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Educating children through reception and year 1 during COVID-19 school disruption.



ickle

Impact of Covid on Key Learning and Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Restrictions to limit the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic led to two periods in which schools in England were closed to the majority of children. The first in Spring 2020 lasted for up to 14 weeks, while the second in Winter 2021 lasted for 9 weeks. During these periods most children were learning at home.

In the ICKLE project we focus on the impact of this disruption on the youngest school pupils, those who were in reception year during the first period of disruption in Spring 2020. These children should have been learning the skills and knowledge essential for later academic achievement.

We have collected data on the attainment and progress of approximately 450 children, from a sample of 10 schools that represent a super-diverse city in the North of England, alongside detail about the remote learning provision provided by schools and the home learning experiences of families.

In this report we document the remote learning provision and home learning experiences of children who were in year 1 during the second period of disruption in Winter 2021. This report extends the findings from our [first and second interim reports](#) on the Spring 2020 period of disruption when the children were in reception. We make comparisons between provision and experiences across these two periods.

Our key findings

- Schools and caregivers reported changes between the two periods of disruption, including an increase in the structure of home learning, higher expectations of the amount of schoolwork to be completed, and an increased focus on the continuation of learning. Schools also highlighted the introduction of daily live lessons, more recorded lessons, and more regular updates and feedback. These changes influenced home learning, with an increase in the number of families reporting a routine.
- The greater reliance on online learning and the associated need for technology was recognized by caregivers, some of whom purchased devices following the first period of disruption, resulting in almost all families having a device during the second period. However, schools continued to use worksheets that needed to be printed for literacy and maths, which for families without a printer (approximately one third of our sample) were challenging to access.
- According to both school and caregiver estimates, more home learning time was spent on literacy and maths, than on personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and communication & language. Schools provided more resources and new activities more often for literacy and maths.
- The majority of families were able to complete most or all of the work set, but 30% were only able to complete some of it. Common challenges included a lack of time due to work commitments and looking after other children, and the child's own motivation. Regarding the level of work set, the majority of families felt it was about right.
- Most schools provided access to online reading books for children learning at home, whereas children who remained in school were more likely to have access to hard copy books. Reading levels were more likely to be monitored for children who remained in school, with only two thirds of children learning at home receiving guidance on their reading level.
- There were improvements reported in relation to home-school communication during the second period of disruption, with more schools contacting families more often. Phone calls and virtual learning environments remained the most common methods of communication, but video calls also started to be used.
- All schools asked for work to be submitted daily for literacy and maths but less often (if at all) for PSED and communication & language. Feedback was provided in the same timeframe as work was submitted. The majority of caregivers reported receiving feedback and many commented that it motivated their children as well as themselves.

Recommendations

Our findings suggest that changes to the remote learning guidance and structure provided by schools had positive impacts on home learning and that improvements to home-school communication helped caregivers to feel supported and motivated. These changes should form the foundation for any future periods of remote learning.

Aspects of remote learning provision to review include the use of worksheets that need to be printed at home and the timeframe for work to be completed by families who have limited time. More guidance is needed to help caregivers plan and prioritise tasks effectively.

INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday January 6th 2021, England entered its third national lockdown – including a second round of school disruption – in response to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. This signalled a U-turn in the Government’s plans, which three days earlier had included a statement from the Prime Minister saying that children should return to school after the Christmas break, despite toughening restrictions. At short notice, schools and families worked to prepare for what would be for many children, two months of remote learning.

The January-March 2021 (hereafter ‘Winter 2021’) period of school disruption presented several key differences to the previous period in Spring 2020. First, schools were required to provide remote education for those learning at home, using comparable resources to those used in school by vulnerable children and those of key workers. Second, the eligibility rules for children of key workers were broadened, resulting in a significant rise in the numbers of children attending school compared to previous lockdown periods.

In July 2021, we published a series of interim reports based on our findings from the first round of school disruption in Spring 2020, when the children in our sample were in reception. These are available at <https://ickle.leeds.ac.uk/>. The current report focuses on children who had been in reception in Spring 2020, and therefore beginning their second term of Year 1 in Winter 2021. It scrutinises the learning resources and guidance provided by schools, and how these were taken up by families of children whose entire school experience had been during the pandemic. We compare our findings with those we published previously to highlight changes between the two rounds of disruption.

We sought to contextualise our data with the findings of other published surveys of parents’ experiences of home learning in the UK during Spring 2020 and Winter 2021, however, at the time of writing (December 2021), a critical mass of publications from the early 2021 lockdown are yet to emerge.

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) analysed data pertaining to the home learning experiences of children aged 4-18 years from the UK survey, *Understanding Society COVID-19*, which includes 3500 children in Spring 2020, and 1900 children in Winter 2021 (Del Bono et al., 2021). In brief, they found an increase in the number of daily lessons provided and in overall time spent on schoolwork between the two rounds of school disruption. This coincided with a decrease in parental time to support learning and a decrease in the use of freely available resources. Where relevant, we contrast our data with this ISER report, noting that the latter findings relate to children from across the primary school, rather than focusing on children in reception and Year 1, as we do.

In a report of lessons learnt from schools’ experiences of COVID-19, Moss et al., (2021) noted that a number of changes brought about by remote learning were beneficial and would remain. These included online meetings with parents and the use of digital platforms for teaching and communicating with families. They also recommended that schools need to share what they have learnt so that they are more resilient in instances of future disruption.

Note that in this report we use the term ‘home learning’ specifically in relation to the curriculum-based activities specified by school. We recognise that a considerable amount of informal learning also took place outside these activities.



STUDY DESIGN

ICKLE was a 12-month project, funded by the UKRI/ESRC, which began in September 2020. The project used a retrospective longitudinal design, with data provided by schools and caregivers, to investigate the factors that may have moderated and mediated pupil progress. See Figure 1 for an overview of the project timeline.

There were two data collection points:

- **T1 October - December 2020**
 - 10 primary schools in Leeds provided us with information about the remote learning provision they delivered in **Spring 2020**. Alongside this, caregivers provided their perspectives on home learning during the same period.
- **T2 June - July 2021**
 - The same 10 schools provided information about the remote learning provision during **Winter 2021**, and again, caregivers provided their perspectives.

Pupil attainment data were collected at both time-points, retrospectively pertaining to Spring 2020 (pre-lockdown), and currently for Autumn 2020 and Summer 2021.

Findings related to pupil progress and predictors of progress during this period can be found in our parallel report *Progress of children through reception and year 1 during COVID-19 school disruption*. Full project details and reports can be found at <https://ickle.leeds.ac.uk/>.



Figure 1: The ICKLE project data collection timeline 2020-2021.

STUDY SAMPLE

Schools

The schools in the ICKLE project vary in size, with most being larger than average. They also vary with respect to pupil characteristics; percentages of children with EAL range from 5% to 95%, children in receipt of FSM from 0% to 45%, and children with SEN from 9% to 20%.

SCHOOL CODE	% EAL	% FSM	% SEN	SCHOOL SIZE
1	5	0	5	343
2	5	10	10	475
3	5	10	15	461
4	95	22	9	779
5	5	45	20	234
6	40	40	20	407
8	5	20	15	332
9	35	30	20	230
10	55	10	15	448
11	5	5	10	448

Figure 2: Schools in the ICKLE project (n=10).

EAL = English as an Additional Language; FSM = Free School Meals; SEN = Special Educational Needs

Half of the schools are above average with regard to the percentage of children in receipt of FSM, and half are below average. With regard to the percentage of children with EAL, 6 schools are below average and 4 above. Regarding the percentage of children with SEN, 4 schools are below average and 6 above.

	% EAL	% FSM	% SEN	SIZE
Number of schools				
ABOVE	4	5	6	8
National Average 2019/20	21.3%	17.3%	14.2%	n=281
BELOW	6	5	4	2

Figure 3: Schools in the ICKLE project (n=10) compared with national average data 2019/20.

Following the first period of school disruption in Spring 2020, 7 schools reopened to all reception children in June 2020. In the best-case scenario, reception children had missed around 7 weeks of normal schooling during that time. In the worst-case scenario, this increased to 14 weeks.

During the third national lockdown in Winter 2021, schools were closed to the majority of pupils for 9 weeks. However the percentage of pupils in school in Winter 2021 was considerably higher than the percentage of pupils in school in Spring 2020. In our sample just 5% of pupils were in school during Spring 2020, compared to 33% in Winter 2021.

With regard to the subsample of pupils for whom we received caregiver survey data, some children (n=25) were attending school for part of the week. Survey responses indicated that while many families were thankful for this opportunity, others felt some guilt (possibly knowing that other parents who were also key workers had not been able to get a place for their child):

I was back at work during the second lockdown and between my husband and I we could not manage to homeschool our daughter with the jobs we both do. I was considered a key worker and was lucky enough to have our daughter accepted into school for the 4 days I worked supporting care homes but I felt incredible guilt about this

Some families started off the lockdown by homeschooling, but then took up the offer of a school place as the pressure grew:

I was juggling this with a front line NHS job, but because we were advised to put them in school for as little as possible I thought I should leave them at home with my home working husband and catch them up with work on my shorter days and weekends. I ended up putting them in school more days as none of us were coping.

STUDY SAMPLE

Caregivers

At t1 in Autumn 2020, 190 caregivers (92% mothers, 8% fathers) from 9 of the ICKLE project schools, provided us with information about their experiences of facilitating home learning in Spring 2020.

At t2 in Summer 2021, 151 caregivers (90% mothers, 10% fathers) from the same 9 schools as t1, reported on their experiences during Winter 2021. Of these families, 122 (81%) had children at home at least one day a week, and so could provide information about their experiences of facilitating home learning during this period.

Our quantitative analyses are based on data from these 122 families. The subsample used in the analyses involving socioeconomic status is slightly smaller (n=113) because postcode information was not provided by 9 caregivers.

As a measure of SES, we used English Indices of Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), based on the postcode of the family home (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019). IDACI measures the proportion of children aged 0 – 15 who live in income-deprived households for each of the 32,844 neighbourhoods in England.

SCHOOL CODE	t1		t2	
	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	IDACI AVERAGE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	IDACI AVERAGE
1	26	.06	22	.05
2	36	.12	20	.14
3	37	.19	16	.18
5	4	.35	7	.34
6	15	.42	11	.43
8	3	.13	7	.12
9	12	.35	7	.35
10	21	.09	4	.09
11	36	.07	22	.07

Figure 5: The number of caregiver surveys and average IDACI scores of respondents, for each school (n=9), at each time-point (t1, t2).

