Department
for Education

Summer Schools Programme for Disadvantaged Pupils: Overview Report

Research report

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NFER & Ecorys

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Executive summary

This is an independent evaluation of the first year of the Department for Education's Summer Schools programme for disadvantaged pupils. The main purpose of this initiative is to help those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and pupils looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority[1], to make a successful transition from primary to secondary school. A total of 1,763 Summer Schools were held across England between July and September 2012.

Key findings from the survey of schools

Key findings from the survey show that:

- The overwhelming majority (94 per cent) of schools surveyed considered their Summer School to be a success. Staff felt that the greatest impact was on pupils' social and emotional wellbeing.

- Half (50 per cent) of the disadvantaged pupils invited to a Summer School attended at least once. Getting pupils to attend was one of the most common challenges identified by schools.

- Schools could invite other pupils making the transition to attend the Summer School if a disadvantaged pupil turned down a planned place, or if there was a surplus available from the funding for disadvantaged pupils. Schools could also use additional funding from other sources if they wished to. About three quarters (74 per cent) of schools surveyed offered places to non-disadvantaged pupils, who comprised 37 per cent of all Summer School attendees.

- Schools had two main aims for their Summer Schools: to prepare disadvantaged pupils socially and emotionally for transition and to secure general improvements in pupils' learning engagement. Fewer Summer Schools were set up specifically to improve pupils' academic attainment.

- The most common Summer School activities were team-building, arts and sports.

- Summer Schools were delivered in a combination of ways involving a range of personnel. The majority of Summer Schools involved school staff and volunteers. Relatively few Summer Schools were delivered entirely by external contractors.

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[1] Henceforth these two groups are referred to as disadvantaged pupils. All other pupils are termed non-disadvantaged for the purposes of this research.

- The median cost per pupil per week was £185, which was within the Department's funding allocation of £250 per week for disadvantaged pupils. The majority of schools (76 per cent) did not use additional funding for their Summer Schools.

- Summer Schools with higher numbers of pupils taking part reported lower costs per pupil. This suggests that schools were benefiting from economies of scale when catering for larger numbers of pupils. Summer Schools rated as highly successful had the lowest average cost per pupil, per week.

- The total costs were higher for Summer Schools with higher staffing ratios and for those offering a greater number of different activities. Costs were higher for Summer Schools offering residential experiences or numeracy activities.

- The overwhelming majority (95 per cent) of all responding schools (including 39 schools that initially signed up to run a Summer School but then withdrew) said they would apply to participate in the initiative in future.

Key findings from case-study schools

- Although five of the ten case-study schools had prior experience of delivering a Summer School, the Department's funding provided an opportunity to deliver a more ambitious programme, and to focus attention on disadvantaged pupils.

- Summer Schools offered a combination of curricular and enrichment activities with an emphasis on 'fun'.

- Many of the case-study schools reported challenges in accessing timely and complete data about pupils eligible for the programme, despite liaising with their feeder primaries. Typical challenges included having to liaise with large numbers of schools, getting information too late and receiving incomplete information.

- Case-study schools had different views on the optimum timing for running a Summer School during the summer holidays. An early session helped to maximise pupil and teacher availability, whereas a later session was more closely identified with starting Year 7.

- Partner organisations played a key role, ranging from providing arts, media and sports expertise to managing Summer Schools.

- Summer Schools enabled teachers and other staff to get an insight to pupils' academic and pastoral support needs. All case-study schools put in place strategies to support individual disadvantaged pupils once they started in Year 7 informed by the needs identified during the Summer School.

- Pupils felt the Summer School had helped them to develop the social confidence to mix with their peers and teachers. Some pupils welcomed the opportunity for a 'fresh start'. However, pupils reported a widespread fear of bullying which persisted despite taking part in a Summer School.

- There were mixed views on the potential longer-term impact on pupils' attainment, but all the case-study schools had observed potential benefits for attendance and classroom behaviour. Case-study schools lacked strategies for more formal monitoring and evaluation.

- The most challenging aspects were a lower than expected take-up from disadvantaged pupils and a limited success in engaging parents and carers. Family learning and celebration events were the most successful activities in encouraging parental engagement.

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings from this study indicate that the Summer Schools programme has been successfully implemented by the vast majority of schools that applied to take part. The initiative is viewed extremely positively by schools, pupils and their parents/carers. As with any new programme, some of the difficulties encountered relate to issues that could be addressed by providing schools with a greater lead-in time to plan and develop their provision. The funding allocation for the programme was sufficient and allowed for a broad range of Summer School activities to be delivered. The Summer Schools programme appears to be supporting disadvantaged pupils' social and emotional wellbeing in particular, providing a positive foundation for successful transition. There is a need to improve take up by disadvantaged pupils and focus more directly on the impact of Summer Schools in improving their attainment.

The main recommendations for schools are:

- Build good relationships with feeder primary schools in advance and involve them in the planning. Develop relationships with disadvantaged pupils and their parents/carers to encourage take up, and consult them about the content and timing of the Summer School.

- Where Summer Schools are offered to other pupils, in addition to those who are disadvantaged, ensure that there are strategies in place (such as individual target-setting and mentoring) to identify their needs and support their learning.

- Consider including a combination of activities such as 'fun' sports and arts, together with numeracy and literacy activities delivered through engaging themes. This ensures that pupils have a well-rounded experience and remain

engaged. Ensure the issue of bullying is addressed in sufficient detail. Holding a celebration event to recognise pupils' success can engage parents and carers.

- Put strategies in place to evaluate the success of the Summer School in achieving its objectives, including improving the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

In addition, the Department may wish to consider:

- Providing earlier notification of Summer School funding to schools in order to help them plan and source high quality extended activities.

- Disseminating effective Summer School practice to schools particularly in relation to identifying disadvantaged pupils and encouraging them to attend.

- Promoting the Pupil Premium aims to ensure schools prioritise them within their Summer Schools.

About the study

The NFER and Ecorys undertook an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the Summer Schools programme in terms of its implementation and early outcomes. The main study methods were:

- A postal and online survey completed by 877 schools (September – October)[2].

- Case-study visits in ten schools involving qualitative interviews with staff, pupils and parents/carers. Initial visits were undertaken during the delivery of the Summer School provision (July – September) and follow up visits took place after transition into Year 7 (October – December).

- The evaluation also included a pupil survey, to explore the impact of the programme on pupils' self-confidence and readiness for school. The findings of the pupil survey will be reported on separately later in 2013.

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[2] Survey sample 1,597 (response rate 55 per cent).

1.   Introduction

This overview report presents the findings of a mixed method research study undertaken by the NFER and Ecorys. It was commissioned by the Department for Education[3] to evaluate the implementation and early outcomes of their 2012 Summer Schools programme for disadvantaged pupils.[4]

1.1 About the Summer Schools programme

In September 2011, the Deputy Prime Minister announced that £50 million would be made available for a Summer Schools programme. The main purpose of this initiative is to help disadvantaged pupils, specifically those eligible for FSM and those looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority[5], to make a successful transition from primary to secondary school. This is one of a number of approaches to raise the attainment and improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, which form part of the Pupil Premium (DfE, 2012a, DfE, 2012b).

The Department has the following specific aims for the Summer Schools programme:

- to allow pupils to see their new school environment;

- to allow schools to familiarise themselves with their new pupils, including identifying any additional needs they may have; and

- to improve the educational attainment of disadvantaged children, ensuring gains in primary school are not lost on transfer.

Participating secondary schools[6] were free to design their programme based on the needs of their incoming Year 7 cohort. Schools could decide on specific aims and objectives, the activities they wished to deliver, and whether these were offered in a single block (of one or two weeks) or broken into regular sessions across a longer period over the summer holidays (from July to September 2012). The Department provided each participating secondary school with £500 per place for each disadvantaged pupil[7], which it anticipated would fund two weeks' worth of activities. Schools could choose to offer a one-week Summer School, in which case they could apply for funding of £250 per disadvantaged pupil. There was a clear expectation

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[3] Henceforth referred to as the Department.

[4] Henceforth referred to as the Summer Schools programme.

[5] Henceforth these two groups are referred to as disadvantaged pupils. All other pupils are termed non-disadvantaged for the purposes of this research.

[6] This includes maintained schools (including special schools), Academies (including special schools), Free Schools (including special schools) and non-maintained special schools. The programme was focused on transition into Year 7 in all schools.

[7] Funding was provided to schools for the lower of the two following numbers: 'disadvantaged pupils invited to attend' and 'summer school places set up'.

that funding was to be used to provide a Summer School for disadvantaged pupils and where schools advised the Department they had chosen not to deliver a Summer School, the funding was recovered. It was open to schools to invite other pupils making the transition to attend the Summer School if a disadvantaged pupil turned down a planned place, or if there was a surplus available from the funding for disadvantaged pupils. Schools could also use additional funding from other sources if they wished to.

The Summer Schools Programme opened to eligible schools in March 2012 and schools were asked to opt in to the programme by the end of April 2012. They received confirmation of their provisional funding allocation in May and half of this was paid to schools in advance. The first instalment of funding was paid on the 29th June (for maintained schools), and on the 5th July for Academies and Free Schools. The Summer Schools Programme was a popular initiative and a total of 1,763 Summer schools were held across England. In November 2012, the Schools Minister announced that the Summer Schools programme will run again in 2013 (DfE, 2012a).

1.2 Evidence from previous research into Summer Schools

The Summer Schools programme has been prompted by evidence that transfer to secondary school is a time of particular vulnerability for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Such pupils typically experience a significant dip in their learning as they move into secondary school, which contributes to the widening gap in performance between those from more and less advantaged backgrounds (Evangelou *et al.*, 2008; Goodman and Gregg, 2010; Evans *et al.*, 2010). Other research evidence has found that many children experience a decline in wellbeing from childhood to adolescence (Gutman *et al.*, 2009). Combined with findings which suggest that school engagement during the early teenage years is a significant predictor of later GCSE achievement, this would indicate that strategies to ensure a successful transition to secondary school, particularly those that include developing new friendships and increasing interest in school and schoolwork, are essential in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils (Gutman and Vorhaus, 2012).

The rationale for Summer Schools is further evidenced by the loss in pupils' academic performance during the summer holidays, commonly referred to as 'summer learning loss'. Cooper *et al.* (1996) analysed findings from the USA (which has an extended summer vacation) and found that children lose an average of 2.6 months of grade-level equivalency in mathematics skills over the summer. However, there were stark differences in the summer learning loss experienced by pupils from different backgrounds. In reading, the results of middle-class children improved over the summer, while lower-income children lost ground, resulting in an average gap of three months in reading skills. Similar findings have been reported in England, with Sainsbury *et al.* (1998) finding evidence of a decline of about a third of a standard

deviation in pupils' reading scores between the Key Stage 2 assessments in May and an equivalent assessment administered in September of the same year, when they had transferred to secondary school.

There is a body of research from the UK and overseas on the effectiveness of summer schools (see Cooper *et al.*, 2000; Mason *et al.*, 2000; Matsudaira, 2008; Terzian *et al.*, 2009). Common findings include measurable improvements in mathematics, English and self-concept, with Cooper *et al.* (2000) reporting an effect size[8] of 0.2 for 'remedial' summer schools and Terzian *et al.* (2009) reporting effects ranging from just below zero to 0.25. The weight of evidence shows that summer schools are particularly effective for pupils with low attainment and from disadvantaged backgrounds (Cooper *et al.*, 2000; Terzian *et al.*, 2009).

Some of the common characteristics of effective summer school provision, identified from previous research (Cooper *et al.*, 2000; Mason *et al.*, 2000; Matsudaira, 2008; Terzian *et al.*, 2009) include:

- clear aims

- high quality staff

- high adult:pupil ratios and smaller programmes

- individual target-setting and feedback

- group activities coupled with tailored support and metacognitive strategies.

Taken together, this body of research recommended that the programme content of extended summer provision should offer real-world relevance and intellectual challenge coupled with fun activities and celebration of achievement. Key success indicators are: attendance/retention, pupil enjoyment, confidence and motivation, positive aspirations, smooth transition to secondary school, positive wellbeing and increased attainment.

