *"invaluable"* for their teacher training.

When the tutors were asked what they least enjoyed a couple of tutors commented on the travel arrangements to get to the allocated school- they said that sharing lifts tended to work better. A couple of tutors commented on observations where they did not actually observe any teaching (electives): *"Sitting in the lessons...where we didn't observe any actual teaching"* suggesting that the tutors felt that these sessions were not the best use of their time. A couple of tutors also commented on the behaviour of the students and said that this was *"frustrating"* at times. This could reflect the responses from half of the tutors that said managing behaviour was "somewhat/sometimes easy".

Tutors were asked to select which of their motivations had been fulfilled (figure 19). Tutors could select as many options as possible that they felt applicable to them. The most common motivation was "to gain practical teaching experience" over 90% of tutors selected this whereas no tutors selected "to develop particular skills" suggesting this statement may have been more applicable if it suggested specific skills they may have fulfilled.

Responses to "Thinking about your motivations for choosing the tutoring placement, which of the following motivations *have* been fulfilled? "

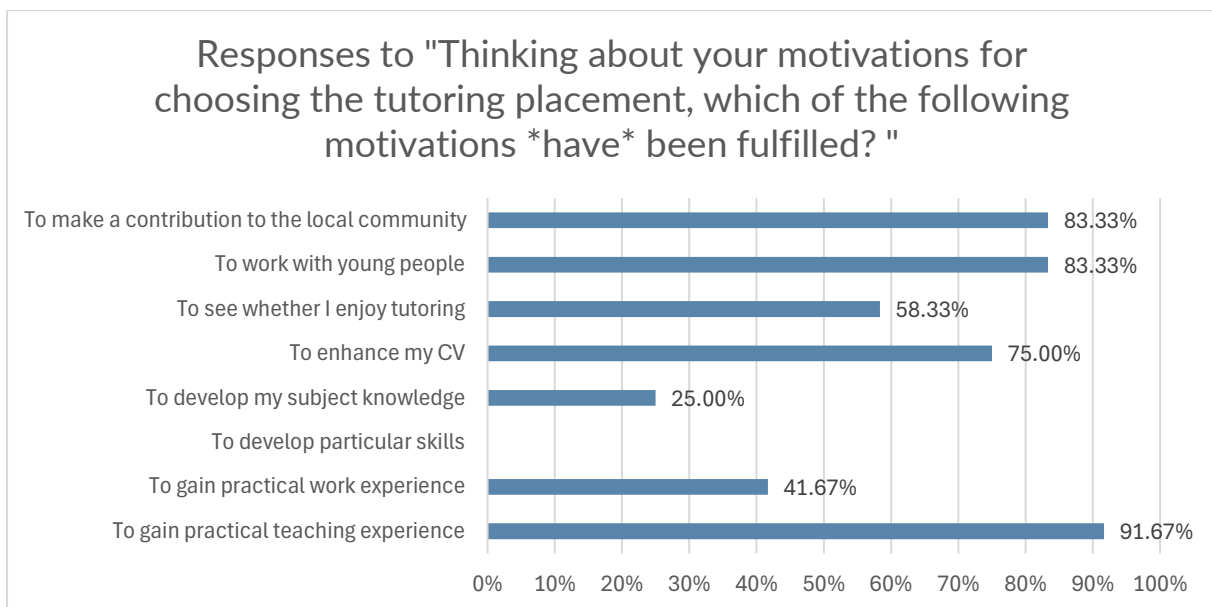| Motivation	Percentage
To make a contribution to the local community	83.33%
To work with young people	83.33%
To see whether I enjoy tutoring	58.33%
To enhance my CV	75.00%
To develop my subject knowledge	25.00%
To develop particular skills	
To gain practical work experience	41.67%
To gain practical teaching experience	91.67%

*Figure 19 shows tutor responses to "Thinking about your motivations for choosing the tutoring placement, which of the following motivations *have* been fulfilled?"*