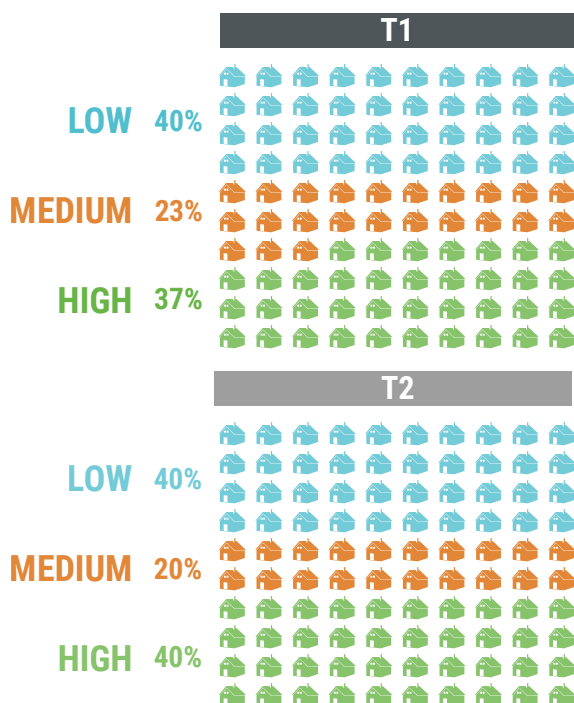


Figure 4: Percentage of caregivers who completed surveys at t1 (n=190) and t2 (n=113) assigned to low, medium and high IDACI bands.

We used the IDACI rank (where 1 indicates the area with the highest proportion of children living in low-income houses, and 32,844 indicates the lowest proportion) to create three bands, with neighbourhoods ranked in the lowest third (1 – 10,948) assigned to a 'low' category, those in the middle third (10,949 – 20,197) assigned 'middle', and those in the highest third (20,198 – 32,944) assigned 'high'.

The distribution of respondents across these bands was consistent across time-points. A similar percentage of caregivers were from Low and High band neighbourhoods (approx. 40%). A much smaller percentage (approx. 20%) were from Medium band neighbourhoods.

DATA COLLECTION

Schools

At each time-point an online survey was used to gather information from teachers, who received a £15 Amazon voucher as a thank you for taking part. Each participating school was also given a £50 Amazon voucher. The surveys were created and shared using Qualtrics.

Both surveys asked about **resources and guidance provided by schools** and **home-school communication**.

Some changes were made to the survey at t2. This was in light of the findings of the interim report, and also because the children were now in Year 1 and working to the KS1 curriculum. We relabeled the curriculum areas such that Phonics, Literacy and Language & Communication were now all considered as sub-categories of English, and PSED became PSHE. We also asked for more detail about provision in each area rather than across the areas as a whole.

So, in regard to each area we asked about:

- Consolidation versus continuation of the curriculum
- The level of activities provided and differentiation
- The amount of time children were expected to spend on that area in a typical day
- How often new activities were provided for that area
- Whether parents were asked to submit work and if so, how often
- Whether feedback was provided on submitted work and if so, how often

In addition we asked whether an overview or structure was provided for home learning and how often this was updated.

Finally we probed in more detail the nature of the reading material that schools were providing. We asked whether books were hard copy, online, or both, whether the type of books were the same for children learning at home and in schools, and how progress through book levels was monitored in the different learning contexts.

See Appendix 1 (t1) and 2 (t2) for the full school surveys.

Caregivers

At each time-point caregivers were invited to complete an online survey, for which they were offered a £10 Amazon voucher. The surveys were created and shared using Qualtrics.

Although the t1 and t2 surveys focused on similar topics, they differed in length, comprising 23 and 35 questions respectively. The t1 survey was used to collect information regarding the Spring 2020 period. The t2 survey primarily asked caregivers about their experiences of supporting home learning in Winter 2021, and how these compared with their experiences in Spring 2020.

Both surveys asked about **home learning resources**, **home learning routines** and **home-school communication**.

However, informed by the findings contained in our interim reports, we included some more focused questions about specific aspects of home learning experiences in the t2 survey, i.e.

Work expectations

- How much of the work set by school was completed, reasons for non-completion, total amount of time that schools expected families to spend on home learning, caregiver attitudes to these expectations, and level of difficulty presented by the activities set by school in each curriculum area.

Book provision

- Level of difficulty, format (hard copy or online), accompanying guidance, and parental attitudes to reading book provision.

School contact

- Frequency of contact, medium of contact, and caregiver attitudes towards contact provided.

Feedback

- How often was work submitted to school for feedback, and information about the specificity of feedback received.

See Appendix 3 (t1) and 4 (t2) for the full home surveys.

FINDINGS

Resources and guidance provided by schools

In Spring 2020 most schools provided caregivers with new home learning activities on a daily basis or a few times a week.

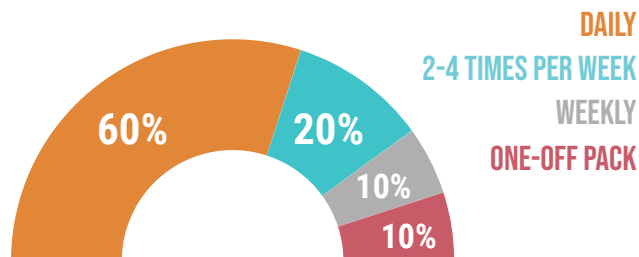


Figure 6: The percentage of schools (n=10) who provided new resources at each frequency interval in Spring 2020.

In Winter 2021, the frequency with which new activities were provided by school was reported according to each curriculum area.

For phonics, literacy, and maths, the majority of schools provided new resources on a daily basis with other providing them a few times per week. New PSED/PSHE resources were provided less frequently, and there was more variability in the frequency with which new language activities were provided.

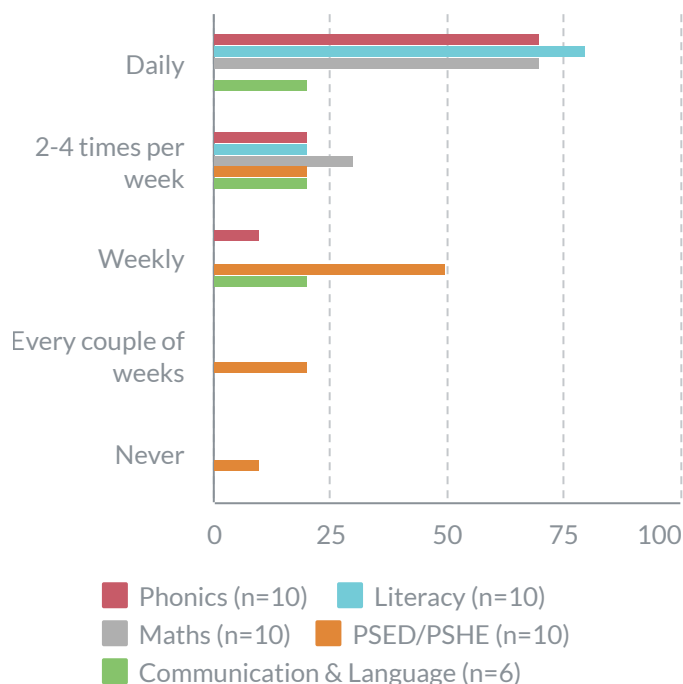


Figure 7: The percentage of schools who provided new resources, for each curriculum area, at each frequency interval in Winter 2021.

The percentage of schools providing differentiated resources during Winter 2021 varied across curriculum areas. The majority of schools differentiated phonics, maths and PSED/PSHE resources at least some of the time.

In contrast, for communication & language, 90% of the 6 schools who provided resources to support this area did not differentiate.

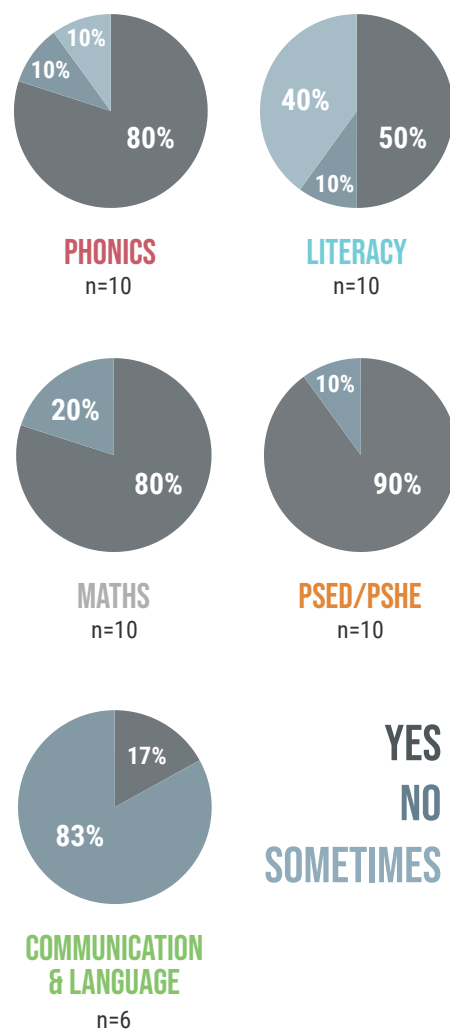


Figure 8: The percentage of schools who provided differentiated resources, for each curriculum area in Winter 2021.

FINDINGS

Resources and guidance provided by schools

All schools provided resources for phonics, literacy, and mathematics during both periods of disruption. Most schools in Spring 2020, and all schools in Winter 2021, provided resources for PSED. Only 70% of schools in Spring 2020, and 60% of schools in Winter 2021, provided specific resources for communication & language.

In Spring 2020 some schools focused on consolidating existing learning, but most provided a mixture of resources to consolidate and continue new learning across the curriculum. Few schools focused solely on continued new learning. The exception was in regards to PSED in which the majority of schools provided resources to support continuation.

The time spent on consolidating existing learning is reflected in our finding that, on average, schools reported only covering 60% of the curriculum in 2019/2020.

The pattern was similar in Winter 2021. Across all curriculum areas the majority of schools provided resources to both consolidate and continue curriculum learning. The percentage of schools providing resources solely for consolidation reduced in all curriculum areas.