1.3   The aims of the evaluation

The main purpose of this evaluation is to establish the effectiveness of the Summer Schools programme in terms of its implementation and early outcomes. The aims are as follows:

- to provide evidence of how the Summer School funding is being spent;

- to evaluate the implementation of the Summer Schools programme (especially in relation to familiarising primary pupils with their new school

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[8] The size of the difference between two groups taking account of the standard deviation of scores. The Education Endowment Foundation (Coe *et al*, 2013) considers an effect size of 0.2 to indicate a 'moderate' effect, equivalent to around three months of progress for a primary pupil.

environment, familiarising schools with the needs of their new pupils and improving the educational attainment of disadvantaged children);

▪ to identify evidence of effective practice, which can be shared with participating schools; and

▪ to enable the Department to refine the Summer Schools policy in the future.

The research questions are set out in Appendix 1.

1.4 About this report

This report sets out:

▪ details of the evaluation and design methods (Section 2)

▪ findings from the school survey (Section 3)

▪ findings from the case studies (Section 4)

▪ conclusions and recommendations for policy and practice (Section 5).

There are three outputs from this evaluation: this overview report, a short key findings report for schools focusing on effective Summer School practise and a report quantifying the impact of the programme on pupils' self-confidence and readiness for school.

2. Evaluation, design and methods

This section sets out the approaches and methods used in the evaluation. It provides an overview of the evaluation design and details of the sampling and response rates.

The research reported on here was undertaken in two strands[9]:

- Strand 1: Survey of participating schools (September – October 2012).
- Strand 2: Case-study visits with participating schools (Phase 1: July – September, Phase 2: October – December 2012).

2.1 Strand 1: Survey of participating schools

The first strand of the evaluation was a survey of schools participating in the Summer Schools programme.

2.1.1 Sampling and response rates

The sample was drawn from 1,981 schools that had applied to the Department to participate in the 2012 Summer School programme. The NFER drew a random sample of 1,604 schools from this list. In order to ensure a representative sample, the NFER's Register of Schools[10] was used to check particular characteristics of the sampled schools against the population of all schools who had applied. Three characteristics were checked, namely: the proportion of pupils receiving FSM (high/medium/low), school attainment (high and low performing) and location (urban or rural). All 104 available special schools were selected to ensure they were sufficiently represented in the sample. A few of the sampled schools had closed or amalgamated and these were subsequently removed from the sample. A total of 1,597 schools (comprising 1,178 secondary, 15 middle and 104 special schools) were sent a paper questionnaire together with details of the online version in September 2012. The target response rate was 600 schools and the achieved sample was 877 schools, giving a 55 per cent response rate and resulting in a representative sample (see Appendix 2 for further details).

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[9] There was also a third strand (a pupil survey) which will be reported on separately.

[10] The Register of Schools is a database containing all schools in England. It holds three main categories of data: basic information on schools, including contact details, year groups and the type of school; contextual data including number of pupils, percentage of pupils in receipt of FSM, and the percentage of pupils who are defined as having English as an additional language; and achievement data.

2.1.2 Survey design

The school survey was designed to gather information on the main characteristics of Summer Schools, together with schools' views on their early success and impact. It consisted of 22 questions, mainly in the form of 'closed' items, to make it quick and easy to complete. A small number of open-ended questions were included to enable respondents to clarify their answers and provide additional information. The questionnaire was piloted in seven schools participating in the Summer Schools initiative and the team made amendments in response to teachers' comments. The questionnaire was designed to be answered by a member of staff in the school who had overall responsibility for the Summer School (e.g. headteacher, deputy headteacher, or senior leader with responsibility for pastoral support). A full version of the survey can be found in Appendix 3.

2.1.3 Survey data analysis

In order to explore whether the aims, objectives or delivery of Summer Schools varied systematically between schools with different characteristics the team carried out descriptive analysis of all of the survey data, as well as significance tests on selected variables. The team also carried out latent class (segmentation) analysis to identify whether the survey responses could be used to divide schools into meaningful groups of schools offering particular types of Summer Schools.

2.2 Strand 2: Case-study visits with participating schools

The second strand of the evaluation involved qualitative data collection with schools, pupils, parents and carers participating in the Summer School programme. In-depth case-study visits to a sample of ten participating schools were conducted in two phases, to gather evidence from the Summer School programme while it was being delivered, and to provide an opportunity for follow-up.

2.2.1 Case-study sampling

Ten case-study schools were sampled from the 1,597 schools in the survey sample, and cross-matched with NFER data regarding FSM bandings. The case-study sample frame was constructed to take into account the following:

- school types

- proportions of FSM pupils

- rural/urban profile

- Summer School characteristics (to ensure a mix of one- and two-week programmes, and taking into account descriptive characteristics regarding the focus of the activities and the modes of delivery to be used).

In addition to the above, one of the schools was purposively selected to provide an example of a Summer School for which the management was sub-contracted to an external organisation, whilst applying the other criteria. The final sample included four maintained schools, four Academies, one Free School and one special school. A summary of the case-study sample is provided in Appendix 4.

2.2.2 Fieldwork design

The fieldwork was designed in two phases, as follows:

- Phase 1 Case-study visits: An initial set of ten case-study visits undertaken during the delivery of the Summer Schools provision in July – September.

- Phase 2 Case-study visits: A lighter-touch follow-up visit to the same set of ten schools during the autumn term, to explore the early outcomes and to gain a fuller picture of the costs associated with running a Summer School. This work took place in October – December.

Each case study included qualitative fieldwork with pupils, parents and carers, school staff and partner organisations involved in the delivery of schemes. Semi-structured interviews were carried out face-to-face wherever possible. The following table provides a summary of the total number of case-study interviews.

Table 2.1 Case-study interviews

Stakeholder group	Numbers (achieved)	
	Phase 1	Phase 2 [11]
Pupils	61	28
Parents	22	12
Lead contact	12	8
Headteacher/deputy	7	3
Teachers and support staff	11	8
Partner organisations	4	2
Total	**117**	**61**

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[11] Phase 2 was designed as lighter-touch follow-up visit. Fewer interviews were conducted during this phase in order to reduce the burden on schools.

A short pro-forma on costs was also distributed to the lead contact for each school, to capture basic information about the time and resource inputs associated with running their Summer School (See Appendix 5).

2.2.3 Case-study data analysis

The case-study interviews were written up into a structured template based on the research questions for the evaluation (see Appendix 1). This allowed for the triangulation of evidence between different stakeholders, consideration of the data collected in individual cases at two time points and a comparative analysis of the evidence for different schools, in relation to the core sampling criteria.

3. Findings from the school survey

- Just over half of the schools surveyed (51 per cent) were already planning to hold a Summer School before the Department's Summer School programme was announced.

- Schools had two main overarching aims for their Summer Schools: to prepare disadvantaged pupils socially and emotionally for transition and to secure general improvements in pupils' academic progress and capacity to learn. Few Summer Schools, however, were set up specifically to improve pupils' attainment.

- The most common Summer School activities were team-building, arts and sports activities.

- Summer Schools were held at different times throughout the summer holidays, although most took place during the two weeks immediately after the end of the summer term. Most Summer Schools ran for two weeks.

- Summer Schools were delivered in a combination of ways involving a range of personnel. The majority of Summer Schools involved staff and volunteers from the secondary school. Relatively few Summer Schools were delivered entirely by external contractors. The average staffing ratios were 2.4 pupils per adult and 4.8 pupils per teacher.

- Half (50 per cent) of the disadvantaged pupils offered a Summer School place actually attended at least once. Getting disadvantaged pupils to attend was one of the most common challenges faced by schools.

- About three quarters (74 per cent) of surveyed schools offered places to non-disadvantaged pupils and over a third (37 per cent) of their Summer School attendees were not eligible for the funding.

- The median cost of running a Summer School for all participating pupils was £7,833. The median cost per pupil per week was £185, which is within the per pupil allocation of £250 provided by the Department. The majority of schools (76 per cent) did not receive any additional funding for their Summer Schools.

- On average, schools had a small surplus of around £49 a week from their funding per disadvantaged pupil who actually attended.

- Summer Schools with higher numbers of pupils taking part reported lower costs per pupil. This suggests that schools were benefiting from

economies of scale when catering for larger numbers of pupils.

- The total costs were higher for Summer Schools with higher staffing ratios and for those offering a greater number of different activities. Costs were higher for Summer Schools offering residential experiences or numeracy activities. Summer Schools rated as highly successful had the lowest average cost per pupil, per week.

- The overwhelming majority (94 per cent) of schools considered their Summer School to be a success. Staff felt that the greatest impact was on pupils' social and emotional wellbeing.

- The overwhelming majority (95 per cent) of all responding schools (including 39 schools that initially signed up to run a Summer School but then withdrew) said they would apply to participate in the initiative in future.

This chapter investigates the implementation of the Summer Schools programme using key findings from the school survey. The following sections cover:

- the rationale behind offering a Summer School (3.1)

- designing a Summer School (3.2)

- running a Summer School, including how the funding is being spent (3.3)

- the success and impact of Summer Schools (3.4)

- common patterns in Summer School aims, design and activities (3.5).

The survey was sent out to 1,597 secondary schools in September 2012. Responses were received from a total of 877 schools,[12] 838 of which actually ran Summer Schools. The remaining 39 schools initially signed up to run a Summer School but then withdrew. Their survey responses show this was mainly because schools felt they had insufficient time to plan and organise a Summer School. A small number of these schools also reported difficulties due to a lack of pupil interest and take up.

Most of the survey respondents were teachers, including members of the senior leadership team (52 per cent of respondents) and teachers with other roles (17 per cent). Further details of the achieved sample are provided in Appendix 2. A copy of the survey populated with the overall responses to each question is presented in Appendix 3.

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[12] A response rate of 55 per cent.

3.1   Offering a Summer School

This section describes schools' overarching aims and rationales of surveyed schools in deciding to offer a Summer School for disadvantaged pupils.

3.1.1 The aims of Summer Schools

Findings from the survey indicate that Summer Schools were usually designed with multiple aims and objectives (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: The main aims of Summer Schools
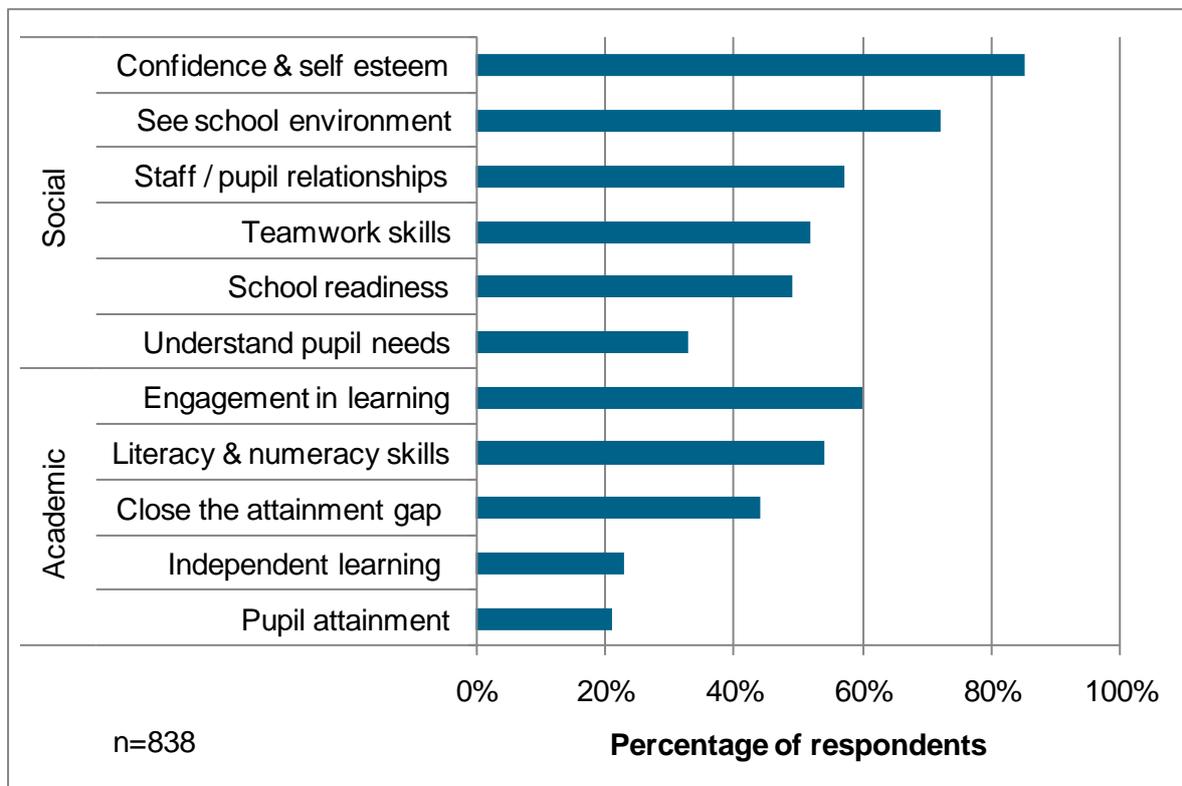
Of the 838 schools surveyed that ran a Summer School, most were designed to enhance pupil confidence and self-esteem (85 per cent). Combined with other common aims such as improving pupils' familiarity with the new school environment (72 per cent) and developing relationships between staff and pupils (57 per cent), this would suggest that overall, the main objective of schools in delivering their Summer School was to support disadvantaged pupils' social and emotional wellbeing in order to prepare them for transition.