In contrast to this most tutors (58.33%) selected "not applicable: all of my motivations were fulfilled" when they were asked which motivations **had not** been fulfilled. This could suggest that the tutoring met their expectations. This is supported through a comment left by one tutor that said *"honestly, I think this term has been amazing."*

On the other hand, 25% of tutors selected "to develop my subject knowledge" and 8.33% selected "to enhance my CV" and "to develop particular skills" when they were asked which motivations **had not** been fulfilled. This suggests that students could benefit from further training to develop their subject knowledge in advance of the tutoring sessions. One tutor commented to say:

❝ *I didn't want to have to take work or worries home, and due to the poor discipline/approach to the tutoring by some schools that has unfortunately happened."*

This could suggest that some further support with behaviour and/or oversight from the schools would have been beneficial. No "other" suggestions were stated by students.

When tutors were asked how the placement had compared with their expectations at the start 33.33% said "as expected", 50% said "better than expected" and 16.67% said "worse than expected" (figure 20). The 16.67% that selected "worse than expected" could reflect the motivations that they felt were not fulfilled throughout the placement.

Responses to "How has the placement compared with your expectations at the start?"
n=12

- As expected — 33.33%
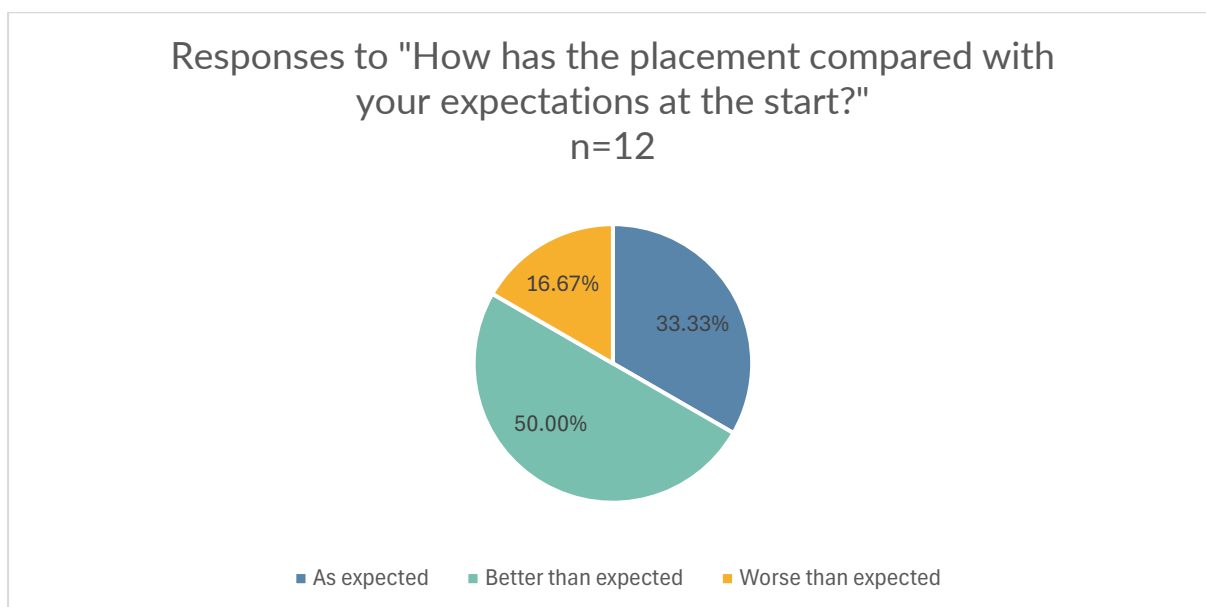- Better than expected — 50.00%
- Worse than expected — 16.67%

Figure 20 shows tutor responses to "How has the placement compared with your expectations at the start?"