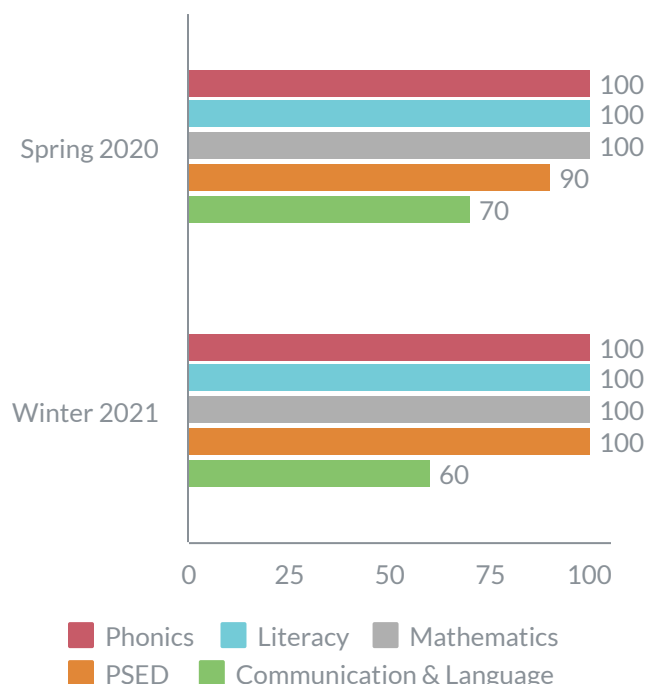


Figure 9: The percentage of schools (n=10) who provided resources for each curriculum area, during each school disruption period.

	PHONICS		LITERACY		MATHEMATICS		PSED		COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE		
CONSOLIDATION	40%	10%	40%	10%	20%	0%	22%	10%	43%	17%	SPRING 2020 WINTER 2021
CONTINUATION	10%	10%	20%	20%	30%	30%	78%	30%	14%	17%	
BOTH	50%	80%	40%	70%	50%	70%	0%	60%	43%	66%	

Figure 10: The percentage of schools who provided resources for the purposes of consolidation, continuation or both, in each curriculum area, during each school disruption period.

In Spring 2020 most schools (70%) provided the same resources for children in school and those learning at home. Where they didn't, this was due to the children being in mixed year groups (20%) or because they chose to follow the normal in-school timetable (10%). Schools provided, on average, a greater number of different resources for phonics, literacy and mathematics than for communication & language and PSED.

In Winter 2021 the provision for children learning at home and in school was the same for the majority of schools (90%).

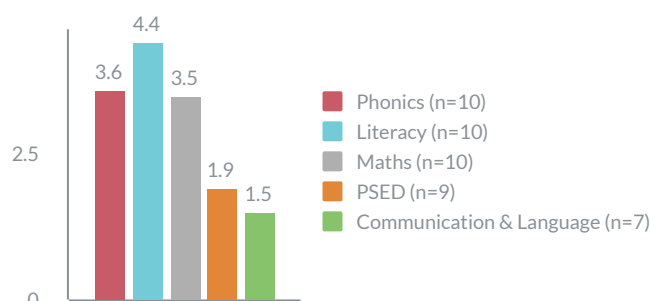


Figure 11: The average number of different resources provided by schools in each curriculum area in Spring 2020.

FINDINGS

Resources and guidance provided by schools

In Spring 2020 the percentage of live or recorded lessons provided was very low, across schools and curriculum areas. Where externally-produced recordings were used, this was primarily to support phonics; school-produced videos were most commonly used to support literacy more broadly.

During Winter 2021 some schools (30%) provided live online lessons for literacy (30%) and for maths (40%); in contrast, no schools had used this method in these areas of the curriculum during the first period of school disruption.

The percentage of schools producing and sharing their own video content increased considerably between the two periods of disruption, across all curriculum areas. Furthermore the use of externally produced videos also increased across all areas in Winter 2021.

In both periods, schools were more likely to provide worksheets (printed or to print at home) for phonics, literacy and mathematics than for communication & language or PSED.

Links to free online resources (videos, activities, games) were provided more often for phonics than for other curriculum areas. In Winter 2021 the percentage of schools providing links to maths and literacy resources increased.

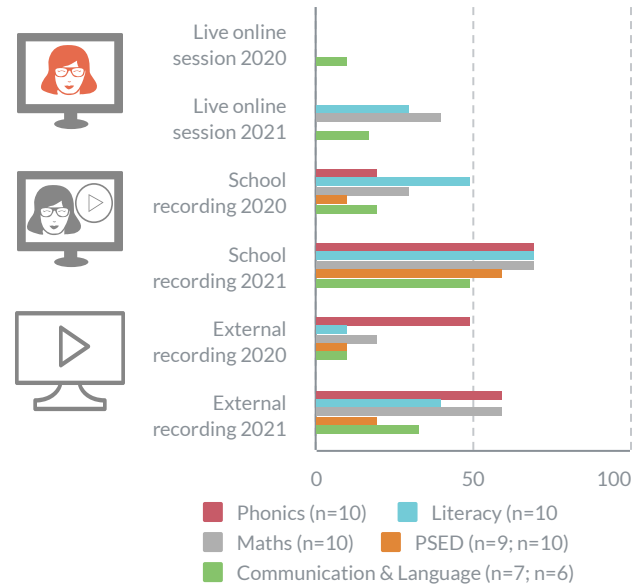


Figure 12: The percentage of schools who provided live and recorded content in each curriculum area, during each school disruption period.

Suggestions for games or activities, were common across the curriculum areas in Spring 2020. In Winter 2021 the percentage of schools providing these suggestions reduced for all areas.

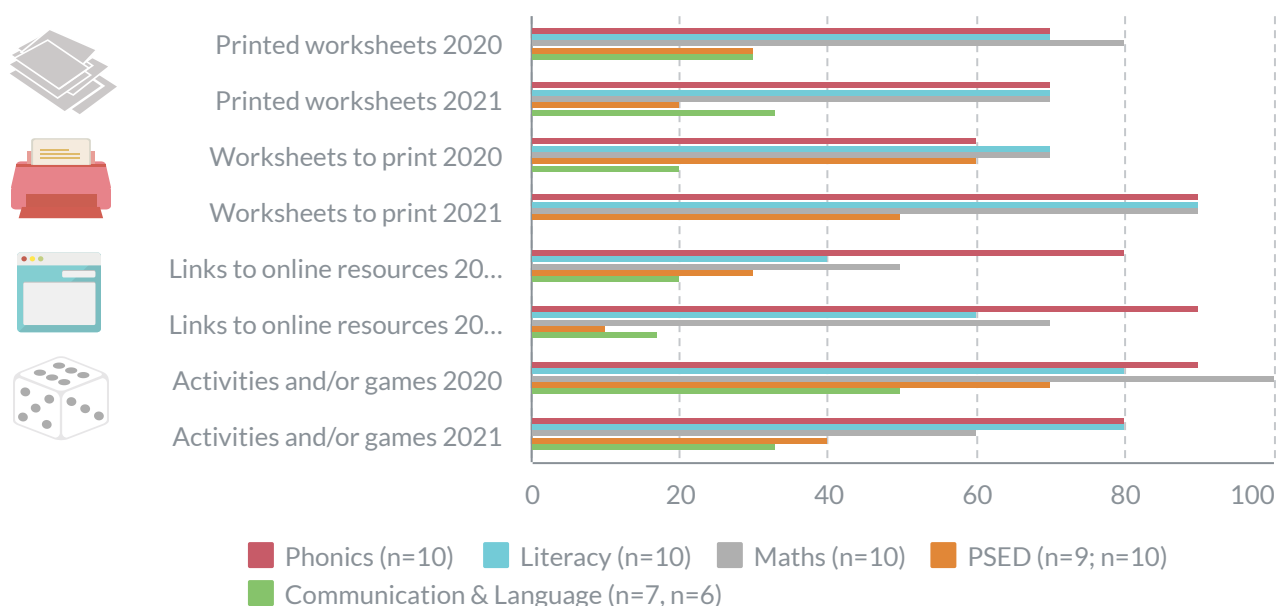


Figure 13: The percentage of schools who provided worksheets, online resources, activities and games in each curriculum area, during each period of school disruption.

FINDINGS

Resources and guidance provided by schools

In Spring 2020 most schools provided access to online reading books, or to a combination of both online and hard-copy books. One school provided only hard-copy books and one school provided neither hard-copy nor online books.

88% of the families in our sample said that schools provided reading books during the winter lockdown. For 63% of families in the sample, this was in digital form online. For 20% of families, books were provided both in hard copy and online, and for 7% only hard copies were provided. Of the families who received hard copies, 90 % felt that it was the right level of difficulty/challenge for their child.

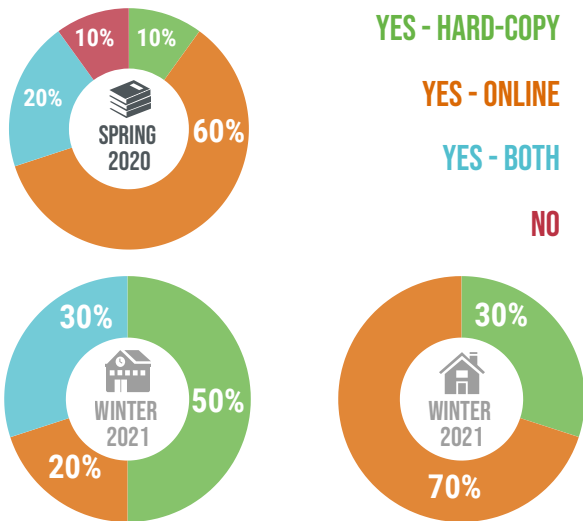


Figure 14: The percentage of schools (n=10) who provided online and hard-copy books, during each period of school disruption, and for each learning context.

I think the school deciding to subscribe to Pearson Bug Club has been brilliant. It has allowed the teachers to set books for each child's level of reading, and they can select a new book from the list daily. I think my daughter's reading has progressed faster than it would have with just hard copies of books.

Online books were also provided by most schools (70%) for pupils learning at home during Winter 2021. Only 30% of schools provided hard copy books for these learners and no schools provided a combination of hard copy and online books. For pupils in school during Winter 2021, half of the schools provided hard copy books, and a further 30% provided a combination of hard copy and online books. 20% of this group were provided with online books only.

Some children, who were in school at least part of the week had the opportunity to change their (physical) books:

We were lucky to have access to school books because the children were in school 2 days a week. For children who didn't attend school there [was] a book bus available at specific times which I know some parents struggled to access due to work commitments.