Another common group of aims were related to improving pupils' learning. Sixty per cent of respondents said their Summer School aimed to support pupils' engagement with learning and just over half (54 per cent) aimed to develop pupils' literacy and

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numeracy skills. Fewer schools, however, had explicit aims to close the attainment gap (44 per cent) or improve pupil attainment (21 per cent).

Schools were asked to add any other key aims. The most common additional aim was to provide opportunities for pupils to make friends with other pupils before starting their new secondary school. Other objectives included building relationships between staff and parents, providing opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to participate in activities outside of school, and offering a childcare facility to parents/carers in the summer holidays.

There was no statistically significant[13] relationship between schools' aims for their Summer School and the size of the school's Year 7 cohort.

The team carried out some additional analysis to identify any differences between schools in relation to their Ofsted inspection results[14]. This showed that those schools with an Ofsted rating of requiring improvement or inadequate, were more likely to design their Summer Schools with the aim of improving attainment and developing the literacy and numeracy skills of disadvantaged pupils.

(See Section 3.5 for further information on the aims held by different groups of schools.)

3.2   Designing a Summer School

This section discusses the ways in which the Summer Schools programme was implemented by participating schools. It includes when Summer Schools were held, their duration, who attended and the common reasons for holding a Summer School.

3.2.1 Offering a Summer School

Figure 3.2 shows that just over half of the 838 surveyed schools which ran a Summer School were already planning to do so before the Department's Summer School programme was announced.

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[13] All differences identified as 'statistically significant' are significant at the level *p.* <0.05.

[14] This analysis used Ofsted data on participating schools' most recent inspection ratings. This showed that 544 schools were graded as outstanding/good and 297 were graded as requiring improvement/inadequate.

Figure 3.2: Schools already planning to run a Summer School in 2012
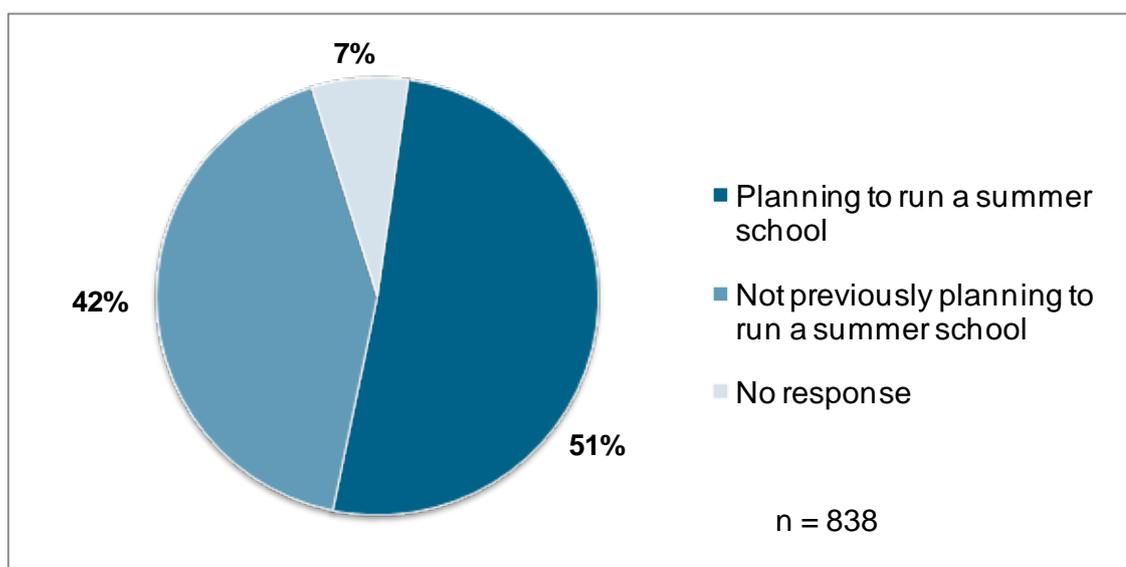
Around a quarter of the surveyed schools already planning to run Summer Schools in 2012 reported that they had changed their plans to meet the aims of the Department's programme. The most common changes made by these 233 schools were: increasing the duration of the Summer School (54 per cent), changing the activities on offer (50 per cent) and focusing provision on 'disadvantaged' pupils specifically (49 per cent).

Summer Schools were most often designed and planned by senior school staff, teachers and support staff from the school. Where schools drew upon the ideas, support and resources of others in developing their Summer School provision, external providers were the most common group (37 per cent). Very few schools involved pupils (18 per cent), feeder primary schools (14 per cent) or parents/carers (six per cent) in the design of their Summer School.

3.2.2 The reach of Summer Schools

The Summer Schools programme was focused on disadvantaged pupils (i.e. those eligible for FSM or pupils looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority). Schools could deliver additional places using any surplus from their Summer School funding. They could also offer planned places turned down by disadvantaged pupils to other pupils making the transition if they felt those pupils would benefit. Schools could also use additional funding from other sources if they wished to. The majority of schools (74 per cent) invited other students to participate. Figure 3.3 shows the distribution of participating schools by their target group of pupils invited to Summer Schools

Figure 3.3: Pupils invited by schools to participate in a Summer School

- Summer School offered to 'other' pupils in addition to disadvantaged pupils
- Summer School offered to disadvantaged pupils only
- Not sure
- No response

1% 2%
23%
74%
n=838
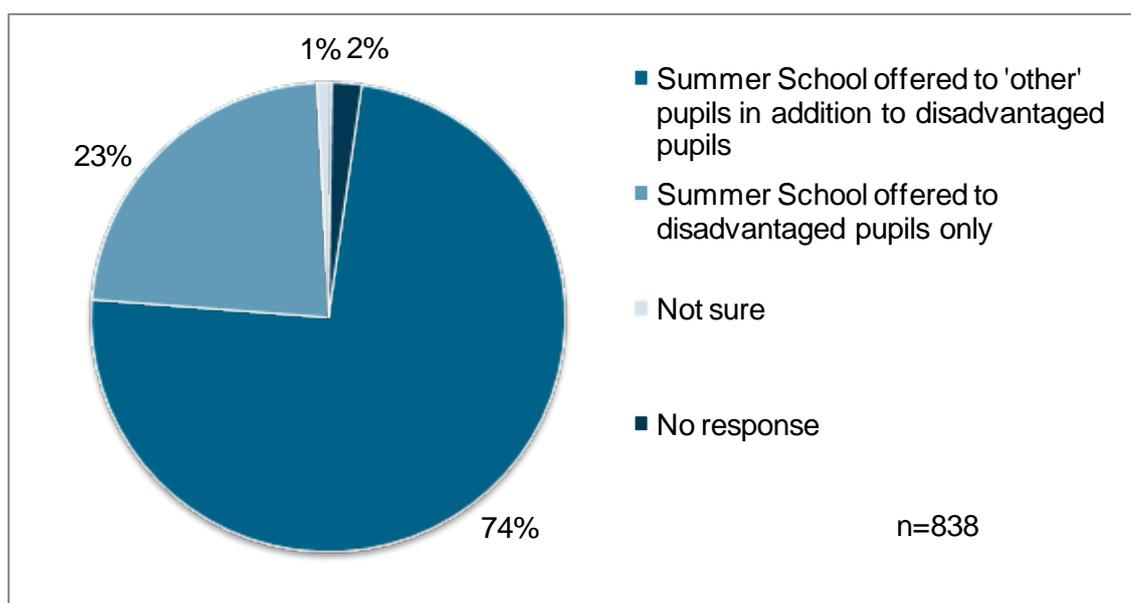
Just under a quarter (23 per cent) of the 624 schools inviting other pupils to take part offered a place to *all* pupils joining the school. Others focused on specific groups of pupils, including those identified as vulnerable by virtue of a combination of factors (13 per cent); those considered likely to struggle with the primary-secondary transition (ten per cent); and pupils lacking in confidence or self-esteem (eight per cent).

3.2.3 The duration and timing of Summer Schools

The duration of Summer Schools ranged from two days to six weeks[15] with the majority (54 per cent) of Summer Schools lasting two weeks. There was no relationship between the size of the Year 7 cohort and the duration of the Summer School.

Participating schools held their Summer Schools at different times throughout the summer holidays, although most scheduled them during the two weeks immediately after the end of the summer term[16] (47 per cent of participating schools held their Summer School in the week commencing 23rd July 2012 and 34 per cent in the week commencing the 30th July).

There was slight dip in the number of Summer Schools held in the middle of the summer holidays, but some schools chose to hold their Summer Schools at the end

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[15] Four schools ran a summer school for two days and a further four schools ran a summer school for six weeks.

[16] Applicable to most schools in England.

of the summer holidays, just before the beginning of the new academic year[17] (26 per cent in the week commencing 20th August and 18 per cent in the week commencing 27th August[18]).

3.3 Running a Summer School

This section sets out approaches taken by schools to recruit disadvantaged pupils to participate in Summer Schools and their attendance rates. It explores the activities provided by Summer Schools, the challenges they encountered and how Summer School funding was spent.

3.3.1 Identifying and recruiting pupils

Most schools surveyed said they found the process of identifying and recruiting disadvantaged pupils (i.e. those eligible for FSM and pupils looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority), without creating a sense of stigma, to be either 'very easy' (34 per cent) or 'quite easy' (35 per cent). Schools did this by using a number of strategies. As reported above, a minority (14 per cent) of secondary schools involved primary schools in designing their Summer Schools, but a majority (59 per cent) of schools said they consulted with their feeder primaries about which disadvantaged pupils to invite and 47 per cent per cent said they relied entirely on feeder primaries to identify disadvantaged pupils[19]. Other less common methods to identify disadvantaged pupils included schools using local authority information (28 per cent) and liaising with the Virtual Looked After Children Head[20] (one per cent).

Some schools took positive steps to address or avoid any stigma associated with a programme targeted on disadvantaged pupils. Strategies included widening the Summer School offer to a broader range of pupils such as whole year groups[21], inviting friends and siblings of disadvantaged pupils (18 per cent); developing a range of targeted and tailored communication to parents/carers, including phone calls and face-to-face meetings (16 per cent); and not emphasising the focus on disadvantaged pupils when describing the selection criteria (11 per cent).

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[17] Applicable to most schools in England.

[18] Note that schools could spread their Summer Schools over more than one week, so percentages reported here total to more than 100 per cent.

[19] This includes schools which extended the invitation to the entire Year 7 year group.

[20] Local authority officers whose role it is to champion the educational needs of the children looked after by the authority and to track and monitor their attainment as if those children attended a single school.

[21] Schools' ratings of the difficulty of identifying and recruiting disadvantaged pupils to apply without stigma was statistically significantly related to the strategy of offering the Summer School to a broader range of pupils, with schools using this strategy less likely to report any difficulties (although this analysis was affected by low numbers of schools reporting this strategy).

3.3.2 Summer School attendance

The survey asked schools to report the number of disadvantaged pupils they invited to attend a Summer School, the number who agreed to take part and the number who actually attended at least once.

Schools' reports of the number of disadvantaged pupils they invited to attend a Summer School ranged from two to 600 pupils. Figure 3.4 shows the relationship between the average (median[22]) number of disadvantaged pupils who were invited, the percentage who agreed to take part, and the percentage who actually participated.

