

Evaluation of the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Two Year Key Stage 3 Project, which was launched in 2003, assisted secondary schools in developing curricula for Key Stage 3 that could be covered in two years instead of the conventional three years (Years 7, 8 and 9).¹ The Project aimed to increase the pace of learning, improve the motivation and engagement of pupils, improve the transition from Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) to Key Stage 3, and open up curricular flexibility through the time saved. Schools were able to decide how to use the time saved by completing Key Stage 3 within two years.

The Project involved two groups of schools (Phase 1 and Phase 2 schools). Phase 1 schools comprised 22 secondary schools across England that began offering a two year Key Stage 3 from September 2003. This group of schools included four middle schools (catering for pupils in Years 5 to 8) and 18 secondary schools. Phase 2 schools comprised 18 secondary schools, all of which were located in London, and which began offering a two year Key Stage 3 from September 2004.

In 2003, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned a consortium comprising the London School of Economics and Political Science and the National Foundation for Educational Research to evaluate the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project. The evaluation consisted of three elements:

- an examination of Phase 1 pupils' attainment when in Years 7 and 8;
- an examination of pupils' reported attitudes as reflected in questionnaire responses;
- visits to eight case study schools to examine how a two year Key Stage fitted in with the work of individual schools.

Methods

In relation to the first two research elements, addressing attainment and pupil attitudes, two Comparison groups of schools were recruited. The Phase 1 Comparison group comprised 17 schools and the Phase 2 Comparison group 12 schools. These were recruited from schools in England known to be already using the QCA Optional Tests (OTs) for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils. In the case of the Phase 2 Comparison group, 12 schools were drawn from schools in London that were known to be using the Optional Tests.

The attainment of pupils following shortened courses was compared with the OT scores achieved by pupils who were following a conventional three year Key Stage at the Comparison schools. Phase 1 Project schools were asked that pupils following shortened courses in mathematics and/or English take the relevant QCA Year 7 and Year 8 Optional Tests. Comparison schools were asked for all pupils to sit the tests. The analysis used multi-level modelling and took into account a range of background factors (including, for example, pupils' prior attainment, sex, known eligibility for free school meals and various other characteristics); these have previously been shown to be associated with variations in pupils' progress.

Phase 1 Project schools were able to enter pupils early (in Year 8) for their statutory Key Stage 3 tests. These are normally taken at the end of Year 9 by pupils who have completed three years of secondary level education. Given that pupils in Project schools were completing this stage of education in two years instead of three, schools were able, if they chose, to enter pupils for the national Key Stage 3 tests in English, mathematics and science earlier than would normally be the case. Project schools were, however, advised to enter only certain pupils, namely those who were expected to achieve at least the

¹ The normal age ranges are: Year 7, 11/12 years; Year 8, 12/13 years; and Year 9 13/14 years.

nationally expected level for pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 (i.e., Level 5/6). This is in contrast to pupils nationally, who entered the tests at the end of Year 9 in accordance with statutory requirements. This creates difficulties in interpreting the results: whereas accelerated pupils at Project schools were selected for early entry to the tests, at other schools all Year 9 pupils had to be entered. Moreover, the analyses were not able to take into account background factors known to be associated with variations in progress.

Pupils at Phase 1 Project and Comparison schools were asked to complete an attitude questionnaire when they were in Years 7, 8 and 9. Pupils attending Phase 2 Project and Comparison schools completed the questionnaire when they were in Years 7 and 8. Responses to individual items were combined to form scales and changes in those scale scores were examined from one year to the next.

Case study visits were made to eight Project schools (drawn from Phase 1 and Phase 2 schools) involved in delivering a Two Year Key Stage 3, to investigate how the Project contributed to the work of the school. The one day case study visits involved interviews with 26 teachers and 4 governors. They were carried out between autumn 2004 and 2006.

Implementation of the programme

Schools had a great deal of freedom in designing their own two year Key Stage 3 programme. They varied according to which subjects they chose to cover in two years; which pupils they chose to follow a two year programme; and in which years they delivered the Two Year Key Stage 3.

The proportion of Year 7 teaching devoted to two year programmes varied considerably. At one fifth of the Project schools, more than 90 per cent of Year 7 teaching involved a shortened curriculum. However, at a quarter of the schools, shortened courses accounted for less than 10 per cent of Year 7 teaching. The remaining half of schools devoted between 10 per cent and 90 per cent of teaching time to two year courses. At 13 (more than one third) of the schools, some pupils were not exposed to shortened courses at all. At all other schools, all pupils experienced a two year course in at least one subject. The wide variation in the ways in which the Project was implemented poses difficulties for the evaluation, as the extent to which pupils were exposed to the intervention varied.

Results

Attainment during Key Stage 3

In the Year 7 and 8 Optional Tests more progress was made in mathematics by pupils following accelerated courses in Phase 1 Project schools than by pupils in Phase 1 Comparison schools. By the end of Year 7, pupils following accelerated courses in Phase 1 Project schools had made between one and one and a half terms of additional progress compared with pupils in Phase 1 Comparison schools. By the end of Year 8 pupils had made an additional two terms of progress compared with pupils in Comparison schools.

In English, the progress made in Year 7 and Year 8 by pupils at Phase 1 Project schools was not significantly different from that achieved by pupils at Phase 1 Comparison schools.

In relation to the Key Stage 3 tests (in mathematics, English and science) the results of early entrants from Phase 1 Project schools were in some respects similar to the Key Stage 3 results nationally. However, in mathematics and science some pupils chosen for early entry were significantly more likely to achieve at least the Level 5 threshold. In contrast, in all three subjects, those selected for Year 8 entry were less likely to make the highest levels of progress (i.e., progressing by two or three levels from Key Stage 2 to 3).

Pupil attitudes

No consistent patterns were found between pupils in Project and Comparison schools in terms of changes in attitudes. However, in relation to subject popularity, mathematics was more popular among accelerated pupils at Phase 1 Project than Phase 1 Comparison schools in both Years 7 and 8. In contrast, English was less popular in Phase 1 Project than Comparison schools in all three years.

Case study analyses

In keeping with the variation across the whole Project, the case study schools had implemented their Two Year Key Stage 3 in a wide variety of ways. No two schools had taken the same approach. Three models for implementation were identified although these were not mutually exclusive and more than one could be found operating at a single school: we have termed these *foundation*, *acceleration* and *enrichment* models.

- The *foundation model* involved a two year Key Stage 3 being taught in Years 8 and 9. The time saved was used to provide an innovative curriculum in Year 7. Such Year 7 curricula were designed to ease the transition from primary to secondary school and to enable pupils to develop learning skills to equip them for Key Stage 3. Thus, the pupils following a two year Key Stage in Years 8 and 9 followed classes in literacy, numeracy, learning to learn and cross-curricular projects while in Year 7. In addition, where these classes were taught by the same teacher, it was hoped that this would ease the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 by providing greater continuity (given that in primary school, pupils are generally taught for most of the day by one teacher).
- The *acceleration model* involved teaching a two year Key Stage in Years 7 and 8 with the time saved deployed thereafter. In most cases, this model was adopted when schools wished pupils to move on to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) study earlier. In some cases, the saved time enabled pupils to enter early for their GCSE examinations. Alternatively, it could be used to extend the period of study for Key Stage 4 qualifications (for example, spending three years on GCSE or vocational courses). An early start to GCSE examinations was seen in itself as a means of motivating pupils. At some schools it was suggested that pupils at risk of disaffection could complete Key Stage 3 early and perhaps also complete some basic qualifications in Year 9; this enabled them subsequently to devote a greater proportion of their time to, for example, vocational courses that they may find more engaging.
- The *enrichment model* devoted the saved time to providing an enriched curriculum. Such enrichment could be provided at any stage during the three years conventionally devoted to Key Stage 3. Thus, any of the three years conventionally allocated to Key Stage 3 teaching could follow an enriched curriculum. For example, at one school, pupils followed a science project, which involved studying the science of outer space when in Year 8, with Key Stage 3 being taught during Years 7 and 9. At another school, an enriched curriculum was followed in Year 9.
- Key considerations in relation to some of the variants included the following:
 - ® One key issue relates to pupil progression. It is important for schools to find appropriate courses to ensure progression throughout secondary schooling. For example, where early entry to GCSE was followed by an additional course in Year 11, it is important that the extra course provides an appropriate level of challenge rather than being at the same level as the course followed in Year 10.
 - ® Timetabling is a key challenge. Clearly, any additional courses need to fit with the teaching time made available. For example, if a school chooses to use an accelerated model, with

both Key Stage 3 tests and GCSE examinations taken early, and some pupils start higher level courses such as AS levels in Year 11, this can create difficulties as AS levels often require greater time allocations than GCSE examinations. In addition this may also create additional timetabling challenges at Key Stage 5.

- ® One means of creating sufficient time to teach full AS Level courses in Year 11 is for several subjects to be accelerated with early entry to GCSE examinations in Year 10. This does however create additional timetabling demands. There are constraints on how many innovations and forms of flexibility may be simultaneously accommodated within a school timetable.
- ® Schools need to consider how more flexible arrangements at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 affect the ability of pupils to transfer between teaching groups. Transfer may be particularly difficult where pupils progress through these Key Stages at different speeds (pupils may, for example, be unable to join higher sets that have already undertaken GCSE coursework).
- ® Schools need to carefully consider which pupils are likely to benefit from early entry to GCSE (and other qualifications); a concern raised by parents at one school with previous experience of early entry was that pupils might obtain lower grades than would otherwise be the case. Also, although teachers believed higher attaining groups benefited from an accelerated Key Stage 3, some felt not all pupils were sufficiently mature to cope with the demands of an early start to GCSE courses.
- ® Allowing departments to decide whether or not to provide shortened Key Stage 3 courses can reduce staffroom dissension. However, if fewer departments participate, this means that the degree of flexibility is reduced.
- ® While an enrichment model increases the time available for curricular enrichment, the more widely adopted accelerated model of implementation was reported, at several schools, to have reduced the opportunity for curricular enrichment.

Conclusions and policy implications

The Two Year Key Stage 3 Project is important, not merely in its own right, but also because of its implications for the personalisation of learning. The White Paper 'Higher Standards, Better Schools for All' (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2005) defines this as 'a tailored education' (p. 50) and examples of tailored education include 'a rich, flexible and accessible curriculum and, for older pupils, one that allows them to mix academic and vocational learning' (p. 50). One key aim of the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project was to open up curricular flexibility; the Project gave schools a great deal of freedom to innovate in Key Stage 3 and the schools used that freedom in a wide variety of ways.

Most commonly the freedom was used to accelerate pupils through Key Stage 3 and make an early start on Key Stage 4 studies. From the point of view of policy, the most significant finding is that a shortened Key Stage 3 was associated with an increased pace of learning in mathematics as measured by the Year 7 and Year 8 QCA Optional Tests.

Schools varied substantially in how they used the time saved as a result of a Two Year Key Stage 3. The enrichment and foundation models offered relatively simple models for schools to implement with the time saved deployed within Key Stage 3.

For schools operating an accelerated model, the use of saved time raised a number of issues. First, many schools planned for pupils to take GCSEs early; this was seen as a way of motivating pupils. However, early entry is not necessarily perceived by parents to be in the best interests of their children as their chances of obtaining a high grade when entered at this stage may be reduced. Second, many of the variants of a Two Year Key Stage 3 present challenges for timetabling; this needs to be carefully considered at the planning and implementation stage and will be important with increased flexibility and personalisation of learning. Third, opportunities for pupils to transfer between teaching groups poses challenges and needs to be considered with care, given that individual pupils progress at different rates.

In conclusion, the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project provided schools with an opportunity to innovate and provide curricular flexibility. Pupils' progress in mathematics during Key Stage 3 was very encouraging. More generally, there are implications for education policy, particularly in view of the increasing focus on the personalisation of learning.

1. EVALUATION OF TWO YEAR KEY STAGE 3 PROJECT

The Two Year Key Stage 3 Project was proposed within the 2001 Green Paper Schools: Building on Success and launched in 2003. The aim of the Project was for participating schools to increase the pace of learning among pupils, to improve the transition from Key Stage 2 (KS2) to Key Stage 3 (KS3) and also improve pupils' motivation and engagement during Years 7, 8 and 9 - the years conventionally devoted to Key Stage 3. By completing Key Stage 3 in two years, schools could then devote the saved time to Key Stage 4 (KS4) studies, including early entry to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, and to enrichment activities for their pupils.

The Project formed part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy which was delivered by CfBT and then Capita under a contract with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Schools participating in the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project were encouraged to find ways to complete programmes of study for Key Stage 3 in two years rather than the conventional three.

Two cohorts of schools were recruited to participate in the Project. The schools involved in Phase 1 of the Project initiated a two year Key Stage for their Year 7 intake from September 2003. Twenty-two schools were involved in delivering a two year Key Stage within Phase 1 and this diverse group of schools were located throughout England. A second group of schools, comprising eighteen schools all located in London, were recruited to Phase 2 of the Project. These schools offered a two year programme of study to pupils entering Year 7 from September 2004. A consortium comprising researchers from the London School of Economics and the National Foundation for Educational Research was commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills to evaluate the initiative. This report presents the evaluation findings.

2. METHODS

2.1 Sample

The research had three main elements. The first examined pupils' attainment during Key Stage 3. The second addressed pupils' motivation and engagement via questionnaires. The third examined, via case studies, how a Two Year Key Stage 3 fitted in with the work of individual schools.

For the first two of these elements - the analysis of pupils' attainment and responses to the attitudinal survey - research was also carried out in a selection of Comparison schools. There were separate Comparison groups for Phase 1 and Phase 2 schools. These were recruited from schools in England known to be already using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Optional Tests for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils.² For the Comparison groups, random samples of 60 schools were drawn to be approached to participate in the evaluation. These schools were selected to be representative of the Project schools in terms of Key Stage 3 performance, school type,³ region and known eligibility for free school meals (FSM). The final number of Phase 1 Comparison schools was 17. In the case of the Phase 2 Comparison group, 12 schools were recruited to participate in the study from schools in London that were known to be using the Optional Tests. (For more details see Annex A.)

² It was originally planned for pupils at Phase 2 schools to take the Optional Tests in Year 7 and Year 8 but it was subsequently decided to restrict the attainment analysis to the Phase 1 Project and comparison group.

³ Middle schools were excluded.

2.2 Attainment and attitudes

The timing of the attainment and attitudinal elements of the research are shown in Table 1. As can be seen, attainment analysis focused only on pupils at Phase 1 schools. For this cohort two attainment comparisons were possible. The first made use of the QCA Optional Tests (OTs) in mathematics and English for pupils in Years 7 and 8. Phase 1 Project schools were asked that pupils following two year programmes in these subjects should undertake the Year 7 and Year 8 Optional Tests. All pupils at the Comparison schools were also requested to undertake these tests. Thus, we were able to compare the attainment of pupils following an ‘accelerated’ Key Stage with the attainment of pupils of the same age attending schools offering a conventional three year Key Stage 3.

In the case of the Year 7 Optional Test analysis, only pupils who had achieved an appropriate level at Key Stage 2 and were therefore working at an appropriate level (as specified by QCA) to be assessed by the Year 7 tests were included in the statistical modelling. For the Year 8 tests, all pupils that schools chose to enter for the tests were included in the statistical modelling. For the main models, relating to overall test scores or levels achieved in English and mathematics, at least 2200 pupils were included in the analysis.⁴

Pupils’ test scores were matched to data relating to prior attainment and school characteristics (drawn from PLASC) and also to pupils’ responses to questions relating to home background in the questionnaires (completed as part of the examination of pupils’ motivation and engagement). Multi-level modelling was the statistical technique used to analyse this data.⁵

Phase 1 Project schools were also able to enter pupils early (in Year 8) for their statutory Key Stage 3 tests. Where schools chose to do this, the test results of early entrants were compared with the results of pupils nationally. However, it must be noted that Project schools were able to choose which pupils to enter for the Key Stage 3 tests whereas this was not the case for schools nationally that entered pupils in Year 9. In addition, this analysis did not take into account the range of background factors included in the analysis of Optional Test results.

Pupils at Phase 1 Project and Comparison schools were asked to complete an attitude questionnaire when they were in Years 7, 8 and 9. Pupils attending Phase 2 Project and Comparison schools completed the questionnaire when they were in Years 7 and 8. Responses to individual items were combined to form scales and changes in those scale scores were examined from one year to the next.

Table 1 - Timing of the attainment and attitudinal elements of the evaluation

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Phase 1 Project and Comparison Schools	Year 7 Pupil survey and OTs	Year 8 Pupil survey, OTs, KS3 tests	Year 9 Pupil survey
Phase 2 Project and Comparison schools		Year 7 Pupil survey	Year 8 Pupil survey

In addition to the elements shown in Table 1, Project schools were contacted in the Spring terms of 2004 and 2005 to identify which pupils were following a condensed Key Stage 3 in which subjects.

⁴ The number of schools from which these pupils were drawn varied between models (ranging from 23 to 31 schools). This is because not all Phase 1 Project schools provided shortened mathematics and English courses (and therefore not all Phase 1 Project schools had any pupils to enter for the Optional Tests). In addition, a few schools did not return test scores for all elements of the evaluation.

⁵ Multi-level modelling is a form of multiple linear regression that takes into account the clustering of pupils within schools.

2.3 Case studies

Case study visits were made to eight Project schools (drawn from Phase 1 and 2 schools) involved in delivering a Two Year Key Stage 3, to investigate how the Project contributed to the work of the school. The one day case study visits involved interviews with 26 teachers (at least three teachers in each school) and four governors. They were carried out between Autumn 2004 and 2006. Notes were taken during interviews. At each school a senior manager with oversight of Key Stage 3 was interviewed (e.g., headteacher, assistant headteacher or Key Stage 3 manager). The senior manager was the initial point of contact and was therefore responsible for selecting the other interviewees. They were, however, requested to be a head of department in a subject offering a condensed Key Stage 3 course and a class teacher who also taught a condensed subject. It was also requested that the three teachers should teach different subjects although at two schools this was not possible (the classroom teacher taught the same subject as either the senior manager or head of department).

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Diverse strategies

Schools were invited to develop their own strategies for putting a two year Key Stage into effect and did so in markedly different ways. They were contacted early in the Spring term when their first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 7 in order to identify which pupils were following a condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum in which of 12 National Curriculum subjects⁶ and also in which years they were undertaking that two year programme of study. The wide variation in the ways in which the Project was implemented presented difficulties for the evaluation as the extent to which pupils were exposed to the intervention varied and because there were also qualitative differences in the type of intervention.

This diversity arose from different decisions as to which subjects should be studied in two years, which pupils should follow the two year Key Stage and during which two years that programme should be studied.

First, schools were able to choose in *which subjects* they would offer a two year Key Stage. Thus, some schools offered a two year Key Stage 3 in all subjects while others focused on only some subjects and still others applied the two year model in only one subject.

Second, schools were also able to choose *which pupils* would follow a two year Key Stage. Again, in some schools it was decided that *all* pupils would follow the programme of study in two years while at others only *some* followed a 'condensed' route. In still others the whole cohort would follow a two year programme in some subjects while in another subject only part of the cohort would follow a two year course.

Third, schools varied in *which years* the Key Stage 3 curriculum was taught. Most schools taught a condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum in Year 7 and Year 8, leading on to an early start to GCSE courses from Year 9. Others chose to teach the condensed curriculum during Year 8 and Year 9, making use of Year 7 to provide a 'foundation' year (Such foundation years were generally, though not always, intended to improve the attainment and skills of lower achieving pupils such that they could successfully access the Key Stage 3 curriculum.) One school offered a condensed curriculum during Year 7 and Year 9. Once again, schools adopted different combinations such that, for example a pupil

⁶ The subjects were mathematics, English, science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (DT), history, geography, modern foreign languages (MFL), art and design, music, physical education (PE) and citizenship.

could follow a Year 7 and Year 8 Key Stage 3 curriculum in one subject and a Year 7 and Year 9 curriculum in another.

In addition, the model of implementation at individual schools could change over time. For example, some subject areas initially pursued a two year Key Stage 3 but then reverted to a conventional three year model. Conversely at some schools additional subjects joined the two year scheme.

Among Phase 1 schools, all schools offered a two year programme in Year 7 and Year 8 to at least some pupils. Some Phase 1 schools did, however, in addition offer other models (for example some pupils at one school followed the Key Stage 3 curriculum in one subject in Year 7 and Year 9 and at another school some followed a Key Stage 3 course in Year 8 and Year 9). Among schools in Phase 2 of the Project, five provided an enriched foundation year in Year 7 (for at least some pupils) followed by a two year Key Stage 3 during Year 8 and Year 9. Three of these five schools also offered a Year 7 and Year 8 programme in some subjects and for some pupils.

3.2 Exposure to Two Year Key Stage 3

There was clearly much variation in how the Two Year Key Stage 3 project was put into practice in individual schools. One way of quantifying pupils' exposure to the two year programme is to calculate how much Year 7 teaching was devoted to teaching condensed curricula at each of the Project schools. Each subject was given a proportional weighting according to the average time devoted to the subject (average time allocations were derived from the DfES' 'Secondary Schools Curriculum and Staffing Survey' (DfES, 2002).⁷ For each school, the time allocation for each subject was then multiplied by the proportion of pupils following a condensed course in that subject. At each school, the total for all subjects then represents the proportion of Year 7 teaching that followed a two year programme.

Figure 1 shows, for Phase 1 and Phase 2 schools, the proportion of Year 7 teaching, in Spring of year 7, during which pupils were exposed to two year programmes of study (or a foundation programme to be followed by a two year programme in years 8 and 9). We see that in only seven schools (one fifth of the 35 schools that responded to this element of the research) was there more than 90 per cent exposure to two year programmes of study. At about a quarter of the schools less than 10 per cent of Year 7 teaching was devoted to shortened courses. At 13 of the schools some Year 7 pupils had no exposure to the innovation. These pupils, though they attended Project schools, followed a three year Key Stage 3 in all subjects.

⁷ The weightings were: mathematics 13.9%, English 13.9%, science 13.9%, modern foreign languages 11.1%, DT 8.3%, ICT 2.8%, history 5.6%, geography 5.6%, music 5.6%, art 5.6%, PE 8.3%, citizenship 5.6%. The exposure proportions represented in Figure 1 may then be understood as the average proportion of time following condensed courses for all pupils at the school. This calculation drew on data for 4113 pupils at Phase 1 Project schools and 2799 pupils at Phase 2 Project schools.