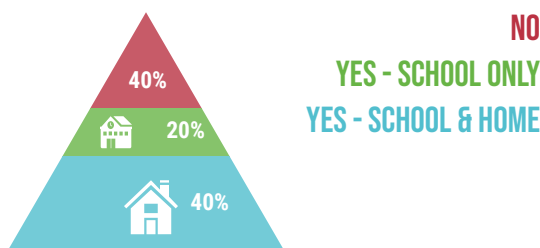


Figure 15: The percentage of schools (n=10) who monitored pupils reading book levels during Winter 2021.

Where a selection of books was provided online, parents chose by difficulty level (42%), title or topic (27%), or both level and topic (7%). 24% responded with 'other'.

Most caregivers (60%) had no set pattern regarding how often they chose a new book. 22% chose a new book daily, 10% weekly, and 8% other.

65% of families received advice from school about their child's reading ability and the level of book to choose. The remaining 35% did not receive advice.

The majority of schools (60%) monitored pupils reading book levels during Winter 2021, however, 40% of schools did not. The monitoring of reading levels was more likely for children attending school.

FINDINGS

Home learning resources

In Winter 2021, 99% of the young children in our home learning sample had **full or shared access to an electronic device/devices** that could be used for learning, which is 4% higher than proportions reported in Spring 2020. Survey responses reflected the greater need for technology during the 2021 lockdown (e.g. for Zoom classes), and outlined various approaches to meeting that need. Some families said that their children were bought laptops or other devices for Christmas, indicating an awareness of the lockdown to come in the new year.

We bought both of our children a refurbished iPad for Xmas as I felt it was inevitable another lockdown was coming. We did this so they would have the sole use of a device which was clear they'd need as we became more familiar with Google Classroom over the autumn term.

Others said that they had been provided with a work laptop in 2021. Some schools loaned devices as children were required to use technology to complete the work set, rather than this being optional as in the first lockdown.

However, not all children had exclusive access to devices; parents noted that if they were sharing devices with their children and working from home, they had to stop work to let the children use the laptop or computer. Desktop computers, laptops, smartphones, and TV were likely to be shared, whereas tablets were more likely to be available to the child exclusively.

Compared to the first lockdown, 27% of our sample said they had greater access to devices, cf. 66% with about the same access, and 7% with less.

Interestingly, those with greater access to devices in 2021 (vs. the same or less) were more likely to come from more disadvantaged areas. This suggests that it took longer for disadvantaged families to acquire devices, compared to families living in more affluent areas who may have already had adequate numbers of devices at home.

61% of our sample has **access to a printer**. The remaining who 39% who did not were more likely to come from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

All but one of the families in our sample were able to **supervise home learning** all (55%) or some (44%) of the time. There was no difference in caregiver availability by SES background. In 61% of our sample, the mother supervised home learning, and in 31% both the mother and father did so.

In 88% of our sample, children had a **space such as a dining table or desk to do home learning activities**. 8% could access a learning space sometimes and 4% had no space. This pattern was not associated with SES background. As in the first lockdown, lack of space for home learning tasks presented challenges for families in 2021. Responses indicated that some families managed to make adjustments, such as rearranging furniture in hallways or bedrooms, and/or buying a desk. Other families continued to share space for home learning and working from home.



FINDINGS

Home learning routines

During Winter 2021, 75% of our sample had a routine for home learning, many imposed by live lessons from school (compared to 60% who said the same about the previous lockdown). This was not associated with SES background.

The expectation was that the child joined live Google classroom sessions with their teachers - up to 3 times a day at set times. This forced more routine into school days worked from home.

We started our day approximately the same as if we would go to school: woke up early, after breakfast checked what homework we had to do, were quite busy with it until lunch, then had a zoom lesson, after continued with a homework and then had a spare time for ourselves. It was similar to a normal school day with the exception that child was at home and I was a homework teacher.

52% said that their approach to home learning during Winter 2021 was different to their approach in Spring 2020. There were a variety of reasons for this difference.

1. Families and schools had a better idea of what to expect so were better equipped.

The school were a lot more structured. Obviously they weren't expecting the first one. They were really well prepared for this lockdown.

It was a lot more structured. We planned for the day ahead and while I was in online meetings my daughter was able to have free time rather than us both getting frustrated.

2. The children being in Year 1 rather than in reception brought greater independence but also higher expectations from school.

During the 2020 lockdown my child was in reception and only required to do 5 activities a week. During the 2021 lockdown my child was in Year 1 and set up to 6 activities a day.

3. The legal requirement for schools to provide high quality remote education and a programme of equivalent length to that which pupils receive in school, coupled with the move to online provision and the expectation to complete work electronically.

The school provision was superb. We had access to high quality materials, videos, activities, zoom calls. It was faultless.

4. Changes to family and work circumstances in individual households.

It was a lot harder as we were not on furlough this time round so managing school was harder

5. The introduction of support bubbles. In contrast to Spring 2020 when household mixing was not permitted, informal childcare was available in Winter 2021. Relatives, particularly grandparents, were cited as being the main carers for children from working families.

As my child needs constant supervision and relative quiet (autistic/ADHD) to work, we had to juggle to make sure that I was able to be fully free to help with their home schooling. This meant using our support bubble

FINDINGS

Home learning expectations

The schools reported their expectations of the amount of time children should spend completing activities each day in the different curriculum areas, during the Winter 2021 period of school disruption.

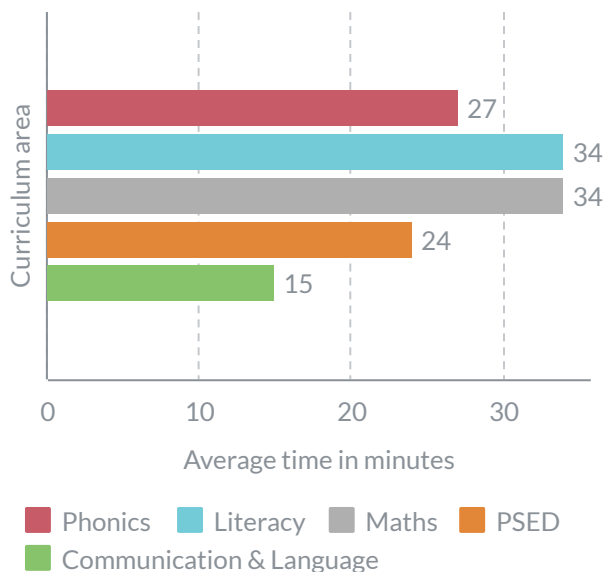


Figure 16: The average amount of time schools expected children to spend on each curriculum area, daily, during Winter 2021.

On average, the schools expected children to spend 34 minutes on maths and literacy, 27 minutes on phonics, 24 minutes on PSED and 15 minutes on communication & language.

There was however some variation, particularly with regards PSED, in which expectations ranged from 5 minutes in one school to 60 minutes in another.

Totalled across these five curriculum areas 10% of schools expected less than 2 hours of time to be spent on activities each day, 40% expected 2 hours, and 50% expected 2-3 hours.

Two schools reported that the approaches they used in Winter 2021 to support home learning were the same as those used in Spring 2020; all other schools used different approaches in Winter 2021 to those used previously.



The main changes to home learning between the first and second periods of disruption were reported as:

- some schools began using online teaching platforms or changed platform
- a more structured 'school day' was followed
- teachers provided daily live lessons
- more recorded sessions were used
- more learning and new content introduced
- more regular updates and feedback for families.

FINDINGS

Home learning expectations

In Winter 2021, 70% all children completed most or all of the work set by school. This was not associated with SES.

This left some 30% of children who were only able to complete some of the work set. Caregivers experienced challenges dividing time between children, and between home learning and home working. Children experienced difficulties maintaining focus.

This [four pieces of work per day] wasn't really too much, but unachievable for us because of our own work commitments and difficult for him because he found it hard to concentrate at home for long.

We have another child with special needs as well as two very demanding full time jobs. I often had to start work at 5am, finishing at 10pm to get my job done and the same with my husband. We tried our best to get everything done but it was an almost impossible task.

Caregivers were not always comfortable being the teacher and having to push their children to complete work:

We did what we could whilst retaining both our sanity/wellbeing. I felt that there was a limit to how much I could push him to complete all the tasks - I was conscious that I did not want to damage our relationship as mother/child as opposed to teacher/student.

58% of respondents reported that schools expected children to spend 3 - 4 hours a day on home learning across all curriculum areas. 22% reported 1 - 2 hours a day, and 19% more than 4 hours a day.

The majority of caregivers (64%) said that expectations were greater in Winter 2021 than in Spring 2020.

Caregiver attitudes towards school expectations were generally positive; 68% said they were about right, 25% too much, and 7% not enough.

I have to admit that the amount of work and level of difficulty for our daughter was set perfectly.

There was a lot of home learning set for us to do with our child which felt quite overwhelming. As a working parent, I would have preferred more tasks children could have done independently would have been better, although I appreciate this may be difficult for the younger ages.



FINDINGS

Home learning expectations

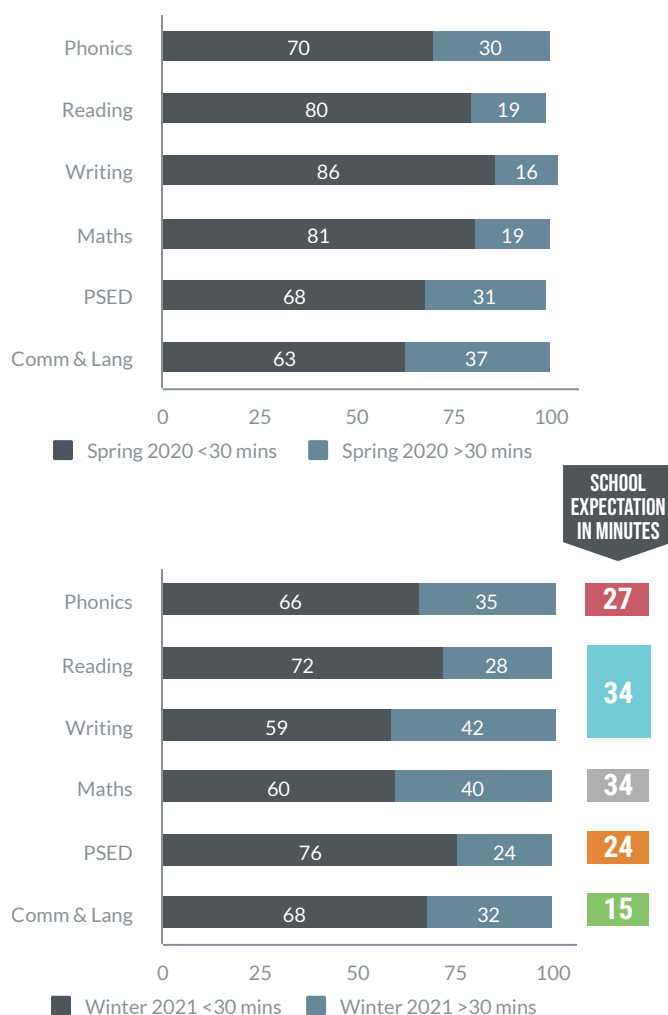


Figure 17: Percentage of caregivers reporting ≥ 30 mins and < 30 mins of time spent per day, on each curriculum area, during each period of school disruption

Around a third of caregivers reported that their children spent 30 minutes or more, daily, on phonics, and on communication & language activities, with the remainder reporting less than 30 minutes. These percentages were similar for Spring 2020 and Winter 2021. 19% of caregivers in Spring 2020, and 28% in Winter 2021 reported spending 30 minutes or more, daily, on reading. Almost one third reported spending 30 minutes or more on PSED activities each day in Spring 2020 which reduced to nearer one quarter in Winter 2021.