Tutors participating through the University of Exeter placement were asked if the classroom observation sessions were useful. 33.33% responded to say "yes", 41.67% responded to say "somewhat" and 25% responded with "no" (figure 21). Tutors said the observation sessions could have been made more useful if they were more involved in the lessons rather than just watching. One tutor said that they only observed extra-curricular (elective) sessions rather than normal structured lessons due to the timetabling at the school they were placed at- even though these were helpful this tutor felt as though they hadn't received the promised experience of the classroom observation.
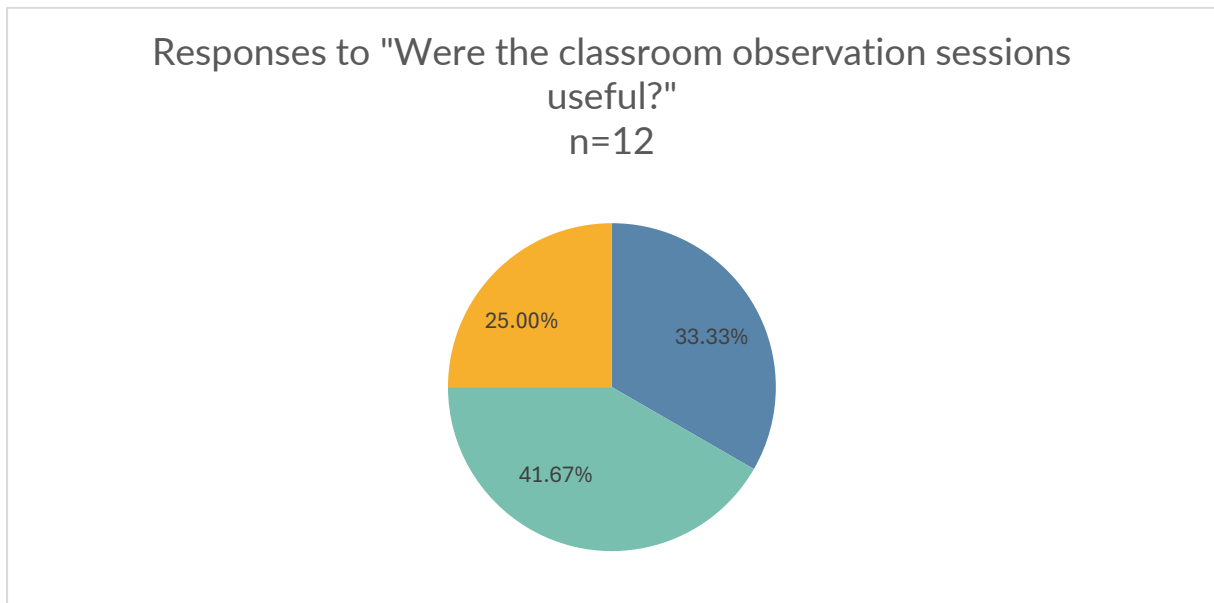
Responses to "Were the classroom observation sessions useful?"
n=12

Figure 21 shows University of Exeter tutor responses to "Were the classroom observation sessions useful?"

Overall, 83.33% of tutors said that they would recommend the placement to other students with the remaining 16.67% selecting "maybe" (figure 22). When the tutors were asked for any further feedback one tutor said:

At the end of year 2 term 2 it was encouraged a lot for sport science students and that's why I think lots of us did it, but I know many degrees didn't even know this module existed... I'm sure there would be many students who would be keen to get involved."