Figure 1 - Exposure to condensed curricula at Phase 1 and Phase 2 schools

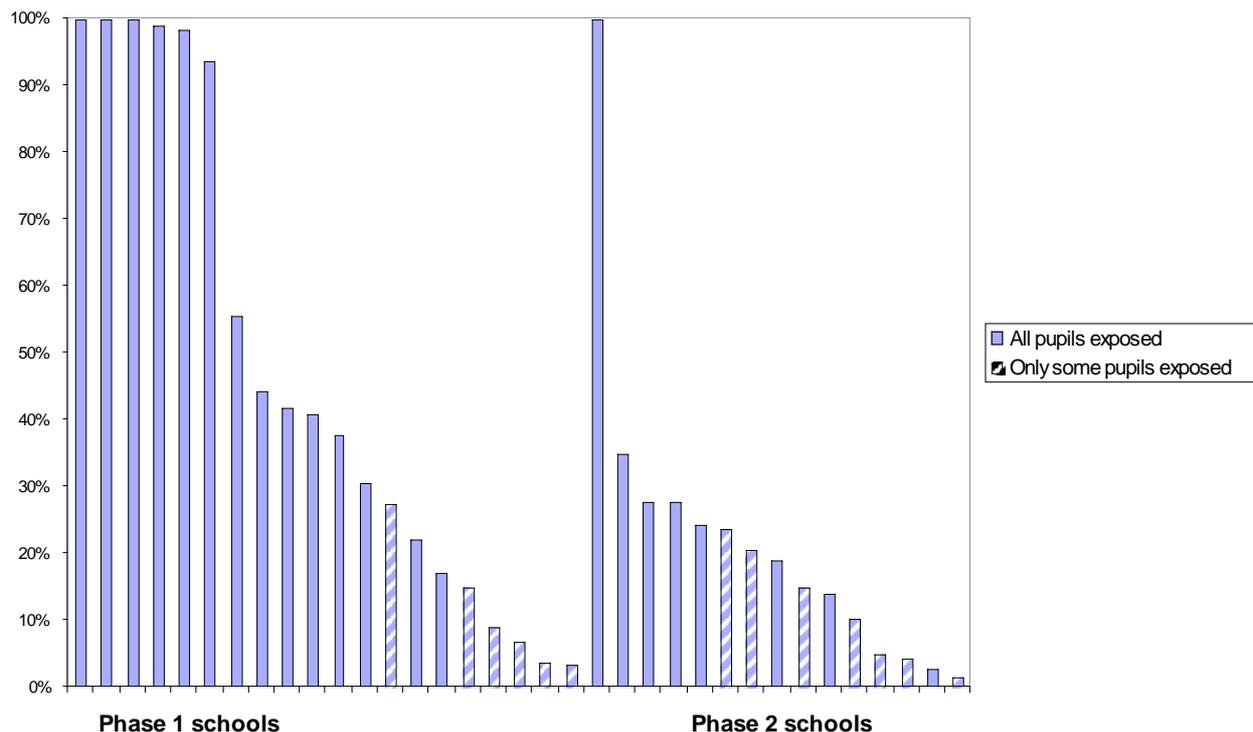
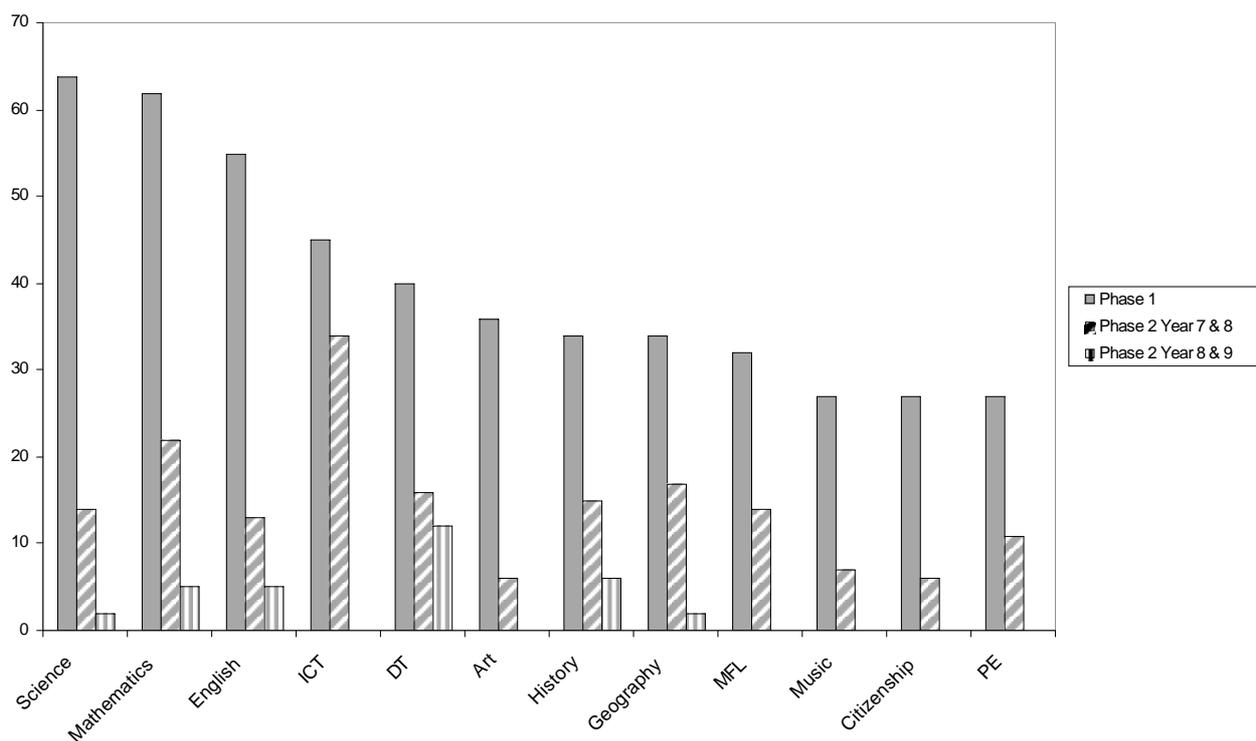


Figure 1 offers a snapshot in the Spring of Year 7. As was stated earlier, schools sometimes changed their methods of implementation. For example, in three of the seven schools with more than 90 per cent of Year 7 teaching following a two year Key Stage 3, subsequent decisions reduced the number of subjects following a two year Key Stage and consequently only 42 per cent of Year 7 teaching at those schools followed a condensed programme thereafter (These were three middle schools feeding the same high school.) Taking other examples from among the case study schools visited, during the course of the evaluation study a two year Key Stage was introduced in additional subjects at one of the case study schools and in another school one particular subject reverted to a three year Key Stage 3.

The proportions of pupils at Phase 1 and Phase 2 Project schools following a condensed curriculum in the Spring of Year 7 in different subjects are shown in Figure 2. For Phase 2 schools, among which a larger proportion of schools offered a Year 8 and Year 9 Key Stage 3, Figure 2 separates pupils following a Year 7 and Year 8 course from those following a Year 8 and Year 9 course. What is immediately clear in Figure 2 is that larger proportions of pupils at Phase 1 schools followed condensed curricula in each of the subjects than pupils at Phase 2 schools. Only in the case of ICT did exposure to a condensed curriculum in Phase 2 schools come anywhere near the Phase 1 level of exposure. We also see that, among Phase 1 schools, a condensed curriculum was most often followed in the National Curriculum core subjects of science, mathematics and English.

Figure 2 - Percentage of Project school pupils following condensed courses by subject, Phase and years in which the two year Key Stage 3 was delivered⁸



Focusing further on the core subjects, at 11 of the 16 Phase 1 schools offering a condensed course in science, at least 90 per cent of the cohort were reported to be following a condensed course. At the other five schools 84 per cent, 64 per cent, 62 per cent, 24 per cent and 15 per cent of the relevant cohort were following a shortened programme.

In the case of mathematics, the corresponding figures were 15 schools offering a condensed programme of which 11 schools had 90 per cent or more of the cohort following such a programme and four schools with only part of the cohort following the shortened route (with 37 per cent, 25 per cent, 24 per cent and 16 per cent of the cohort following the course).

For English 13 schools offered a shortened course, 10 of which had 90 per cent or more of pupils pursuing the condensed course. The three schools providing such a course to a smaller proportion of pupils had 87 per cent, 28 per cent and 16 per cent of pupils on condensed programmes of study.

For all three subjects, where only part of the year group followed a condensed course it tended to be higher attaining pupils who were selected for the shortened programme (that is, with higher sets following a condensed course). The proportions selected to follow condensed courses (that is, attending schools where only some of the cohort were following a shortened programme) expressed as a proportion of all pupils reported to be following such courses were for science 20 per cent, for mathematics 8 per cent and for English 10 per cent. Thus for all three subjects, most pupils following a two year programme did so because the school had chosen to offer a condensed course in that subject rather than particular sets being chosen to pursue shortened courses.

⁸ N=4113 for Phase 1, N=2799 for Phase 2

4. ATTAINMENT ANALYSIS

Our examination of attainment, which focuses on Phase 1 Project schools only, includes analysis of performance in the QCA Year 7 and Year 8 Optional Tests in mathematics and English, and also of Key Stage 3 test results for mathematics, English and science.

Specifically for this evaluation, Phase 1 Project schools were asked for pupils following condensed programmes of study in mathematics and/or in English to take the QCA Year 7 and Year 8 Optional Tests in those subjects. All pupils at Phase 1 Comparison schools were also asked to take these tests.⁹

The Year 7 Optional Tests are suitable for pupils who achieved at least Level 4 at Key Stage 2. Consequently only these pupils were included in the analysis that follows. In the analysis, we compared the test scores achieved by pupils at Phase 1 Project schools with those of pupils at Phase 1 Comparison schools. The attainment measures relating to the Optional Tests comprised the total test score in mathematics, score in the mental mathematics test paper, total score in English and scores in the reading and in the writing elements of the English test.

The Year 8 Optional Test in mathematics was provided in two tiers. The lower tier test is designed to assess pupils working in the Level 4 to Level 6 range and the higher tier version for those working between Level 5 and Level 7. It was up to individual teachers to decide which tier was most appropriate for each pupil. The attainment measures for the Year 8 Optional Test in mathematics comprised the test level achieved (in either tier of the test), total test score for entrants to the higher tier test and total test score for entrants to the lower tier test. For English the attainment measures were the total score in the English test and scores for the reading and writing components of the English test.

Some characteristics that had been shown to be associated with progress in previous research were taken into account in the analysis (see Annexes B and C for details). The method of analysis used was multi-level modelling which is a version of multiple linear regression.

We also report the Key Stage 3 test results achieved by Phase 1 Project school pupils who were entered for the tests while in Year 8 rather than Year 9.¹⁰ Schools were able to choose whether to enter pupils early for their Key Stage 3 tests and the first cohort of Project pupils able to do so, took the tests in 2005. The guidance (DfES, 2004) issued to schools participating in the Project states:

Pupils have only one opportunity to learn and achieve in Years 7, 8 and 9. This guidance repeatedly stresses that any school contemplating a two-year Key Stage 3 should be confident that participating pupils would achieve at least the same level of success in the condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum as they would have in three years. Equally it is important for the school to have systems in place that will enable pupils following a condensed programme in years 7 and 8 to revert to a three-year programme if their learning is not on target to meet at least national expectations by the end of Year 8. (Page vi)

Thus schools were advised only to enter pupils for the tests if they were expected to achieve the nationally expected standard (Level 5/6). Consequently some schools entered only part of any accelerated cohort for the tests while others chose to postpone the entry of all pupils until Year 9. A small number of schools chose to enter all pupils (or more accurately all those working at the appropriate level for the Key Stage 3 tests) when in Year 8.

⁹ The Year 7 Optional Tests were completed in June 2004 and the Year 8 Optional Tests in June 2005. The Year 8 Optional Test papers were marked externally and for the Year 7 tests a mixture of internal and external marking was used.

¹⁰ Data relating to early entrants from non-Project schools are presented in Annex G.

The analysis of Key Stage 3 results separated pupils according to the level they achieved at Key Stage 2. The levels subsequently achieved in Key Stage 3 tests by Year 8 entrants from Project schools were then compared with results nationally. Bar charts are then presented that compare the attainment of early entrants to Key Stage 3 tests with the attainment of non-accelerated pupils in non-Project schools. The analysis of progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 does not however include the set of background variables also taken into account in the analysis of the Optional Tests results. In addition, the analysis of the proportion of pupils achieving the Level 5 threshold does not take into account the clustering of pupils within schools.¹¹

4.1 Attainment in mathematics

Optional Test results

Table 2 reports our analysis of Year 7 mathematics Optional Test total scores and shows the coefficients for independent variables included in the final model.¹² The numbers shown in the table indicate, when taking into account the other factors included in the model, the change in the number of Year 7 Optional Test points achieved that was associated with a *one unit* change in the characteristics listed. Thus, following a shortened mathematics course during Year 7 and Year 8 in a Phase 1 Project school (indicated by the variable ‘Project school’) was associated with an increase of 6.6 points in the Year 7 Optional Test in Mathematics having taken into account the other factors listed. In terms of National Curriculum levels, we might interpret this as an additional one to one and a half terms of progress.

Table 2 - Estimated change in Year 7 Mathematics Optional Test score associated with a one unit change in pupil or school characteristics

Pupil or school characteristic	Change in test score
Project school	6.61
Key Stage 2 mathematics score	1.39
Eligible for FSM	-3.67
% eligible for FSM at the school	-0.29
Number of books in the home (6 point scale)	1.18
Girl	1.17
Special educational needs without a statement	-4.55

Taking all of these factors into account at the same time, we see that higher scores in the test were associated with higher prior attainment, larger numbers of books in the home and being a girl. Lower scores were associated with being eligible for free school meals and also with higher proportions of pupils at the school being eligible, and also for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) but without a statement (this is, it should be noted, while also taking into account the pupil’s prior attainment).

In addition, scores in the mental mathematics element of the Year 7 Optional Test were examined and, taking other factors into account, attending a Project school was associated with an additional 1.38 points in the mental mathematics test.

Table 3 presents the results for the test level achieved in the Year 8 mathematics Optional Tests (in either tier of the test). In this case attainment is measured in QCA sub-levels rather than in the number

¹¹ The failure to take into account the clustering of pupils within schools means that the size of the confidence intervals around the proportion of pupils achieving the test threshold (in this case Level 5 in the Key Stage 3 tests) will tend to be underestimated.

¹² Details of all models referred to in this section, and graphs showing effect sizes for selected models, are included in Annex C.

of points achieved in the test. We see that, in the tests taken at the end of Year 8, and taking into account the other factors listed in the table, following a shortened course at a Phase 1 Project school was associated with achieving an additional 1.08 of a sub-level in the mathematics test. A sub-level is to be understood as representing an additional two terms of progress.

Table 3 - Estimated change in Year 8 Mathematics Optional Test sub-level associated with a one unit change in pupil or school characteristics variables

	Change in test sub-levels
Project school	1.08
KS2 Mathematics score	0.14
Eligible for FSM	-0.35
School FSM	-0.04
Number of books in home (6 point scale)	0.16
Girl	0.18
Special educational needs without a statement	-0.65
'Other' ethnic group	0.51
Middle school	0.85

We also examined the results of the higher tier test and lower tier test separately. Here our analysis was able to focus on the number of points achieved in tests rather than having these translated into QCA sub-levels. Among higher tier test entrants, following a shortened course at a Phase 1 Project school was associated with achieving an additional 8.78 test points. Again this corresponds to an additional two terms of progress. However the analysis of the lower tier test results indicated that Project school pupils had not achieved significantly different test scores from Phase 1 Comparison school pupils.

The higher tier test modelling was further expanded to examine whether, among entrants to this tier of the test, the progress of pupils following shortened courses at Project schools varied according to their level of prior attainment.¹³ That is, among higher tier test entrants, we examined whether accelerated pupils with higher levels of prior attainment made greater progress than accelerated pupils with lower levels of prior attainment. However, the model did not indicate that accelerated pupils with higher levels of prior attainment made significantly more progress than accelerated pupils with lower levels of prior attainment.

Key Stage 3 results

Table 4 reports the 2005 Key Stage 3 test results in mathematics for 1262 pupils attending Phase 1 Project schools who were entered for the tests when in Year 8. The table shows the proportions of early entrants and all entrants in England who achieved at least Level 5 in the Key Stage 3 mathematics tests.

¹³ This was investigated by including a Phase 1 Project school * Key Stage 2 mathematics test score interaction term in the modelling.

Table 4 - Proportion of pupils achieving at least Level 5¹⁴ in 2005 Key Stage 3 mathematics tests

KS2 level	% achieving Level 5 or higher at KS3			No. of Year 8 entrants at Project schools
	Year 8 entrants at Project schools	All entrants in England	Statistically significant difference ¹⁵	
Level 3	52	32	*	163
Level 4	92	90	*	599
Level 5	99	99	NS	520

NS no statistically significant difference

* $p < 0.05$

Thus we see in Table 4 that the proportions of early entrants achieving the level 5 threshold were, banded by prior attainment, significantly higher among early entrants with prior attainment at Level 3 or Level 4. This could be regarded as a success for the Project as these pupils were then able to move on to new programmes of study a year earlier than would otherwise have been the case. It should of course be noted that schools were advised that they should only enter pupils expected to achieve Level 5/6 or higher in the Key Stage 3 test.¹⁶ For most non-Project schools, however, all Year 9 pupils were entered for the Key Stage 3 tests.

In terms of attainment in Key Stage 3 tests, guidance issued to Project schools also suggested that they should be confident that pupils should achieve in two years what they would, under a conventional arrangement, be expected to achieve in three years. In the analysis that follows, Year 8 entrants for Key Stage 3 mathematics tests are compared with their Year 9 counterparts from Project schools who also took the test in 2005, and also with the results of all non-accelerated pupils attending non-Project schools.

Pupils taking the tests in 2005 have been split according to their Key Stage 2 test results. The test levels achieved by pupils who achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2 are shown in Figure 3. While a larger proportion of pupils achieved Level 5 than among non-accelerated pupils at Project schools or than non-accelerated pupils at other schools, smaller proportions of pupils achieved Level 6 and especially Level 7. In the case of pupils moving from Level 4 at Key Stage 2 to Level 7 at Key Stage 3, significantly fewer early entrants at Project schools achieved this level (5 per cent versus 11 per cent).¹⁷

¹⁴ While Level 5/6 is the national expectation for pupils at the end of Key Stage 3, achieving the Level 5 threshold is most often used as the headline attainment measure. The 2004 Public Service Agreement targets, for example, relate to the proportion of pupils who achieve Level 5 (HM Treasury, 2004).

¹⁵ In Table 4, Table 6 and Table 7 confidence intervals were calculated using a binomial model. This calculation does not take account of the clustering of pupils within schools but rather treats them as if they were a simple random sample. Statistically significant differences are reported at the 5% level.

¹⁶ 10 Phase 1 Project schools chose to enter at least some Year 8 pupils for their Key Stage 3 mathematics tests. Each of these 10 schools entered at least 30 pupils. Across the 10 schools, 65% of Year 8 pupils were entered for the tests. Not all pupils attending these 10 schools followed a two year programme of study in mathematics, but of those pupils who were reported to be following a two year course when they were in Year 7, 85% were then entered for the tests in Year 8.

¹⁷ The statistical test used in relation to data presented in Figures 3-8 is based on approximating binomially distributed percentages using the normal distribution, with the means and standard errors estimated taking account of intraclass correlation and design effects due to the clustering of pupils within schools. The hypothesis tested is that the percentages in the two groups reaching a particular threshold are the same. Significant differences are reported where the probability that the observed difference could have occurred by chance is less than 5%.

Figure 4 gives the test levels achieved by pupils who had achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2. As can be seen a larger proportion of accelerated pupils achieved Level 6 or Level 7 but a smaller proportion achieved Level 8. Significantly fewer early entrants than non-accelerated pupils moved from Level 5 at Key Stage 2 to Level 8 at Key Stage 3 (7 per cent versus 19 per cent).

Figure 3 - 2005 Key Stage 3 mathematics test results of pupils who previously achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2

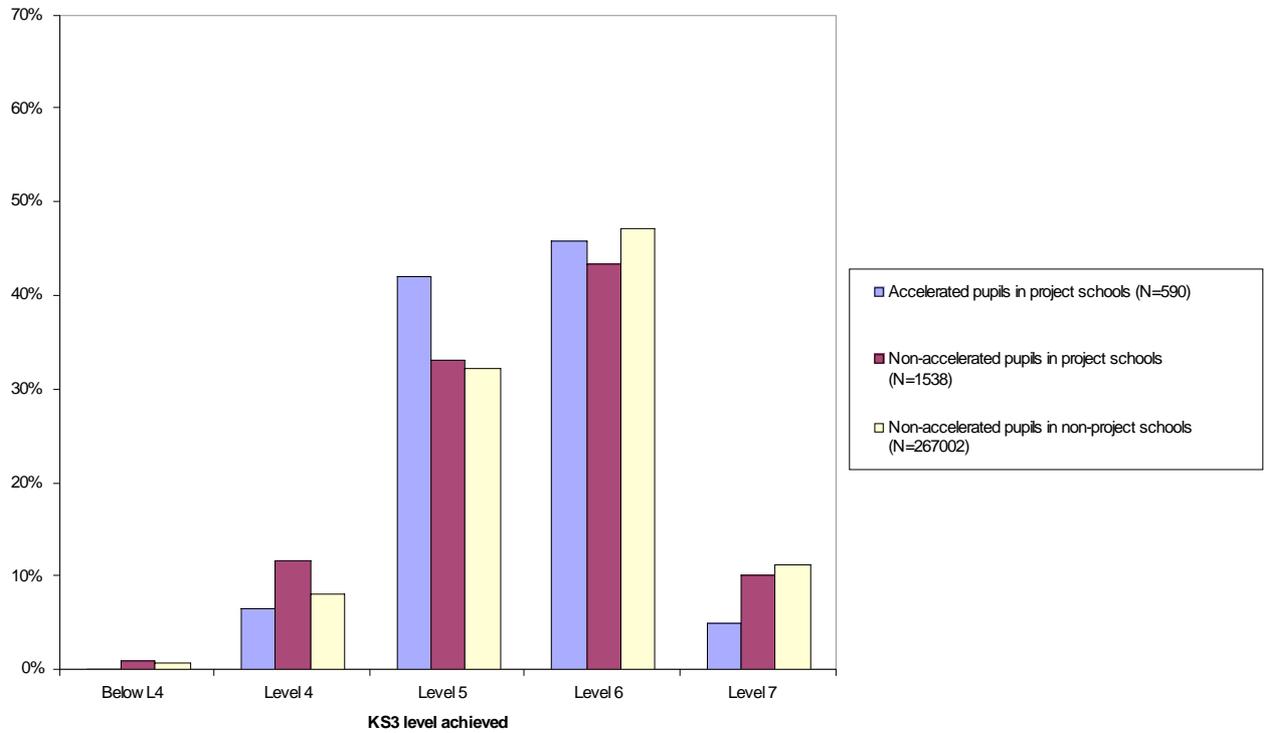
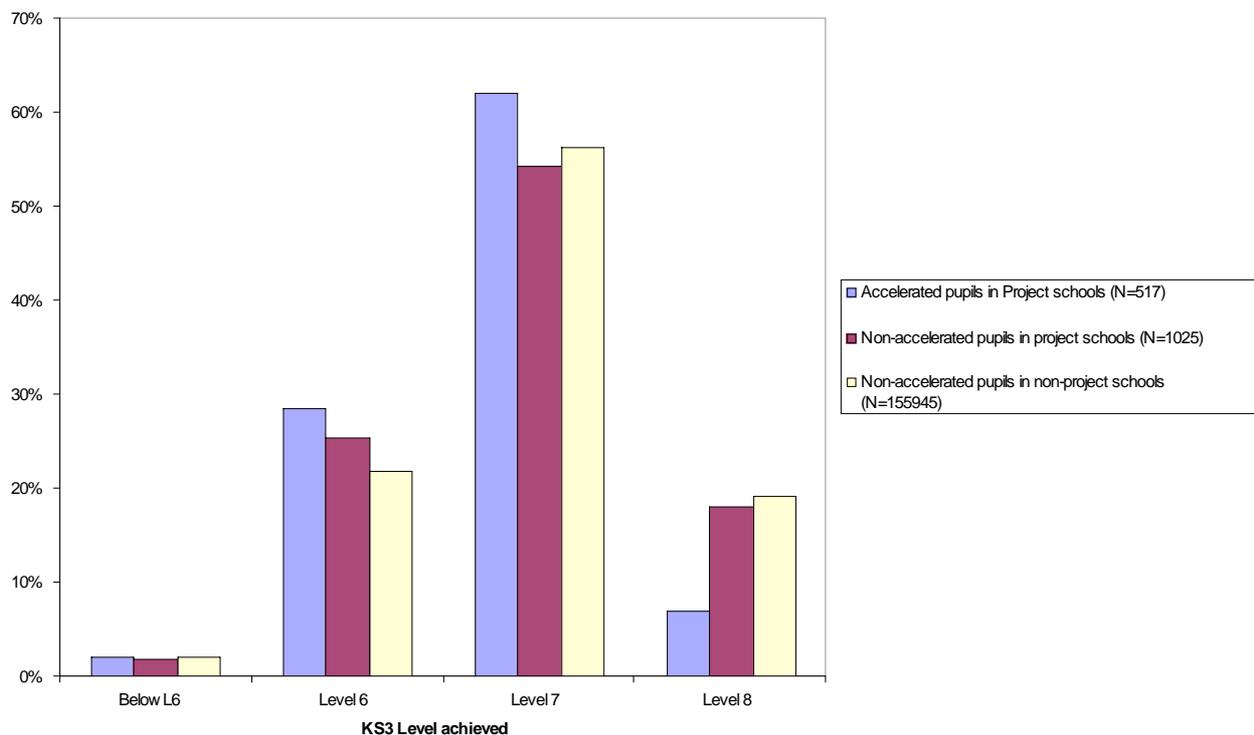


Figure 4 - 2005 Key Stage 3 mathematics test results of pupils who previously achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2



Summary

In summary, the analysis of the Year 7 and Year 8 Optional Test results for mathematics took into account pupil and school characteristics that have previously been shown to be associated with progress. The analysis indicated that by the end of Year 7 pupils at Project schools had made between a term and a term and a half of additional progress when compared with pupils at Comparison schools. By June of Year 8, this gap had increased to about two terms of additional progress.

Analysis of the 2005 Key Stage 3 mathematics test results shows that some groups of pupils from Project schools who entered for the tests when in Year 8 were significantly more likely to achieve the national benchmark standard (Level 5) than were Year 9 pupils from non-Project schools. However, it is vital to keep in mind that schools were advised only to enter pupils early for the tests if they were confident that they would achieve the nationally expected level of attainment and that, for other schools, all Year 9 pupils had to be entered for the tests. In addition, we saw that early entrants to the Key Stage 3 tests were less likely to achieve the highest levels of progress.