The most noticeable contrasts are in relation to writing and maths. In Spring 2020, only 16% of caregivers reported spending 30 minutes or more daily on writing, whereas in Winter 2021 this increased to 42%. In Spring 2020, 19% of caregivers spent 30 minutes or more daily on maths compared with 40% in Winter 2021.

For all curriculum areas, families felt they were doing more during the Winter 2021 than in Spring 2020, though this increase was felt to be greatest in Writing and Maths.

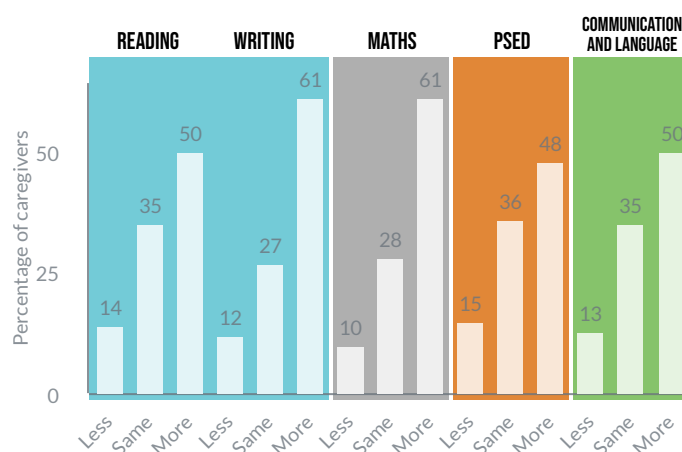


Figure 18: Percentage of caregivers reporting less, same or more time spent per day, on each curriculum area in Winter 2021 relative to Spring 2020

In Winter 2021 schools expected that approximately 34 minutes would be spent on literacy activities, however the caregiver responses show that 28% spent over 30 minutes on reading alone, and 42% spent over 30 minutes on writing. This indicates that the amount of work completed in this area exceeded school expectations in many families.

With regard to phonics, most families (69%) reported spending between 15 and 45 minutes on this area, daily, suggesting that the actual time spent and the school expectations (27 minutes) were broadly aligned. Similarly, for maths, the majority of caregivers (77%) reported spending between 15 and 45 minutes on this area, which is roughly in line with the school expectation of 34 minutes.

Although 24% of caregivers reported spending 30 minutes or more on PSED activities each day, the majority (76%) spent less than 30 minutes, including 40% who spent less than 15 minutes. Therefore many families were spending significantly less time on PSED than schools expected (24 minutes). The opposite pattern can be seen in relation to communication & language. Almost one third of caregivers reported spending more than 30 minutes each day on this curriculum area, and a further 38% spent 15-30 minutes. These families exceeded the average school expectation of 15 minutes per day.

FINDINGS

Home learning expectations

When deciding how best to manage time for home learning, many families prioritised **core curriculum areas**. Other tasks were attempted if the children were interested:

We focussed on maths, reading, English and phonics. Frequently, by the time we had done this the children had had enough and it wasn't worth the battle to push the last activity / task. Therefore, if the task was something they were interested in, such as space or art, then there was a better chance we would attempt it.



In some cases, schools suggested that if families could only manage some of the tasks, they should focus on the core curriculum areas:

School were extremely supportive of our approach (only doing about half the work) but they suggested focusing on phonics, maths and literacy. While this makes sense, it did mean that he often missed out on other enriching school work like art, music and personal/social/emotional learning because it was never a priority, which was a shame.

For each of the curriculum areas, the majority of families said that the **level of difficulty** or challenge of the activities set by school was about right (reading 89%, writing 87%, maths 84%, language and communication 96%, PSED 96%).



Some families commented on the lack of differentiation between ability levels:

Phonics activities were set for whole class during home learning, but in the classroom, children were sorted by ability. My son was in one of the higher groups and felt that he had already covered many of the phonics activities so found it a bit easy at times. Maths was also perhaps not challenging enough for him. However, in both cases he was given extra workbooks by the school to challenge him a bit more so that helped a lot.



FINDINGS

Home-school communication

All schools made contact with caregivers during each period of school disruption. The frequency of this contact however varied across schools and time period. In Spring 2020 30% of schools contacted families daily, 50% weekly and 20% at 'other' time intervals. In Winter 2021 50% of schools were in daily contact with families, 20% in weekly contact, and 30% in contact a few times a week.

In both Spring 2020 and Winter 2021 the most common methods of contact were phone and virtual learning environment (VLE). The main difference between the periods was in the use of video calls; in Spring 2020 no schools used this method compared with 50% of schools in Winter 2021. In Spring 2020 90% of schools asked for pupils work to be submitted to their teachers, and in all cases feedback was provided on this work.

In Winter 2021 we asked about submission of completed work and feedback separately for the curriculum areas. We found that all of the schools asked parents to submit work for phonics, literacy and maths, with the majority of schools asking for this on a daily basis. All but one school asked for PSED/PSHE work to be submitted and this was most often on a weekly basis. Of the 6 schools that provided resources for language & communication, only 3 asked families to submit work and this was usually on a weekly basis. When schools asked for work to be submitted they provided feedback and in the same timeframe.

Overall, caregiver survey responses reflected gratitude and praise for how teachers and schools handled home-school communication. Respondents mentioned text messages, communication via platforms such as Seesaw, Teams, Google Classroom and Zoom, live contact via video calls, phone calls, and one instance of a chat in the front garden. Parents said they felt able to contact teachers via email or via whichever platform was being used, to ask for extra help or support, and that teachers would respond quickly and willingly to such requests:

Teachers were very supportive always saying if we needed anything to email them and they would sort it out, always giving tips to help me help my girls to learn at home, how to explain differently the same things. The teachers were available every day for any questions or concern we may have had. Communication was fantastic.

Relatively few comments suggested that communication could have been better. One parent said that the level of contact was acceptable but only because she was coping, and that she was not sure school would have been able to pick up anyone those not explicitly asking for help.

It was fine because we were ok and we knew what we were doing and I had support around me. If I had been struggling I'm not sure school would have picked up on it due to the limited 1:1 contact

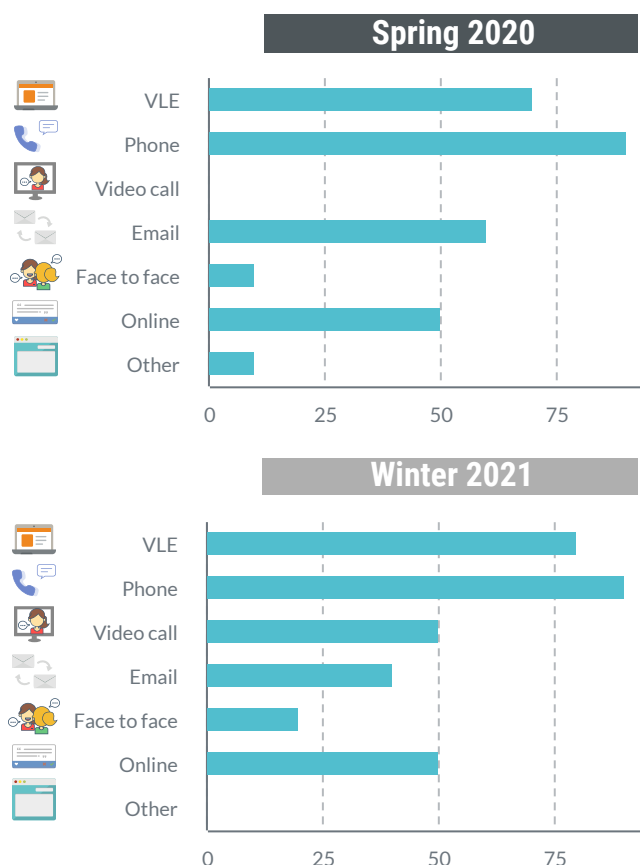


Figure 19: The percentage of ICKLE project schools (n=10) who used each communication method to contact caregivers, during each period of school disruption.

FINDINGS

Home-school communication

Families felt a range of positive impacts from good communication from school in Winter 2021:

- It provided structure and clarity, and allowed families to plan ahead
- It provided support and reassurance to families that they were doing a good job
- It gave the children more motivation to do their work
- It provided continuity across the times when many children were not in school, including allowing children to see and talk to each other and to the teacher on live calls
- It provided specific feedback on work which the children had submitted.

We asked caregivers how often work was submitted to school, and about the feedback received. Work was submitted online daily (73% of families), 2-4 times a week (13%) or weekly (7%). Hard copy submission was used much less frequently, with only 24% of children doing this weekly or more frequently, and 75% never doing this. Almost two-thirds of children showed their work to their teacher during live online lessons or video calls at some point during the Winter 2021 period.

One parent commented on the difficulty of submitting work done on paper:

We didn't submit the work as we did it on paper and uploading it was too much with everything else going on. The teacher had asked about it and explained that it was hard to evaluate it if she couldn't see it.

When families submitted work, 85% said they received feedback. 12% said they did sometimes, and 3% said they never received feedback.

Feedback was usually specific or a mixture of specific and general encouragement.

Families reported that feedback from teachers was highly motivating to both children and parents:

The teachers were fantastic at keeping the children engaged, responded quickly to feedback and questions and provided feedback on every single piece of work submitted. It was great seeing different teachers commenting on different things too.