Another said it would be helpful to review the booklet as there were a few spelling and grammar mistakes. Another tutor said to make sure every school had a notes page at the back of the booklet as some of them didn't. A couple of tutors said thank you for the opportunity.
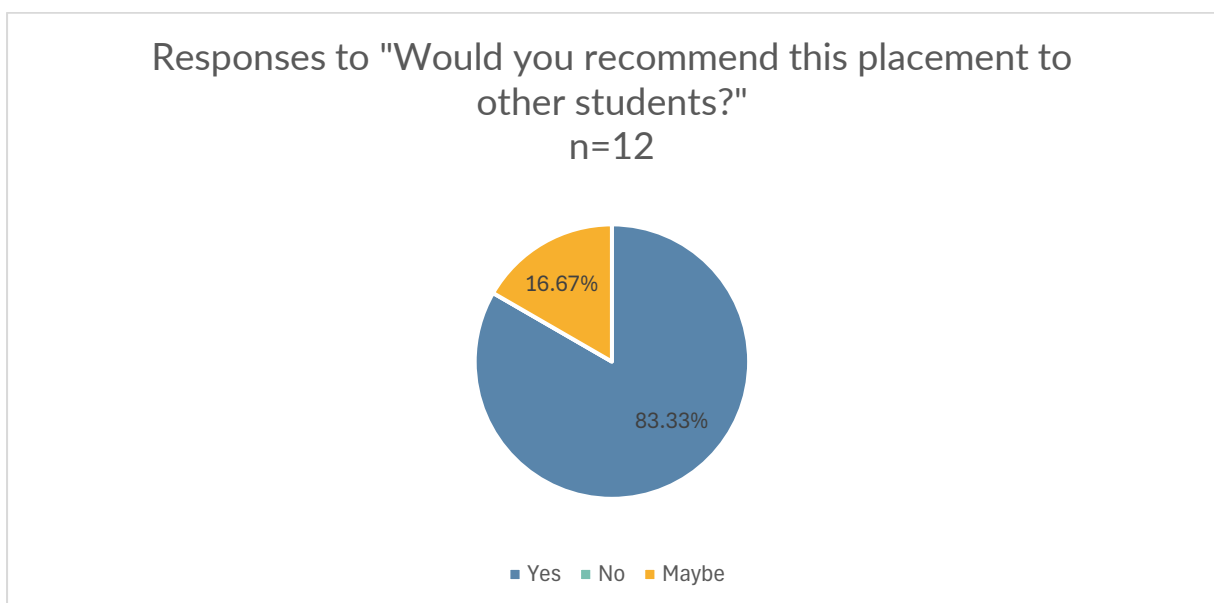
Responses to "Would you recommend this placement to other students?"
n=12

■ Yes ■ No ■ Maybe

Figure 22 shows tutor responses to "Would you recommend this placement to other students?

5. Summary and Recommendations

In summary, student literacy assessment scores increased by 9.27 percentage-points or 25.57% change suggesting that **the programme met the intended outcome of enhancing pupils' ability to write accurate sentences**. Therefore, this programme could be of value for future cohorts of participants who need further support with their writing. When looking at the breakdown of scores for each area it was evident that the weakest area for students was "using punctuation to create meaning" with the lowest scores in this area and the smallest change in scores in this area of development overall. This emphasises that **further focus may be needed on "using punctuation to create meaning"** within the tutoring sessions to aid the progress of the students which could further boost the positive change in scores in the future.

The change in pre and post intervention scores was statistically significant (p<0.05) for each area of learning in the literacy assessment. This means that the positive increase in scores is unlikely to have occurred purely due to chance and the change in scores was likely an effect of the Crafting Accurate Sentences Programme. Yet, it is important to recognise that in the absence of a control group, it is difficult to be confident that the change between pre- and post-intervention scores can be wholly attributed to the programme without controlling for background factors.

There was no correlation (R=0.07) between the number of sessions attended and the change in scores suggesting no linear relationship between the two variables. This means that in this evaluation the number of sessions attended and the change in assessment scores had no direct connection. This could have been impacted by the small sample. It is also important to consider other factors that could have also had an impact on this outcome such as the quality and consistency of sessions, the concentration of the students, the total number of sessions delivered and the relationships between the tutors and students e.g. some tutors may find it harder to build rapport and so this may have less impact in the small number of sessions. ImpactEd Evaluation would recommend further research to allow better control for these factors.

Overall, **students' motivation and self-efficacy scores remained steady over the course of the tutoring programme**. This could suggest that a longer period of tutoring may have been more beneficial to see any changes to students' motivation and self-efficacy. Also, because scores remained lower than the national benchmark after the course of tutoring this could emphasise that these students may benefit from further continued support. However, due to scores remaining lower than the national benchmark this could suggest that the right pupils are being targeted.