4.2 Attainment in English

Optional Test results

In the case of the total English score in Year 7 Optional Tests, pupils attending a Phase 1 Project school did not achieve significantly different scores from those attending Phase 1 Comparison schools.¹⁸ As can be seen in Table 5, prior attainment in English at Key Stage 2, the number of books in the home and being a girl were each associated with higher Year 7 English test scores. We also see that being eligible for free school meals and having a larger proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at the school were associated with significantly lower English test scores. Similarly, special educational needs (both with and without a statement) were associated with lower test scores (even having taken prior attainment into account).

Table 5 - Estimated change in Year 7 English Optional Test score associated with a one unit change in pupil or school characteristics

Pupil or school characteristic	Change in Year 7 test score
Project school	-
KS2 English score	0.70
Girl	2.66
Number of books in the home	0.70
Eligible for FSM	-1.75
% at the school eligible for FSM	-0.16
SEN without statement	-3.19
SEN with statement	-9.25

Scores in the separate reading and writing elements of the Year 7 Optional Tests were also examined. Once again, pupils following a shortened course at a Phase 1 Project school did not achieve significantly different scores from their counterparts at Phase 1 Comparison schools.

Analysis of attainment in the Year 8 English Optional Test and its component elements found a similar story with pupils at Phase 1 Project schools not achieving significantly different results from Year 8 pupils attending the Phase 1 Comparison schools. Further details of the results relating to Year 8 English Optional Test total scores, reading scores and writing scores are included in Annex C.

Key Stage 3 results

Key Stage 3 English test results are shown in Table 6 for 1368 Year 8 pupils from Phase 1 Project schools entered for the tests in 2005. The proportions of early entrants and all entrants in England who achieved at least Level 5 in the Key Stage 3 English tests are shown in the table.

¹⁸ Details of all models referred to in this section, and graphs showing effect sizes for selected models, are included in Annex C.

Table 6 - Proportion of pupils achieving at least Level 5 in 2005 Key Stage 3 English tests

KS2 level	Proportion achieving Level 5 at KS3			No of Year 8 entrants at Project schools
	Year 8 entrants at Project schools	All entrants in England	Significant difference	
Level 3	32%	38%	NS	114
Level 4	86%	86%	NS	765
Level 5	99%	98%	NS	503

NS no statistically significant difference

* p<0.05

Thus we see in Table 6 that the proportions of early entrants achieving nationally expected levels of achievement were, banded by prior attainment, very similar to those achieved nationally. This could be regarded as a success for the Project as these pupils were then able to move on to new programmes of study a year earlier than would otherwise have been the case. However, Project schools were advised only to enter those pupils anticipated to achieve the nationally expected level whereas this was not the case with those from non-Project schools.¹⁹

The transitions from Level 4 at Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 are shown in Figure 5; while a larger proportion of pupils achieved Level 5 than among non-accelerated pupils at Project schools or than all pupils nationally, a significantly smaller proportion of pupils achieved at least Level 6 (20 per cent versus 28 per cent).

Figure 6 shows that for pupils at Level 5 at Key Stage 2, a larger proportion of accelerated pupils achieved Level 5 or Level 6 at Key Stage 3, but a significantly smaller proportion achieved Level 7 (21 per cent versus 30 per cent).

¹⁹ 12 Phase 1 Project schools chose to enter some Year 8 pupils for their Key Stage 3 English tests. At least 30 Year 8 pupils were entered from each of the 12 schools. Across the 12 schools, the early entrants comprised 55% of all Year 8 pupils. At the 12 schools, not all Year 8 pupils were following a condensed course in English and, of those reported to be following a condensed course when in Year 7, 69% were subsequently entered early for their Key Stage 3 English tests when in Year 8.

Figure 5 - 2005 Key Stage 3 English test results of pupils who previously achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2

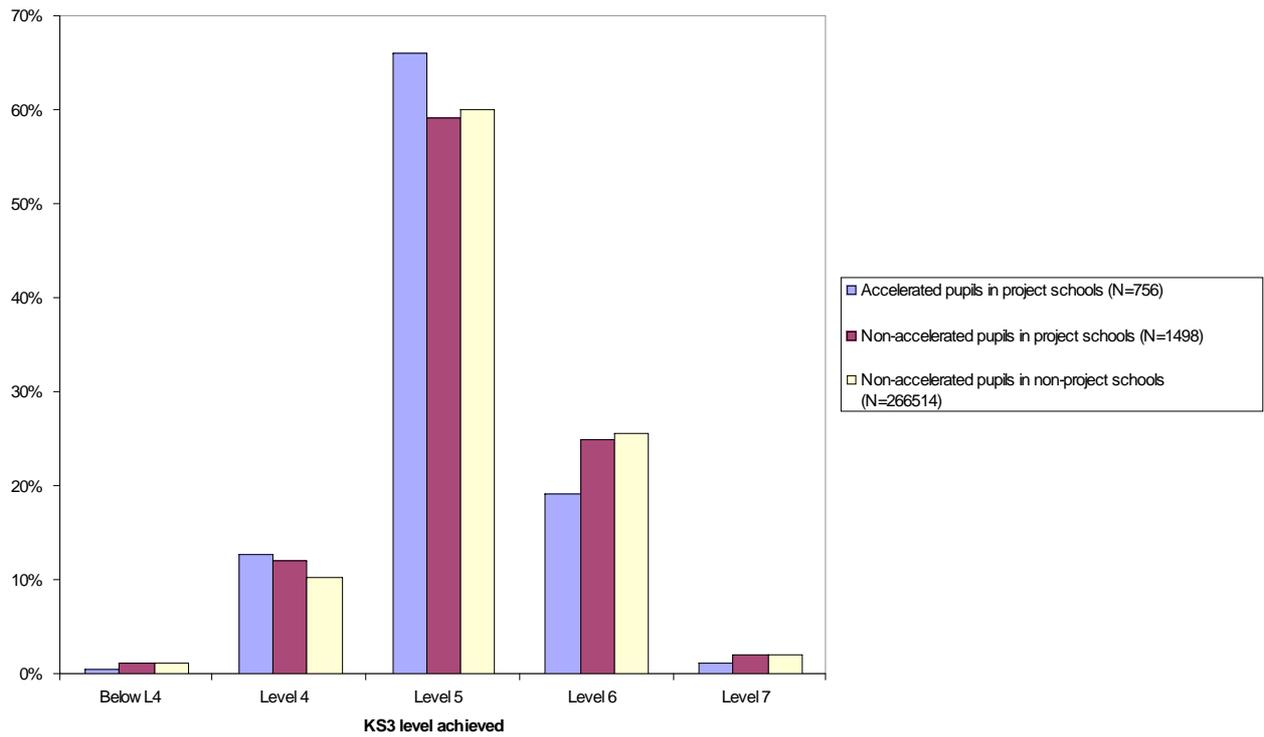
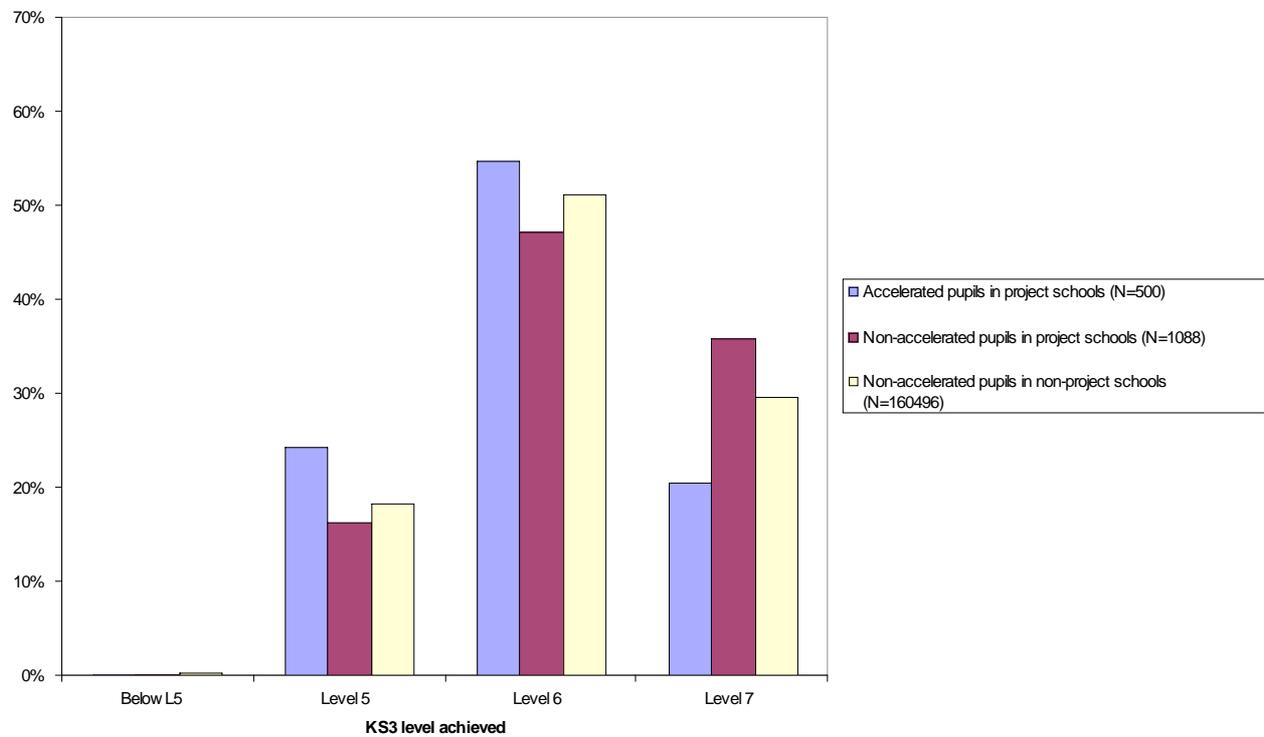


Figure 6 - 2005 Key Stage 3 English test results of pupils who previously achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2



Summary

In the case of English, when prior attainment and other background characteristics were taken into account, pupils following a condensed course in Year 7 and Year 8 at Phase 1 Project schools achieved test scores in the Year 7 and 8 Optional Tests that were not significantly different from those of pupils of the same age who attended Phase 1 Comparison schools.

Among the pupils who were selected by the Project schools for early entry to the Key Stage 3 tests, taking into account the test level achieved at Key Stage 2, similar proportions achieved the national benchmark level (Level 5) as among Year 9 pupils across the country as a whole. This is an encouraging finding. However, it should be borne in mind that Project schools were advised only to enter pupils who were predicted to achieve the nationally expected level in those tests whereas other schools entered all Year 9 pupils. The Key Stage 3 test results also show that Year 8 entrants from Project schools were less likely to achieve the higher levels when compared with Year 9 pupils at other schools.

4.3 Key Stage 3 science results

Key Stage 3 results

Pupils were not assessed in science for this evaluation. However some Phase 1 Project schools chose to enter some Year 8 pupils for the Key Stage 3 science tests.²⁰ The proportions achieving the Level 5 threshold at Key Stage 3 are shown in Table 7. More accelerated pupils than pupils nationally moved from a Level 4 at Key Stage 2 to reach the Level 5 threshold.

Table 7 - Proportion of pupils achieving at least Level 5 in 2005 Key Stage 3 science tests

KS2 level	Proportion achieving Level 5 at KS3			No. of Year 8 entrants at Project schools
	Year 8 entrants at Project schools	All entrants in England	Statistically significant difference	
Level 3	15%	10%	NS	27
Level 4	74%	67%	*	385
Level 5	97%	96%	NS	498

NS no statistically significant difference

* $p < 0.05$

Figure 7 gives the proportion of pupils who reached Level 4 at Key Stage 2, who achieved different levels at Key Stage 3 and Figure 8 gives the proportion of pupils who reached Level 5 at Key Stage 2, who achieved different levels at Key Stage 3. Significantly fewer early entrants from Phase 1 project schools than non-accelerated pupils at non-Project schools moved from a Level 5 at Key Stage 2 to a Level 7 at Key Stage 3 (15 per cent versus 30 per cent).

²⁰ Nine schools chose to enter at least 30 Year 8 pupils for the Key Stage 3 science tests (a further three schools entered fewer than 10 pupils). Across the nine schools, 56% of Year 8 pupils were entered for the science tests. Not all pupils at these schools were following a shortened science course and, of those reported to be following a shortened course when in Year 7, 66% were subsequently entered for the Key Stage 3 science tests when in Year 8.

Figure 7 - 2005 Key Stage 3 science test results of pupils who previously achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2

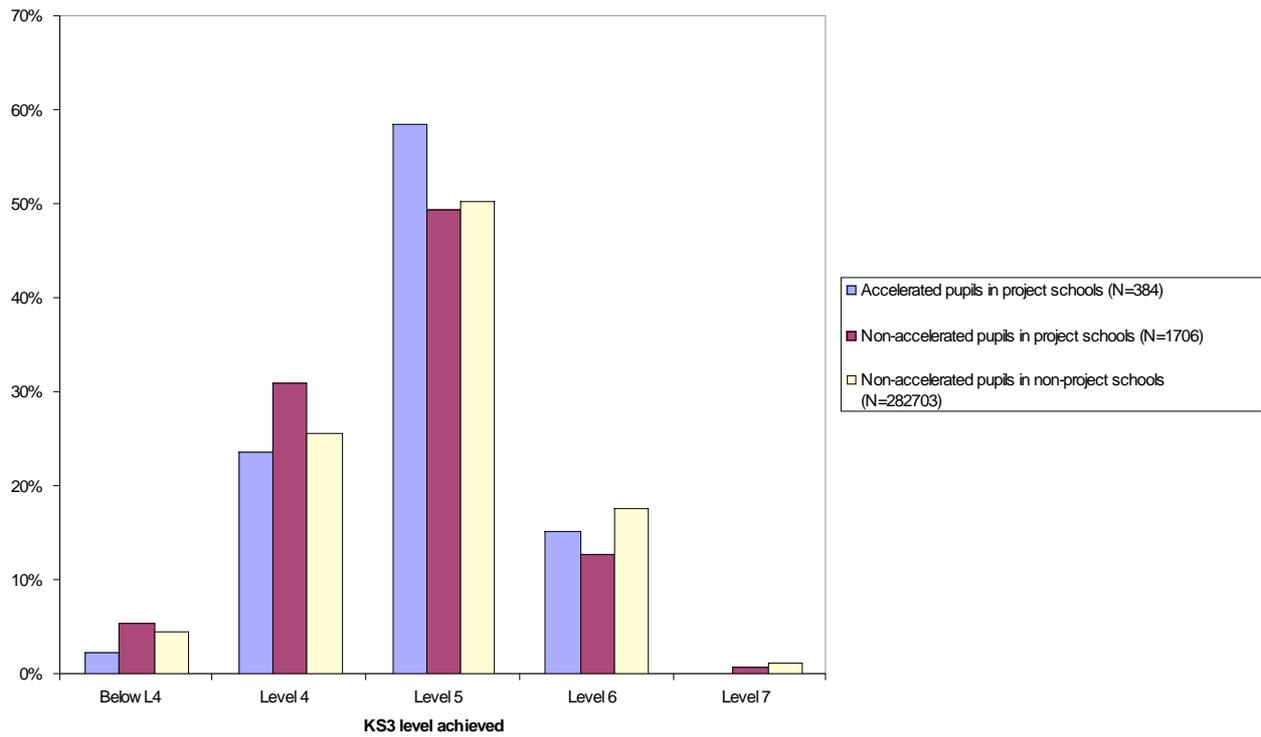
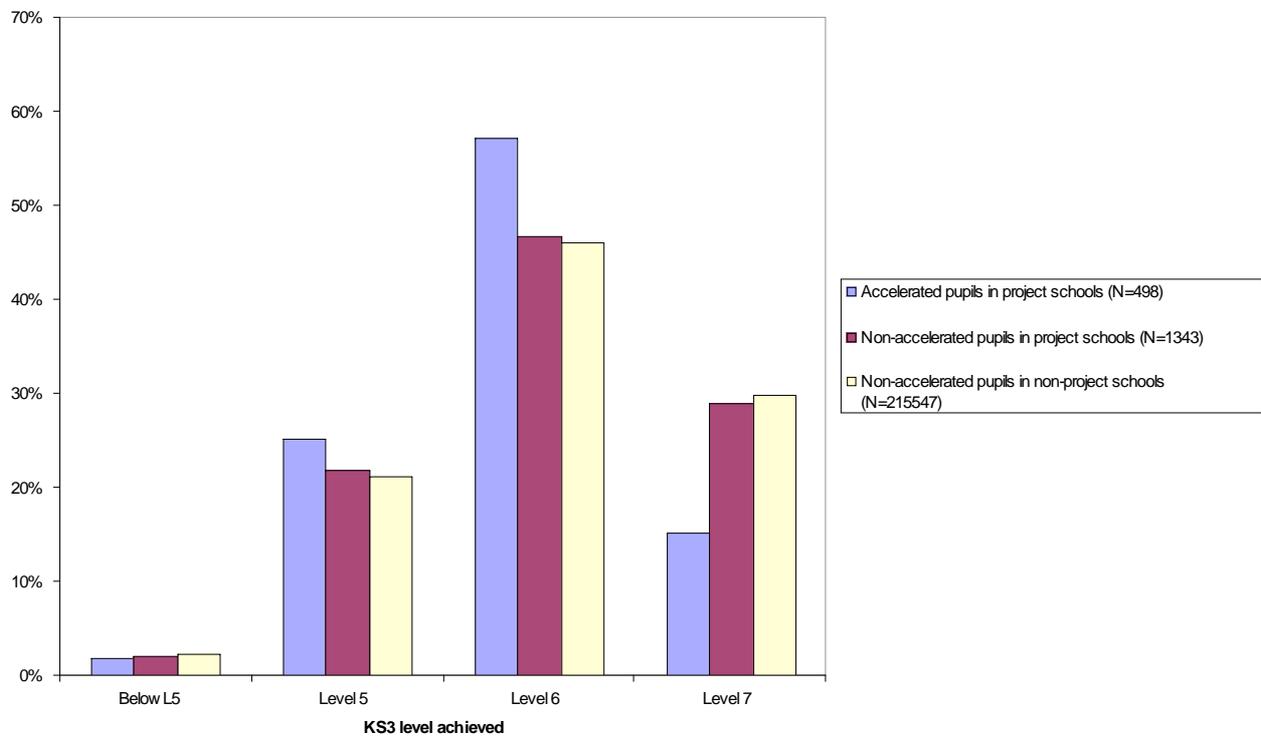


Figure 8 - 2005 Key Stage 3 science test results of pupils who previously achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2



4.4 Attainment summary

The analysis of the Optional Test results indicated that pupils following a two year Key Stage in mathematics at Phase 1 Project schools made more progress during Years 7 and 8 than pupils attending Phase 1 Comparison schools who followed a conventional three year Key Stage 3. However, the progress made in English was not significantly different from that made in the Comparison schools. It is not possible to draw conclusions regarding causation, but the findings would be consistent with the view that a two year Key Stage may be more effective, in relation to pupils' attainment, for some subjects than for others.

The analysis of Key Stage 3 results for mathematics only, shows that some groups of pupils from Project schools who entered for the tests when in Year 8 were significantly more likely to achieve the national benchmark standard (Level 5) than were Year 9 pupils from non-Project schools. However, schools were advised only to enter pupils early for the tests if they were confident that they would achieve the nationally expected level of attainment and that, for other schools, all Year 9 pupils had to be entered for the tests. In addition, we saw that early entrants to the Key Stage 3 tests were less likely to achieve the highest levels of progress.

5. ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION CHANGES

Attainment may itself be a manifestation of improvement in motivation and one of the aims of the evaluation was to examine whether participation in the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project had an impact on pupils' motivation and engagement. Pupils at Phase 1 schools completed a questionnaire in the Spring term of Years 7, 8 and 9. It was expected that pupils' reported attitudes would deteriorate during these years and consequently, rather than looking at change from one year to the next, we compared the changes in reported attitudes at Project schools with the changes in attitudes reported by pupils attending Comparison schools. Similarly, pupils at Phase 2 schools and Phase 2 Comparison schools completed questionnaires in the Spring terms of Years 7 and 8.

Several scales were derived from the questionnaire returns. These scales combined sets of related items that pupils responded to in a consistent manner.²¹ Eleven scales were constructed in this way. Four of the scales could be viewed as especially pertinent to the objectives of the Two Year Key Stage 3. These comprise the 'like school work', 'extra-curricular participation', 'conformity' and 'aspirations' scales, which might be seen as reflecting aspects of pupils' motivation and engagement. The individual items included in each scale are provided in Annex D.

As we have seen, pupils' exposure to the Two Year Key Stage 3 varied and in some cases might be restricted to a condensed programme in a single subject. However, the pupil questionnaire was unable to focus on the motivation and engagement related to a specific mix of condensed courses undertaken by each pupil. The questionnaire scales are therefore somewhat generalised in character.

Scores on the attitude scales tended to deteriorate as pupils moved through the first years of secondary school. At both Phase 1 and 2 Project and Comparison schools, mean scores deteriorated on nine of the eleven scales, with the two exceptions being the 'aspirations' mean score and the 'social integration' mean score. The mean deteriorations in the scale scores among Phase 1 Project and Comparison school pupils from Years 7 to 9 for pupils who completed questionnaires in all three years are shown in Table 8. These are expressed as percentages of the mean scale score in Year 7. The decline in scores among

²¹ Exploratory factor analysis was carried out (using Principal Components Analysis) as a means of data reduction in order to identify whether pupils tended to respond to sets of items in a consistent manner (positively or negatively).

pupils at Phase 2 Project and Comparison schools tended to be smaller than for Phase 1 pupils (this was true in all cases except for the ‘good teachers’ scale).

Table 8 - Percentage deterioration in scores from Years 7 to 9: Pupils at Phase 1 Project and Comparison schools who completed a questionnaire in all three years

Scale	% change in mean scale score from Year 7 to Year 9 (N=3938)
Work respected by peers	-26
Extra curricular participation	-21
Good teachers	-17
Participation in extra-curricular activities respected by peers	-14
Positive school atmosphere	-14
Like school work	-9
Conformity	-8
Positive peer group	-7
Parental interest	-6
Aspirations	2
Social integration	4

Among pupils who completed questionnaires each year, deteriorations in scale scores could then be compared between those pupils exposed to a Two Year Key Stage 3 and those attending Comparison schools. In the case of Phase 1 pupils we were able to examine changes in attitude scores from Years 7 to 8 and also from Years 8 to 9.²²

From Year 7 to 8, Phase 1 Project school pupils’ scores declined significantly less than those of pupils at Phase 1 Comparison schools on three of the seven scales. These comprised the ‘like school work’, ‘positive school atmosphere’ and ‘positive peer group’ scales. However, from Year 8 to 9 a significantly larger deterioration was then seen among pupils exposed to a two year Key Stage 3 for all three of these scales, as well as on a further four of the scales. The four other scales seeing a larger deterioration from Year 8 to 9 were the ‘extra-curricular participation’, ‘conformity’, ‘good teachers’ and ‘work respected by peers’ scales.

The relatively positive changes in scale scores from Year 7 to 8 were therefore balanced by relatively negative changes from Year 8 to 9, with the effect that a significant difference in the change to a scale score from Year 7 to Year 9 was only present for one of the scales. This was for the ‘extra-curricular activities’ scale which saw a larger deterioration among Project school pupils than among Comparison school pupils.

However, when examining changes in scale scores among pupils at Phase 2 schools a different pattern of differences emerged from Year 7 to 8. Where significant differences occurred, being exposed to a condensed curriculum at a Project school was associated with larger deteriorations in scale scores. This was the case for the ‘extra-curricular participation’, ‘conformity’ and the ‘good teachers’ scales.

In summary, we see that when comparing Phase 1 school pupils and Phase 1 Comparison school pupils, the benign significant differences in change scores from Year 7 to 8 were followed by significant negative change scores from Year 8 to 9. In the case of a comparison between Phase 2 Project schools and Phase 2 Comparison schools, where there are significant differences in change scores from Year 7

²² Comparisons, using independent samples t tests, between the deteriorations of scale scores at Phase 1 Project and Phase 1 comparison and Phase 2 Project and Phase 2 comparison schools are shown in Annex E.

to 8 these were in the opposite direction than was the case for Phase 1 (although for different scale scores).