Figure 3.4: Retention rates of disadvantaged pupils invited to attend a Summer School
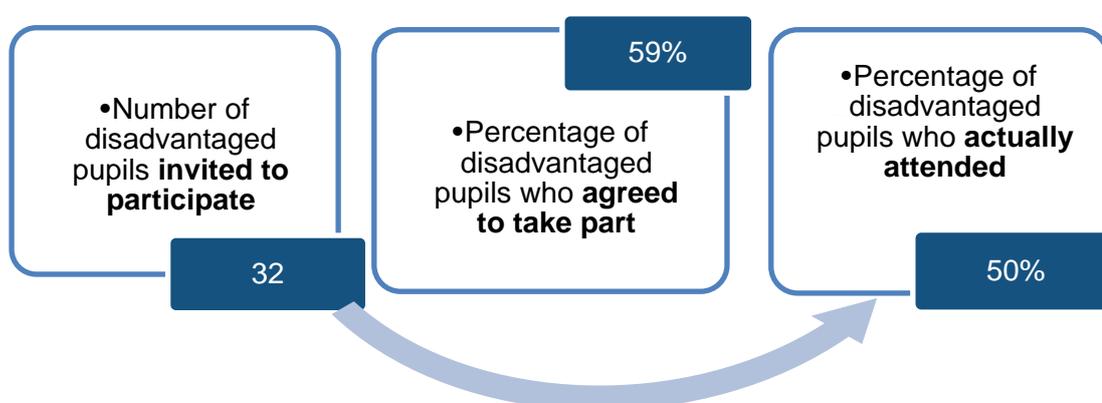
Figure 3.4 shows that half of the disadvantaged pupils invited to attend a Summer School actually took part (at least once). Most of those who initially agreed to take part actually went on to attend, with just a small dropout rate of about nine percentage points on average, per Summer School. The biggest drop off was between those disadvantaged pupils invited to participate and those and those who agreed to take part (41 percentage points).

It was open to schools to invite other pupils (in addition to the eligible disadvantaged group) to attend the Summer School, if a disadvantaged pupil turned down a planned place, if there was a surplus available from the funding for disadvantaged pupils, or if they wished to use additional funding from other sources. A majority (74 per cent) of the 838 surveyed schools reported doing so. The findings suggest that over a third (mean of 37 per cent) of Summer School attendees in the surveyed schools were not eligible for Summer School funding from the Department (i.e. these pupils were not from the two eligible disadvantaged groups).

The schools that invited 'other' pupils to attend reported slightly higher participation rates among disadvantaged pupils, of around an additional two pupils per Summer

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[22] The median is the middle value in a distribution. The median has been reported instead of the mean in this case due to outliers in the distribution, which can give rise to misleading results.

School. However, this may be related to the characteristics of the schools, rather than implying that opening up the Summer School to non-disadvantaged pupils necessarily boosted attendance among disadvantaged pupils. As may be expected, schools with larger Year 7 cohorts had larger numbers of pupils attending Summer School.[23] There were no statistically significant differences in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils among schools with higher and lower Ofsted ratings.

The survey asked schools to give the reasons why disadvantaged pupils did not attend the Summer School. Around half of schools (46 per cent) said they did not know why disadvantaged pupils did not attend because this information was not recorded. Where schools were aware of the reasons for low take up, the most common were:

- competition with other summer holiday activities, such as family holidays (39 per cent)

- unsuitable timing of the Summer School (20 per cent)

- parents/carers not giving permission for their child to attend (19 per cent)

- 'other reasons' (27 per cent) such as illness/medical appointments, pupils reluctant to attend – for example because friends were not invited (seven per cent), and religious activities, including Ramadan (seven per cent).

3.3.3 The delivery of Summer Schools, staffing ratios and the range of activities

Summer Schools were delivered in a combination of ways involving a range of people and organisations. Table 3.1 provides details of the staff, volunteers and organisations involved in delivering Summer Schools.

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[23] This analysis used the NFER's Register of Schools to calculate the size of the Year 7 cohort in the school year 2010-2011 and grouped schools into one of three categories: smallest (up to 133 Year 7 pupils); medium (134-185 Year 7 pupils); and largest (186 or more Year 7 pupils). The analysis (Chi-square test) showed that a higher proportion schools with the smallest Year 7 cohort had summer schools attended by less than 25 pupils whereas a higher proportion of schools with the largest Year 7 cohort had summer schools attended by 100 or more pupils.

Table 3.1: The range of people and organisations involved in delivering Summer Schools

People involved	Percentage of schools
School staff	88%
School staff working with external contractors	43%
External contractors only	13%
Local authority staff	5%
A group of schools working together *with* external contractors	2%
A group of schools working together *without* external contractors	2%
Parents/carers	2%
Others	12%
Number of schools	**838**

Schools could give more than one answer so percentages sum to more than 100.

The majority of Summer Schools were delivered by secondary school staff and volunteers. Just under half of all schools worked with external partners or contractors, with relatively few Summer Schools delivered entirely by external staff.

Table 3.2 shows the distribution of the total number of people involved in delivering the Summer Schools in 2012.

Table 3.2: Average number of people involved in Summer School delivery

Total number of people involved in delivery	Number of schools	Percentage of schools
Up to 10	363	44%
11 to 20	313	37%
21 to 30	101	12%
31 to 40	31	4%
31 to 50	12	1%
More than 50	12	1%
No response	6	1%
Total	**838**	**100%**

The mean number of people involved in delivering a Summer School was 14 and the most common number of people involved in the delivery was ten. This included teachers, parents/carers, support staff, external partner/contractor staff, adult volunteers and pupil volunteers (see Appendix 3 for further details). Figure 3.5 shows the activities provided by the Summer Schools.

Figure 3.5: Activities provided by the Summer Schools
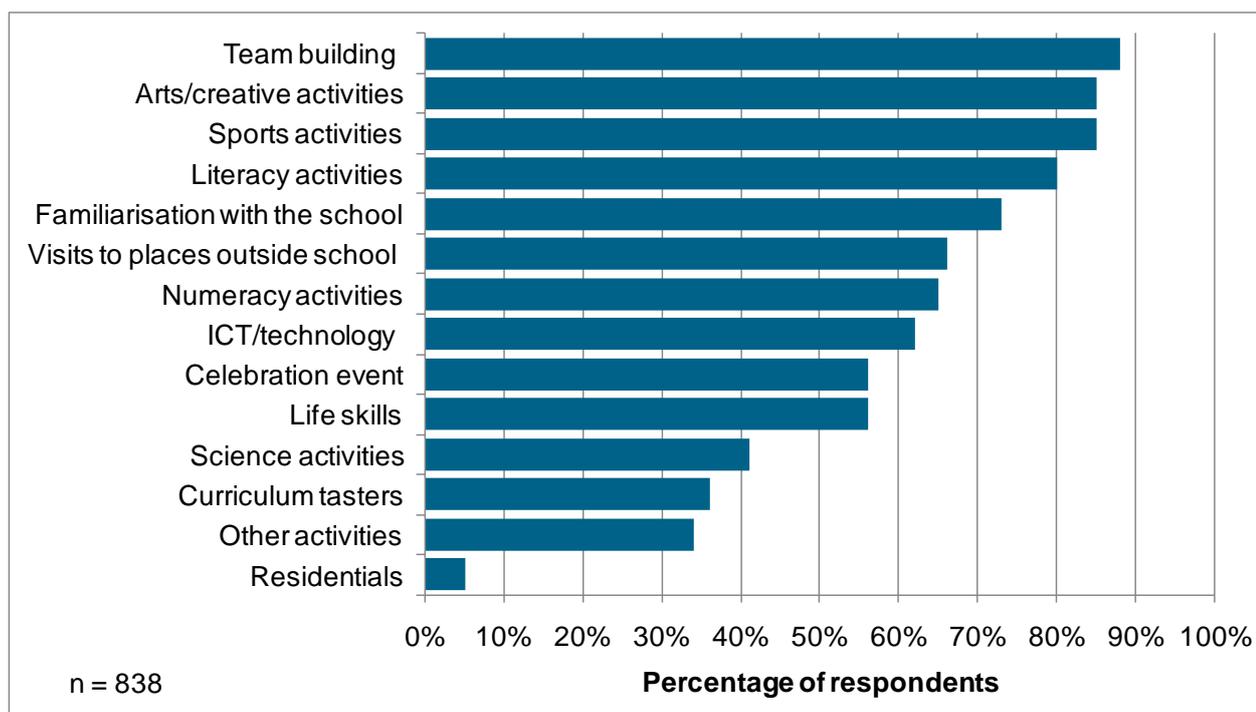
The most popular activities were team-building, arts and sports activities. Most Summer Schools provided literacy activities, and familiarisation with the layout of the school. It was common for Summer Schools to include visits to places outside the school. Fewer schools included science or curriculum tasters and very few offered residential experiences[24]. Section 3.5 (below) provides further insights into the activities delivered by different schools.

The mean pupil: adult ratio was 2.4 pupils to each adult and the mean pupil: teacher[25] ratio was 4.8 pupils to each teacher. By combining information on the ratios of pupils to adults (and teachers) with the information on the activities offered, the evaluation was able to explore whether certain types of activities were associated with significantly higher or lower mean staffing ratios.

Pupil: adult ratios were statistically significantly higher for Summer Schools offering:

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[24] i.e. group trips away involving at least one overnight stay.

[25] Not including external partner or contractor staff, some of whom may have been qualified teachers.

- residentials[26] (1.7 pupils per adult)

- science activities (2.2 pupils per adult)

- visits to places outside the school (2.3 pupils per adult).

Pupil: teacher ratios were statistically significantly higher for Summer Schools offering:

- literacy activities (4.5 pupils per teacher)

- curriculum tasters (4.3 pupils per teacher)

- science activities (4.2 pupils per teacher).

Pupil: teacher ratios were statistically significantly lower for Summer Schools offering:

- Life skills (5.3 pupils per teacher)

- Familiarisation with the layout of the school (5.3 pupils per teacher).

While it cannot be assumed that offering certain types of activities caused the observed differences in staff: pupil ratios, it does seem to make sense that certain types of activities (such as visits and residential activities) may require higher staffing ratios, and that other activities (such as literacy, science and curriculum tasters) would require the involvement of subject teachers.

There were no statistically significant relationships between the types of activities offered and the size of a school's Year 7 cohort. There were, however, statistically significant differences between the types of activities offered by schools with different Ofsted inspection results. Those graded as requiring improvement/inadequate were more likely to offer science, literacy and sports activities in comparison to schools with better Ofsted ratings.

3.3.5 The challenges associated with Summer Schools

Schools were asked to identify the greatest challenges associated with taking part in the programme from a list provided in the questionnaire (see Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6: The greatest challenges associated with Summer Schools

n = 838
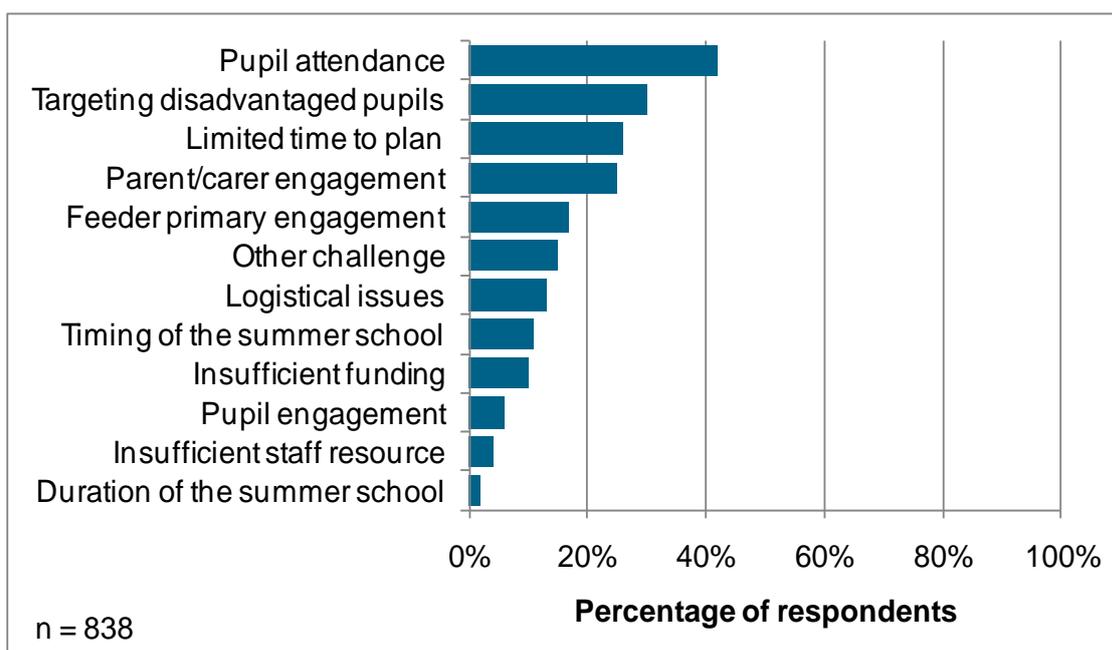
Figure 3.6 shows that pupil attendance was the most common challenge associated with running a Summer School: this was identified as the greatest challenge by 42 per cent of respondents. Lack of sufficient time to plan activities was mentioned by 26 per cent of schools. Parental engagement was mentioned as a challenge by 25 per cent of schools (but some respondents explained that this was something they struggled with in general and was not unique to the Summer School experience) and liaison with feeder primary schools was identified as a challenge by 17 per cent.