Not all comments were however positive, a few comments report perceptions that teachers were not giving enough feedback:

There was little or no feedback from the school at all we were basically left dangling

SUMMARY

Key changes between school disruption periods

- Schools and caregivers reported changes including an increase in structure of home learning, higher expectations of the amount of schoolwork to be completed, and an increased focus on the continuation of learning. This supports the findings of Del Bono et al. (2021). These changes reflect the statutory guidance for schools' remote learning provision, and the children entering Key Stage 1. Schools also highlighted the introduction of daily live lessons, more recorded lessons, and more regular updates and feedback. These changes have influenced home learning, with an increase in the number of families reporting a routine.
- More children attended school during the second period of disruption (33%) than in the first (5%). By mid-February 2021, nationally 1 in 6 schools reported 30% or more of primary school children attending school in January 2021 reflecting the widening of eligibility criteria and an increase in the number of parents deciding to use available places.

School provision and resources

- All schools provided resources for phonics, literacy, maths, and PSED, but not all did so for communication & language. Some reported that language activities were incorporated into resources for other curriculum areas. Schools provided a wider range of resources for phonics, literacy and maths than for PSED and communication & language. New resources were provided more frequently for phonics, literacy, and maths (usually daily or most days) than for PSED and language.
- There was an increase in online learning in the second period of disruption, with schools using live online lessons for phonics, literacy, and maths. They also used more of their own and externally-produced videos across the curriculum compared to the first period of disruption, consistent with Del Bono et al. (2021).
- There was also an increase in the use of free online resources across the curriculum, although these were most common for phonics and maths. The increased use of technology was recognised by caregivers, some of whom purchased devices following the first period of disruption, resulting in almost all families having a device during the second period. However, schools continued to use worksheets that needed to be printed for phonics, literacy and maths, which for families without a printer (approximately one third of our sample) were challenging to access.
- Activities and games remained common across all curriculum areas, but the overall use of these resources was reduced in the second period of disruption compared to the first.

Home learning

- Nearly all our caregivers were able to supervise home learning, at least some of the time.
- According to both school and caregiver estimates, more time was spent on school work for phonics, literacy, and maths, than for PSED and communication & language. However, while schools estimated more time was spent on PSED activities than communication & language, caregivers' estimates were in the opposite direction.
- 70% of families were able to complete most or all of the work set, while 30% were only able to complete some. Common challenges included a lack of time due to work commitments and looking after other children, and their child's own motivation.
- In terms of the level of work set, the majority of families felt this was about right, although the % with this view was slightly lower for maths and literacy. This is interesting, as the majority of schools reported differentiating schoolwork in these areas. It's possible that those caregivers who didn't feel the level was correct had children at the school that did not differentiate.

Reading

- Most schools provided access to online reading books for children learning at home, whereas children who remained in school were more likely to have access to hard copy books. Caregivers were positive about having access to online books and/or hard copy books. 60% of schools monitored reading levels for children learning at home, but monitoring was more likely for children in school. This was reflected in caregiver responses, as only two thirds said they had received advice about their child's reading level and which books to choose.

Home-school communication

- There were improvements reported in relation to home-school communication, with more schools contacting families more often in the second period of disruption. Phone calls and virtual learning environments remained the most common methods of communication, but video calls also started to be used.
- All schools asked for school work to be submitted daily for phonics, literacy, and maths but less often (if at all) for PSED and communication & language. Feedback was provided in the same timeframe (as work was submitted). The majority of caregivers reported receiving feedback and many reported that it was motivating for their children and for them too.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Aspects of remote learning provision to continue

- Improved **guidance / structure** from school for remote provision helped families to develop a home learning routine.
- Increased **range of communication methods** including more use of video calls, plus more contact opportunities were welcomed by families. In particular they felt more supported and motivated.



Aspects of remote learning provision to review

- The use of **printable worksheets** is problematic for those without printer access. Hard copies of resources, including **hard copy books**, would be more helpful for these families. School budgets and library provision should take this into account.
- Some families reported feeling overwhelmed with the **amount of work to complete within the expected timeframe**. Family circumstances should be recognised, and guidance offered to help caregivers plan and prioritise tasks effectively.
- Access to **differentiated resources** is key for children's motivation and progress.



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- Moss, G; Bradbury, A; Braun, A; Duncan, S; Levy, R; (2021) Learning through Disruption: Using schools' experiences of Covid to build a more resilient education system. UCL Institute of Education: London, UK. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10136102/>

APPENDIX

1. School survey (t1)

Q1 What is your name?

Q2 What is your school's name?

Q3 What is your job title?

Q4 When schools were closed to the majority of children in March 2020, did you provide remote learning activities for Phonics? (Yes/No)

Q5 Were these activities (tick all that apply)

- Printed packs of worksheets provided by the school and sent/delivered to parents
- Electronic worksheets for parents to print at home
- Live online lessons provided by school
- Pre-recorded videos provided by school
- Activities/games
- Links to free online video lessons created by others [if yes, which providers]
- Links to free online resources or interactive games created by others [if yes, which providers]
- Other [please specify]

Q6 Please describe the resources and guidance you provided to families to support Phonics

Q7 Was the remote learning provision for phonics focused on consolidating existing knowledge or continuation of the curriculum?

- Consolidating existing knowledge
- Continuation of the curriculum
- Combination of both

Q8 When schools were closed to the majority of children in March 2020, did you provide remote learning activities for PSED? (Yes/No)

Q9 Were these activities (tick all that apply) (*Same response options as Q5*)

Q10 Please describe the resources and guidance you provided to families to support PSED

Q11 Was the remote learning provision for PSED focused on consolidating existing knowledge or continuation of the curriculum? (*Same response options as Q7*)

Q12 When schools were closed to the majority of children in March 2020, did you provide remote learning activities for Language and Communication? (Yes/No)

Q13 Were these activities (tick all that apply) (*Same response options as Q5*)

Q14 Please describe the resources and guidance you provided to families to support Language and Communication

Q15 Was the remote learning provision for Language and Communication focused on consolidating existing knowledge or continuation of the curriculum? (*Same response options as Q7*)

Q16 When schools were closed to the majority of children in March 2020, did you provide remote learning activities for Literacy (beyond Phonics)? (Yes/No)

Q17 Were these activities (tick all that apply) (*Same response options as Q5*)

Q18 Please describe the resources and guidance you provided to families to support Literacy

Q19 Was the remote learning provision for Literacy focused on consolidating existing knowledge or continuation of the curriculum? (*Same response options as Q7*)

Q20 When schools were closed to the majority of children in March 2020, did you provide remote learning activities for Maths? (Yes/No)

Q21 Were these activities (tick all that apply) (*Same response options as Q5*)

Q22 Please describe the resources and guidance you provided to families to support Maths

Q23 Was the remote learning provision for Maths focused on consolidating existing knowledge or continuation of the curriculum? (*Same response options as Q7*)

APPENDIX

1. School survey (t1)

Q24 How often were home learning activities sent to parents?

- Every day
- 2-4 times per week
- Once per week
- One off pack
- Other (please specify)

Q25 Were the home learning activities translated into the parents' home languages? (Yes/No/Sometimes)

Q26 Please can you provide more information about translating the home learning activities into the parents' home languages

Q27 Were the same activities and resources provided for key worker/vulnerable children who attended a school hub? (Yes/No)

Q28 Please describe what the children did at school

Q29 Did parents submit completed work to you? (e.g., upload videos or photographs of work, email work to you, post work) (Yes/No/Sometimes)

Q30 Was feedback provided on this work? (Yes/No/Sometimes)

Q31 Were you in regular contact with children/parents from your class during this period? (Yes/No)

Q32 How often were you in contact with parents?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Other (please specify)

Q33 How was this contact carried out? (tick all that apply)

- Virtual learning environment
- Telephone calls
- Video calls
- Emails
- Face-to-face contact (e.g., home visits)
- Online conversations (e.g. blog posts, interactive chats etc.)
- Other (please specify)

Q34 Did your school re-open to all reception children on or after June 1st 2020? (Yes/No)

Q35 Before school closures in March 2020, when was your last EYFSP assessment carried out with the 2019/2020 reception cohort? (please provide month and year)

Q36 What percentage of the whole EYFS curriculum do you estimate you covered last year in reception?

Q37 What percentage of the usual literacy curriculum do you estimate you covered last year in reception?

Q38 What percentage of the usual numeracy curriculum do you estimate you covered last year in reception?

Q39 What percentage of the usual communication and language curriculum do you estimate you covered last year in reception?

Q40 What percentage of the usual PSED curriculum do you estimate you covered last year in reception?

Q41 How do you monitor EYFSP progress? (For example, which systems do you use and how often do you use them?)

Q42 What reading scheme do you currently use in EYFS?

Q43 Is this the same as the reading scheme you used in the previous year (2019/2020)?

- Yes
- No (please provide details)

Q44 Is this the same the reading scheme as you currently use in year 1? (Yes/No)

Q45 Please provide details of the reading scheme used in year 1

Q46 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about EYFS provision?

APPENDIX

2. School survey (t2)

Q1 consent
Q2 consent

Q3 What is your name?

Q4 What is your school's name?

Q5 What is your job title?

Q6 During the most recent lockdown period, from January to early March 2021, were you teaching from home or were you in school, or a combination?

- Teaching entirely from home
- Teaching entirely in school
- A combination of teaching from home and teaching in school
- Other (please write in)

Q7 How do you monitor pupil progress in Year 1? For example, which systems do you use and how often do you use them?

This section relates to teaching across ALL curriculum areas when many/most children were not in school due to the national lockdown from January to early March 2021.

Q9 Were parents/families provided with an overview or structure of any kind for home learning? If so, how often did they receive this?

- No such overview or structure was provided
- Yes - it was provided daily
- Yes - it was provided several times a week
- Yes - it was provided weekly
- Yes - it was provided fortnightly
- Yes - there was a combination of weekly overall structure and daily reminders/tasks
- Yes - but the frequency varied over time
- If you would like to say more about this, please write in the box below

Q10 Who provided this overview or structure for learning?

- The head teacher
- The class teacher
- The key stage leader
- Other (please write in)

Q11 During the lockdown period from January to early March 2021, were you and other Year 1 teachers in regular contact with children/parents from your class(es)? (Yes/No)

Q12 How often were you in contact with parents?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Several times a week
- Other (please write in)

Q13 How was this contact carried out? Please tick all that apply.

- Emails
- Telephone calls
- Online written conversations via blog posts, interactive chats etc.
- Live video calls
- Via virtual learning environment/platform e.g. Tapestry
- Face-to-face contact e.g. home visit
- Other (please write in)

Q14 Were home learning activities provided by the school translated into the parents' home languages?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes (comment below if you wish)

APPENDIX

2. School survey (t2)

Q15 Please provide any information which you feel is relevant about the translation of home learning activities into parents' or families' home languages.