In short, the differences in change scores do not show a consistent pattern between Phase 1 and Phase 2. In addition, for the Phase 1 Comparison, changes from Year 7 to 8 and from Year 8 to 9 do not show a consistent pattern. Thus, in relation to these global measures of motivation and engagement, the evidence arising from the pupil questionnaires does not support the view that participation in the Two Year Key Stage 3 enhanced pupils' motivation and engagement in any clear and consistent manner.²³

5.1 Condensed courses, subject options and subject popularity

Pupils' motivation and engagement with particular subjects may be linked to their enjoyment of those subjects. Pupils were asked in the questionnaire whether they liked particular subjects.²⁴ We were therefore able to compare the popularity of subjects among those following condensed courses and those following conventional three year courses at Comparison schools. Once again, the data presented in this section relates to pupils who completed questionnaires in all possible years. We have focused our attention here on Phase 1 schools only. This is for two reasons. First, the number of pupils exposed to a two year Key Stage 3 in individual subjects is much higher among Phase 1 schools than at Phase 2 schools. Second, the Phase 1 pupils completed questionnaires in Year 7, Year 8 and also Year 9. Year 9 was of particular interest as pupils completing a Key Stage 3 in Year 8 would by then have moved on to a different programme of study or perhaps to different subjects.

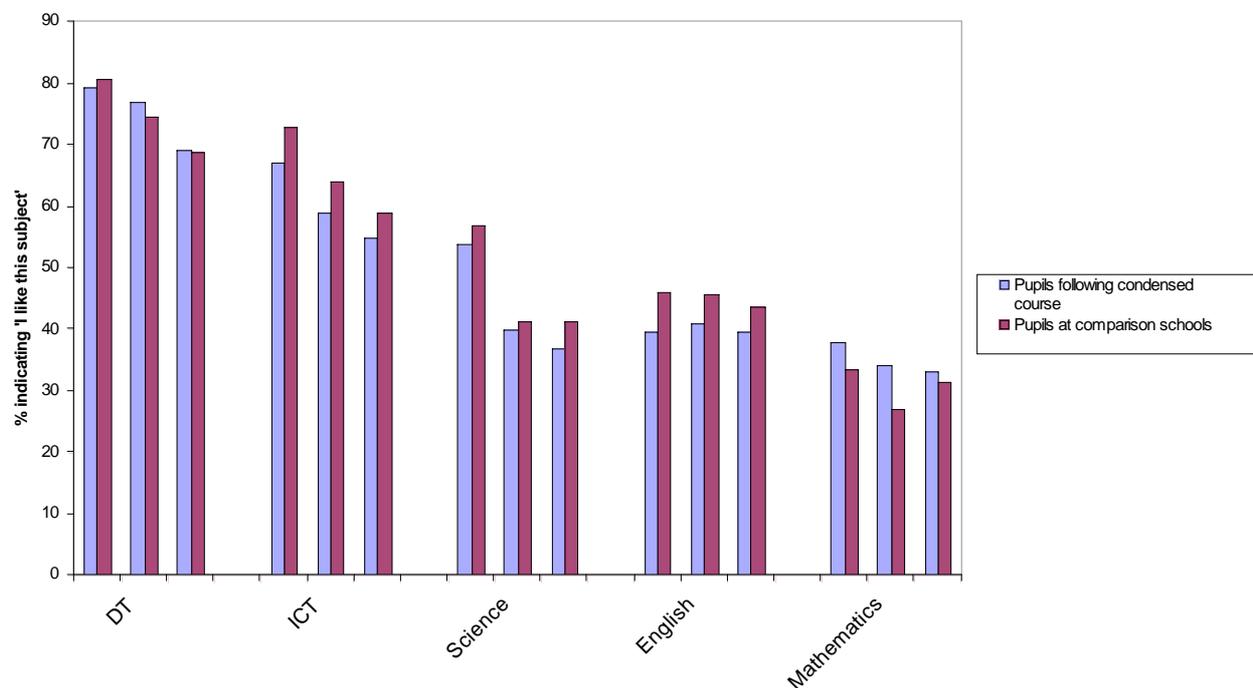
Figure 9 shows, for selected subjects that are compulsory during both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, the percentage of pupils reporting 'I like this subject' when in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9. We see that Design and Technology and also ICT remain popular subjects throughout these years and that science showed a decline in popularity from Year 7 to 8.

Interestingly, given the attainment findings reported earlier, pupils at Phase 1 Project schools significantly more frequently reported that they liked mathematics than was the case for pupils at Phase 1 Comparison schools in both Year 7 (38 per cent versus 34 per cent) and Year 8 (34 per cent versus 27 per cent). In contrast, English was less frequently reported to be popular by Project school pupils than Comparison school pupils in all three years (40 per cent versus 46 per cent, 41 per cent versus 46 per cent and 40 per cent versus 44 per cent respectively). In addition, ICT was significantly less popular at Project schools in all three years and science significantly less popular in Year 9.

²³ The Project and comparison groups of schools included varying proportions of girls and also of single sex schools. However, when this analysis was repeated within sex groups and only for pupils attending coeducational schools, the results remained substantially the same.

²⁴ Response categories were 'I like this', 'I neither like nor dislike this', 'I don't like this' and 'I do not do this subject'.

Figure 9 - Popularity of subjects compulsory at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 among Project school pupils exposed to two year courses and Comparison school pupils²⁵

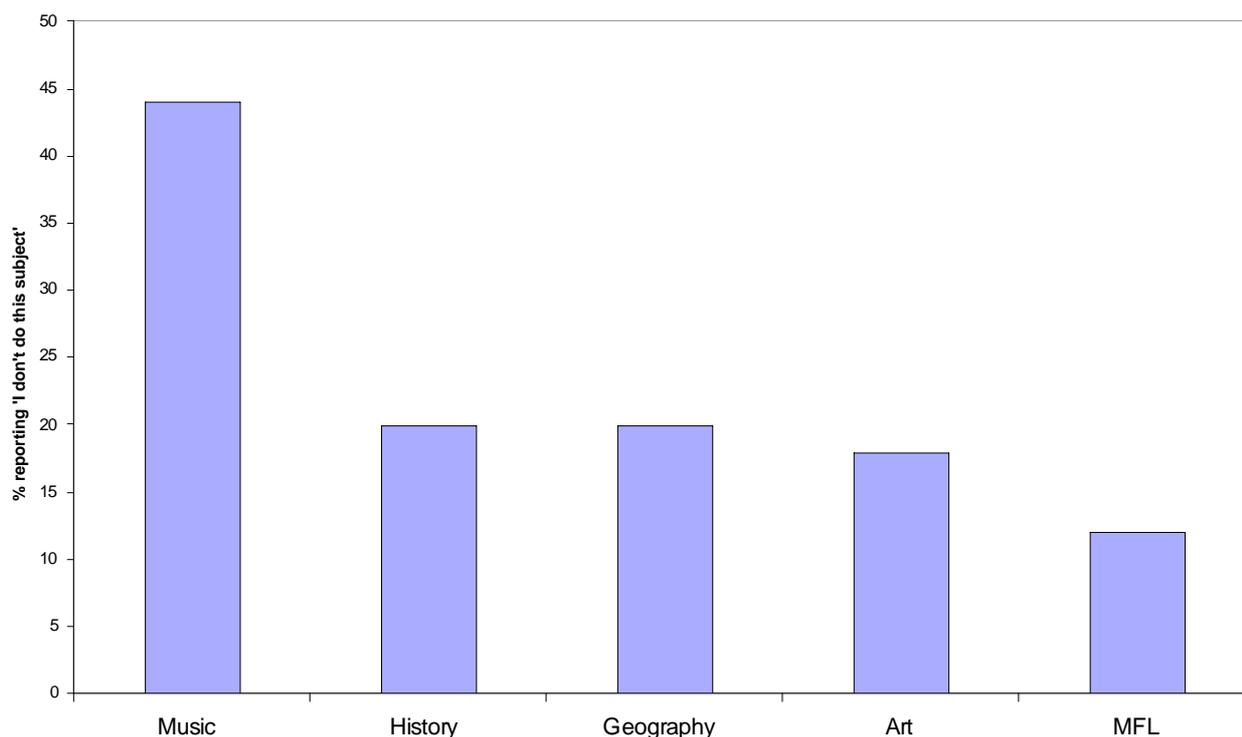


Responses in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9

Some subjects that are compulsory at Key Stage 3 are not compulsory at Key Stage 4 and consequently some of the Project schools allowed pupils completing a two year Key Stage 3 to drop these subjects in Year 9. Figure 10 shows the percentage of pupils who were identified as following a two year Key Stage 3 in selected subjects who appeared to drop those subjects in Year 9. Altogether, 44 per cent of pupils who followed an accelerated music course in Years 7 and 8 no longer studied the subject in Year 9. Up to 20 per cent of pupils in Year 9 indicated they did not study the other subjects represented in Figure 10.

²⁵ For comparison school pupils in each of the subjects, N=1702 to 1720. For Project schools for each subject the range of Ns for the three years reported are: DT N=713 to 714, ICT N=689 to 703, science N=1281 to 1293, English N=916 to 918, mathematics N=1189 to 1193.

Figure 10 - Percentage of Year 7 pupils identified as following a two year Key Stage 3 who appeared to drop non-compulsory subjects in Year 9²⁶

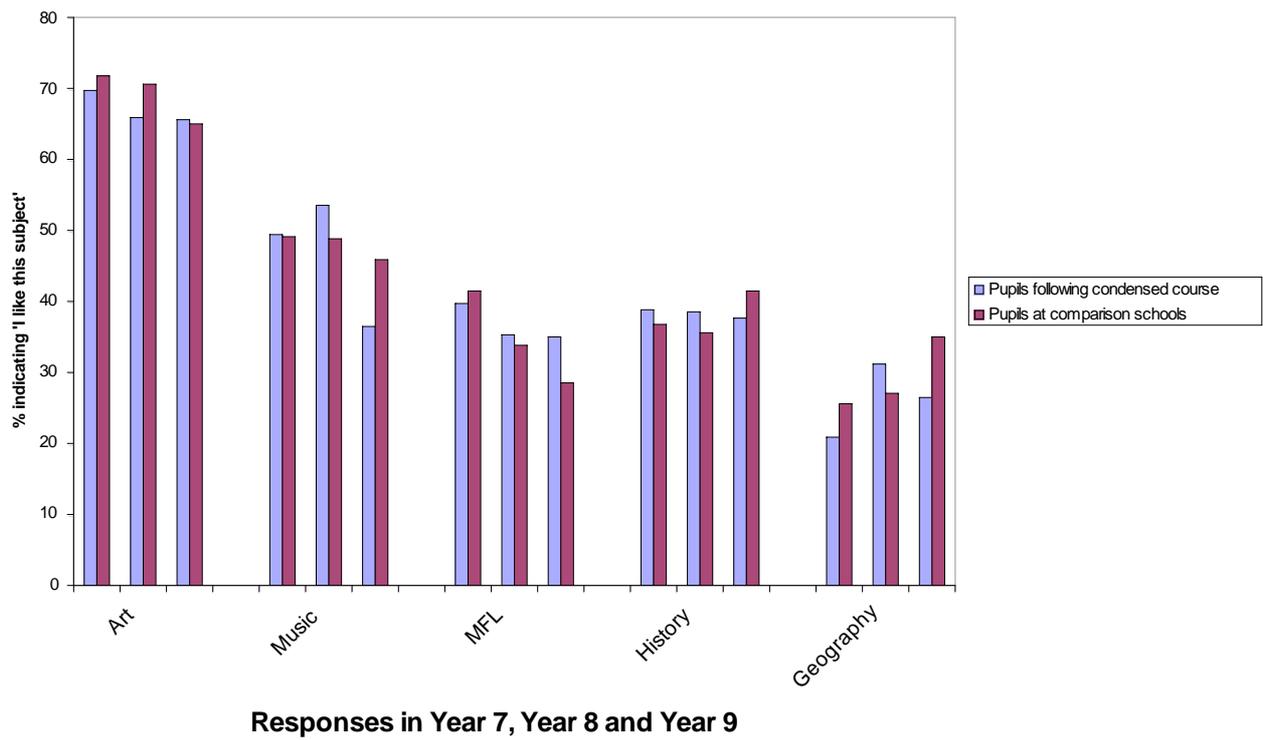


It was then interesting to consider whether the fact that some of the pupils at Project schools would have actively *chosen* to study these subjects was then reflected in the popularity of subjects in Year 9. For example, of pupils who had followed a shortened music course in Year 7 and Year 8, 56 per cent indicated that they were studying music in Year 9. Would music then be more popular among such a reduced cohort? We see from Figure 11 that no consistent pattern emerged in Year 9, relative to Year 7 and Year 8.

In modern foreign languages, of pupils who had followed a shortened Key Stage 3 course and continued with a language in Year 9, a significantly greater proportion reported that they liked the subject than of those in Year 9 attending Phase 1 Comparison schools (35 per cent versus 29 per cent). However, geography and music were significantly *less* popular in Year 9 at Phase 1 Project schools than at Comparison schools (27 per cent versus 35 per cent and 37 per cent versus 46 per cent respectively). Of course the character of teaching and the type of material covered may, in some or all subjects, change from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 and so the comparison between the two groups of pupils may not be a fair one.

²⁶ For music N=378, for history N=618, for geography N=611, for art N=670, for MFL N=535. A small number of accelerated pupils who completed questionnaires in all three years did not respond to this question when in Year 9 but did so in earlier years. Their responses are included in Figure 11 and hence some of the Ns are larger in Figure 11.

Figure 11 - Popularity of subjects compulsory at Key Stage 3 but not Key Stage 4 among Phase 1 Project school pupils exposed to two year courses and Phase 1 Comparison school pupils²⁷



²⁷ For comparison school pupils in each of the subjects, N=1653 to 1715. For Project schools for each subject the range of Ns for the three years reported are: art N=552 to 678, music N=213 to 386, MFL N=472 to 545, history N=496 to 621, geography N=486 to 620.

6. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY DATA

As has been shown, the Two Year Key Stage 3 was put into practice in a wide variety of ways and this was reflected among the case study schools. Some of the differences in how the two year programme was put into effect are summarised in Table 9. Summary figures for total pupil absences at the schools are shown in Figure 12 (for Phase 1 schools the Project could only affect absences in 2004 and 2005, and for Phase 2 schools in 2005 only).²⁸

Interestingly, four of the eight case study schools had instigated their curricular innovations *before* joining the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project and, for some of these, the Project could be said to offer a legitimating function, although this was only stated explicitly by one senior manager. Innovations that may, for example, have been especially scrutinised if the school were to have undergone an inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) could be seen to have greater protection through participation in the Project. This point was also made by a school governor who explained that the school had previously been looking for opportunities to be more flexible but was constrained by the National Curriculum.

Six of the eight case study schools offered a two year Key Stage 3 during Year 7 and Year 8. Most of the material presented later in this section relates to schools offering such a model. In five of these six schools (the exception being a middle school) pupils were intended to be entered early for GCSEs in at least some subjects and to use the saved time to enter for extra qualifications by Year 11. In addition, in some of the schools the saved time gave the school greater flexibility to offer a range of pathways through Key Stage 4 including vocational options.

The other two case study schools offered what we have described as a ‘foundation’ model. That is, a shortened Key Stage 3 curriculum was provided during Years 8 and 9 (A third school, which also offered a Year 7 and Year 8 model in some subjects, provided a ‘foundation’ year to the two lowest sets in one subject.) Of the two schools offering a purely Year 8 and Year 9 model, in one of the schools Year 7 provided an opportunity to devote some time to teaching independent learning skills and competencies, such as literacy, numeracy, teamwork and emotional intelligence, that were designed to enable pupils to be successful in the classroom thereafter. The overall aim of the project at this school, which had low levels of prior attainment, was to ensure that pupils were able to access the Key Stage 3 curriculum on entering Year 8. A governor interviewed wholeheartedly supported the innovation.

The other school offering a ‘foundation’ model was a pilot school for the RSA Opening Minds programme. Under this scheme Year 7 pupils attended ‘opening minds’ lessons for 10 out of 25 lessons each week (taught by one or, if necessary, shared between two teachers). Pupils followed a project-based programme with each project lasting for half a term and incorporating content from seven foundation subjects. Such an approach was felt to smooth the transition from primary school as pupils then had to contend with fewer teachers and would find it easier to navigate around the school. In addition it was suggested that some subjects (e.g., RE) benefited from being able to present material in a particular context (for example when studying a project on the Romans or on migration) rather than as a discrete subject.

²⁸ While it was an aim of the Project that improved motivation and engagement would translate into improved attendance this is not reflected in the absence data. Although the data relate to the whole school rather than the year groups exposed to a two year programme, even when schools were able to provide attendance data broken down by year groups no clear pattern was evident. This was largely because the two year programme had not been operating long enough to draw any firm conclusions about differences in attendance from one year to the next.

Four main rationales were presented for offering a two year Key Stage 3 although at some schools more than one rationale was provided. The first rationale was for a Year 7 and 8 model which enabled pupils to make more rapid progress with higher attaining pupils stretched more than they would be under a three year arrangement and with external tests being brought forward and providing a motivator for pupils.

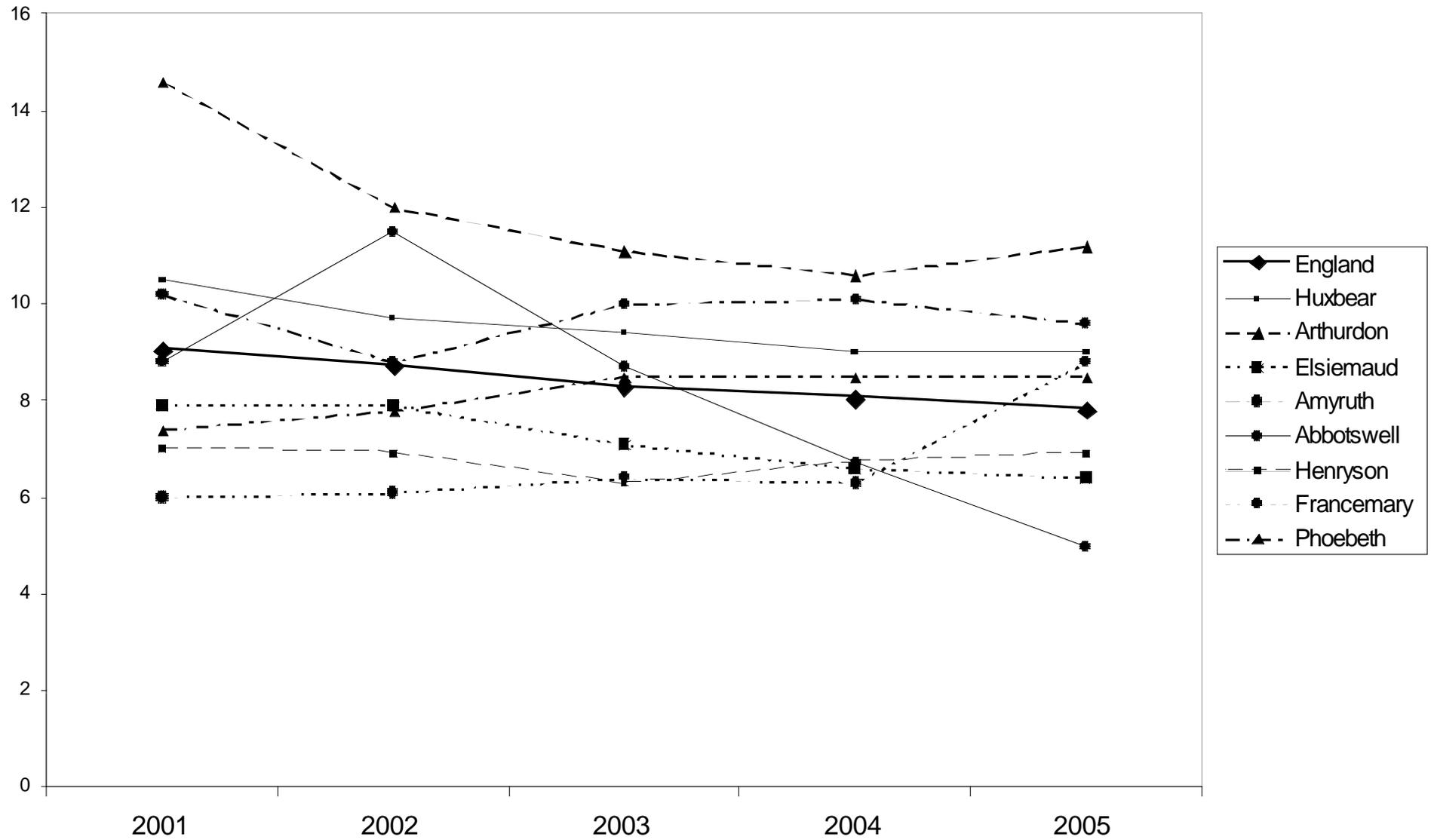
The second rationale arose from a belief that some pupils made progress but then reached a plateau. For such pupils it was argued a Year 7 and 8 model provided the possibility of reaching the same level of attainment and then allowing pupils to move on earlier to study courses that they found more motivating. In extreme cases this was seen as a means of avoiding disaffection and disengagement from education. These schools sometimes aimed for pupils to be awarded what they described as meaningful qualifications much earlier than was conventionally the case.

The third rationale could be described as the 'foundation' model, two examples of which were described briefly above. The final rationale might be described as an enrichment model. Under this model the Key Stage 3 curriculum was condensed in order to make room for enrichment activities. For example, this model was deployed in one school where for some pupils Year 8 science was devoted to a 'Space Project' involving additional investigations and skills-based work in which pupils could apply their knowledge in areas such as studying growing plants in space and studying forces in space.

Table 9 - Operationalisation of the Two Year Key Stage 3 at case study schools

School	Phase	Years of condensed KS3	Cohort of pupils following condensed courses	Condensed courses offered in:				Year 8 entry to KS3 tests	Use of saved time
				Maths	English	Science	Other subjects		
Phoebeth	1	7 & 8 8 & 9	All & some	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Early entry to GCSE, additional qualifications, vocational pathways, Year 7 foundation course
Francemary	1	7 & 8	All	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	All pupils	Early entry to GCSE, additional qualifications, vocational pathways
Abbotswell	2	8 & 9	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Year 7 foundation course
Arthurston	1	7 & 8 7 & 9	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Some pupils	Early entry to GCSE, enrichment, additional qualifications
Elsiemaud	2	7 & 8	All	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	All pupils	Early entry to GCSE, additional qualifications
Amyruth	1	7 & 8	All	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some pupils	KS3 continued in Year 9
Henryson	1	7 & 8	All	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	All and some	Early entry to GCSE, enrichment, additional qualifications
Huxbear	2	8 & 9	All	No	No	No	Yes	N/A	Year 7 foundation course

Figure 12 - Percentage of half days missed at case study schools and all schools in England, 2001 to 2005



6.1 Overall views

Most, though not all, of the interviewees were, on balance, positive about the value of the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project. It was frequently seen as facilitating a tightening up of Key Stage 3 schemes of work, improving attainment and improving motivation and engagement. As one headteacher put it succinctly:

Fewer staff complain about Year 8 and 9 classes now.

It is however important to note that this interviewee also emphasised that the Project was a small component in the overall work of the school and that it was difficult to disentangle the benefits of the two year programme from, for example, reorganising the school day, altering the pathways available through Key Stage 4 and providing mentoring to pupils - among other innovations.

Similar points were made by teachers at other schools:

Specialist status, the numeracy strategy and Key Stage 3 programme of study all came in recently so it's hard to separate them and in a way the new schemes of work are just a development of those. The process has just provided for a tighter programme. Objective-driven lessons are now much more common than they were... Lessons have a faster pace and pupils are pushed harder... It's just a less boring approach. For example, if we're studying number, instead of having a lesson on adding fractions, a lesson on subtracting fractions, a lesson on multiplying fractions, we'd now spend 15 minutes on that and then look at the next curriculum area, which is shape and space and so we'd do the area of circles. It cuts down on unnecessary repetition. [Mathematics teacher]

Teachers frequently described the opportunities that the Project had provided for making improvements in teaching and learning at the school. Teachers enthusiastically described lessons that aimed to capture the imaginations of pupils by turning the classroom into a crime scene to study colour chromatography (as a forensic scientist), playing an outdoor wide game to understand tactics used during Roman invasions and so on.

Most often, the condensed programme was seen as particularly benefiting the most able pupils. One English teacher commented: *'The top group feel special'*; a mathematics teacher noted: *'The top group like the pace'* and a science teacher said: *'We're not holding the pupils back'*.

However, some teachers did express concerns about pupils not keeping up with the pace of teaching.