Looking at the student feedback most students were looking forward to the tutoring (46.15%) however those that were not sure (34.62%) or were not looking forward to the tutoring (19.23%) may have benefited from further detailed information on what the sessions would look like so that they could prepare themselves. **Most students enjoyed the tutoring with 97.73% selecting that they enjoyed the tutoring "all of the time", "most of the time" or "some of the time".**

Scores showed a decrease over time when students were asked if they wanted to go to university in the future with more students selecting that they did not want to go to university in the future after the programme. Yet despite this negative change, **when students were asked what they wanted to do in the future fewer were undecided and more noted careers related to education such as an "English Teacher" which could suggest the programme may have positively influenced their choices**.

Generally, **tutor feedback was positive with 100% selecting that they enjoyed the tutoring "a lot" or "somewhat/sometimes"**. Some tutors found the behaviour and engagement of the students easier to manage than others suggesting that future training or top tips for encouraging good engagement and behaviour from the students could be beneficial for those that were less confident with this. Half of the tutors said that the tutoring exceeded their expectations and over 80% of tutors said that they would recommend the programme to others.

Recommendations for programme

Below ImpactEd Evaluation has outlined some key recommendations as a result of the findings and feedback that have arisen from the evaluation carried out. As the facilitators of the programme the University of Exeter and Next Steps South West should consider these alongside information they have on the context of the programme and how practical it would be to implement these in reality.

- **Provide more detail to school students in preparation for the tutoring:** A preparation session, detailed briefing, or introduction to the tutoring for students could be considered by the University of Exeter to relieve some of the student worries or uncertainties prior to starting the course of tutoring. This will also help when scaling to other universities as each university could receive the same brief so that this is consistent across schools.
- **Consider a longer programme duration:** The University of Exeter might want to think about extending the programme over a longer time period in order to see if the programme has more of an impact on students' social and emotional outcomes.
- **Consider school student groupings:** Comments from the school students suggested there could be further consideration of groupings for the tutoring sessions. This could be considered before the tutoring sessions begin to ensure all students work well together to get the most out of the programme.
- **Ensure consistency in sessions delivered:** the different number of sessions delivered by schools could have impacted upon findings and so it is important for future delivery that this is consistent across schools and the full programme is completed.
- **Flexible timetabling:** Flexibility in timetabling could help as some students worried about missing out on other lessons whilst others found it more difficult to attend after school. Organising timetables between students and tutors continues to be a challenge yet a where possible a balance of the two across all providers (University of Exeter and Next Steps South West) could be considered as this could perhaps suit the needs of more students in different schools.

- **Consider motivations that were not fulfilled:** Considering motivations that were not fulfilled this time for tutors will help to identify and improve how these could be fulfilled next time. E.g. an introduction on key subject knowledge that the programme would include to prepare them for the sessions ahead. This would likely encourage other tutors to support with this programme when scaling to other universities.
- **Further focus on topic areas with the lowest scores:** Using punctuation to create meaning was an area in the assessment with the lowest scores overall. Therefore, a more intensive focus on this could boost scores.

Recommendations for future evaluation

Consider a larger sample of participants where possible: Increasing the number of participants completing the surveys at all time points (and thus, the sample size of the participating group) would allow for a higher reliability of the findings. Some participants completed baseline but not endline surveys and vice versa so ensuring a higher rate of completion would improve the reliability of the findings and findings can then be broken down into demographics of interest.

- **Incorporate further qualitative work:** Qualitative interviews or focus groups with some of the students and/or tutors would enrich the data collected quantitatively through surveys. This way the number of custom survey questions could be reduced to prevent participant fatigue.
- **Consider a comparison group:** Introducing a comparison group in the evaluation design would allow the attribution of changes that are seen in the data to the programme.
- **Clarity and definition in survey responses:** Clearer and concise survey response options may help to unpick further details or uncertainties in responses for example in the tutor survey for the question, "Thinking about your motivations for choosing the tutoring placement, which of the following motivations *have* been fulfilled?", "to develop particular skills" could be more clearly defined suggesting specific skills that they might develop. This could also include further differentiation between responses such as "relatively easy" and "sometimes easy" for example.
- **Continued evaluation cycle:** The University of Exeter could use the findings from this year to build an annual evaluation cycle to identify whether the trends identified continue. This will strengthen the quality of the data and the confidence with which we can draw conclusions about the impact of the programme. It will also help the University of Exeter refine the approach to delivery so that it can be easily implemented and replicated each year.