Q16 Who was teaching or working with the key worker/vulnerable children who attended school or a school hub in person?

- Teachers
- Teaching assistants
- Both teachers and teaching assistants
- It varied according to who was available to work in school

Q17 Thinking about the activities and resources provided to children and families learning at home, were the same activities and resources being provided for and used by key worker/vulnerable children who attended in person in a school or school hub?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes (comment below if you wish)

Q18 Please tell us about any differences between the activities and resources provided within the school setting and those provided to children learning at home.

Q19 If there is anything else you wish to tell us about the teaching and provision for children who attended school or a school hub in person, please write in the box below.

This section asks about curriculum-related resources provided by schools for home learning during the period from January to early March 2021, when many/most children were not able to come into school.

It covers the following curriculum areas:

English - phonics

English - other literacy activities

English - spoken language

Maths

PSHE (personal/social/emotional development)

There are multiple choice options, but there is also space for you to tell us more about each option where you feel you can provide relevant information.

English - phonics

Q22 During the national lockdown period from January to early March 2021, did you provide remote learning activities for phonics? (Yes/No)

Q23 Were these phonics activities (tick all that apply) ...

- Printed packs of worksheets provided by the school and sent/delivered to parents (please give further detail if you wish)
- Electronic worksheets for parents to print at home (please give further detail if you wish)
- Live online lessons provided by school (please give further detail if you wish)
- Pre-recorded videos provided by school (please give further detail if you wish)
- Activities/games (please give further detail if you wish)
- Links to free online video lessons created by others (if yes, which providers?)
- Links to free online resources or interactive games created by others (if yes, which providers?)
- Paid-for resources, where school has taken out a subscription to an online resource (please tell us which)
- Other (please write in)

Q24 Was the remote learning provision for phonics focused on consolidating existing knowledge or continuation of the curriculum?

- Consolidating existing knowledge
- Continuation of the curriculum
- Combination of both

Q25 Were the phonics activities provided for home learning *differentiated*?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes (please explain if you wish)

APPENDIX

2. School survey (t2)

Q26 If the phonics activities provided were *not* differentiated, what level were the activities pitched at? Please write in.

Q27 How much time per day, on average, would you say you expected a child to spend on phonics activities provided for home learning?

Q28 On average, how often...

...did you provide new phonics activities for home learning?

...did you ask parents to submit completed phonics work to you?

...did you provide feedback to each child on submitted phonics work?

- Every day
- Most days
- At least once a week
- Once every couple of weeks
- Never

Q29 We are interested in the kind of feedback you offered on phonics work. For example, were you correcting mistakes, or was it more generic, supportive feedback to encourage children, through comments such as 'well done'?

Q30 Please use the box below to give us any more information you feel is relevant to home learning in phonics.

Questions 22-30 repeated for each curriculum area.

Q71 On this page, we ask you to estimate how much of the Year 1 curriculum you think you have covered this academic year - 2020/21.

Q72 What percentage of the Year 1 curriculum have you covered?

- Percentage of OVERALL curriculum
- Percentage of English curriculum
- Percentage of maths curriculum
- Percentage of PSHE curriculum

This section focuses on provision for reading.

Q74 What reading scheme do you currently use in Year 1?

Q75 Did you monitor children's reading levels during the lockdown period from January to early March 2021?

- Yes, if children were in school
- Yes, if children were learning remotely
- Yes, for children at home and children in school
- No

Q76 Please tell us *how* you monitored children's reading levels between January and early March 2021, for children at home and/or at school.

Q77 When did you last assess your pupils' reading ability?

Q78 Has the way in which you are using book bands changed in the current school year (2020 - 2021)? (Yes/No)

Q79 If 'yes', please explain how.

Q80 Have children's current book band levels been determined by their assessed reading level?

- Yes
- No
- Partly

Q81 If 'no' or 'partly', please tell us how current book band levels were determined.

APPENDIX

2. School survey (t2)

Q82 If there is anything further you would like to tell us about CHANGES to remote learning provision, between the two lockdowns, please tell us here.

For example, how much did the experiences of the first lockdown influence what has happened this year? How much is due to the different expectations and guidance from government, and how much to what you as a teacher want to do differently? Please tell us a little about this.

Q83 If there is anything else you would like to tell us about your provision for Year 1 children learning at home during the lockdown from January to early March 2021, which you feel has not been covered in the previous questions, please tell us here.

Q84

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire.

If you would like further information about the ICKLE project, please visit our website.

Q85 Please use the box below to tell us more about your working context, if you wish.

A follow-up email was sent to each survey respondent to gather some further information on whether hard copy or online reading books (or both) were provided for children and how progress was monitored for children learning at home and in school.

During the lockdown from January to early March 2021, did you provide reading books in hard copy, or online, or both, to Year 1 children learning at home and whether this was different for children who remained in school.

Could you tell us a little bit about this, please - e.g., how did families know which level of book to choose, how did children change hard-copy books and anything else you think would be useful.

APPENDIX

3. Caregiver survey (t1)

Questions 1 and 2 concerned informed consent processes.

Q3 What is your name?

Q4 What is your child's name?

Q5 What is your relation to the child?

- Mother
- Father
- Other, please specify

The next questions are about your child's experience of school between March and June 2020

Q6 Was your child in school between March and June 2020 when school was open for the children of Key Workers and some other groups of children?

- Yes / No

If No, skip to Q8

Q7 How many days in a typical week did your child attend school?

- 0 / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

Q8 Did your child return to full-time education when schools re-opened to reception children from June 1st 2020?

- Yes / No

The next questions are about home based learning activities

Q9 When schools were closed to the majority of pupils did your child do any home based learning activities?

- Yes / No

If No, skip to Q25

Q10 During the closure period did your child have access to an electronic device/devices that could be used for home based learning?

- Yes / No

If No, skip to Q18

Q11 Which device/devices? (tick all that apply)

- Desktop
- Laptop
- Tablet
- Smart phone
- TV
- Other (please specify)

Q12 Was the desktop:

- Always available to the child / Shared with parents/siblings

Q13 Was the laptop:

- Always available to the child / Shared with parents/siblings

Q14 Was the tablet:

- Always available to the child / Shared with parents/siblings

Q15 Was the smart phone:

- Always available to the child / Shared with parents/siblings

Q16 Was the TV:

- Always available to the child / Shared with parents/siblings

Q17 Was the other device/devices:

- Always available to the child / Shared with parents/siblings

Q18 During the period when schools were closed, did you have a printer to print out activities for home based learning?

- Yes / No

Q19 Did you have access to other equipment such as pencils and paper?

- Yes / No

APPENDIX

3. Caregiver survey (t1)

The next questions are about a typical day of home learning

Q20 Was there a space where your child could do home learning activities? (e.g. dining table, desk)

- Yes / No / Sometimes (please provide details)

Q21 Did you have a routine for home based learning?

- Yes / No

Q22 On a typical day during school closures, how much time did your child spend on the following?

Phonics (teaching children about sounds and letters e.g. practising sounds out loud, playing phonics games online, using flashcards etc)

Reading (e.g. practising reading a book at your child's reading level, discussing a story, guessing what happens next)

Writing (e.g. writing letter shapes, simple words such as the child's own name, or simple sentences which can be read by the child and others)

Maths (teaching children about numbers and sums, shapes and measuring e.g. counting objects, adding and subtracting single digits, recognising shapes and talking about time or money)

Language & communication (activities to help children express themselves and understand other people e.g. story telling, role playing, giving and following instructions etc)

Personal, social and emotional development (activities to help children manage their feelings and learn social skills e.g. talking about feelings, discussing good and bad behaviour and why we follow rules, doing yoga, mindfulness etc.)

- No time
- Less than 15 mins
- 15-30 mins
- 30-45 mins
- 45 mins - 1 hour
- 1-2 hours
- Over 2 hours

Q23 Was an adult available to supervise home learning?

- Yes / No / Sometimes

If No, skip to Q25

Q24 Who supervised the home learning? (tick all that apply)

- Mother / Father / Older siblings / Grandparents / Other (please specify)

Q25 Is there anything else you would like to share with us regarding your child's home learning experience?

APPENDIX

4. Caregiver survey (t2)

1. What is your relation to the child?
 - *Mother / Father / Other (please specify)*

This section is about your child's attendance at school from 5th January to early March 2021. This was the period of the third lockdown, when only vulnerable children and children of key workers were going into school for face-to face lessons, and other children were learning from home

2. Was your child in school at all during lockdown, between January and early March 2021, when school was open only for the children of key workers and some other groups of children?

3. If so, how many days in a typical week did your child attend school?
 - *1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5*

The next questions are about home-based learning activities your Year 1 child may have engaged in during lockdown from January to early March 2021, when they were learning from home instead of being taught face-to-face in school. Some questions ask you to compare home learning this year, from January to early March 2021, with home learning during the first lockdown in spring 2020.

4. During the lockdown, from January to early March 2021, did your child have access to an electronic device/devices that could be used for home based learning?

5. Which device/devices did your child have access to between January and early March 2021? (Please tick all that apply)
 - *Desktop, laptop, tablet, smartphone, TV, other.*

6. Was the desktop / laptop / tablet / smartphone / TV / other device(s)...?
 - *Always available to the child / Shared with parents or siblings*

7. Did your child have more, less, or about the same access to an electronic device/devices, compared with the first lockdown in spring 2020?

8. If you have anything else to say about the amount of access your child had to devices between January and early March 2021 compared with the first lockdown in spring 2020, please write it in here.

9. During the period from January to early March 2021, did you have access to a printer to print out activities for home-based learning?

The next questions are about a typical day of home learning. Some of the questions ask you to compare home learning from January to early March 2021 with the first lockdown in spring 2020. We understand if you cannot remember the details exactly - just give us your best estimates.

10. Did you have a routine for home based learning?

11. Was your approach to home learning during the third lockdown, from January to early March 2021, similar or different to the first lockdown in spring 2020?

12. From January to early March 2021, was there a space such as a dining table or desk, where your child could do home learning activities?