The second and third groups [also following a two year key stage in Year 7 and Year 8] sometimes find it too fast and don't keep up. Consequently they're losing some of the basics of grammar and sentence starters, for example. [English teacher]

Year 7 is going well, but the Year 8/9 schemes of work in Year 8 seem a lot more difficult. [Mathematics teacher]

This teacher's concerns arose as the gap between the pupils' chronological age and the 'curriculum age' widened. This issue was perhaps also reflected in the mathematics results reported by another teacher:

[Of those who took] maths SATs [Key Stage 3 national tests] in Year 8 all got 5+. One got a level 8, but there were not as many 7s as we would expect in year 9. And then they took a first GCSE module in March of Year 9. [Mathematics teacher]

A head of department described the effect of accelerating a top set such that in Year 8, instead of devoting four lessons a week to the subject, the class picked up an *additional* (related) subject with each subject being taught for two lessons a week.

Year 7 was successful. In Year 8 I could almost see the class split in half.

[What separates them?]

Those keeping up versus those who aren't. Especially in what they're retaining and are able to reproduce... We could go to three lessons in one subject and one in the other but then it's difficult to pick up [that subject] in just one lesson a week. So we may shoot ourselves in the foot here. [Teacher]

Nevertheless, in schools offering a Year 7 and 8 model, most teachers were enthusiastic about their most able groups following a condensed curriculum. However, in addition, in three schools where staff had maintained as their goal that pupils should achieve in two years what they would, under conventional arrangements, be expected to achieve in three (rather than necessarily aiming to achieve the 'nationally' expected standard - Level 5/6) they also spoke enthusiastically about the value of the innovation to the lower achieving pupils. For example:

The more able get bored [under the old three year arrangement] and don't need three years for Key Stage 3. For the least able we feel liberated because they're not going to make Level 5. Maybe not even level 4. Consequently we feel less pressure... those who suffer are the ones in the middle who we push too hard... The strain is in the middle group. [Science teacher]

One mathematics teacher spoke of the tension between seeing curriculum coverage as teaching every objective to every pupil and seeing it as bringing pupils to the same stage at the end of Year 8 as they would have achieved at the end of Year 9. As he went on:

The latter is more useful. The lowest attainers may not ever reach Level 6 no matter how long they spent on it. There is a certain greyness when talking about coverage. For example, trigonometry is in the Key Stage 3 curriculum but 25 per cent will never be taught it because even if they studied maths all their lives it would never be a sensible next step. [Mathematics teacher]

Another teacher of a bottom set that had followed a foundation course in Year 7 with a view to following a condensed Key Stage 3 in Year 8 and Year 9 was similarly positive in relation to this group of pupils when interviewed at the end of the school year:

Behaviour has improved compared with previous bottom sets. Motivation is still good and normally we find they have turned off by the summer of Year 7... There are still challenging pupils. I have two very difficult lads who are hard to manage. I'm constantly telling them to sit down or giving positive encouragement. But I've not had to use the senior management to remove them. For the bottom set last year they would be called one or two times a week... It has involved a change in the teaching style - I've been given freedom I wouldn't have had before for example teaching without using a book or having them producing written evidence. And it's much more fun to teach. [Science teacher].

But ironically, despite one of the potential pay offs of the project being to enable schools to introduce more enrichment activities, in many cases one of the consequences of introducing a condensed curriculum was to reduce the time devoted to such enrichment.

We would previously have done a couple of weeks on the maths of the Olympics. Not now. [Mathematics teacher]

Points of interest for the higher sets are squeezed out. Mathematics teacher]

There are no opportunities for side-liney stuff. For example we'd do an item on the geography of the World Cup, maybe looking at wealth and success. It's a good opportunity as they're into it. But if we make room for that we have to say 'what will we drop?' [Teacher]

In Year 7 and 8 any enjoyment and enrichment have gone... We feel more pressure to cover the ground. It's almost making delivery more mechanical. It feels a bit like a meat factory. [Mathematics teacher]

Some departments had clearly worked hard to integrate units and to cover some elements of the programme of study through cross-curricular work. For example, a geography teacher explained that in drama classes pupils were working on a production relating to weather and climate change. Similarly in art, pupils were drawing geographical images based on photographs.

Nevertheless, in some of the schools, the reduction in time devoted to Key Stage 3 had also been achieved by reducing the amount of material covered. As one senior manager explained:

In history and geography teachers are now teaching what they want to teach. For example history have reintroduced the unit on Native American Indians – which they couldn't do alongside the Mughal Empire – because that's a unit the students enjoy. They also teach Nazi Germany in Year 7 instead of Year 9 and have dropped the unit on kings and queens which they found really boring. [Senior manager]

We took the Key Stage 3 specification and cherry-picked the interesting, engaging and useful bits. [Teacher]

The fast groups are losing some content [in a named unit]. But then in Year 9 [under the old arrangement] the whole year is dictated by SATs so it's not so much of a loss. [English teacher]

A senior manager at the same school, which had initiated Key Stage 3 reform before joining the project, explained:

The idea arose from consultation with staff who were tearing their hair out because there was too much content in the Key Stage 3 curriculum. They were frustrated by how it was taught and by pupil behaviour. So before this project came up we asked them to pick out key skills for their subject. We wanted to get rid of the dip in Year 8. So we went back to planning interesting lessons and made it clear it was OK to get rid of content. Then when the project came along we decided to do it. [Senior manager]

Another teacher stated that the headteacher had instructed him to 'sit lightly on the curriculum'. However, at this school, despite initially instigating a two year programme in all subjects, the school had subsequently restricted the two year project to core subjects on the grounds that:

We felt we couldn't complete the programmes of study in the content heavy subjects. We felt if Ofsted came looking at our Foundation subjects they would find we had signed off subjects administratively but hadn't finished the programmes of study in reality. [Headteacher]

It is perhaps important to note that this was a middle school and, having joined the Two Year Key Stage 3, the school may have felt slightly greater pressure from the accountability function of the Key Stage 3

tests and Ofsted's assessment of Key Stage 3 teaching than some of the secondary schools. The relationship between the Two Year Key Stage 3 and the various means through which schools are held to account was an issue that emerged many times at the case study schools. For example, the relationship between a two year Key Stage 3 and Ofsted inspections, national testing, league tables and compliance with the National Curriculum came up many times.

6.2 Key Stage 3 and GCSEs

If we consider the relative profile of Key Stage 3 at the middle school compared with some of the secondary schools, the relative value placed on Key Stage 3, and indeed the National Curriculum, was expressed in blunt terms at more than one secondary school:

Parents are not interested in Key Stage 3. I have never, ever been asked by a parent about Key Stage 3 results. They are interested in GCSEs, and if their children are able they want to know that they are being challenged. But apart from that we can do what we like. For me, the most important thing is Ofsted's view of our teaching. If our teaching is good and our leadership is good then if they want to say we're not delivering D & T at Key Stage 4 or whatever then that's fine. [Headteacher]

People aren't so scared of the National Curriculum any more [since joining the Project]. The Senior Leadership Team has been giving a clear message. The issue is to be prepared for Key Stage 4 – if you've not covered section 7.4 of the National Curriculum or whatever then it's not a crisis. There's less pressure on covering content from the management... The Senior Leadership Team have taken away the accountability problem from the teachers. [Senior manager]

Another senior manager however admitted it was sometimes difficult to shield teachers completely in this way:

We don't care about SATs results, we care about GCSE results... But then there's the LEA [Local Education Authority] pressure about SATs results. So we [senior management] say one thing to teachers and then the LEA adviser says, 'What about your SATs?' [Senior manager]

Nevertheless, being relieved of some of the pressure applied by the conventional accountability structures was described in graphic terms by one teacher. This teacher delivered a competence-based Year 7 course intended to provide pupils with the skills to learn more effectively during Years 8 and 9 and that was not assessed in a conventional manner:

Pupils are highly motivated in their assessments because they see it is related to effort. They are buying into being assessed against their capabilities rather than being saddled with 'working towards Level 1'. They make as much progress as I've seen Year 7s make [in 30 years of teaching]. But when I first heard about it I couldn't believe you could get away with it - not having to assess and then translate into National Curriculum sub-levels and terms of progress - it was like being told you can park on the pavement. [Teacher]

At several schools, particularly those offering a two year Key Stage 3 in Year 7 and Year 8, the main benefit was perceived to lie at Key Stage 4 rather than Key Stage 3:

It's driven by the headteacher. It's a school-wide policy with a view to giving students longer to raise performance at GCSE which is at the end of the day the qualification people look at. And I support that view. [Teacher]

The key advantage is opening up Key Stage 4. But there are also advantages at Key Stage 3. There's certainly no hanging around any more. [Mathematics teacher]

The main advantage is that it leads to the possibility of higher results in Key Stage 4. We will use Year 9 to produce mock coursework. [Teacher]

It is interesting to note that while condensing the curriculum, a quick start and the absence of repetition were invariably presented as strengths at Key Stage 3, the reverse was the case in relation to Key Stage 4. That is, spending three years rather than two on GCSE was always presented as a strength, as were opportunities to retake examinations.

In addition, several teachers acknowledged the benefits of bringing forward the start of GCSE and other Key Stage 4 courses as they felt that these motivated pupils. One teacher acknowledged that external tests in themselves could raise standards:

A [former Secretary of State for Education and Skills] Charles Clarke quote was discussed early on in the Project. He'd said, 'exams raise standards' which sparked a debate because we were angry and said 'it's not exams that raise standards, it's teachers that raise standards' but now I think up to a point it's true. [English teacher]

Another teacher pointed to the motivating effects of a two year Key Stage 3 in years 7 and 8 followed by an early start to GCSE courses:

It has a huge motivating effect for boys. They feel they are doing real things as GCSE is a real currency that they deal in... The problem, if it occurs, is the subject matter in English – it deals with grown up themes. This more often occurs with the boys. [English teacher]

However this quotation also draws attention one of the central dilemmas of the policy - should the benefits of enhanced motivation be traded off against any costs arising from a lack of maturity? Concerns arising from a lack of maturity were acknowledged in several schools. In one school, which had followed an accelerated model for several years, those concerns had been allayed:

Generally, there is an issue of confidence in the lead up to Year 8. Pupils do feel pressurised. But having done that they progress well to GCSEs. In Years 9 and 10 there is a focus on motivation. By Year 11 pupils have from one to five GCSEs. There is a big change in their self-confidence... It certainly benefits high attainers. But it equally benefits all students who are then able to spend three years on GCSEs which is of most value to them. [Senior manager]

A colleague had drawn similar conclusions about the value of a two year programme.

I was prepared to give it a go but I was also a bit cynical as I was worried that it was moving exam anxiety from Year 9 to Year 8 when pupils were less mature... I am much more comfortable with it now. I think it was the right thing to do for these pupils... The results are excellent. The boys' results [in external tests] are phenomenal. [English teacher]

This teacher went on to acknowledge, as did teachers at other schools, that if pupils did not do well in tests for which they had been entered early then this could act as a demotivator.

By way of contrast to the quotations above, a teacher at a school with previous experience of early entry to GCSEs had drawn conflicting conclusions. This teacher was concerned that pupils, and also parents,

were unhappy that pupils entered early for a GCSE might achieve a lower grade than they would have been awarded had they taken the examination a year later:

I don't think the kids like the accelerated programme. They don't understand why they are taking GCSEs early and what the benefit is. And parents don't like it because if he gets a C in Year 10 he could possibly have got an A in Year 11 and think he should have waited. [English teacher]

At other schools teachers were also concerned about the trade off between motivation and having the maturity to handle or respond well to additional pressure:

At parents evening they were talking about early entry and saying 'she's already doing accelerated maths and science and [this subject]' and there's the feeling of too much pressure and not wanting to pile it on them too early. [Teacher]

Year 9 have started a coursework unit but are not really mature enough so they will be submitting it in November instead. There is a group of girls being silly about it... Year 10 pupils just knuckle down and take it seriously if you say do x, y and z in the next four weeks. But it's not so in this Year 9 group. [Mathematics teacher]

It is very clear that the current Year 8 are not as mature as they would be at the end of Year 9. Especially among the boys.

[How is that played out?]

Not just in their behaviour but their focus on work and approach to their work. We see a massive change in boys in Year 9. Year 10 GCSE starters are much more mature than Year 9. And this is the lag between boys and girls. [Teacher]

The benefits of an early completion of Key Stage 3 were therefore seen as offering more time at Key Stage 4 either again to enter examinations early, or to follow more courses, or to spend longer, perhaps three years, studying for a 'high value' qualification and also to provide time to retake examinations to achieve better grades.

One additional benefit was to bring forward option choices to Year 8. While this meant that some pupils dropped National Curriculum subjects in Year 9, it was also noted that teachers in non-compulsory subjects were often happier to teach fewer classes of relatively motivated pupils who had actively chosen to study the subject rather than a large number of classes made up of pupils compelled to do so.

While all of the secondary schools offering a Year 7 and 8 model had elected give pupils the opportunity to enter GCSE and other Key Stage 4 examinations early, one senior manager was keen to point out that the Project also offered opportunities to experiment with personalised learning and a remodelled secondary phase. Speaking before the Tomlinson report (2004) was published the senior manager stated:

We have been clear all along that acceleration for exams is not an end in itself... It [the Project] is a huge opportunity to look seriously at how Tomlinson is to be delivered and an opportunity for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to be brought together. It also reveals the problems of delivering a personalised curriculum... Schools will have to think about all of the issues we've been dealing with... [Senior manager]

This school planned for a range of pathways through Key Stage 4 and, as well as offering early entry to GCSE for higher attaining pupils, aimed to enable lower attaining pupils to gain meaningful qualifications in Year 9 or Year 10 before devoting more of their time to vocational study.

6.3 Progression

Nevertheless, finding appropriate courses to follow during the time saved was a challenge and so was the timetabling of those options. For pupils entering for GCSEs early the school referred to above was looking for appropriate courses to offer in Year 11. Considering this question had immediately raised several complicating factors at all of the schools. For example, most of the schools were planning to offer AS level courses during Year 11. At 11 to 18 schools with a substantial intake of new pupils in Year 12 this clearly involved difficulties as the new intake would not have completed the early units of the course.

As another senior manager observed:

One issue is how to timetable in Year 11 if they don't want to go on and do the subject. For example one option we're looking at is an AS Level in Critical Thinking Skills as a generic course. [Senior manager]

Another teacher stated, somewhat bluntly:

It's not clear what the end point of this journey is. We've set off without knowing where we're going in Year 9 and Year 10. It's winding up members of staff and the head has given platitudes about sorting it out. For example, one suggestion is starting A levels in Year 11. But what about students who don't want to do [this subject] at A level? [Teacher]

This observation was made at all five of the relevant schools - what to do with pupils who had taken a GCSE early but who did not then want to study that subject at GCE A level? Interestingly, at one school a department had previous experience of early entry at GCSE but found its pupils were then demotivated during Year 11. Consequently they had decided that pupils following a two year Key Stage 3 should enter more GCSEs but with all examinations taken in Year 11. At another school where planning was at a relatively early stage a teacher explained:

*We will start the GCSE course in Year 9. We have not yet decided about the Year 10 GCSE. [So pupils have chosen but they don't know what they've chosen?]
Yes. They don't know what they've chosen and nor do we! It may be a two year GCSE with a view to AS Level in Year 11. Although because at Key Stage 4 it's two periods per week and in Year 12 it's five periods per week we couldn't teach them the whole course - possibly one module. [Teacher]*

Thus even among those wanting to continue with the subject, the time allocation could present problems. Another issue arose at a school with several years experience of offering AS level courses to Year 11 pupils. Some of the pupils had gone on to college to study for A levels and had been advised to retake the modules that they had entered early in order to achieve higher grades.

6.4 Timetabling

The quotations above touched on the issue of timetabling at Key Stage 5. However the challenges of timetabling could be present throughout the school. For example, at the school offering the integrated Year 7 course, taught where possible by the same teacher for 10 out of 25 lessons each week, there were clearly knock-on effects:

Timetabling is a nightmare. Everyone suffers to make it work. Well, everyone except Year 11 who are timetabled first. [Senior manager]

Thus, for example, in a small department in which some of the teachers taught the integrated Year 7 courses this meant that Year 10 groups starting their GCSE courses had to be taught by more than one teacher. This example is perhaps extreme but, particularly in view of other constraints on timetabling, any complications arising from a two year Key Stage 3 could be significant. Another senior manager commented:

[With a Year 7 and Year 8 two year Key Stage] options are more difficult to organise. Timetabling has to be more flexible... You have to be determined to make it work and have a 'can do' mindset. [Senior manager]

These challenges can however be substantial. For example, one school had agreed for some Key Stage 4 pupils to follow vocational courses at the local further education college for two days each week. Consequently those pupils had to be taught English, mathematics, ICT and science on the other three days. Again the consequence was split groups (more than one teacher teaching the same group). Other factors could also constrain timetabling such as a school being on a split site (preventing the movement of staff or pupils between sites except at lunchtime). At another school, which was committed to a sixth form consortium with another local school, the consequence of fitting the two timetables together was that the Project school was unable to set pupils, as it had intended to, in Year 7.

Of course such timetabling challenges and constraints are present in any school at any time. However, new 'flexibilities' may open some doors while simultaneously closing others.

6.5 Challenges of flexibility

At schools where some pupils followed a condensed Key Stage 3 in a subject but others did not, this could create difficulties for pupils transferring from one group to another:

I'm a great believer in equal opportunities because I know from my own experience that people progress at different times. As soon as you enter just a top set [for an external test] then they accelerate away. For example, in set two, psychologically they know they can't move up into set 1 because they're now doing a different curriculum. [Mathematics teacher]

These consequences could be practical as well as psychological. The difficulty of transferring between groups was most clearly exemplified when pupils moved from one *school* to another. Thus at one school where higher sets had begun GCSE courses earlier than is conventional, new arrivals to the school were unable to join the higher sets (where they would otherwise have been placed) because they had not completed the first elements of GCSE coursework. Similarly pupils transferring from a Project school to another school and having already completed Key Stage 3 in Year 8, were then left to 'tread water' for a year.

The meshing between institutions was particularly important where part of a cohort had completed a set of tests or examinations early and then moved on to another institution (for example in the case of pupils moving from a middle school to a high school or from an 11 to 16 school to a sixth form college). Receiving institutions need to be able to timetable their teaching in such a way as to recognise the tests and examinations that pupils had already taken but this was not always the case.

Another difficulty encountered by a failure to mesh with a less flexible external environment arose in relation to GCSE examination entries. In two subjects a school had planned for its accelerated cohort of pupils to complete a GCSE course over a three year period. However, the relevant examination board had then modified the examinations in question and consequently all pupils were required to be entered for the GCSE after two years rather than the planned three as at the end of these years the examinations

would no longer exist. Both of the relevant teachers expressed concern that, for pupils wishing to follow these subjects at Key Stage 5, they would have had a one or two year period without studying the subject at all.

A potentially more valuable consequence for the school was however:

They will enter for the GCSE in Year 10 with possible re-entry in November and perhaps even again in June because of the 5 A-C target now including maths and English [and therefore including this subject]. [Teacher]

A further issue related to the external world being less prepared for flexibility within schools was noted by another teacher:

The textbooks are written for three year courses not two so we can't have everyone with just one Year 7 textbook because not all the material is in it and then they need both Year 8 and Year 9 textbooks for the second year. [Mathematics teacher]

6.6 Accountability

Clearly we have seen that bringing tests forward was seen as a means of motivating pupils. However this is obviously not the only function of external tests. For example, the main role of the Key Stage 3 tests could be seen as performing an accountability function. At several schools, teachers felt a degree of pressure to achieve good results in Key Stage 3 tests as a result of participating in the Project. In one case this resulted in plans for a shortened Key Stage 3 being scaled down.

As we saw earlier, the guidance issued to schools stated that Project schools should be confident that pupils would achieve at least the same level of success in two years as they would have in three and also that they would achieve national expectations by the end of Year 8. Clearly, this is a substantial challenge for schools. As we also saw, at two of the case study schools teachers had felt liberated by focusing on achieving the three year targets in two years - particularly for lower attaining pupils (and expressly those not expected to achieve Level 5 after three years of study). However, the guidance stated that only those achieving the national expected level (Level 5/6) should be allowed to complete a two year Key Stage. On the other hand, for higher attaining pupils, as we have seen in the attainment analysis presented earlier, it was difficult for them to achieve in two years what they would otherwise achieve in three. While precise guidance is understandable, it is possible that the constraints imposed may limit opportunities for innovation.

Several senior teachers saw the Two Year Key Stage 3 policy as arising from a wider vision of entering pupils for tests when ready rather than according to age - compared by two of the interviewees with taking a driving test or a music examination. However, reflecting on the policy of entering pupils for tests when ready rather than according to age, one senior teacher observed:

My personal view is that for the policy to be consistent...anyone who didn't achieve Level 5 would carry on at Key Stage 3. And some pupils will not get a level 5 no matter how long they spend on it... [Senior manager]

In general teachers expressed a good deal of hostility towards the Key Stage 3 tests:

For whose benefit do they do the tests? Not for teachers. [Mathematics teacher]

As I see it we get them [the pupils] in Year 7 and they leave in Year 11. The Key Stage 3 English tests get in the way and are an absolute waste of time. For the DfES, SATs drive everything and

the tests are always a focus for network meetings...A formal test is just there for schools to compete - for the DfES and for parents. [Senior manager]

As teachers, the Key Stage 3 SATs are of limited value because we're already doing GCSE modules in Year 9 and they are a better indicator of progress...For example, if you're at Level 2 in Key Stage 2 and then at the Level 3/4 border in Year 9 then you're better off on a [GCSE module] and succeeding in that, even if that's equivalent to a grade G at GCSE, rather than getting...Level 3 in the SAT and feeling you've failed and hardly moved on. Even those working [at a very low level towards a GCSE] feel it counts towards something real. [Mathematics teacher]

6.7 Early entry to Key Stage 3 tests

It is interesting to consider the entry policies for Key Stage 3 tests adopted at the case study schools. Two of the schools were offering a foundation year model and so, of course, early entry for Key Stage 3 tests was not a possibility. However, of the other six schools, four had chosen to enter at least some pupils for the tests in Year 8. Of these four, two had entered all pupils early (or more accurately all those working at the level assessed by the test) in at least one subject (despite the guidance (DfES, 2004)). Interestingly, both of these schools had very secure local academic profiles and were oversubscribed.

One of the schools entering a *partial* cohort had a much less secure local profile and faced stiff competition for its Year 7 intake from a newly opened Academy. A senior manager at this school stated '*we played it safe with the test entry*'. A colleague went on to explain:

We used mock SATs and teacher assessments to decide who to enter and only entered solid level 5s, that is 5Bs. And 100 per cent achieved Level 5. 71 out of the accelerated group of 91 took the SAT early and the other 20 will stay in the same teaching groups so they don't feel they have failed. The 20 taking them in Year 9 will be taken out of lessons for 3 full days just to do preparation for the test this year. [Teacher]

In this school, test entry was clearly seen as separate from following a two year Key Stage and some pupils who had not entered the test early nevertheless went on to begin their GCSE courses.

The other school entering a partial cohort was a middle school. For this school, the test itself was seen as the criterion for having completed the Key Stage. That is, those who had taken the test were deemed to have completed the Key Stage and those not entered for the test were not. This is understandable given that the school was a middle school and could not control how or what their pupils were taught in Year 9. In addition it should be noted that *only* pupils entered early for Key Stage 3 tests would be included in the performance tables at this school as any pupils taking the tests in Year 9 would by that time be attending the high school.

This situation had an impact on the accountability function of the Key Stage 3 tests. The headteacher reported that the high school was 'understandably miffed' that the middle school had already entered the more able pupils for the Key Stage 3 tests and suggested it would be preferable for both schools to be able to report the Key Stage 3 results of early entrants. This headteacher was very concerned to emphasise that it was good for pupils to experience success, as he put it:

I want them to go up with a sense of success...To say you are going to be entered early for SATs is a good thing to say to children. [Headteacher]

However, as a colleague noted, even not being selected for entry for the test could be viewed by pupils as a (lesser form of) failure:

Personally, I think some of the children feel sad they're not entered for their SATs. I'm amazed how seriously they take it. They say 'why can't I do my SAT now?' and 'if I did this, could I take them?' It hurts their pride if they're not one of the chosen ones. [Teacher]

But at this school, clearly the Key Stage 3 test results were prioritised over, for example, the wishes of pupils or the organisational benefits arising from entering a whole cohort for the tests in Year 8.

7. MODELS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Three models for implementation were identified although these were not mutually exclusive and more than one could be found operating at a single school: we have termed these *foundation*, *acceleration* and *enrichment* models.