6. Glossary

Evaluation terminology

Academically validated measures

These are scales to measure social and emotional skills linked to academic achievement and long-term life outcomes that have been developed and peer reviewed by academic researchers within the fields of education and psychology. These have been developed to ensure:

> Predictive validity. These skills have been shown to be closely related to desirable life outcomes such as educational achievement, employability and earnings potential, or long-term health and life satisfaction. (In psychometrics, predictive validity is the extent to which a score on a scale or test predicts scores on some criterion measure. For example, the validity of a cognitive test for job performance is the correlation between test scores and, say, supervisor performance ratings.)
>
> Construct validity. The measure tests for the skill that it says it does, as defined in the literature.
>
> Test-retest validity. The results stay the same when tests are repeated.

Baseline

The initial assessment of students' attainment or social and emotional skills, at the start of an evaluation.

Change over time

The difference between a student's baseline result and their final result, either for attainment or social and emotional skills. This indicates progress made during participation in the programme. This will begin to indicate whether the programme has had an impact on students, though we must also account for other factors that could lead to this change, which is why we recommend the use of control groups and qualitative analysis.

Endline

The final assessment of students' attainment or social and emotional skills at the end of an evaluation.

Outcomes

We use outcomes to refer collectively to any social and emotional skills and academic attainment scores that are being measured over the course of an evaluation.

Statistically significant

A result has statistical significance when it is very unlikely to have occurred given the null hypothesis. In other words, if a result is statistically significant, it is unlikely to have occurred due purely to chance.

P Value

A p-value is a measure of the probability that an observed result could have occurred by chance alone. The lower the p-value, the greater the statistical significance of the observed difference. Typically a p-value of ≤ 0.05 indicates that the change was statistically significant. A p-value higher than 0.05 (> 0.05) is not statistically significant and indicates strong evidence for the null hypothesis; i.e. that we cannot be confident that this change did not occur due purely to chance.

Participating students

The group of students participating in the evaluation, and not forming part of a control group.

Programme

This could be any intervention, project or programme run in school with the aim of improving student outcomes or life chances. ImpactEd works with schools to build evaluations of their programmes in order to better understand whether they are having their intended impact.

Skills measures

We use a set of academically validated skills measures to assess students' social and emotional skills. See Our Metrics, below, for details of each measure we use.

Social and emotional skills

The term 'social and emotional skills' refers to a set of attitudes, behaviours, and strategies that are thought to underpin success in school and at work, such as motivation, perseverance, and self-control. They are usually contrasted with the 'hard skills' of cognitive ability in areas such as literacy and numeracy, which are measured by academic tests. There are various ways of referring to this set of skills, such as: non-cognitive skills, twentieth century skills and soft skills. Each term has pros and cons; we use social and emotional skills for consistency but we recognise that it does not perfectly encapsulate each of the skills that come under this umbrella.

Motivation

Motivation is what causes an individual to want to do one thing, and not another. Intrinsic motivation relates to students' inherent enjoyment or interest in a task. Intrinsic motivation has positive effects on academic performance, encouraging high-quality learning and creativity (Gutman & Schoon, 2013; Vallerand, 1997). Teaching which is focused on intrinsic goals as opposed to extrinsic goals improves test performance across all age groups (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004).

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is a measure of students' belief in their ability to achieve a specific task in the future. Self-efficacy is correlated with higher academic achievement and persistence, and also contributes to student wellbeing. (Gutman & Schoon 2013, DeWitz et. al. 2009).

Supporting our purpose driven partners to make better decisions using high quality evidence.

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