13. Thinking about a typical day, please tell us how much of the work set by school was completed.
 - *We completed: All of the work / Most of the work / Some of the work / Not much of the work / None of the work*

14. If you did not complete all the work set, please tell us why. Please tick as many as apply.
 - *We did not have enough time to complete everything.*
 - *My child was not happy about doing school work while at home.*
 - *We did not have access to the resources (devices/printer etc.) we would need to do the work.*
 - *My child could not concentrate for very long when learning from home.*
 - *We chose not to complete all the work set.*
 - *Other (please write in)*

15. How much time did school expect your child to spend per day on home learning in total across all curriculum areas, from January to early March 2021?
 - *Less than an hour per day*
 - *1 - 2 hours per day*
 - *3 - 4 hours per day*
 - *More than 4 hours per day*

APPENDIX

4. Caregiver survey (t2)

16. How do you feel about this?

- *I think that the amount of time was about right.*
- *I think that the amount of time was too much.*
- *I think that the amount of time was not enough.*

17. Please estimate how this compares with the amount of time your child was expected to spend on home learning during the first lockdown in spring 2020.

- *I think my child was expected to spend more time on home learning this year, compared with the first lockdown in spring 2020.*
- *I think my child was expected to spend less time on home learning this year, compared with the first lockdown in spring 2020.*
- *I think my child was expected to spend about the same amount of time on home learning this year, compared with the first lockdown in spring 2020.*

This section asks about home-learning activities which were provided by school for specific curriculum areas during the lockdown from January to early March 2021.

18. Thinking about a typical day of home learning, from January to early March 2021, please indicate how much time your child would spend on the following:

- Phonics (teaching children about sounds and letters e.g. practising sounds out loud, playing phonics games online, using flashcards etc).
 - Reading (e.g. practising reading a book at your child's reading level, discussing a story, guessing what happens next)
 - Writing (e.g. writing letter shapes, simple words such as the child's own name, or simple sentences which can be read by the child and others)
 - Maths (teaching children about numbers and sums, shapes and measuring e.g. counting objects, adding and subtracting single digits, recognising shapes and talking about time or money)
 - Language & communication (activities to help children express themselves and understand other people e.g. story telling, role playing, giving and following instructions etc)
 - Personal, social and emotional development (activities to help children manage their feelings and learn social skills e.g. talking about feelings, discussing good and bad behaviour and why we follow rules, doing yoga, mindfulness etc.)
- *No time / Less than 15 minutes / 15-30 minutes / 30-45 minutes / 45 minutes- 1 hour / 1-2 hours / Over 2 hours.*

This section asks about the activities set by school for home learning during the most recent lockdown period, from January to early March 2021.

19. For each of those curriculum areas, please estimate whether this was more, less, or roughly the same as it was in the first lockdown (spring 2020), as far as you can remember.

20. For each of the curriculum areas, please tell us what you think about the level of difficulty or challenge of the activities set by school:

- Phonics
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Maths
 - Language and communication
 - Personal, social and emotional development
- *Too difficult / Too easy / About the right level of difficulty/challenge*

21. Did the school provide reading books during the most recent lockdown, from January to early March 2021?

- *Yes - in hard copy / Yes - in digital form online / Yes - both hard copy and online / No*

22. If you were given a hard copy book, did you feel it was the right level of difficulty/challenge for your child?

- *Yes / No*

23. If books were provided online, how did you go about selecting an appropriate one for your child?

- *Based on difficulty / Based on the title or topic / Other (please write in)*

APPENDIX

4. Caregiver survey (t2)

24. How often did you select a new book?

- *Daily / Weekly / No set pattern/as often as we felt like it / Other (please write in)*

25. Did you receive any advice from school about your child's reading ability and the level of book to choose?

- *Yes / No*

26. Please use the space below to tell us anything else which you feel is relevant to any of the aspects of the activities set for home learning that have already been mentioned (time spent on activities, level of difficulty, provision of reading books).

This section asks about communication between the school and you, in relation to the provision and follow-up of work.

27. Please tell us how, and how often, the school made contact with you via the following methods, while your child was learning from home during the lockdown between January and early March 2021.

- *By telephone*
- *By email*
- *Via notes, blogs or other typed messages on an online portal, such as Tapestry or Google Classroom*
- *Via live video calls*

- *Daily / Several times a week / Weekly / Fortnightly / Once or twice during the lockdown period / Never*

28. Please tell us anything else you think is relevant about how, or how often, the school got in touch with you during lockdown.

29. Please tell us how often, if at all, you submitted any work to school, during the lockdown period from January to early March 2021.

- *We submitted work in hard copy/on paper...*
- *We submitted work online...*

- *Daily / 2-4 times a week / Weekly / Once or twice during the lockdown period / Never*

30. When you submitted work, did you receive feedback about that work?

- *Yes / No*

31. If you received feedback, was it specific to the work submitted, or was it more general encouragement to keep your child motivated?

- *It was always specific to the work submitted.*
- *It was mostly specific to the work submitted.*
- *It was usually general encouragement, rather than specific to the work.*
- *It was a mixture of general encouragement and specific feedback.*

32. If there is anything else you would like to tell us about feedback, or about submitting work, please write it here.

33. Was an adult available to supervise home learning?

- *Yes - an adult was available all the time.*
- *Yes - an adult was available some of the time, around other commitments (e.g. looking after other children/working from home).*
- *No - there was no adult available to supervise home learning.*

34. Who supervised the home learning? (tick all that apply)

- *Mother*
- *Father*
- *Older siblings*
- *Grandparents*
- *Other children's parents, in a support bubble*
- *Other (please write in)*

35. If there is anything else you would like to share with us regarding your, and your child's, experience of home learning, including how your experiences were the same or different from the experiences you had during the first lockdown (spring 2020), please tell us here.

THE ICKLE TEAM



Dr Hannah Nash - Principal Investigator

Hannah is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology. Her research focuses on how children learn to read and why some children experience difficulties. As principal investigator, Hannah oversees all aspects of the ICKLE project. <https://medicinehealth.leeds.ac.uk/psychology/staff/639/dr-hannah-nash>



Dr Paula Clarke - Co-Investigator

Paula is an Associate Professor in the School of Education. Her research focuses on reading and language comprehension skills and includes the development of assessment and intervention approaches. On the ICKLE project, Paula is working on the reading progress data and the write-up and dissemination of project findings. <https://essl.leeds.ac.uk/education/staff/644/dr-paula-clarke->



Dr Catherine Davies - Co-Investigator

Catherine is an Associate Professor in Language Development in the School of Languages, Cultures, and Societies. Her research focuses on the role of children's language environment in their lexical and pragmatic development. On the ICKLE project, Cat is working on the home learning environment data and the write-up and dissemination of findings. <https://ahc.leeds.ac.uk/languages/staff/699/dr-catherine-davies>



Dr Peter Hart

Peter is a Lecturer in the [Centre for Inclusion, Childhood and Youth \(ICY\)](#) in the School of Education. Peter is assisting with quantitative data analysis on the ICKLE project. <https://essl.leeds.ac.uk/education/staff/136/dr-peter-hart>



Dr Matt Homer - Co-Investigator

Matt is an Associate Professor in the School of Education. He has over 15 years' experience of analysing assessment and educational data across a range of educational projects and settings. On the ICKLE project, he is mainly responsible for quantitative data analysis. <https://essl.leeds.ac.uk/education/staff/475/dr-matt-homer>



Dr Rachel Mathieson - Research Fellow

Rachel is responsible for the day-to-day progress of the ICKLE project, including liaising with schools, development of research instruments, and data collection. She is also contributing to the write-up and dissemination of findings. <https://essl.leeds.ac.uk/education/staff/152/dr-rachel-mathieson>

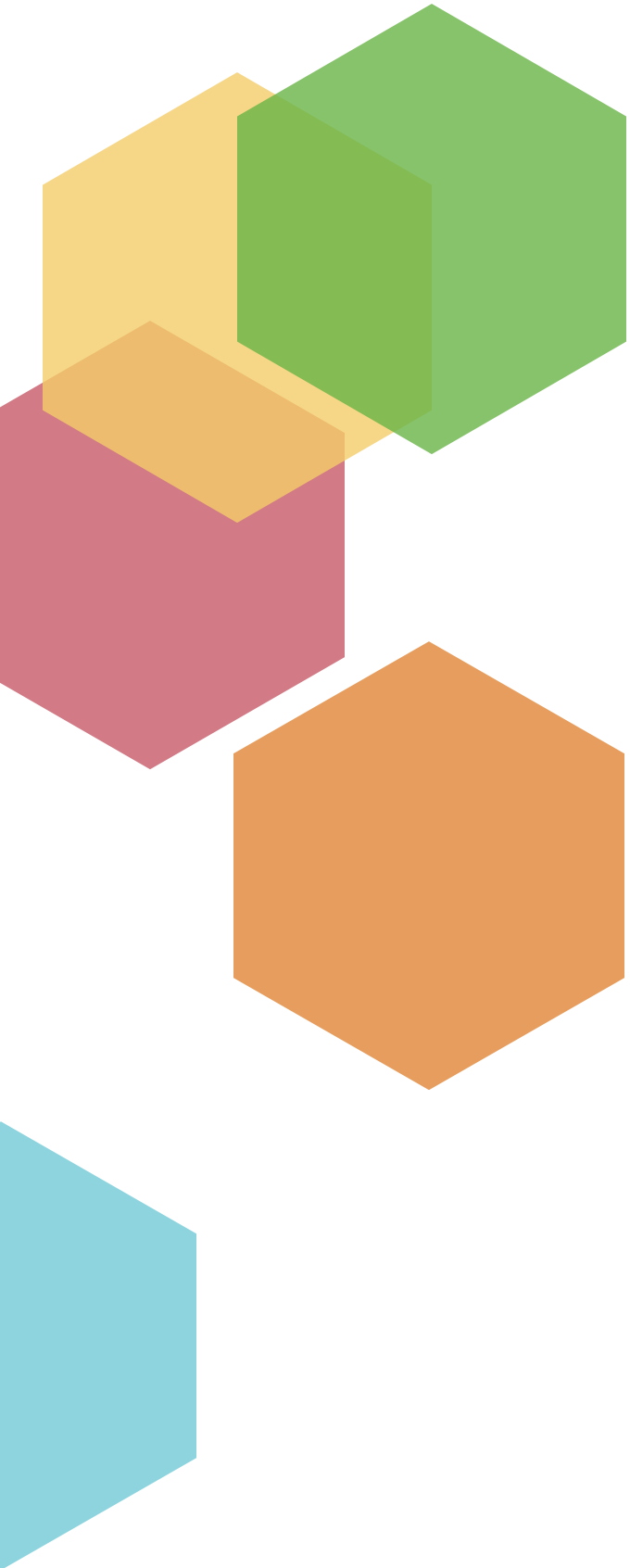




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