- The *foundation model* involved a two year Key Stage 3 being taught in Years 8 and 9. The time saved was used to provide an innovative curriculum in Year 7. Such Year 7 curricula were designed to ease the transition from primary to secondary school and to enable pupils to develop learning skills to equip them for Key Stage 3. Thus, the pupils following a two year Key Stage in Years 8 and 9 followed classes in literacy, numeracy, learning to learn and cross-curricular projects while in Year 7. In addition, where these classes were taught by the same teacher, it was hoped that this would ease the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 by providing greater continuity (given that in primary school, pupils are generally taught for most of the day by one teacher).
- The *acceleration model* involved teaching a two year Key Stage in Years 7 and 8 with the time saved deployed thereafter. In most cases, this model was adopted when schools wished pupils to move on to GCSE study earlier. In some cases, the saved time enabled pupils to enter early for their GCSE examinations. Alternatively, it could be used to extend the period of study for Key Stage 4 qualifications (for example, spending three years on GCSE or vocational courses). An early start to GCSE examinations was seen in itself as a means of motivating pupils. At some schools it was suggested that pupils at risk of disaffection could complete Key Stage 3 early and perhaps also complete some basic qualifications in Year 9; this enabled them subsequently to devote a greater proportion of their time to, for example, vocational courses that they may find more engaging.
- The *enrichment model* devoted the saved time to providing an enriched curriculum. Such enrichment could be provided at any stage during the three years conventionally devoted to Key Stage 3. For example, at one school, pupils followed a science project, which involved studying the science of outer space when in Year 8, with Key Stage 3 being taught during Years 7 and 9. At another school, an enriched curriculum was followed in Year 9.
- Key considerations in relation to some of the variants included the following:
 - ® One key issue relates to pupil progression. It is important for schools to find appropriate courses to ensure progression throughout secondary schooling. For example, where early entry to GCSE was followed by an additional course in Year 11, it is important that the extra course provides an appropriate level of challenge rather than being at the same level as the course followed in Year 10.
 - ® Timetabling is a key challenge. Clearly, any additional courses need to fit with the teaching time made available through early entry to GCSE examinations. If a school chooses to use

an accelerated model, and some pupils start higher level courses such as AS levels in Year 11, this can create difficulties as AS levels often require greater time allocations than GCSE examinations. In addition this may also create additional timetabling challenges at Key Stage 5.

- ® One means of creating sufficient time to teach full AS Level courses in Year 11 is for several subjects to be accelerated with early entry to GCSE examinations in Year 10. This does however create additional timetabling demands. There are constraints on how many innovations and forms of flexibility may be simultaneously accommodated within a school timetable.
- ® Schools need to consider how more flexible arrangements at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 affect the ability of pupils to transfer between teaching groups. Transfer may be particularly difficult where pupils progress through these Key Stages at different speeds (pupils may, for example, be unable to join higher sets that have already undertaken GCSE coursework).
- ® Schools need to carefully consider which pupils are likely to benefit from early entry to GCSE (and other qualifications); a concern raised by parents at one school with previous experience of early entry was that pupils might obtain lower grades than would otherwise be the case. Also, although teachers believed higher attaining groups benefited from an accelerated Key Stage 3, some felt not all pupils were sufficiently mature to cope with the demands of an early start to GCSE courses.
- ® Allowing departments to decide whether or not to provide shortened Key Stage 3 courses can reduce staffroom dissension. However, if fewer departments participate, this means that the degree of flexibility is reduced.
- ® While an enrichment model increases the time available for curricular enrichment, the more widely adopted accelerated model of implementation was reported, at several schools, to have reduced the opportunity for curricular enrichment.

The lessons for other schools were however perhaps best expressed by one senior teacher, when asked if a two year Key Stage 3 should be recommended to other schools:

Only if it was very clear what outcomes were wanted. You have to know what you want at Key Stage 4. It is not a way of masking weakness in teaching and learning... You also have to work out how you are going to be successful. If you are secure you can experiment and innovate. You need to be able to deal with failures as well as successes - and in this context the ethos of the school and the support of senior management are important.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Two Year Key Stage 3 Project is important, not merely in its own right, but also because of its implications for the personalisation of learning. The White Paper 'Higher Standards, Better Schools for All' (DfES, 2005) defines this as 'a tailored education' (p. 50) and examples of tailored education include 'a rich, flexible and accessible curriculum and, for older pupils, one that allows them to mix academic and vocational learning' (p. 50). One key aim of the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project was to open up curricular flexibility; the Project gave schools a great deal of freedom to innovate in Key Stage 3 and the schools used that freedom in a wide variety of ways.

Most commonly the freedom was used to accelerate pupils through Key Stage 3 and make an early start on Key Stage 4 studies. From the point of view of policy, the most significant finding is that a shortened Key Stage 3 is associated with an increased pace of learning as measured by the Year 7 and Year 8 QCA Optional Tests.

Schools varied substantially in how they used the time saved as a result of a Two Year Key Stage 3. The enrichment and foundation models offered relatively simple models for schools to implement with the time saved deployed within Key Stage 3.

For schools operating an accelerated model, the use of saved time raised a number of issues. First, many schools planned for pupils to take GCSEs early; this was seen as a way of motivating pupils. However, early entry is not necessarily perceived by parents to be in the best interests of their children as their chances of obtaining a high grade when entered at this stage may be reduced. Second, many of the variants of a Two Year Key Stage 3 present challenges for timetabling; this needs to be carefully considered at the planning and implementation stage and will be important with increased flexibility and personalisation of learning. Third, opportunities for pupils to transfer between teaching groups poses challenges and needs to be considered with care, given that individual pupils progress at different rates.

In conclusion, the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project provided schools with an opportunity to innovate and provide curricular flexibility. Pupils' progress in mathematics during Key Stage 3 was very encouraging. More generally, there are implications for education policy, particularly in view of the increasing focus on the personalisation of learning.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Ian Schagen from NFER for his assistance with the statistical analysis contained in this report. Thanks to Dave Hereward from NFER for liaising with participating schools and collecting data. Thanks also to Hazel Pennell for assistance with fieldwork. We would also like to thank all those interviewed for the evaluation for their candour and also school staff for their support in data collection. The views expressed in the report are those of the authors alone.

ANNEX A - NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

The number of responses relating to the identification of pupils following shortened courses, to pupil questionnaires and Optional Test entries are shown below.

Phase 1 Project and Phase 1 Comparison schools

Phase 1 Project schools were contacted in Spring 2004 and asked to identify which of their Year 7 pupils were following shortened courses in each of 12 subjects. Twenty Project schools responded to this request and information was collected for 4113 pupils.

The 2004 Year 7 cohort at Project and Comparison schools were asked to complete pupil questionnaires in the Spring terms of 2004, 2005 and 2006. The number of questionnaires returned and the number of schools from which they were received is shown in Table A1.

Table A1 - Number of pupil questionnaires received from Phase 1 Project and Comparison schools

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Phase 1 Project schools	3866 (20 schools)	3066 (17 schools)	3087 (19 schools)
Phase 1 Comparison schools	2640 (17 schools)	2189 (15 schools)	2053 (15 schools)

The number of pupils who completed the questionnaire in each of the three years is shown in Table A2.

Table A2 - Number of pupils completing a questionnaire in all three years

	Completed in all three years
Phase 1 Project schools	2211 (17 schools)
Phase 1 Comparison schools	1727 (15 schools)

Project schools were asked to enter pupils following shortened courses in mathematics and/or English for the QCA Optional Tests when in Year 7 and Year 8. All pupils at Comparison schools were requested to enter the tests. The number of marks received are shown in Tables A3 and A4.

Table A3 - Phase 1 English Optional Test marks received

	Year 7	Year 8
Phase 1 Project schools	1859 (12 schools)	1431 (12 schools)
Phase 1 Comparison schools	1491 (14 schools)	1194 (11 schools)

Table A4 - Phase 1 mathematics Optional Test marks received

	Year 7	Year 8 low tier/high tier (schools)
Phase 1 Project schools	2083 (15 schools)	660/877 (14 schools)
Phase 1 Comparison schools	1945 (16 schools)	946/485 (13 schools)

Phase 2 Project and Phase 2 Comparison schools

Information identifying pupils following shortened courses in each of 12 National Curriculum subjects was requested from Phase 2 schools in Spring 2005. Fifteen schools responded, providing information relating to 2799 pupils.

Table A5 - Number of pupil questionnaires received from Phase 2 Project and Comparison schools

	Year 7	Year 8
Phase 2 Project schools	2396 (15 schools)	2022 (14 schools)
Phase 2 Comparison schools	1806 (12 schools)	1469 (11 schools)

Table A6 - Number of pupils completing a questionnaire in both years

	Both years
Phase 2 Project schools	1619 (14 schools)
Phase 2 Comparison schools	1312 (11 schools)

Characteristics of schools included in Year 7 mathematics Optional Test modelling

Table A7 - Selected school characteristics

	Phase 1 Project Schools (N=15)	Phase 1 Comparison Schools (N=16)
Admissions policy		
Comprehensive	14	15
Selective	1	0
Modern	0	1
School type		
Community	6	8
Foundation	5	2
Voluntary Aided	4	5
Sex of intake		
Girls	2	2
Boys	0	2
Mixed	13	12
Age range		
9-13	4	0
11-16	4	6
11-18	7	10

Source: School Performance Tables 2003

Table A8 - Key Stage 3 attainment

	% pupils achieving level 5 or above			Average KS3 point score	KS2-KS3 value added measure
	English	Mathematics	Science		
Phase 1 Project Schools (N=11)	68%	73%	71%	34.8	99.8
Phase 1 Comparison Schools (N=16)	66%	68%	68%	33.5	99.3

Source: School Performance Tables 2003

Table A9 - Other selected school characteristics

	Mean % with statements of SEN (a)	Mean % with SEN without statement (a)	Mean % with first language other than English (b)	Mean % known to be eligible for FSM (c)	Mean % aged 15 achieving 5+ GCSE A*-C (d)	Mean Number of day pupils
Project Schools	3%	16%	7%	15%	58%	1110
N	15	15	15	15	13	15
Comparison Schools	3%	15%	5%	17%	46%	932
N	16	16	16	16	16	16

Characteristics of schools included in Year 7 English Optional Test modelling

A10 - Selected school characteristics

	Project Schools (N=11)	Comparison Schools (N=16)
Admissions policy		
Comprehensive	11	13
Selective	0	1
Modern	0	0
School type		
Community	6	8
Foundation	2	3
Voluntary Aided	3	3
Sex of intake		
Girls	1	1
Boys	0	2
Mixed	10	11
Age range		
9-13	4	0
11-16	3	5
11-18	4	9

Source: School Performance Tables 2003

A11 - Key Stage 3 attainment

	% pupils achieving level 5 or above			Average KS3 point score	KS2-KS3 value added measure
	English	Mathematics	Science		
Project Schools (N=7)*	66%	69%	65%	33.6	99.4
Comparison Schools (N=14)	66%	68%	67%	33.6	99.4

Source: School Performance Tables 2003

*NB Four of the Project schools were middle schools that did not therefore report KS3 results in the school performance tables.

A12 - Other selected school characteristics

	Mean % with statements of SEN (a)	Mean % with SEN without statement (a)	Mean % with first language other than English (b)	Mean % known to be eligible for FSM (c)	Mean % aged 15 achieving 5+ GCSE A*-C (d)	Mean Number of day pupils
Project Schools	3%	18%	7%	17%	49%	1103
N	11	11	11	11	9*	11
Comparison Schools	3%	15%	5%	16%	46%	940
N	14	14	14	14	14	14

Source: School Performance Tables and Annual Schools Census 2003

*This includes GCSE results for the two high schools to which the middle school pupils went on.

Characteristics of pupils from Phase 1 Project schools and Phase 1 Comparison schools who completed questionnaires in all three years (Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9)

A13 - Pupils' sex (percentage table)

Sex	Project	Comparison
Girls	55	48
Boys	45	52

A14 - Reported number of books in the home (percentage table)

Number of books	Project	Comparison
None	3	3
1-10	11	11
11-50	23	24
51-100	24	22
101-200	19	18
200+	20	21
Missing	1	3

A15 - Ethnicity (percentage table)

Ethnic group	Project	Comparison
White, British	85	79
White, other	3	6
Caribbean or British Caribbean	1	1
African or British African	1	2
Indian or British Indian	1	1
Pakistani or British Pakistani	0	1
Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi	0	0
Mixed, white and black Caribbean	1	1
Mixed, white and black African	0	0
Mixed, white and Asian	0	1
Mixed, other mixed	1	1
Turkish or British Turkish	0	0
Other	1	1
Missing	6	7

A16 - Sex of intake of schools

Type	Project	Comparison
Boys school	0	2
Girls school	2	2
Mixed school	15	11

A17 - Age ranges of schools

Years	Project	Comparison
9-13	4	0
11-16	6	6
11-18	7	9

A18 - School admissions policies

Type	Project	Comparison
Comprehensive	16	14
Secondary modern	0	1
Grammar	1	0

Characteristics of pupils from Phase 2 Project and Phase 2 Comparison schools who completed a questionnaire in each year (Year 7 and Year 8)

A19 - Sex of pupils (percentage table)

Sex	Project	Comparison
Girls	53	76
Boys	47	24

A20 - Reported number of books in the home (percentage table)

Number	Project	Comparison
None	2	1
1-10	13	12
11-50	23	21
51-100	24	22
101-200	15	15
200+	18	22
Missing	5	7

A21 - Ethnicity (percentage table)

	Project	Comparison
White, British	39	39
White, Other	6	5
Caribbean	11	5
Black African	12	9
Indian	5	7
Pakistani	3	2
Bangladeshi	1	7
Mixed, Caribbean	4	2
Mixed, African	1	1
Mixed, Asian	1	2
Other mixed	1	1
Turkish	1	1
Other	5	6
Missing	10	12

A22 - Sex of school intakes

Type	Project	Comparison
Boys	2	1
Girls	4	5
Mixed	8	5

A23 - Age ranges of schools

Years	Project	Comparison
11-16	3	2
11-18	11	8

A24 - School admissions policies

Type	Project	Comparison
Comprehensive	13	7
Secondary modern	0	1
Grammar	1	2

ANNEX B - VARIABLES IN OPTIONAL TEST MODELLING

The variables listed below were included in the Year 7 English Optional Test modelling.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean or %	Std. Deviation
YR 7 English Score	2414	0	85	46.73	13.00
KS2 English test level	2414	4	5	4.35	0.48
% entitled to FSM	2414	2	55	12.49	10.94
Number of books in the home	2414	0	6	3.26	1.36
Project school	2414	0	1	50%	
Lone mother household	2414	0	1	13%	
Lone father household	2414	0	1	1%	
Two parents	2414	0	1	67%	
Step family	2414	0	1	12%	
Multi-adult household	2414	0	1	5%	
No response on family structure	2414	0	1	2%	
Indian	2414	0	1	1%	
Caribbean	2414	0	1	2%	
Pakistani	2414	0	1	1%	
White	2414	0	1	86%	
African	2414	0	1	1%	
Bangladeshi	2414	0	1	0%	
Mixed Asian	2414	0	1	1%	
Other	2414	0	1	2%	
Did not say	2414	0	1	3%	
Eligible for FSM	2414	0	1	11%	
Special educational needs without statement	2414	0	1	6%	
Special educational needs with statement	2414	0	1	0%	
Sex	2414	0	1	56%	
English as an additional language	2414	0	1	4%	

The variables listed below were included in the Year 8 mathematics Optional Test modelling.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean or %	Std. Deviation
KS2 mathematics test level	2898	2	5	4.21	0.72
KS2 mathematics total score	2929	4	100	65.20	20.64
% entitled to FSM	2929	2	44	12.12	10.98
Number of books in the home	2929	0	5	3.03	1.47
Lone mother household	2929	0	1	13%	
Lone father household	2929	0	1	1%	
Two parents	2929	0	1	65%	
Step family	2929	0	1	13%	
Multi-adult household	2929	0	1	4%	
No response to family question	2929	0	1	2%	
Indian	2929	0	1	1%	
Caribbean	2929	0	1	1%	
Pakistani	2929	0	1	0%	
White	2929	0	1	90%	
African	2929	0	1	1%	
Mixed Asian	2929	0	1	1%	
Other	2929	0	1	2%	
Did not say	2929	0	1	1%	
Missing data on books in home	2929	0	1	2%	
Eligible for FSM	2929	0	1	12%	
Special educational needs without a statement	2929	0	1	14%	
Special educational needs with a statement	2929	0	1	1%	
Sex	2929	0	1	57%	
English as an additional language	2929	0	1	2%	
Project school	2929	0	1	55%	
Middle school	2929	0	1	17%	

ANNEX C - OPTIONAL TEST MODELLING

Multi-level modelling was used as the method of analysis for the Optional Test results. This is a form of multiple regression. Multiple regression enables us to examine the relationship between the dependent variable of interest (for example the Year 7 Mathematics Optional Test score) and a set of independent (predictor) variables. These independent variables include whether the pupils attends a Project or Comparison school and also various background characteristics that have previously been shown to be associated with attainment (for example prior attainment, the sex of the pupil and eligibility for free school meals). 'Multi-level' modelling takes into account the fact that pupils are clustered within schools. Failure to take this clustering into account may result in statistically significant associations being reported between the dependent variable (e.g., mathematics test scores) and an independent variable (e.g., being eligible for free school meals) when such a conclusion is not merited.

The models also allow for the possibility that, for example, at some schools pupils with higher levels of prior attainment may make greater progress than their schoolmates while at other schools it may be pupils with lower prior attainment who make relatively greater progress.

It should be remembered that the range of possible values differs for the independent variables listed in Tables C1 to C11. For example, the Key Stage 2 Mathematics variable reported in Table C has a standard deviation of more than 20 points whereas the school's percentage eligible for free school meals has a standard deviation of only 11 and the eligible for free school meals variable may either take the value of zero (for those not eligible) or one (for those eligible).

One means of comparing the 'effect sizes' for different independent variables is to express the coefficients for continuous variables (such as Key Stage 2 score) in terms of the standard deviation of that independent variable and to express changes in the dependent variable in terms of its standard deviation. In the case of continuous variables this enables us to compare the effect size for each variable for a comparable change in the value of those variables. That is, even though Key Stage 2 Mathematics score is measured in marks (from 1-100) and the number of books in the home on a different scale (from 1-6), we are able to compare the two by expressing both in terms of their own standard deviation (or, as is shown in the figures, for a change of 1.41 standard deviations). In the case of the dichotomous variables such as 'Project school' the figures indicate the change in Optional Test scores (expressed in terms of their standard deviation) associated with having that characteristic (that is, for example, being a girl or attending a Project school).

Such effect sizes are represented in Figures C1 to C4 as are the degree of precision for each of the estimated values with the lines showing the 95% Confidence Intervals for each coefficient estimated.

Table C1 - Final model for Year 7 Mathematics Optional Test score

Yr 7 Mathematics Score		Multilevel results			
				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	167.405	58.238	*	53.259	281.551
School KS2/constant covar	-1.766	0.680	*	-3.099	-0.433
School KS2 variance	0.022	0.009	*	0.004	0.040
Pupil variance	159.027	4.105	*	150.981	167.073
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	-17.346	3.299	*	-23.812	-10.880
KS2 Mathematics score	1.392	0.034	*	1.325	1.459
School level FSM	-0.289	0.075	*	-0.436	-0.142
Project school	6.611	2.033	*	2.626	10.596
Quantity of books in home	1.180	0.180	*	0.827	1.533
Eligible for FSM	-3.667	0.746	*	-5.129	-2.205
Special educational needs	-4.547	0.925	*	-6.360	-2.734
Female	1.169	0.528	*	0.134	2.204

Table C2 - Final model for Year 7 Optional Test score in Mental Mathematics

Yr 7 Mental Mathematics		Multilevel results			
				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	5.673	2.152	*	1.455	9.891
School KS2/constant covar	-0.189	0.096	*	-0.377	-0.001
School KS2 variance	0.008	0.005		-0.002	0.018
Pupil variance	13.098	0.337	*	12.437	13.759
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	3.331	0.700	*	1.959	4.703
KS2 Mental Mathematics score	1.042	0.027	*	0.989	1.095
Special educational needs	-1.669	0.259	*	-2.177	-1.161
Indian	2.012	0.644	*	0.750	3.274
Quantity of books in home	0.202	0.051	*	0.102	0.302
Eligible for FSM	-0.870	0.211	*	-1.284	-0.456
School level FSM	-0.064	0.018	*	-0.099	-0.029
Project school	1.380	0.479	*	0.441	2.319

Figure C1 - Year 7 mathematics Optional Test score effect sizes and confidence intervals

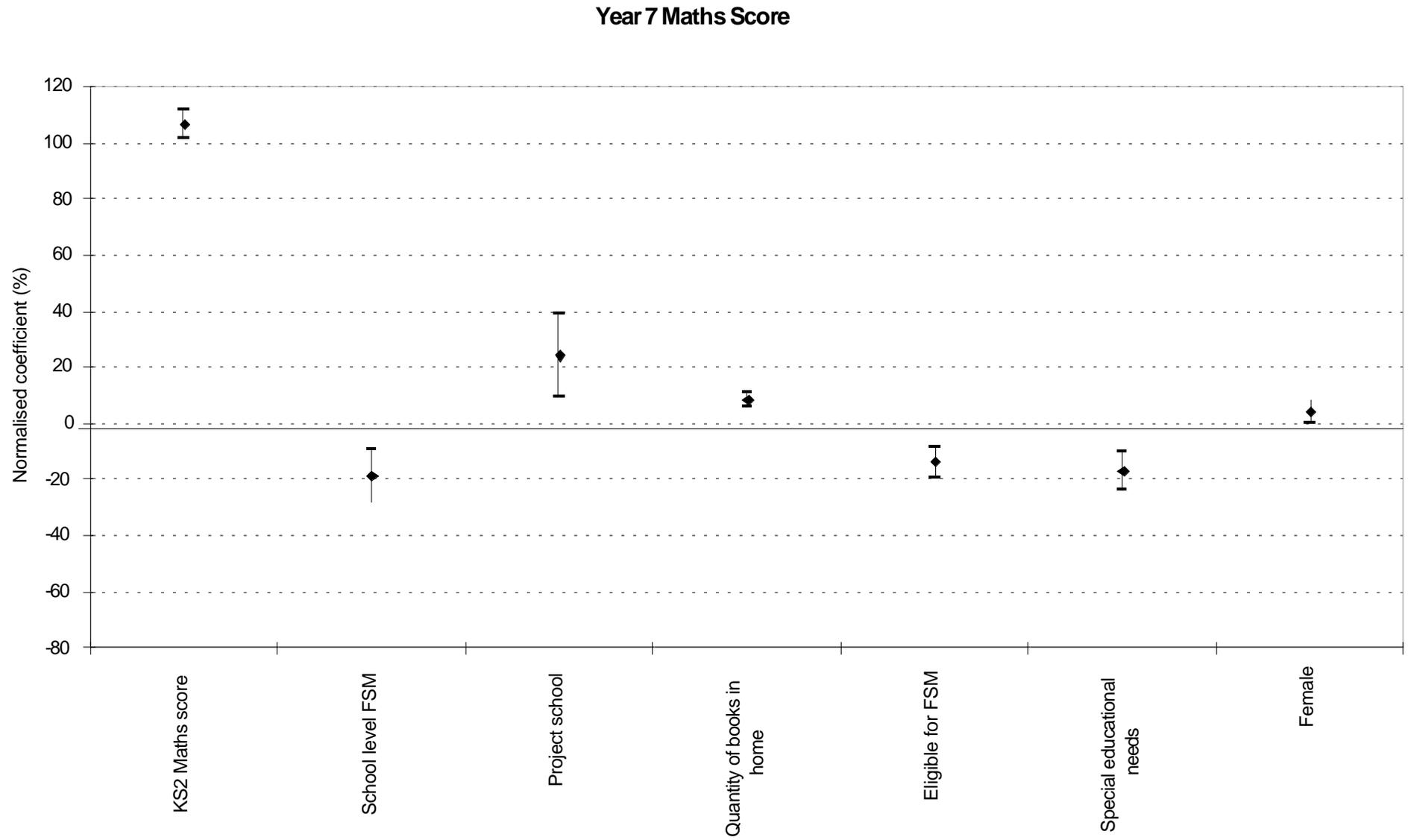


Table C3 - Final model for Year 7 English Optional Test score

Yr 7 English Score		Multilevel results		95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	37.189	18.293	*	1.335	73.043
School KS2/constant covar	-0.455	0.256		-0.957	0.047
School KS2 variance	0.007	0.004		-0.001	0.015
Pupil variance	69.992	2.033	*	66.007	73.977
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	1.848	1.907		-1.890	5.586
KS2 English score	0.697	0.025	*	0.648	0.746
Female	2.661	0.383	*	1.910	3.412
Eligible for FSM	-1.751	0.569	*	-2.866	-0.636
Special Educational Needs	-3.183	0.751	*	-4.655	-1.711
Statement of SEN	-9.247	3.444	*	-15.997	-2.497
Quantity of books in home	0.697	0.136	*	0.430	0.964
School level FSM	-0.162	0.042	*	-0.244	-0.080
Project school	-0.333	1.089		-2.467	1.801