Some schools mentioned other challenges, including that they considered the eligibility criteria to be too restrictive, and that they would appreciate more autonomy over pupil selection, in order to include other pupils such as those with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

There was one statistically significant difference in relation to the challenges encountered by schools with different Ofsted inspection results. A higher proportion of those rated by Ofsted as requiring improvement/inadequate identified pupil engagement as a key challenge.

3.3.6 How Summer School funding is being spent

As mentioned previously, schools participating in the Department's Summer School programme were able to apply for £500 for every place created for disadvantaged students taking part in a two-week Summer School and £250 per disadvantaged pupil for one-week Summer Schools. Although there is a clear expectation that the funding should be used to provide summer activities for disadvantaged pupils it was not was not 'ring-fenced'. Schools were able to use some of the funding to offer

places to other children, where there was a surplus available from the funding for disadvantaged pupils or if a disadvantaged pupil turned down a planned place.

Table 3.3 shows the range of total expenditure reported by schools to deliver their Summer School (including staff, contractors, venue, refreshment and travel costs) to all participating pupils – both disadvantaged pupils and others.

Table 3.3: Range of total costs to run a Summer School

Cost range	Number of schools	Percentage of schools
Up to £4,000	158	19%
£4001 to £6,000	124	15%
£6001 to £10,000	149	18%
£10,001 to £16,000	127	15%
More than £16,000	135	16%
No response	145	17%
Total	**838**	**100%**

The total reported expenditure to deliver the Summer School to all participating pupils ranged from under £4,000 to over £16,000 per school, with an average (median) cost of £7,833 per school.

There was a statistically significant relationship between costs and numbers of pupils, with lower costs per pupil reported for Summer Schools with higher numbers of pupils taking part. This suggests that schools were benefiting from economies of scale when catering for larger numbers.

Summer Schools were more expensive when they were delivered by groups of schools working together (£263 median cost per pupil, per week) and when they were delivered exclusively by external providers (£205). It is possible that some of the difference in costs reported for school-run and group- or contractor-run Summer Schools may be due to schools under-estimating the costs to themselves of running a Summer School (for example, they may not have included the cost of staff time for planning and administration, or the use of school facilities).

There was a statistically significant relationship between staff ratios and costs: Summer Schools reporting higher median expenditure per pupil per week had higher ratios of adults to pupils and higher ratios of teachers to pupils.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the number of activities offered by Summer Schools and their cost. Those that offered fewer activities had the lowest average costs. The cost per pupil per week was also related to the types

of activities provided[27]. Costs per pupil were higher for schools offering numeracy activities and lower for schools providing familiarisation with the school layout. Residential Summer Schools, of which there were very few, had the median cost of £228 per pupil per week which was relatively high, but still within the Department's funding allocation of £250 per week for disadvantaged pupils. The above results are consistent with the variations in staffing ratios for different types of activities reported above (with the exception of numeracy activities, which did not show a statistically significant relationship with higher staff ratios). In general, Summer Schools offering more activities and those offering types of activities associated with higher staffing levels had higher costs, and vice versa for activities associated with lower staffing rates or requiring fewer qualified teachers.

There was a statistically significant relationship between cost and geographical region: the average cost per pupil per week was higher for schools located in the South of England (including London) than in the North or Midlands[28].

Summer School expenditure in relation to funding for disadvantaged pupils

Most schools (76 per cent) said they did not have any additional funding for their Summer School for disadvantaged pupils. Those that did have other funding drew upon their own school funds (15 per cent), parental contributions (eight per cent) and/or other sources such as an external funder (four per cent). Schools that accessed additional funding tended to have a higher number of pupils attending their Summer Schools. Schools with additional funding were found to have offered different types of activities from schools with no additional funding. More schools with additional funding offered residential activities and life skills, whereas fewer offered literacy, science or numeracy activities. This is somewhat counter-intuitive, given that it might be expected that schools were using additional funding to offer more expensive activities, such as literacy, science and numeracy (as well as residentials). However, an alternative explanation is that some schools used the additional funding to offer places to non-disadvantaged pupils. Also, because the numbers of schools with additional funding offering each type of activity was relatively small, these results should be treated with caution.

The research team carried out some further analysis, linking the Department's data on the amount of funding paid to each school and the number of places funded for disadvantaged pupils, to the NFER school survey data on total Summer School expenditure, number of weeks the Summer School was run and the number of pupils who attended (both disadvantaged pupils and others). This analysis was designed to reveal the relationship between schools' actual expenditure and the funding they received from the Department.

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[27] This analysis was run for all types of activity identified in the survey: only those with significant relationships at $p.$ <0.05 are reported here (i.e. those activities not identified in the text did not show evidence of a statistically significant relationship with costs per pupil per week).

[28] The mean cost in the South was £215 compared with a mean of £185 per pupil per week in the North and Midlands.

The evaluation team identified 607 schools with data on the relevant questions. In order to reduce the risk of inaccurate reporting of expenditure biasing the results, the analysis excluded outliers (two per cent of values at each end of the expenditure range). The resulting sample comprised 575 schools[29].

Although the outliers have been removed, it should be noted that the results of these calculations still depend on the accuracy of the information provided by schools about their total expenditure and the number of pupils who attended[30].

The results of this analysis are shown in Table 3.4 below, with further information included in Appendix 2.

Table 3.4: Summer School funding and expenditure

	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	Number of schools
A. Cost per pupil (disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged) per week	£111.84	£185.19	£250.00	575
B. Funding surplus per funded place per week	£0.00	£33.33	£91.62	540
C. Funding surplus per disadvantaged attendee per week	£0.00	£48.70	£160.26	535
D. Spending on non-disadvantaged pupils per funded place per week	£53.85	£99.89	£167.22	392
E. Spending on non-disadvantaged pupils per disadvantaged attendee per week	£71.59	£150.00	£341.36	412

The first calculation (A) represents the cost per pupil per week. This was calculated from the school survey responses, based on the total estimated cost of running the Summer School divided by the total number of pupils (both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged) who actually attended the Summer School and the number of weeks that the Summer School was offered by the school[31]. The costs per pupil per week ranged considerably, as shown by the costs at the 25th percentile (£112) and 75th percentile (£250). The median value (the mid-point of the distribution[32]) was around

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[29] Although not all of these schools had full data for all of the analyses presented.

[30] As noted above, it seems likely that some schools may have underestimated the total costs of providing their Summer Schools.

[31] This calculation assumes that all pupils attended throughout.

[32] Medians are reported, rather than means, due to a skewed distribution affecting several of the calculations. The mean values are provided in Appendix 2.

£185 per pupil per week. This analysis shows that the funding level of £250 per disadvantaged pupil per week set by the Department was sufficient to cover the per pupil cost in 75 per cent of schools.

Any funding initiative is exposed to the risk of 'leakage', meaning that some of the money intended for a particular purpose (in this case to help disadvantaged pupils to make a successful transition to secondary school) may not actually be used for this purpose, but leaves the system. Calculations B-E represent different kinds of leakage from disadvantaged pupils to schools, and from disadvantaged pupils to non-disadvantaged pupils.

Calculation B indicates the amount of surplus funding per week (or leakage from the Summer School funding to the participating schools) for each place a surveyed school offered to a disadvantaged pupil, after taking account of school's expenditure in providing the Summer School. As explained earlier, the Department funded schools for the number of places they offered[33] to disadvantaged pupils, rather than the number of disadvantaged pupils who actually attended. The results from Calculation B show that the median surplus funding per funded place was £33. However, some schools had no surplus funding (because their total estimated costs were equal to or more than[34] the Department's funding for the number of places they provided). Others had a much larger surplus per funded place, because they spent less per disadvantaged place than the funding they received from the Department (or because they underestimated the total costs of running the Summer School). Figure A2.1 in Appendix 2 provides a graph of this distribution.

Calculation C represents the amount of surplus funding per week available to surveyed schools for each disadvantaged pupil who actually attended at least once (excluding five schools which reported that no disadvantaged pupils actually attended the Summer School). The median funding surplus was about £49 per disadvantaged attendee per week. Again, some schools had no funding surplus, because their costs for each disadvantaged pupil who attended were equal to or more than the amount of funding they received from the Department[35] whereas other schools had a much larger funding surplus.

As reported above, a majority (74 per cent) of surveyed schools reported that non-disadvantaged pupils attended the Summer School. The last two calculations estimate the amount of expenditure on non-disadvantaged pupils per week in relation to the number of funded places (Calculation D) and the number of disadvantaged pupils who actually attended (Calculation E). This may be considered

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[33] Schools were funded for either the 'number of summer school places set up for disadvantaged pupils' or the 'number of disadvantaged pupils invited to attend', whichever was the lower.

[34] As reported earlier, some schools used funding from sources other than the Department to support their Summer School.

[35] The amount of surplus reported in Calculation C is greater than that in Calculation B because the number of places offered to disadvantaged pupils – and for which schools received funding – was greater than the number of disadvantaged pupils who actually attended.

to represent a leakage of funding from disadvantaged to non-disadvantaged Summer School attendees. (Both of these calculations excluded 148 schools which reported that they had no non-disadvantaged attendees, and a further ten with missing information for the number of non-disadvantaged pupils who attended).

Calculation D shows that overall, schools responding to the survey which had non-disadvantaged pupils attending their Summer School spent approximately £100 of their funding per week for each disadvantaged place on non-disadvantaged pupils; and Calculation E shows that these schools spent approximately £150 per week on non-disadvantaged pupils for each disadvantaged attendee. This represents a leakage of 40 per cent per place and 60 per cent per disadvantaged attendee. However, this should not be interpreted as indicative of the amount of leakage to non-disadvantaged attendees across all responding schools, because up to a quarter of schools did not have any non-disadvantaged pupils attending their Summer School.

3.4 Success and impact

This section focuses on respondents' views of the success of Summer Schools, including the main impacts for pupils and schools and the likelihood of schools participating in the programme in the future.

3.4.1 The overall success of Summer Schools

Most schools rated their Summer Schools as successful (94 per cent). Figure 3.7 provides a full breakdown of responses.