Table C4 - Final model for Year 7 English Optional Test reading score

Yr 7 Reading Score		Multilevel results		95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	8.516	4.469		-0.243	17.275
School KS2/constant covar	-0.138	0.109		-0.352	0.076
School KS2 variance	0.004	0.003		-0.002	0.010
Pupil variance	25.408	0.716	*	24.005	26.811
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	3.654	1.058	*	1.580	5.728
KS2 Reading score	0.581	0.022	*	0.538	0.624
Female	2.184	0.222	*	1.749	2.619
Special educational needs	-1.342	0.430	*	-2.185	-0.499
Quantity of books in home	0.436	0.078	*	0.283	0.589
Live with mum only	-0.926	0.293	*	-1.500	-0.352
School level FSM	-0.077	0.030	*	-0.136	-0.018
Project school	0.225	0.844		-1.429	1.879

Table C5 - Final model for Year 7 English Optional Test writing score

Yr 7 Writing Score	Multilevel results			95% Confidence interval	
	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	18.714	7.293	*	4.420	33.008
School KS2/constant cover	-0.436	0.212	*	-0.852	-0.020
School KS2 variance	0.012	0.006	*	0.000	0.024
Pupil variance	32.523	0.941	*	30.679	34.367
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	6.177	1.272	*	3.684	8.670
KS2 Writing score	0.535	0.031	*	0.474	0.596
Female	1.032	0.263	*	0.517	1.547
Special educational needs	-3.004	0.496	*	-3.976	-2.032
Quantity of books in home	0.469	0.091	*	0.291	0.647
School level FSM	-0.087	0.029	*	-0.144	-0.030
Eligible for FSM	-1.391	0.381	*	-2.138	-0.644
Lives with step family	-0.833	0.365	*	-1.548	-0.118
Project school	-0.793	0.766		-2.294	0.708

Figure C2 - Year 7 English Optional Test score effect sizes and confidence intervals

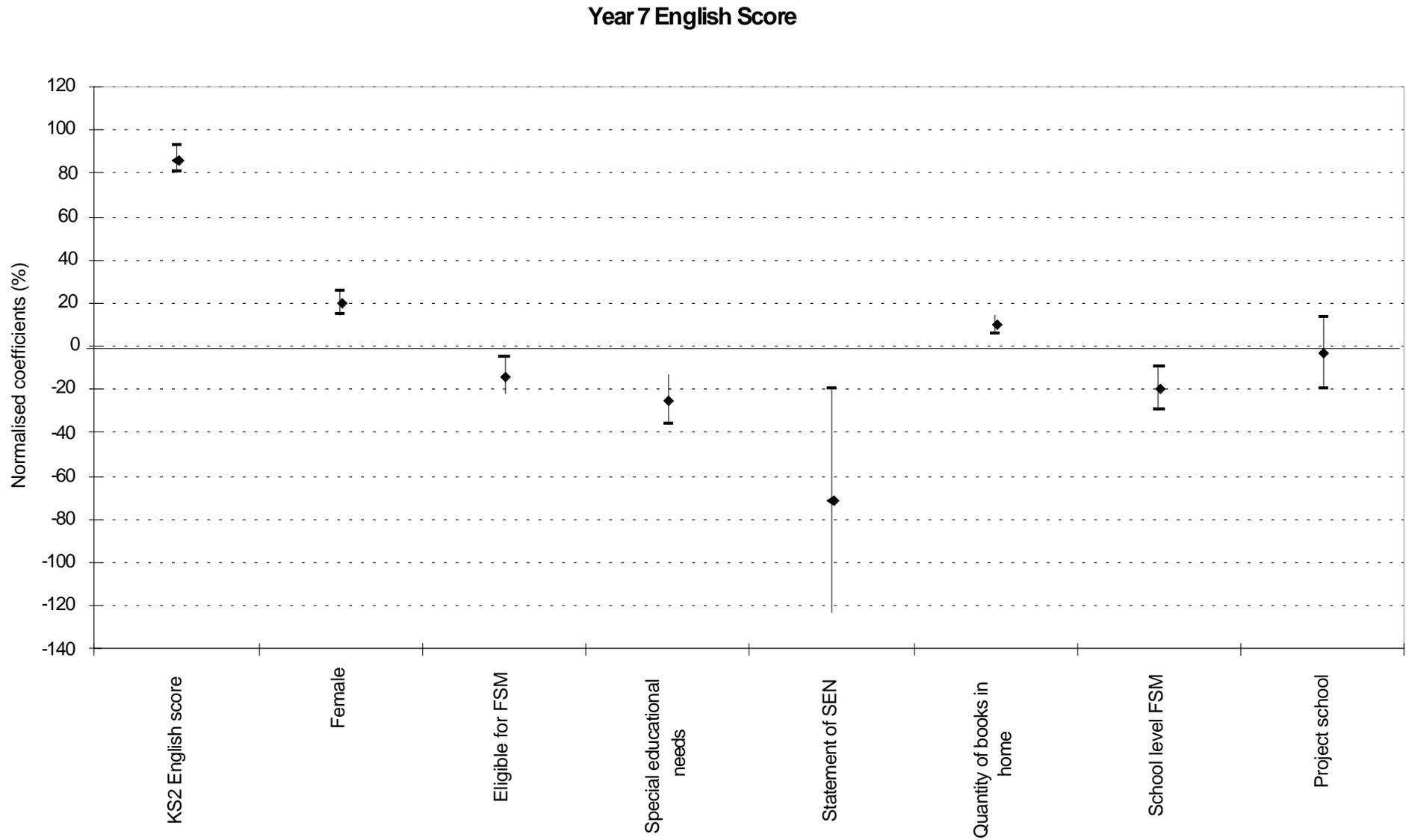


Table C6 - Final model for Year 8 Optional Test Level in mathematics (measured in sub-levels)

Yr 8 Mathematics Level	Multilevel results				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.	
Final model						
School variance	1.893	0.650	*	0.619	3.167	
School KS2/constant covar	-0.020	0.008	*	-0.036	-0.004	
School KS2 variance	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	
Pupil variance	2.468	0.065	*	2.341	2.595	
Fixed coefficients						
Constant	-1.933	0.387	*	-2.692	-1.174	
KS2 Mathematics score	0.140	0.004	*	0.132	0.148	
Female	0.175	0.066	*	0.046	0.304	
Project school	1.083	0.271	*	0.552	1.614	
Eligible for FSM	-0.347	0.097	*	-0.537	-0.157	
School FSM	-0.037	0.010	*	-0.057	-0.017	
Special educational needs	-0.649	0.098	*	-0.841	-0.457	
Other ethnicity	0.510	0.241	*	0.038	0.982	
Quantity of books in home	0.164	0.022	*	0.121	0.207	
Middle school	0.853	0.363	*	0.142	1.564	

Table C7 - Final model for Year 8 mathematics Optional Test score - lower tier

Yr 8 Mathematics Score (Low Tier)	Multilevel results				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.	
Final model						
School variance	59.661	26.692	*	7.345	111.977	
School KS2/constant covar	-1.439	0.659	*	-2.731	-0.147	
School KS2 variance	0.053	0.019	*	0.016	0.090	
Pupil variance	164.218	5.816	*	152.819	175.617	
Fixed coefficients						
Constant	4.661	2.444		-0.129	9.451	
KS2 Mathematics score	0.956	0.055	*	0.848	1.064	
Eligible for FSM	-3.335	0.958	*	-5.213	-1.457	
Special educational needs	-5.219	0.882	*	-6.948	-3.490	
Statement of SEN	-6.622	2.540	*	-11.600	-1.644	
No family information	-6.764	2.055	*	-10.792	-2.736	
Quantity of books in home	1.256	0.231	*	0.803	1.709	
Project school	3.439	2.299		-1.067	7.945	

Table C8 - Final model for Year 8 mathematics Optional Test score - higher tier

Yr 8 Mathematics Score (High Tier)		Multilevel results			
				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	381.478	188.653	*	11.718	751.238
School KS2/constant covar	-4.124	2.165		-8.367	0.119
School KS2 variance	0.048	0.026		-0.003	0.099
Pupil variance	178.141	7.148	*	164.131	192.151
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	-21.085	5.978	*	-32.802	-9.368
KS2 Mathematics score	1.266	0.063	*	1.143	1.389
Project school	8.784	2.709	*	3.474	14.094
School level FSM	-0.564	0.107	*	-0.774	-0.354
Quantity of books in home	1.474	0.306	*	0.874	2.074
Live only with dad	12.137	4.567	*	3.186	21.088
Pakistani	-9.617	4.572	*	-18.578	-0.656
Middle school	7.072	3.543	*	0.128	14.016

Figure C3 - Year 8 mathematics Optional Test Level score effect sizes and confidence intervals

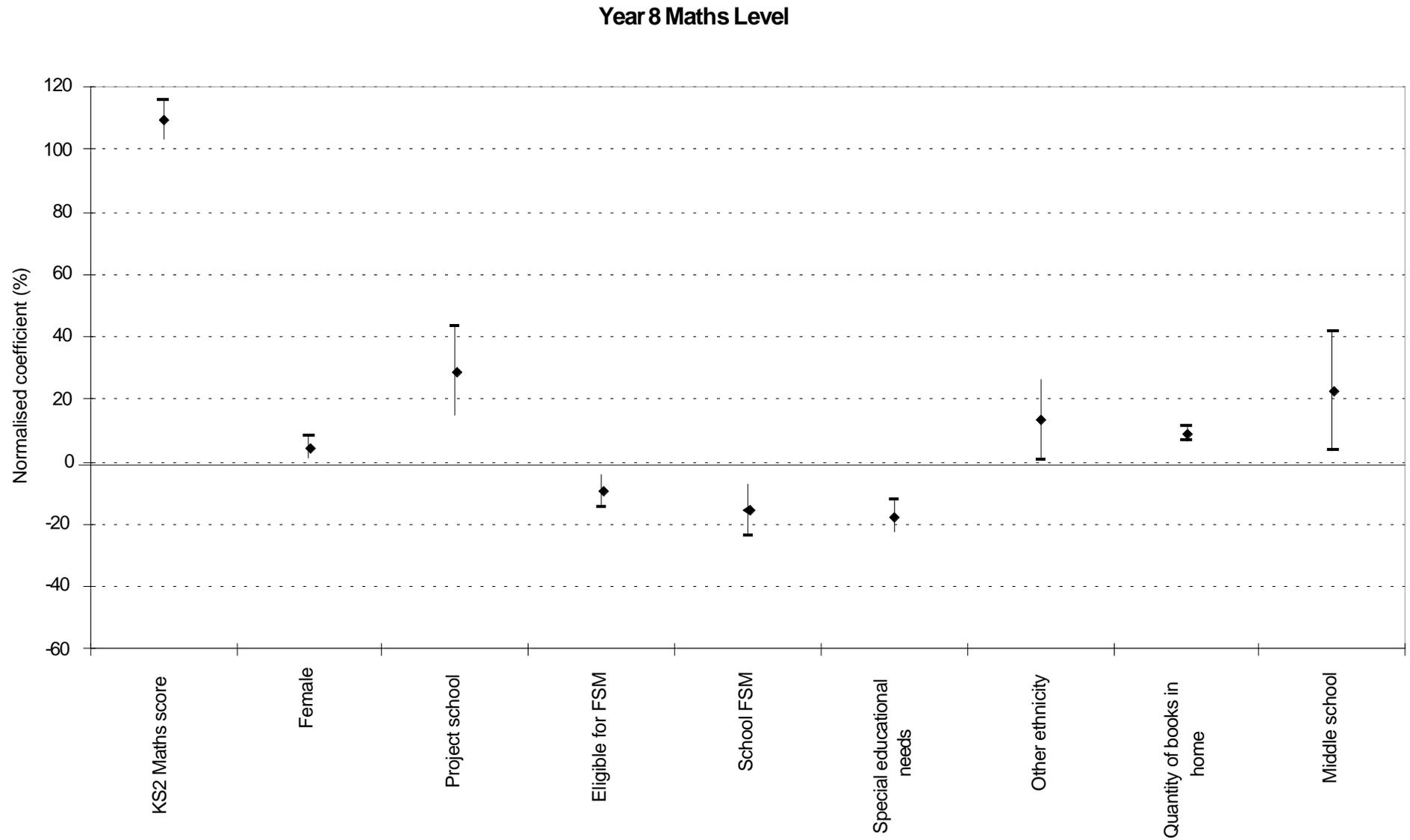


Figure C4 - Year 8 mathematics higher tier Optional Test score effect sizes and confidence intervals

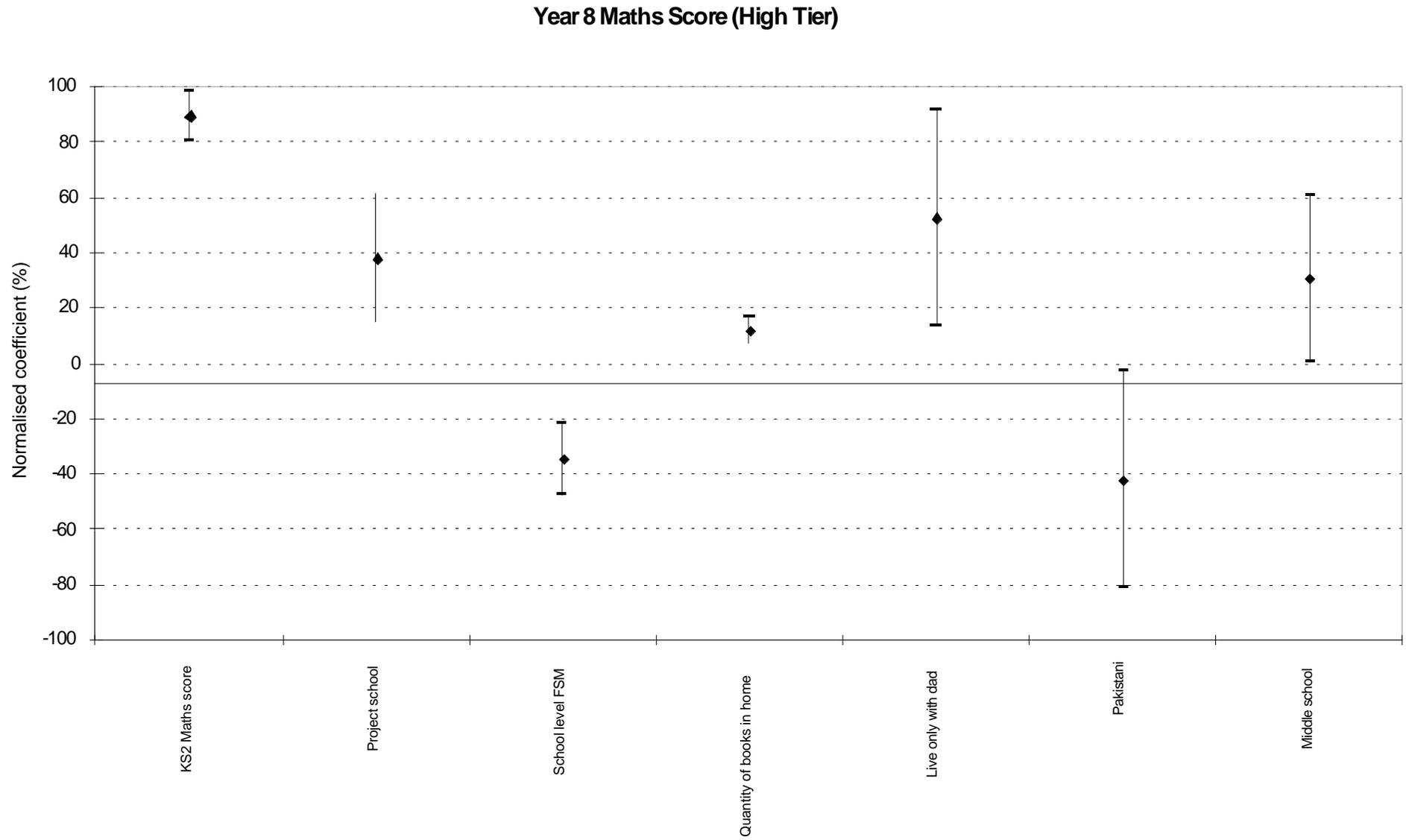


Table C9 - Final model for Year 8 Optional Test score in English

Yr 8 English Score		Multilevel results			
				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	34.805	14.801	*	5.795	63.815
School KS2/constant cover	-0.437	0.227		-0.882	0.008
School KS2 variance	0.010	0.004	*	0.002	0.018
Pupil variance	65.702	1.985	*	61.811	69.593
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	-1.296	1.845		-4.912	2.320
KS2 English score	0.632	0.027	*	0.579	0.685
Female	2.810	0.370	*	2.085	3.535
Special educational needs	-3.566	0.575	*	-4.693	-2.439
Statement of special educational needs	-4.284	1.599	*	-7.418	-1.150
Quantity of books in home	0.868	0.133	*	0.607	1.129
Live with mum only	-1.342	0.506	*	-2.334	-0.350
Project school	1.777	1.802		-1.755	5.309

Table C10 - Final model for Year 8 Optional Test reading score

Yr 8 Reading Score		Multilevel results			
				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	14.182	5.459	*	3.482	24.882
School KS2/constant covar	-0.174	0.106		-0.382	0.034
School KS2 variance	0.006	0.003	*	0.000	0.012
Pupil variance	21.194	0.622	*	19.975	22.413
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	1.688	1.176		-0.617	3.993
KS2 Reading score	0.536	0.023	*	0.491	0.581
Female	1.590	0.203	*	1.192	1.988
Special educational needs	-2.286	0.312	*	-2.898	-1.674
Statement of SEN	-3.419	0.866	*	-5.116	-1.722
Quantity of books in home	0.603	0.072	*	0.462	0.744
Live with mum only	-0.843	0.278	*	-1.388	-0.298
Mixed race - Asian	3.625	1.405	*	0.871	6.379
Project school	-0.217	1.318		-2.800	2.366

Table C11 - Final model for Year 8 Optional Test writing score

Yr 8 Writing Score		Multilevel results			
				95% Confidence interval	
Parameter	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.	Min.	Max.
Final model					
School variance	15.722	6.437	*	3.105	28.339
School KS2/constant covar	-0.432	0.217	*	-0.857	-0.007
School KS2 variance	0.023	0.009	*	0.005	0.041
Pupil variance	31.434	0.944	*	29.584	33.284
Fixed coefficients					
Constant	2.323	1.240		-0.107	4.753
KS2 Writing score	0.518	0.039	*	0.442	0.594
Female	1.467	0.257	*	0.963	1.971
Special educational needs	-3.023	0.379	*	-3.766	-2.280
Statement of SEN	-2.809	1.079	*	-4.924	-0.694
Quantity of books in home	0.587	0.091	*	0.409	0.765
Eligible for FSM	-0.946	0.374	*	-1.679	-0.213
Project school	1.933	1.289		-0.593	4.459

ANNEX D - ITEMS IN ATTITUDE SCALES

Like school work

I enjoy being at school
I often count the minutes till a lesson ends
I am bored in lessons
The work I do in lessons is a waste of time
The work I do in lessons is interesting
I do my homework because it's interesting
My schoolwork is worth doing

Participate in extra-curricular activities

'How often do you do the following activities **at school** but outside normal lesson time (e.g., at lunch time)?'

Sport
Drama or dance
Music
Arts activities
Reading or writing
Using computers/ICT
A subject you don't normally do in lesson time
Other

Conformity

I work hard most of the time
I am late for lessons
I am well behaved in school
I do my homework on time
I do my homework because I don't want to get into trouble

Aspirations

My parents/carers want me to go to university/higher education
I want to stay on at school or go to college after Year 11
I'd really like to go to university

Positive school atmosphere

I think this is a good school
Most teachers treat the pupils with respect
Most pupils treat the teachers with respect
Pupils' opinions are listened to
Most teachers encourage pupils who are good at something
Most teachers help pupils who have difficulty with their work

Good teachers

My teachers make sure we do our homework
My teachers make it clear how we should behave in school
My teachers do something when they see someone breaking the rules
My teachers praise me when I do my school work well
My teachers can keep order in class
My teachers try to get me to work as well as I am able
My teachers always mark my work

Participation respected by peers

Pupils at my school respect pupils who take part in school sports activities
Pupils at my school respect pupils who take part in school dance activities
Pupils at my school respect pupils who take part in school art and craft activities
Pupils at my school respect pupils who take part in school music activities

Work respected by peers

Pupils at my school respect pupils who work hard
Pupils at my school respect pupils who do well in their school work

Not socially integrated

I am bullied or badly treated by other students in the school
My friends are bullied or badly treated by other students in the school
Things are all mixed up in my life
I am popular with people my own age
I often feel lonely at school

Positive peer group

My friends are well behaved in school
My friends do their homework on time
My friends find schoolwork interesting

Parental interest

How often do you parents make sure you do your homework?
How often do you parents make it clear you should behave well in school?
How often do you parents say that they think school is important?
How often do you parents praise you for doing good work at school?

ANNEX E - CHANGES IN ATTITUDE SCALE SCORES

Table E1 - Change in scale scores from Year 7 to 8: Pupils exposed to condensed curricula at Project schools compared with pupils at Comparison schools

	Exposed pupils at Phase 1 Project schools (N=1794)	SD	Pupils at Comparison schools (N=1727)	SD	Significant (ind t-test p<0.05)
Like school work	-1.1	5.0	-1.6	5.1	*
Extra curricular participation	-0.5	5.2	-0.7	5.4	
Conformity	-0.3	1.8	-0.4	1.8	
Aspirations	0.0	1.3	0.1	1.4	
Positive school atmosphere	-0.7	2.6	-1.0	2.7	*
Good teachers	-1.4	3.7	-1.6	3.9	
Participation in extra-curricular activities respected by peers	-0.4	2.4	-0.5	2.4	
Work respected by peers	-0.5	1.6	-0.6	1.6	
Social integration	0.1	1.8	0.1	2.0	
Positive peer group	-0.1	1.4	-0.3	1.4	*
Parental interest	-0.2	1.5	-0.2	1.6	

Table E2 - Change in scale scores from Year 8 to 9: Pupils exposed to condensed curricula at Phase 1 Project schools compared with pupils at Comparison schools

	Exposed pupils at Phase 1 Project schools (N=1794)	SD	Pupils at Comparison schools (N=1727)	SD	Significant (ind t-test p<0.05)
Like school work	-0.2	4.6	0.1	4.6	*
Extra curricular participation	-1.4	5.0	-0.6	4.6	*
Conformity	-0.3	1.8	-0.2	1.8	*
Aspirations	0.1	1.3	0.0	1.3	
Positive school atmosphere	-0.5	2.8	-0.1	2.6	*
Good teachers	-1.3	3.9	-0.9	3.7	*
Participation in extra-curricular activities respected by peers	-0.3	2.5	-0.2	2.4	
Work respected by peers	-0.2	1.5	-0.1	1.5	*
Social integration	0.2	1.8	0.2	1.7	
Positive peer group	-0.1	1.3	0.0	1.3	*
Parental interest	-0.2	1.6	-0.2	1.6	

Table E3 - Change in scale scores from Year 7 to 9: Pupils exposed to condensed curricula at Phase 1 Project schools compared with pupils at Comparison schools

	Exposed pupils at Phase 1 Project schools (N=1794)	SD	Pupils at Comparison schools (N=1727)	SD	Significant (ind t-test p<0.05)
Like school work	-1.3	5.5	-1.4	5.5	
Extra curricular participation	-1.9	5.7	-1.3	5.7	*
Conformity	-0.6	1.9	-0.6	2.0	
Aspirations	0.1	1.5	0.1	1.5	
Positive school atmosphere	-1.2	2.9	-1.1	2.9	
Good teachers	-2.7	4.1	-2.5	4.2	
Participation in extra-curricular activities respected by peers	-0.7	2.7	-0.7	2.6	
Work respected by peers	-0.7	1.7	-0.6	1.7	
Social integration	0.3	2.0	0.3	2.1	
Positive peer group	-0.2	1.5	-0.3	1.5	
Parental interest	-0.4	1.7	-0.4	1.8	

Table E4 - Change in scale scores from Year 7 to 8 for pupils exposed to condensed curricula at Phase 2 Project schools compared with pupils at Comparison schools

	Exposed pupils at Phase 2 Project schools (N=1116)	SD	Pupils at Comparison schools (N=1312)	SD	Significant (ind t-test p<0.05)
Like school work	-0.6	4.8	-0.7	4.7	
Extra curricular participation	-1.0	6.2	-0.3	5.6	*
Conformity	-0.2	1.6	-0.1	1.6	*
Aspirations	0.2	1.3	0.3	1.2	
Positive school atmosphere	-0.6	2.5	-0.5	2.7	
Good teachers	-1.8	4.1	-1.5	3.9	
Participation in extra-curricular activities respected by peers	-0.4	2.4	-0.1	2.5	*
Work respected by peers	-0.2	1.6	-0.2	1.5	
Social integration	0.2	1.9	0.3	1.9	
Positive peer group	0.0	1.3	-0.1	1.3	
Parental interest	-0.1	1.4	0.0	1.4	

ANNEX F - CASE STUDY SUMMARIES

Phoebeth School

The case study visit took place in Autumn 2004. At that time the first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 8.

Phoebeth School is a large, mixed, 11-16 school located in a village in rural England. It serves an intake with a wide range of ability. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average and very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups. In terms of attainment, performance at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is above the national average, and the DfES value added scores are in line with the national average.

The school participated in Phase 1 of the Project. The idea of a shortened Key Stage 3 arose well before the Project (perhaps 10 years before) with an accelerated mathematics course for the top set. This arose from an awareness of areas of repetition within the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 curricula. However, under this arrangement the Key Stage 3 course was simply stopped after two years at whatever point had been reached rather than attempting to condense the curriculum. These pupils were then following a two year GCSE course which was completed in Year 10, followed by A level modules in Year 11. Science later followed a similar pattern and when the school heard about the Key Stage 3 Project it seemed natural to take part.

Departments decided for themselves whether to participate in the Project and some, such as the Modern Foreign Languages Department, elected to take part while others, such as Humanities, decided not to participate.

Among those subjects in which a condensed Key Stage 3 was pursued departments were able to choose whether all or just some pupils should follow a condensed Key Stage 3. For example, in mathematics all pupils followed a two year Key Stage 3 course. For the top sets this led on to GCSE mathematics and an additional mathematics qualification with both completed in Year 11. For the bottom sets this implied a foundation year in Year 7 followed by a two year Key Stage 3 in Year 8 and Year 9 leading to Foundation GCSE mathematics in Years 10 and 11. For middle sets a condensed Key Stage 3 course in Year 7 and Year 8 was followed by a three year GCSE course.

In contrast only some pupils completed a Modern Foreign Languages Key Stage 3 programme in two years with the bottom set following an entry level qualification in Year 9 and the top set going on to start GCSE courses in Year 9.

In other subjects, following the completion of a two year Key Stage 3 course pupils could elect to follow a 'pre-Key Stage 4' option course. By bringing forward option choices to Year 9 it was hoped that pupils could elect to drop subjects in which they were not interested while having achieved the same levels that would have been expected after three years.

All three teachers interviewed expressed the view that some pupils' attainment reached a plateau and that bringing assessment forward could enable them to achieve the same test levels and then move on to work on programmes of study that they found more engaging.

Interestingly, the mathematics department, with its experience of early entry to GCSE followed by A level modules in Year 11 had elected to have all pupils sit examinations in Year 11 rather than Year 10 because previous experience indicated that early entry could lead to a loss of motivation among pupils in Year 11 (some of whom would not be planning to follow mathematics at A level).

Francemary School

The case study visit took place in Autumn 2004. At that time the first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 8.

The school is a very large 11-18 mixed comprehensive school in a large English city. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly higher than the national average and the school has a relatively high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Attainment at the school is similar to the national average at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and also in relation to the DfES value added indicator.

The school's interest in offering a shortened Key Stage 3 pre-dated the Project and a small group of pupils were already following an accelerated course in English. This reflected the school's interests in personalised learning, improving the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 and preventing a dip in progress during Year 8. In addition, the school already offered a two year Key Stage 3 programme in ICT which was then followed by all pupils pursuing the GNVQ in ICT during Year 9 and Year 10.

On joining the Project it was decided that all pupils should follow a two year programme in English, mathematics and ICT. A key issue in planning this version of a two year Key Stage was to make the arrangements manageable - with all pupils following these subjects during both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 the challenges for timetabling would be reduced.

At the time of the visit it was planned that at the end of Year 8 all pupils would start their GCSE English course (including those not entered for their Key Stage 3 SAT until Year 9). Some higher attaining pupils would be entered for English Language and English Literature in Year 10 and then have the opportunity to gain qualifications in drama, media studies or dance in year 11. The very highest attaining pupils would be able to sit GCSEs in Year 9. It was suggested the saved time may also be used to undertake modules of AS level English during Year 11 thus providing more free time in Year 12. However, staff were also aware that many pupils joined the school sixth form in Year 12 and consequently early starts to A level courses could be problematic.

In addition, vocational pathways were to be available from Year 10 as, it was suggested, some pupils were already becoming disaffected at this stage. The school therefore aimed that such pupils should be able to achieve an English qualification as soon as possible - either during Year 9 or Year 10.

In the case of mathematics, taught within sets, it was planned for all pupils to begin work on modular GCSEs in the final half term of Year 8. For the bottom four sets (of 12) the focus was described as being on progress compared with expected levels rather than on condensing the whole curriculum into two years. The least able pupils would then follow a GCSE course in two years followed by a mathematics course which it was felt would be more useful to them in later life.

In general, pupils would be entered for examinations when ready during Year 10 and 11. It was anticipated that pupils in the top sets would complete GCSE mathematics in year 10 and then statistics in Year 11. Middle sets would however be able to devote three years to their GCSE courses.

The ICT department was already teaching Key Stage 3 within two years with all pupils following a GNVQ course in Years 9 and 10. Pupils did not study ICT in Year 11 and the saved time was used for other subjects. It was planned for the GNVQ course to be replaced with a BTEC course.

Abbotswell School

The case study visit took place in the Summer of 2005. At that time the first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 7.

Abbotswell School was characterised by an interviewee as a non-selective school located in a largely selective local authority. The prior attainment of the intake of the school is below the national average and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals above the national average. Key Stage 4 results are below the national average although the DfES value added measure suggests pupils make above average progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 although not to Key Stage 3.

Abbotswell School joined Phase 2 of the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project. In contrast to many of the other participating schools, at Abbotswell for most pupils the condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum was covered during Year 8 and Year 9. Year 7 was used as a foundation year with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Condensed curricula were followed in English, mathematics, science, technology, history, geography, religious education, drama and modern foreign languages. A conventional three year Key Stage 3 was followed, in some subjects, by some higher attaining pupils.

It was felt that the conventional National Curriculum was not meeting the needs of pupils at Abbotswell. The Key Stage 4 curriculum had already been adapted with, for example, different pathways offering vocational and work based options. The new Year 7 programme was described as trying to tie pupils into education rather than turning them off it.

For example, not all pupils studied a foreign language in Year 7. The four lower attaining groups instead followed an 'Opening Doors' programme delivered by the SEN department. Similarly a 'Learning to Learn' programme delivered by the personal social and health education team focused on learning styles and skills that would enable pupils to be successful in the classroom such as standing up and talking to the class, listening to others, teamwork and self-assessment.

In addition, in other subjects the Key Stage 3 curriculum had been adapted to better engage pupils. The changes were supported by the staff interviewed because so many pupils struggled to access the curriculum. The Year 7 programme included literacy, numeracy and a great deal of cross-curricular work. To take the case of geography, cross-curricular activity included an art unit on geography in photographs and drawing geographical images, and a mathematics unit concerning grid references.

Similarly Year 7 science lessons for the lowest science set often used literacy-based starters such as anagrams or missing words and might be followed by the use of sorting cards or keyword definitions in order to develop a vocabulary of science. It was suggested that this was more fun to teach and had perhaps improved pupils' behaviour.

Arthurdon School

The case study visit took place in the Summer of 2006. At that time the first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 9.

This mixed 11-18 comprehensive school is located in a village in a formerly industrial area. The proportion of pupils at the school eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average and there are relatively few pupils at the school from minority ethnic groups.

The school operated some forms of acceleration prior to joining Phase 1 of the Project, with early entry to GCSE already being possible in science and, in the previous year, the top mathematics set had been entered for both mathematics and statistics in Year 11. However, the latter experiment had not been a success.

When the school joined the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project it was decided that only the core subjects would offer a condensed Key Stage 3 programme and, in the core subjects, only some pupils would follow the condensed courses. The programme is best understood as splitting the cohort into three groups. The groups might be characterised as an accelerated group, an enriched group and a conventional group.

The top sets in mathematics, English and science comprised the accelerated group and undertook the Key Stage 3 programme of study in Year 7 and Year 8, beginning GCSE courses thereafter. In the case of science, Year 8 pupils completed some GCSE biology modules with the intention that they should conclude biology in Year 10 and then complete physics and chemistry GCSEs in Year 11. This plan was however disrupted by changes to the biology GCSE specification requiring pupils to complete their GCSE course the following year. Consequently the pupils were forced to take GCSE biology in Year 9 rather than Year 10.

In the case of mathematics it was intended that pupils should begin their GCSE mathematics course in Year 9, take GCSE statistics in Year 10, and then complete the mathematics course in Year 11. However, once again the plans were disrupted due to changes in examination specifications (from a three tier to two tier GCSE arrangement). Consequently, once again, pupils were required to complete their mathematics GCSE course earlier than had been planned (Year 10 rather than Year 11) and follow the statistics course in Year 11. The accelerated English groups would complete GCSE English language in Year 10 followed by literature and media studies in Year 11.

The enriched cohort comprised the middle sets for science and English. These pupils followed a condensed Key Stage 3 course in Years 7 and 9 with an enrichment programme during Year 8 - often seen as the 'dip' year. In the case of English this focused on a media project involving working with a writer, a trip to a museum of film and pupils making their own video about the school. In the case of science the enrichment year comprised the 'Space Project' involving a trip to the National Space Centre and lots of investigations and skills-based work with opportunities to apply their knowledge (e.g., looking at forces in space, growing plants in space etc).

The conventional group comprised the lower sets in mathematics, English and science who followed a three year Key Stage 3 programme. There was also a plan for an 'Access Group' the following year comprising pupils who had achieved Level 3 at Key Stage 2 with 50 per cent of the Year 7 timetable being delivered by the form tutor and with a subsequent Two Year Key Stage 3 programme in Year 8 and Year 9.

Elsiemaud School

The case study visit took place in the Summer of 2006. At that time the first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 8.

Elsiemaud School is a very large mixed, 11-18 comprehensive school located in outer London. Its GCSE results are close to the national average though its score on the DfES value added indicator is below average.

The school joined Phase 2 of the Project and a two year Key Stage 3 was introduced in all subjects and for all pupils at the school. This decision was taken by the headteacher and senior management team, reportedly in response to teachers' frustration at the curricular content of Key Stage 3 and also pupils' behaviour.

Options were brought forward to Year 9 although plans for Key Stage 4 had not been finalised at the time of the visit. Thus, for example, pupils had made their Key Stage 4 option choices in Year 8 and could thus drop some Key Stage 3 National Curriculum subjects. This would mean that, for example, not all pupils would study history in Year 9. However, in terms of the teaching load of the history department the impact was, initially, minimal as the Key Stage 4 time allocation was greater than that in Key Stage 3 and thus fewer groups required teaching more often. In addition, it would mean that the pupils continuing with the subject would have actively chosen to do so.

It was felt that a two year Key Stage 3 would allow greater flexibility and focus at Key Stage 4 but also allow teachers to slim down the Key Stage 3 curriculum which was seen by some as too content heavy. It was hoped that this would enable staff to plan more interesting lessons for Key Stage 3 pupils and avoid a Year 8 dip. Departments had thus been encouraged by senior management to reduce the curriculum content.

Different subjects had adopted different approaches to the condensed curriculum. In one department the possibility of transfer between sets was seen as particularly important and so, for example, it was decided that all pupils should be entered for the SAT in Year 8. In another it had been decided to teach more varied curricula to different sets. It was decided to enter all pupils for the Key Stage 3 tests in Year 8.

Plans for Key Stage 4 were still under discussion with staff debating the merits of early entry to GCSE and, concomitantly, how to use saved time in Year 11. In the case of ICT it was planned that some Year 9 pupils should produce mock GCSE coursework while higher ability pupils might be entered early for examinations. Possibilities for using saved time arising from early entry to GCSE included offering AS level critical thinking skills in Year 11. This would offer a generic course to pupils who had entered GCSE examinations early but who did not wish to continue with them beyond GCSE level.

Amyruth School

The case study visit took place in Summer 2006. At that time the first cohort of accelerated pupils were in Year 11 (at the local high school) and the first cohort of Project pupils were in Year 9 (at the local high school).

Amyruth School is a middle school catering for pupils aged 9-13. It is located in a coastal town with a high level of deprivation among its population. The intake of the school includes a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school joined Phase 1 of the Project.

At this school, early entry of pupils for Key Stage 3 tests pre-dated the launch of the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project. Being a middle school, and reportedly at the behest of the local high school to which it was a feeder, there was an attraction in having pupils complete the Key Stage at their middle school rather than having Key Stage 3 straddle two schools. Respondents reported that teachers had initially not been in favour of the change and that some remained so. The two year Key Stage 3 was seen as a challenge thrown down to the three feeder middle schools by the high school and taken up with a degree of trepidation rather than as originating from within the school.

Initially all pupils followed a two year Key Stage 3 programme in all subjects. However, this was reduced, in all three of the middle schools, to the core subjects only. It was felt that they struggled to complete programmes of study in the more content heavy subjects and that an Ofsted inspection could easily conclude that they had signed off pupils as having completed their programme of study administratively when they had not done so in reality. Consequently the programme was reduced to covering the core subjects only.

Interviews suggested that the school seemed to operate with a slightly different conception of Key Stage 3 from the other case study schools with entry for the SAT test as the defining criterion for having completed a two year Key Stage 3.

At the end of Year 8, Amyruth's pupils went on to the local high School. Staff at the middle school however felt that the time saved had not been well utilised by the high school.

The middle school only entered its most able pupils for the Key Stage 3 tests and consequently, in terms of raw scores, looked very good in the school performance tables. The high school, meanwhile, were left entering the lower attaining pupils and consequently saw its Key Stage 3 league table position depressed.

Henryson School

The case study visit took place in Summer 2006. By that time the oldest cohort of Project pupils were in Year 9. The school had however previously run its own pilot with higher attaining pupils entering Key Stage 3 tests in Year 8 prior to joining the Project. These pupils were in Year 11 at the time of the visit.

Henryson School is a mixed, 11-16 school located in a city. Attainment at Key Stage 4 and progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 is above the national average. Levels of eligibility for free school meals are below the national average although the intake could not be described as advantaged.

The school chose to adopt a two year Key Stage 3 for a number of reasons. In particular, a desire to improve motivation, improve pace and progression, as a vehicle to improve the quality of teaching and learning, to avoid a Year 8 dip and to open up a more flexible Key Stage 4 were all cited as reasons. The idea for a shortened Key Stage 3 pre-dated the Project. Originally it was adopted as a means to accelerate learning although this subsequently changed as the programme was seen as a component of designing the curriculum as a 5-year package with different pathways to GCSE.

While the senior management team decided on the adoption of the policy, departments were able to choose whether or not to take part. A two year Key Stage 3 was followed in English, mathematics, science and the humanities. Art, one of the school's greatest strengths, was felt to depend in part on maturity and so a three year Key Stage was retained. Music, drama and technology also retained the conventional format.

In the case of English, all pupils followed a two year Key Stage 3 and all pupils working above Level 3 were entered for the Key Stage 3 tests during Year 8. In mathematics and science however only pupils who were anticipated to achieve Level 5 or higher were entered in Year 8.

In English, an enrichment programme was then provided in Year 9 including, for example, creative writing, media studies and poetry but also with some starting GCSE coursework. In Year 10 the decision was taken as to who completed GCSE English Literature and Language at the end of that year. AS level film studies and English were then available in Year 11.

The main benefits of the innovation were seen to be opening up a wider range of options in Key Stage 4 with an earlier acquisition of qualifications (with pupils having from 1 to 5 GCSEs on entering Year 11). In addition, the saved time allowed pupils to study for AS levels in Year 11. However, under the new model it was acknowledged that the opportunities for transferring between groups were limited and so, when determining groups, it was important to take into account maturity as well as attainment.

Huxbear School

The case study visit took place in Autumn 2006. The school began its Opening Minds programme in 2002 and the first cohort of pupils were in Year 11 at the time of the visit. The first cohort of Two Year Key Stage 3 Project pupils were however in Year 9.

Huxbear school is a mixed, 11-16 school located in a white working class area of outer London. The intake of the school, drawn from up to 80 feeder primary schools, has relatively low levels of prior attainment and high levels of eligibility for free school meals. Despite levels of attainment and progress, as measured by the DfES value added indicator, below the national average, attainment at Key Stage 3 and 4 has been improving and the school is now oversubscribed.

The school began offering an innovative curriculum to Year 7 pupils prior to joining the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project. The school took part in the RSA Opening Minds programme, offering an integrated curriculum to Year 7 pupils for ten (out of 25) one hour lessons per week. The ten Opening Minds lessons were taught by one or most often two teachers. This competence-based programme included elements of history, geography, technology, music, art, RE and ICT. Pupils were however taught English, mathematics, science and French under a conventional 3 year Key Stage 3 programme. It was felt that, owing to the accountability function of Key Stage 3 tests and historically low levels of Key Stage 3 attainment at the school, it would be difficult to gain support, for example from the LEA, for an integrated programme incorporating core subjects.

The Opening Minds programme involved teaching a series of projects, each lasting for half of a term taking, for example, a historical or geographical theme but incorporating art, music and other subjects into that study project. The teaching team were therefore required to act as generalists and would receive in service training from specialist teachers within the school. Opening Minds teaching could be daunting but also rewarding as teachers moved out of their traditional disciplinary area.

The integrated Year 7 programme was then followed by condensed courses in Year 8 and Year 9. Although pupils lacked some subject knowledge at the start of Year 8, it was felt that this was compensated for by, for example, the independent learning skills and team work skills they had acquired.

While in the earlier years of the Opening Minds programme teachers had been very careful to map the schemes of work onto the National Curriculum, on joining the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project they had felt able to be more flexible in the programme of study for Year 7. In addition the Senior Leadership Team had made it clear to teachers that the over-riding aim for Key Stage 3 was for pupils to be ready for Key Stage 4.

ANNEX G - OTHER EARLY ENTRANTS TO 2005 KEY STAGE 3 TESTS

Some schools in England that were not participating in the Two Year Key Stage 3 Project chose to enter at least some of their Year 8 pupils for the Key Stage 3 tests in 2005 and it is interesting to compare the test results of those entrants with the results of other pupils. The total number of pupils entered early for mathematics and English are shown in Table G1.

Table G1 - Number of early entrants to 2005 Key Stage 3 tests

	Mathematics	English
Phase 1 Project schools	1271	1370
Phase 2 Project schools	42	31
Non-Project schools	6162	6070

At many schools, the number of early entrants was very low. For example, in English some 357 schools entered only one pupil early for the Key Stage 3 English tests. It is perhaps therefore more instructive to focus our attention on pupils attending schools where at least 10 pupils were entered early for the tests as this may be indicative of a school policy on early entry.

In order to make a fair comparison between schools entering pupils early for Key Stage 3 tests and those entering pupils when in Year 9 it is important to differentiate between schools that entered the whole year group for the tests and those that chose to enter a smaller proportion of the year group as the latter group may have chosen to enter only those pupils they believed were likely to do well in their tests.

Table G2 and Table G3 show the type of schools that entered at least 10 pupils early for their Key Stage 3 mathematics and English tests, differentiating between schools that entered at least 90 per cent of their cohort and those schools entering less than 90 per cent of their Year 8 cohort.

Focusing first on Table G2, we see that among those schools entering at least 90 per cent of the cohort, the only Project school to choose to do so was a grammar school. Among the 24 non-Project schools choosing to do so some 13 were either grammar schools, middle schools or City Technology Colleges. While some 8 non-Project comprehensive schools chose to enter at least 90 per cent of the Year 8 cohort for the mathematics test, no Phase 1 Project schools did so.

A policy of entering only part of the cohort early for the mathematics tests was more common among comprehensive schools.

Table G2 - Types of schools entering Year 8 pupils early for 2005 Key Stage 3 mathematics tests

		Comprehensive	CTC	Grammar	Middle
Schools entering at least 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	0	0	1	0
	Non-project schools	8	4	9	3
Schools entering less than 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	5	0	0	4
	Non-project schools	23	1	0	3

The corresponding table relating to schools with early entrants for the English tests is shown as Table G3.

Table G3 - Types of schools entering Year 8 pupils early for 2005 Key Stage 3 English tests

		Comprehensive	CTC	Grammar	Middle
Schools entering at least 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	1	0	0	0
	Other	8	3	12	1
Schools entering less than 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	7	0	0	4
	Other	16	0	0	3

Once again, schools entering all of their Year 8 cohort are dominated by grammar schools, City Technology Colleges and middle schools.

Key Stage 3 Mathematics test levels achieved by early entrants from comprehensive schools

Next we focus our attention on the Key Stage 3 test results achieved by pupils attending comprehensive schools. Here we split this group of pupils into those who previously achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2 and those who achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2.

The Key Stage 3 test results of those who previously achieved Level 4 in Key Stage 2 mathematics are shown in Table G4. The proportion of all entrants (from all year groups) who achieved each of the level thresholds are shown in the top line of the table.

Table G4 - Key Stage 3 Mathematics test results of pupils who achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2: Percentage who passed thresholds for levels 4 to 7 (comprehensive schools only)

		Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Number of pupils	Number of schools
	All entrants	99%	91%	58%	11%	246713	2755
Schools entering at least 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Non-Project schools	99%	90%	48%	4%	729	7
Schools entering less than 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	100%	91%	47%	2%	336	5
	Non-Project schools	99%	99%	79%	9%	312	17

The corresponding figures for early entrants who had previously achieved Level 5 in their Key Stage 2 mathematics tests are shown in Table G5.

Table G5 - Key Stage 3 Mathematics test results of pupils who achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2: Percentage who passed thresholds for levels 5 to 8 (comprehensive schools only)

		Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Number of pupils	Number of schools
	All entrants	100%	98%	73%	15%	130379	2754
Schools entering at least 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Non-Project schools	100%	97%	58%	9%	484	7
Schools entering less than 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	99%	96%	55%	4%	255	5
	Non-Project schools	100%	99%	62%	7%	830	21

Key Stage 3 English test levels achieved by early entrants from comprehensive schools

Table G6 and Table G7 are the corresponding tables for early entrants for the Key Stage 3 English tests. Once again, the data relate to pupils attending comprehensive schools only, differentiating between schools that entered more than 90% or less than 90% of the cohort, those participating in the Phase 1 of the Two Year Key Stage Project and other schools. Table G6 relates to pupils who had previously achieved Level 4 in the Key Stage 2 English test and Table G7 relates to those who achieved Level 5.

Table G6 - Key Stage 3 English test results of pupils who achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2: Percentage who passed thresholds for levels 4 to 7 (comprehensive schools only)

		Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Number of pupils	Number of schools
	All entrants	99%	88%	27%	2%	246224	2754
Schools entering at least 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	97%	81%	12%	1%	98	1
	Non-Project schools	99%	90%	21%	0.3%	777	7
Schools entering less than 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	100%	90%	27%	1%	417	7
	Non-Project schools	98%	81%	25%	2%	567	13

Table G7 - Key Stage 3 English test results of pupils who achieved Level 5 at Key Stage 2: Percentage who passed thresholds for levels 4 to 7 (comprehensive schools only)

		Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Number of pupils	Number of schools
	All entrants	100%	79%	26%	137606	2752
Schools entering at least 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	100%	71%	9%	56	1
	Non-Project schools	100%	75%	19%	530	7
Schools entering less than 90% of Year 8 pupils	Phase 1 Project schools	100%	80%	25%	362	7
	Non-Project schools	99%	65%	17%	484	14

Copies of this publication can be obtained from:

DfES Publications
P.O. Box 5050
Sherwood Park
Annesley
Nottingham
NG15 0DJ

Tel: 0845 60 222 60
Fax: 0845 60 333 60
Minicom: 0845 60 555 60
Online: www.dfespublications.gov.uk

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Produced by the Department for Education and Skills

ISBN 978 1 84478 902 3
Ref No: RR836
www.dfes.go.uk/research