Figure 3.7: Schools' rating of overall success

Pie chart showing: 68% Highly successful, 26% Successful, 5% Partially successful, 1% Unsuccessful. n = 838
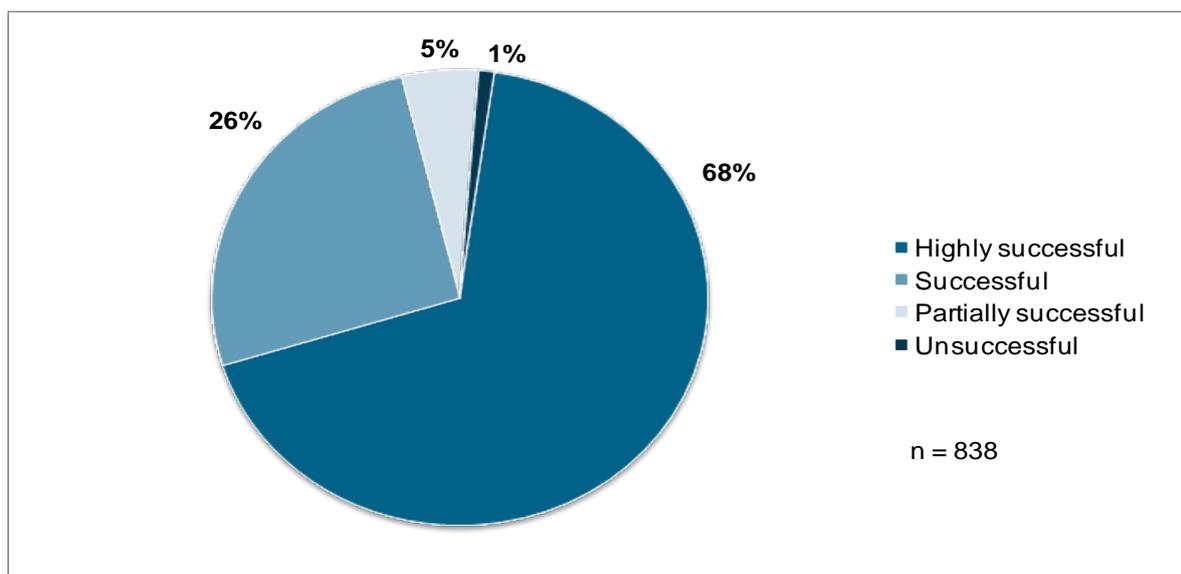
A key factor in determining the success of Summer Schools relates to the number of disadvantaged pupils who attended. Those Summer Schools rated as highly successful achieved the highest attendance of disadvantaged pupils.[36]

When schools were asked to explain their reasons for their success ratings, these were typically based on positive feedback from pupils, parents and carers, and the perception that the transition to Year 7 was made easier for pupils who attended. In addition to good attendance rates, a number of schools also reported that their Summer Schools were successful because pupils had been fully engaged in the activities, enjoyed their time at the Summer School and exhibited increased confidence when they started Year 7.

Further analysis showed a relationship between costs and schools' success ratings: Summer Schools rated as highly successful had the lowest average cost per pupil, per week. Summer Schools rated as partially successful had the highest average cost per pupil, per week.

There was a statistically significant relationship between schools' success ratings and their Ofsted inspection ratings. Schools rated as outstanding/good were significantly more likely to rate their Summer Schools as highly successful. There was no significant relationship between schools that used additional funding and their rating of their Summer School's success.

Taken together, these findings suggest that schools' perceptions of success were related to the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and positive feedback from pupils, parents and carers. Schools with better Ofsted ratings may have provided more successful Summer Schools, or have been more confident in their success. The relationship between costs and success ratings could also be influenced by the number of pupils attending, since Summer Schools accommodating larger numbers of disadvantaged pupils were more cost effective.

3.4.2 The impact of Summer Schools

The greatest impacts reported by schools reflect the aims of Summer Schools reported in Section 3.1. In fact, an analysis of schools' answers to the two questions showed a statistically significant relationship between their responses to all items common to both questions[37].

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[36] The significance test used the mean values. Those that rated their Summer school as highly successful had a mean of 22 disadvantaged pupils per school. Those Summer Schools rated as partially successful had a mean attendance of 14 disadvantaged pupils.

[37] The response items in common between the two questions were: improved pupil engagement in learning; developing literacy and numeracy skills; confidence and self-esteem; teamwork skills; independent learning skills; and improved relationships between pupils and staff.

Figure 3.8 shows where schools thought the Summer School had the greatest impact.

Figure 3.8: Where Summer Schools had the greatest impact

n = 838
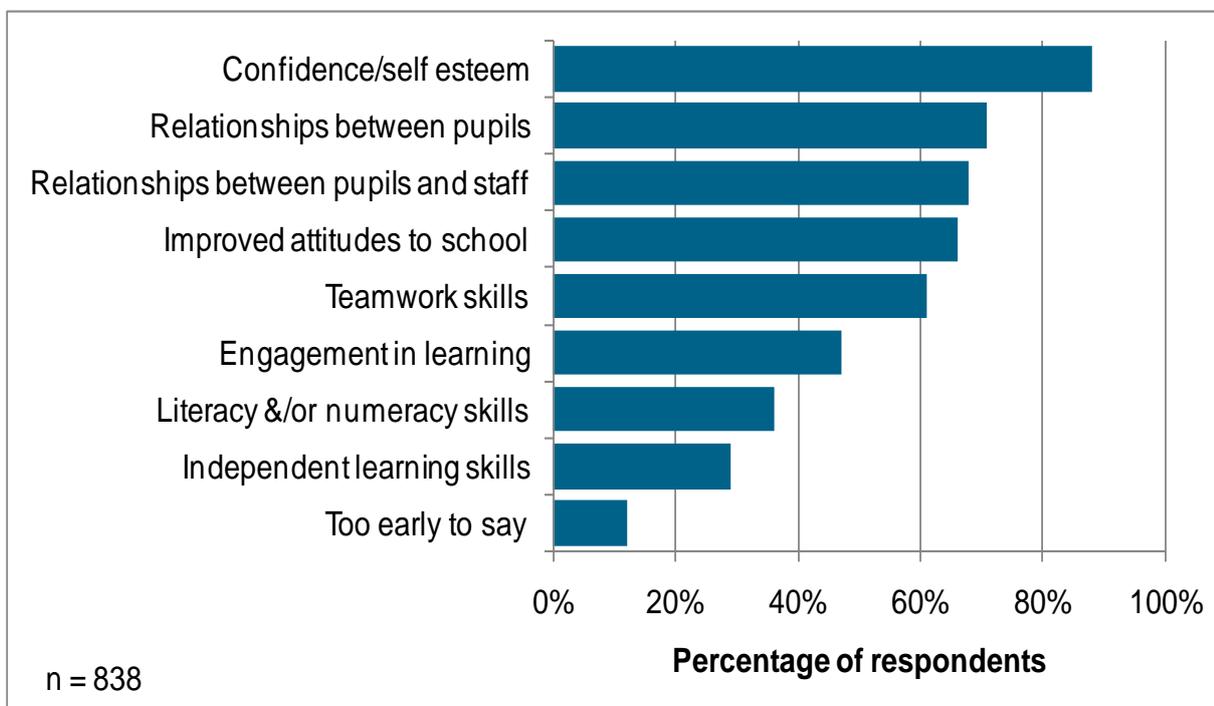
Improved confidence and self-esteem was the most common area of impact (reported by 88 per cent of schools). In addition, improved relationships between pupils in the year group and between pupils and staff were also perceived to be important areas of impact (mentioned by 71 and 68 per cent of schools respectively).

As noted above, schools whose latest Ofsted inspection identified them as requiring improvement/inadequate were statistically significantly more likely to focus their Summer School on improving attainment and developing the literacy and numeracy skills of disadvantaged pupils. In line with this, those schools whose latest Ofsted inspection identified them as requiring improvement/inadequate were statistically significantly more likely to report impacts on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills as a result of attending the Summer School than those schools rated as outstanding/good.

The questionnaire asked all 887 responding schools (including the 39 which applied but did not actually run a Summer School in 2012) to say whether they would apply to participate again in future. The vast majority of schools (95 per cent) would definitely apply to run a Summer School for disadvantaged pupils again in future.

Only three schools stated that they would not apply (which accounted for less than one per cent of sample); the remaining schools were 'not sure' (four per cent)[38].

3.5 Common patterns in Summer School aims, design and activities

In order to provide further insights into the different types of Summer Schools delivered as part of the programme, the evaluation team carried out exploratory segmentation analysis (also known as latent class analysis). This aimed to group respondents, based on their answers to key survey questions[39] about planning and running a Summer School.

The analysis did not find evidence of any very clear differences between groups of schools, suggesting that schools used a diverse range of approaches to planning and running their Summer School.

The analysis identified four groups of schools: two large (accounting for 95 per cent of the 838 responding schools that ran a Summer School) and two small (accounting for the remaining five per cent of responses). The main difference between the two largest groups was that one focused more strongly than other schools on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills whereas the other focused more strongly than other schools on improving pupils' familiarity with their new school environment and improving pupils' school readiness. Further information on this analysis is provided in Appendix 2.

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[38] The majority (26) of the 39 schools that did not run a summer school in 2012 said they would definitely apply to run a summer school in future. The remainder answered not sure (11 schools) or no (two schools).

[39] The questions included in this analysis were: when the Summer School took place; duration in weeks; cost per pupil/week; whether it was offered to pupils other than disadvantaged pupils; the number of other pupils attending; involvement of external partners/contractors in delivery; involvement of pupils/students in delivery; whether the Summer School had additional funding; the school's aims for their Summer School; and the main challenges.

4. Findings from the case studies

Key findings summary

Designing a Summer School

- Although five of the ten case-study schools had prior experience of delivering a Summer School, the Department's funding provided an opportunity to deliver a larger and more ambitious programme of activities, and to target disadvantaged pupils.

- The case-study schools used the broad aims of the Department's Summer Schools Programme to set their aims and objectives. They also set out to complement their existing transitional support, mirroring the survey findings. Most of the case-study Summer Schools focused on school readiness, social and emotional wellbeing and preparing pupils for the academic year ahead.

- Many of the case-study schools faced a challenge in accessing timely and complete data about pupils eligible FSM and those looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority, despite liaising with their feeder primaries.

Planning and running a Summer School

- Case-study schools had different views on the optimum timing for running a Summer School. A session held early in the summer holiday maximised pupil and teacher availability, but a later session had the advantage of being more closely identified with starting in Year 7.

- Schools understood the need for a sensitive approach in engaging disadvantaged pupils, and reported no difficulty in avoiding any stigma attached to a programme designed to support disadvantaged pupils. On the other hand, a few reported that parents of non-disadvantaged pupils objected to the fact that their children could not participate.

- Summer Schools offered a combination of curricular and enrichment activities with an emphasis on 'fun'.

- Partner organisations played a key role, ranging from providing arts, media and sports expertise to managing Summer Schools. A close working relationship between schools and partners was essential to provide a cohesive programme.

- The largest item of expenditure was staff costs, together with the additional costs involved in providing a residential trip in some cases.

Key findings summary

Success and impact

- Most case-study schools felt they had achieved their aims, or made significant progress towards them. Supporting the survey evidence, the most challenging aspects were a lower than expected take-up from disadvantaged pupils and a limited success in engaging parents and carers. Family learning and celebration events were the most successful in encouraging parental engagement.

- Summer Schools enabled teachers and other staff to get an insight to pupils' academic and pastoral support needs. Staff felt that the Summer Schools had helped pupils become 'school ready'.

- Pupils usually settled into school without experiencing any significant 'jolt' after the summer holidays. However, they reported a widespread fear of bullying which persisted despite taking part in a Summer School. Pupils felt they had developed the social confidence to mix with their peers and teachers. Some pupils welcomed the opportunity for a 'fresh start'.

- There were mixed views on the potential longer-term impact on pupils' attainment, but all the case-study schools had observed potential benefits for attendance and behaviour in the classroom.

This chapter reviews the evidence from the two phases of case-study research, drawing upon the qualitative interviews and data collection in ten schools (see Appendix 4 for further details on the case-study sample). It examines how the schools set about designing and running their local programme; the challenges they encountered, and how these were addressed. It then considers the evidence for the success and impact of the Summer Schools; both in terms of the immediate benefits for the school, pupils, parents and carers, and the early evidence for whether and how these benefits were sustained.

4.1   Designing and developing Summer Schools

The case-study schools identified objectives for their Summer Schools with reference to the Department's published aims and eligibility criteria (see Section 1.1 for details), and by drawing upon their own knowledge and experience of supporting disadvantaged pupils. There was a common understanding that the Summer Schools programme offered additional targeted funding for disadvantaged pupils, to support the delivery of the Pupil Premium objectives. The aims that were common to all of the case-study schools were:

- familiarising pupils with the school environment

- reinforcing pupils' confidence and self-esteem

- raising pupils' aspirations and preparing them for Year 7 teaching and learning

- gaining a better understanding of the needs of disadvantaged pupils and,

- building trusting relationships with teachers and other pupils.

Most of the case-study schools had a mix of social and academic objectives for their Summer School programme. Whilst staff were generally optimistic about the potential benefits for pupils' attainment in the longer term, the initial emphasis was on supporting their adjustment and maximising the personal and social benefits.

4.1.1 Monitoring and self-evaluation

Although several of the case-study schools reported having written aims and objectives for their Summer School, they rarely identified measurable criteria against which to track the impact of the Summer School once pupils entered Year 7. Just one of the schools (an Academy) set more explicit academic goals for attainment, although nearly all the schools included some kind of embedded literacy or numeracy within their programme of activities.

There were a number of factors influencing the lack of monitoring and evaluation:

- this was the first year of running a targeted Summer School with disadvantaged pupils, and there were few benchmarks to use when setting measurable targets

- Some of the intended outcomes (e.g. improved school readiness and confidence) were less easy to measure

- monitoring and (self) evaluation was not required as a condition of the funding

- schools had relatively little time to set monitoring systems in place and staff did not always have knowledge of suitable tools for measuring change

- schools felt that it would be difficult to isolate the impact of the Summer School activities from wider transition activities.

4.1.2 Alignment with existing transition activities

All of the case-study schools had existing arrangements in place to support pupils making the transition to Year 7. This facilitated some level of contact with pupils and parents/carers from the new intake prior to running the Summer School. The specific arrangements varied between schools, but included transition days, 'taster' sessions and master classes in key subjects for the incoming Year 6 pupils. This earlier

contact often informed pupils' and families' initial expectations of the Summer School and in some instances meant that the staff were already known to the families.

Whilst half of the case-study schools had prior experience of running extended summer activities, these were typically much shorter in duration (two or three days), involved lower numbers of pupils, and were delivered on an 'ad hoc' basis when funding became available. Examples included holiday clubs, catch-up classes for pupils needing extra academic support, and Saturday Schools. The Department's funding enabled case-study schools to offer a larger and more structured programme over a longer period, with greater numbers of pupils.

4.1.3 Engagement with feeder primaries

The case-study schools all reported taking active steps to work with their feeder primaries to share information about disadvantaged pupils in the new intake.

Where there had been regular liaison over a sustained period of time, schools reported having a better understanding of the Year 7 cohort. A member of staff with responsibility for pastoral support at one school, for example, worked with feeder primary school pupils from Year 5 onwards, which provided a good early insight into their needs. Staff at another school attended Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and child protection meetings for individual pupils in Year 6. This level of continuity was not always possible, however, for a number of reasons:

- regular communication was less manageable for schools with much larger numbers of feeder primary schools (48 in one instance)

- several of the schools were working with feeder primaries for the first time, due to a change in catchments or because the school had recently opened; and,

- schools did not always know which primary schools pupils would be coming from until a relatively late stage (e.g. due to late applications or pupils not getting their first choice of school).

Around a third of case-study schools expressed concerns about the usefulness of the pupil data provided by their feeder primaries. These concerns related to the timing and reliability of FSM pupil numbers, and in some instances to the level of supporting information about prior attainment and behavioural issues or SEN. This was a common area of uncertainty. For example, one teacher asked:

> *Why do we have to do things traditionally? There is no information* [from the feeder primaries] *until June or July and then it's the summer… Why can't we get that data earlier?*

In addition, one of the Summer Schools was subcontracted to an external provider, which encountered difficulties in obtaining information from the local authority about

pupils eligible for FSM and those looked after continuously for more than six months due to multiple requests from both the school and the provider.

4.1.4 Recruiting and retaining disadvantaged pupils

Case-study schools used a variety of channels to raise awareness of the programme and to encourage participation. Nearly all schools sent an invitation letter to the parents/carers of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the programme followed by a telephone call. This was reinforced with face-to-face contact with parents/carers if opportunities arose (at transition meetings, for example). Some schools also used more targeted measures, such as using multi-lingual teachers or volunteers to engage parents/carers for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL). One school hired a minibus to transport pupils and this helped to raise awareness among families when staff collected the children from their homes. Pupils looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority were typically very few in number, and were often already known to the school and being actively supported by the Year 7 team.

Despite these different approaches, the levels of take-up were lower than many schools had hoped for. The main contributory factors, which align to those identified in the school survey, included:

- the relatively late confirmation of funding, which left some schools with less than two months to plan and raise awareness of their activities

- pupils' and teachers' pre-arranged holidays

- a clash of some of the activities with Ramadan, which meant that pupils either missed some of the activities or found it harder to cope when fasting[40]

- over-caution on the part of some schools, who restricted the number of places offered, due to confusion about the funding criteria and a resulting fear of funding claw-back in the event of non-attendance[41].

The actual rates of enrolment ranged from 50 to 80 per cent of invited pupils, but the numbers fluctuated during the programme. Several of the case-study schools found that there were a small number of very disruptive pupils who only attended the first few sessions and never came back. In other instances, pupils were only able to attend on certain days of the week due to prior commitments.

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[40] As mentioned previously, the case-study responses were not necessarily representative of schools in general. Feedback gathered via the DfE policy team indicates that other schools successfully accommodated the needs of fasting, by restricting activities to the morning and including prayer times.

[41] This misunderstanding arose because schools thought they would be penalised for non-attendance by disadvantaged pupils, even if that pupil had accepted a place that was then set up for them.

Staff recognised that some degree of non-attendance was inevitable, given the voluntary nature of the programme and its focus on disadvantaged pupils. They felt that more work is needed to understand the motivations of parents/carers who did not take up the opportunity to enrol their children. There was very limited opportunity to explore these issues within the study timeframe.

4.1.5 Addressing potential stigma

Due to the nature of the programme, schools needed to target disadvantaged pupils, without causing stigma amongst their peer group or with other parents/carers. In practice, this was reported to be less of a challenge than was anticipated. The case-study schools were generally familiar with the need for a sensitive approach to encourage the take-up of FSM entitlements, and had fully taken these issues into account.

- As indicated in the school survey, the most common approach used by case-study schools was to target disadvantaged pupils, but without directly referencing the eligibility criteria in the invitation letter. There were a few problems associated with this approach, however, in that other families started to become aware of the programme and complained that their child was not offered a place.

- Other schools had combined the funding from the Department with alternative funding sources, to widen participation. For example, one school delivered an initial week exclusively to disadvantaged pupils with a focus on confidence-building, and then offered a wider programme in the second week to benefit other pupils from the year group.

The schools generally took action to fill any surplus places with other pupils who might be considered 'vulnerable', but who did not meet the Department's eligibility criteria for disadvantage (i.e. pupils eligible for FSM and those looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority). Definitions of vulnerability varied, but included pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties, EAL pupils and those with a Child Protection plan. In practice, the case-study schools had sometimes widened the boundaries of eligibility to provide a boost for all pupils whom they considered would benefit although they were not funded for these places unless the place had been offered to and turned down by a disadvantaged pupil. There was a clear tension in this respect between the Pupil Premium objectives, and the ability for schools to exercise their discretion in assessing pupils' needs.

One school offered the Summer School to all pupils in the intake, following the principle that transition to Year 7 is an important time and that no child should be excluded from the opportunity for extra support. Disadvantaged pupils meeting the eligibility criteria were fully subsidised. Other pupils were asked for a contribution of

£8.00 per day to attend. However, the school used some of the funding to subsidise families for whom this was unaffordable.

4.2 Planning and running the Summer School activities

As explained in Section 1.1, there was no fixed timing for the Summer Schools, so the case-study schools needed to balance practical considerations about the availability of staff and pupils with more specific educational objectives. Table 4.1 overleaf shows the schools' decisions about when to hold their Summer Schools.

Table 4.1: Timing of Summer Schools: feedback from staff and pupils

Approach	Description	Benefits	Drawbacks
Approach 1: *Early Summer School*	• Several schools opted to run their programme immediately following the end of the summer term. The rationale was to maximise the availability of staff and parents/carers before the holiday period and to catch pupils while they were still ready to learn.	• It sometimes proved easier to engage the pupils, because: '…the kids are still in school mode', and it provided pupils with reassurance about starting at secondary school, before going on their summer holidays with family or friends.	Secondary staff felt that the break in learning of up to four/five weeks after the end of the Summer School was not ideal.
Approach 2: *Mid-summer learning boost*	• Staff in one school opted to run their programme at the mid-point during the summer holidays. Their aim was to break the holiday period into two shorter blocks, to minimise the time spent away from learning.	• Initial gains were reported to have been made at the Summer School, in terms of pupils' confidence and readiness to learn.	• Staff felt that pupils had not maintained their progress during the initial weeks of the new term.
Approach 3: *Pre-start Summer School*	• Two of the case-study schools opted to end their programme with a residential experience, so that pupils' confidence was at its highest immediately prior to starting the new term.	• There was '…more of a sense that they [the pupils] were starting something new… it was more like the 'start' of secondary school'. They 'enjoyed it [the learning experience] because it was fresh'	• A teacher noted that: 'It took longer for pupils to pick up the pace'. • The timing resulted in a longer first term for those involved.
Approach 4: *'Stretched' Summer School*	• One school opted to stretch their activities across the six-week school summer holiday period. The aim was to provide continuity, and to enable pupils to take ownership of a longer project (involving crafts and film-making) that would give them a sense of achievement.	• The Summer School provided valuable *'time out'* for pupils with challenging home lives • The school received positive feedback from parents/carers who were grateful for additional support with their child during the summer.	• The extended format placed pressures on staff availability, and pupils' attendance was variable due to the Summer School being disrupted by Summer Holidays, or other family commitments.

4.2.1 Working with partner organisations

Most of the case-study schools drew upon external partner organisations to support the planning and delivery of their Summer Schools. These included the following:

- arts and media organisations

- theatre/drama companies

- professional sports and leisure coaches

- outward-bound activity/residential providers

- independent educational organisations.

Schools often turned to providers who had worked with the school before, and had a proven track record of engaging with disadvantaged pupils. In many cases, the school was already planning to work with these organisations in some capacity, and they had extended the scope of the work to deliver a full Summer School programme.

Schools found external expertise invaluable in securing an attractive 'enrichment' element to their programme if this was not already available within the school, for example, in arts and multimedia. It also enabled a number of the schools to offer a residential trip; including activities based at an outdoor education centre (three schools). Wider support from local shops and businesses was also apparent, to provide subsidised access to leisure and catering facilities.

Just one of the case-study schools had sub-contracted the delivery of their programme to an external agency, which was allocated the majority of the funding. The boxed example provides a brief account, and the lessons learned.

Study example: External management of the programme

This maintained school opted to subcontract the management of their Summer School to an external provider. Although they had experience of running their own Summer School and Saturday activities staff were impressed with the provider's ability to access a wider range of high quality resources that the school did not have. The contractor's involvement made it possible to do more within the timeframe, including theatre trips and sports, and to link the Summer School with a wider educational offer of study support and individual tuition.

On the other hand, the school found it difficult to integrate the enrichment activities with the work around the Year 7 curriculum content. Some of the school staff also commented that the provider had not consulted with them sufficiently at the outset, which meant that the literacy aspects were not sufficiently differentiated for pupils.

Despite the advantages of involving external partners, there were evident drawbacks of delivering at arm's length from the school. One of these was the reduced level of

contact time between pupils and Year 7 teaching and pastoral support staff, and the more limited opportunities to build rapport with pupils as a result.

4.2.2 Costs of running a Summer School

The following table provides an overview of the main sources of expenditure for the case-study schools.

Table 4.2: Sources of Summer School expenditure

Staff costs		Other costs	
Common	*Less common*	*Common*	*Less common*
• Direct staff costs: payment to school staff running the Summer School	• Cost of external partner(s) to run the Summer School • Specialist: sports technician and duty manager costs; arts practitioner costs	• Transport • Venue hire • Purchase or hire of equipment/facilities (GO karts) • Tickets/event entry • Food	• Overheads apportionment • IT Equipment • Certificates • Arts and crafts materials

The case-study schools highlighted that the main cost of running a Summer School was staffing. This included both school staff and external partners, including arts, media and sports professionals. The interviews reinforced the importance of securing a good range of teaching and support staff to deliver all of the desired elements and to ensure that pupils can benefit from appropriate learner support.

The more detailed budget breakdown varied considerably within the case-study schools, according to the types of activities.

The example below illustrates a two-week Summer School delivered in 2012 as part of the Department's-funded programme. This Summer School largely delivered school-based activities 'in house'. A total of 31 disadvantaged pupils attended out of the 50 eligible pupils offered a place).

Table 4.3: Cost breakdown for a Summer School run by a School

Type of activity	Activity Cost
Direct staff costs	£11,375
Equipment hire	£5,600
Venue hire	£4,742
Meals / lunches for pupils	£1,000
Tickets / event entry	£237
Transport	£1,000
Other costs	£297
Total cost	**£24,251**

Whilst staff costs nearly always comprised the main expenditure, there were some variations in how these costs were calculated. A direct comparison was not possible using the costs pro-forma (see Appendix 5), because schools calculated their staff costs in different ways, and it was not clear whether all management and coordination time had been included within the budget.

The schools differed in the proportion of staff costs outsourced to an external delivery partner(s), ranging from £24,500 for a Summer School that was co-delivered with an external provider, to £1,180 for a Summer School that drew more selectively on external experts (sports coaches) to deliver specific activities. Similarly, the costs of providing transportation varied according to the nature of the Summer School and the degree of off-site delivery. While one case-study school spent £1,000 on transport costs, others reported no transport costs at all.

In those schools that offered a residential trip, this was invariably expensive and one school topped this up with other funding. Another school encouraged a system of 'mini-bids' by each department, against a ring-fenced central pot. Each had to justify how they would spend the money and what they would achieve[42].

4.2 A snapshot of Summer School provision

The content of each case-study school's programme was locally designed and developed, and no two Summer Schools looked the same. However, some common themes can be identified, which are now briefly reviewed.

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[42] Source: case-study data (ten schools).

Embedding literacy and numeracy with key/functional skills – schools often took a 'learning through doing' approach, using sports and outdoor activities to reinforce curriculum themes. Some examples included:

- A visit to an outdoor adventure centre, which included literacy and numeracy tasks such as writing postcards home and calculating shopping lists, alongside physical activities.

- A medieval-themed programme, which alternated between classroom-based delivery in the morning and arts and creative activities (such as textiles) in the afternoon.

Exploring spaces and places – schools provided a mix of *on-site* delivery to familiarise pupils with the school environment, and elements conducted *off-site* to widen their horizons by taking them out of familiar surroundings (which was felt to be important for disadvantaged pupils). Some examples included:

- A 'treasure hunt' activity in week one, which provided an opportunity for pupils to explore the school grounds.

- Activities delivered in 'The Den'– a safe haven created for pupils who find it difficult to integrate in the school environment, which is also used as a drop-in facility to access learning mentors.

- A project for pupils to create 'a space they can call their own' within the school building, which involved design activities.

- Several programmes offered a week on location at the school followed by a residential activity. This included a 'forest skills' course to raise aspirations for pupils from a disadvantaged urban area by using green spaces and local environments to deliver key skills and life skills.

The case-study schools commonly planned the programme to be aligned with National Curriculum goals. Teachers often described taking steps to showcase Year 7 curriculum themes or teaching methods. These often provided a familiar 'hook' for pupils that was recalled at a later stage. A broad curriculum approach proved to be a particularly effective way of planning and delivering the activities in a format that was also appealing to pupils and showcased a wide range of activities. The following box provides an example.

Study example: Delivering a broad curriculum Summer School

This maintained school had previously offered sports activities to the local community during the summer holidays, and delivered a programme of transition support to the new intake, but these activities had been planned and delivered separately.

The Department's initiative provided the impetus to integrate these activities into a single broad curriculum programme, linking the sports elements to the Year 7 curriculum for mathematics, English and Science, and with a focus on showcasing the school to pupils; raising their self-esteem, and removing fears and apprehension.

- The programme took place over two weeks and workshops were delivered in two-hour blocks; planned collaboratively by the schools' pastoral care team and subject leads. Each workshop included a 'fun' element, with some kind of link to arts or sport, and making the best possible use of the sports centre facilities. The programme culminated in a two-day residential trip, hosted at an outdoor education centre, with a focus on team-building and conquering fears about starting school.

- The seven pupils interviewed all rated the programme highly. One had been worried that the mathematics would be too difficult, but was surprised to find that it involved origami and code-breaking, and this was their 'best thing' about the Summer School.

- The broad curriculum theme brought the subject teachers together with the sports centre staff and external specialists. For most this was their first experience of working together and proved to be an inspiring experience. The main drawback was the reliance on so much different expertise, which made it logistically challenging to organise and run.

One school had developed a system to examine 'school readiness' with the aim of targeting support for the Summer School more effectively. This is described in the following boxed example.

Study example: Providing differentiated support

This maintained school gathered information directly from pupils at the transition days in the final term of Year 6. They asked pupils to indicate their level of concern about starting secondary school by using a traffic light system (green, amber, red). Learning mentors were assigned to red/amber pupils, with additional personalised support factored into the Summer School. This system, along with teacher observation during the first week, was used to target pupils in greatest need of a confidence boost for the residential trip at the end of the second week.

4.2.4 Involving older pupils in delivery

Four of the case-study schools enlisted Year 8 or 9 pupils to contribute to their Summer Schools. Their involvement ranged from giving school tours, to answering questions about school life, and supporting a range of activities alongside school staff. As one teacher from a maintained school explained: 'It is that mediator role… to support the kids and teachers and to be that middle person… being a role model.' Typically, the schools ensured that this arrangement was mutually beneficial, by providing the opportunity for the older pupils to gain leadership skills.

4.2.5 Parental engagement

Parental engagement in the Summer School activities was quite mixed. On the whole, schools found that opportunities for direct contact were limited to specific 'events', such as the briefing prior to a residential trip; final celebratory events, and more ad hoc contact around pick-up and drop-off points. The two schools that provided a mini-bus service to transport pupils reported having some success in reaching out to families who might not be willing or able to come into the school.

Two of the schools had run a family cooking/family meal activity as part of the Summer School, all considered it to have been very successful in encouraging parents and carers to attend and providing an informal context for building relationships with school staff. Both schools intended to run similar activities again, at a later stage during the school year.

> **Study example: Parental engagement through celebratory events**
>
> The school held a banquet on final day of Summer School, and invited parents/carers to attend. There were opportunities for parents/carers to try the different activities the pupils had been involved in during Summer School, such as glass painting and shield-making. The teachers also presented rewards to pupils in recognition of their achievements whist at the Summer School.

A number of the schools planned to extend the parental engagement aspect of their programme in the future, when timescales will allow for a longer lead-in to involve parents/carers in designing the activities. One school intended to recruit parents/carers from the local community as volunteers, to co-deliver a culture and language skills element of their programme. This idea arose after the school encountered a high proportion of EAL pupils within the new cohort.

4.3 Pupils' and parents/carers' views on Summer School activities

The following table illustrates some of the aspects of the Summer School programme that pupils from one or more schools told us they liked or disliked.

Table 4.4: Summer school provision - pupils' likes and dislikes

+ Liked	- Disliked
Commonly identified:	*Commonly identified:*
Meeting the year group; making friends; using drama to get to know other pupils	Dissatisfaction with literacy and numeracy work – too much like a regular lesson; not challenging enough
Getting to know the staff, and being treated 'fairly'	Cancelled, over-subscribed or re-scheduled activities
Meeting older pupils	Too few opportunities to look around the school grounds
Trying new activities they had not been able to do before, such as languages and crafts	*Individual/less common example:*
Sports and physical activities	Individual pupils being allowed to dominate the session - at reading, sports etc.
The organisation of the day – a mix of class-work and fun activities	Poor behaviour of other pupils
Individual/less common examples:	Low energy levels due to fasting for Ramadan
Residential trips	Not enough boys attending (comment by male pupil).
Specific activities – drama and literacy; feeling confident to read aloud.	

As might be expected, pupils' enjoyment of the activities was strongly influenced by their views of the teachers and other adults (e.g. sports coaches, artists and residential workers) involved in running the programme and how they were treated during the session.

One of the recurrent themes was for staff to 'model' the expected behaviours and conduct for Year 7 and to set appropriate boundaries for pupils during the Summer School. In the main, this approach was respected by the pupils who were interviewed. Pupils commonly reported that the programme was run within a 'fun but strict' environment. Parents/carers who observed the activities were also generally

satisfied with the way they were run, and liked the '… balance between being fun and serious'.

Pupils responded favourably to being treated with greater maturity than they were used to from their experiences of primary school. They were often very candid about their past experiences, and the need to make a positive change. Some of the pupil's comments included the following:

> *I knew school would be a tough challenge. At primary school I wasn't the perfect standard of behaviour, but I think being here has made me want to be better. I think it was because of* [the Summer School] *because it set you up.*

> *I feel excited about starting a new life because it means that all the bad stuff you've done at that* [primary] *school gets forgot about and it's a fresh new start.*

Pupils often had strong views on the organisation of the Summer School, and were quick to express their dissatisfaction with activities that did not go ahead, or were poorly planned: 'On the letter it said we'd do all sorts of fun things and go on trips but then we found out there was lots of writing.'

The typical Summer School day was shorter than a regular school day, in recognition that the Summer School was taking place over the holiday period. A day lasting from 10.30am until 3.30pm was fairly standard within the case-study sample, although one Summer School ran from 8.45am to 3pm. The reason given by the school staff was to help pupils become more accustomed to the school day that they could expect after the start of term. Pupils generally reported few problems with the length of the day, and many welcomed the opportunity to attend when they would otherwise have been 'bored' at home. One case-study school also cited examples of reported pupils arriving as early as 9am despite an official start of 10am, due to parents/carers needing to manage drop-offs around the working day. The school had ensured that board games and paper and pencils were available for these pupils.

Pupils and parents/carers had mixed views on how the numeracy and literacy elements of the programme were pitched. Some pupils said they found the mathematics or English components easier than in Year 6, whereas other pupils attending the same Summer School found the level of the work quite difficult. This points towards the importance of personalisation, where activities had a stronger curricular element, and indeed schools commonly identified the need for additional resourcing for learner support as one of the main ways in which they could improve their Summer School model next year.

4.3.1 Learning over the summer holiday period

The follow-up interviews with pupils and parents/carers afforded an opportunity to explore what pupils did for the remainder of the summer holiday period, and whether

they used any 'take home' materials or activities that were provided at the Summer School. In the main, the pupils recalled having been disappointed when the Summer School ended, although this was often counterbalanced with looking forward to family holidays or other activities. The following gives an idea of the typical responses **to the end of the Summer School**:

- 'I was bored, I had nothing to do'

- 'I was upset a bit; I missed seeing my friends'

- 'I had mixed feelings, was a bit cross because it ended, but was going on holiday the next week so was looking forward to that.'

Not all of the case-study schools had included a 'home learning' aspect. A common view was that this would be too much to ask of parents/carers and pupils; especially within the context of the school holidays, and given that they had already forgone other activities to attend the Summer School. However, one school had provided children and parents/carers with worksheets at the final celebration event, which included a series of (optional) themed activities based on the Summer School. Another school provided worksheets with a stronger emphasis on 'practicing' the literacy and numeracy skills gained during the literacy sessions.

All but two of the six pupils who were interviewed from the school providing the literacy and numeracy worksheets had gone on to complete them during the summer holiday period, whilst one pupil had already been set individual work to complete, and another had lost the worksheets. The pupils did not express a strong opinion about doing literacy and numeracy activities over the summer, although some said that it provided '*something to do'.* Not surprisingly, there was a lower take-up of the worksheets from the school that took the 'optional' approach.

The was a common tendency for children who enjoyed a book by a particular featured author at their Summer School to go on to complete the text during the summer holidays, and sometimes to visit the library and search for other books by the same author.

4.4 Programme effectiveness and early outcomes

Most of the case-study schools felt that they had either achieved their aims, or had provided a platform to build upon with next year's Summer School. The programme was commonly reported to have boosted schools' capacity to deliver better support for disadvantaged pupils during transition, with some promising evidence of benefits for pupils, parents/carers and partners. The main areas of disappointment were around the lower than anticipated levels of take-up amongst disadvantaged pupils, and more limited evidence for the impact on parental engagement.

Case-study schools identified a good level of fit with the wider aims of Pupil Premium funding, through the focus on disadvantaged pupils, although most would have liked greater discretion to offer funded places to other categories of vulnerable pupils not meeting the Department's eligibility criteria. There was also a common view that the programme should do more to encourage mixing between different social groups.

The Summer Schools programme also clearly assisted with delivering National Curriculum objectives across the case-study schools. This was achieved by providing an opportunity to develop broad curriculum links, and by challenging teaching staff to work with external organisations to deliver curriculum themes in alternative ways. There was also a central focus on building emotional support, in laying the foundations for learning during the school term.

The progress made against each of the national Summer School programme outcomes set by the Department is now considered in further detail.

4.4.1 Understanding pupils' needs

For the majority of case-study schools, the experience of delivering a Summer School programme was invaluable in helping them to gain an early understanding of the needs of pupils within the new cohort. Despite reporting a history of good links with feeder primaries, schools often found that the data about pupils' prior attainment and behaviour was incomplete, and that much work was needed during the autumn term to identify pupils' support needs after teaching and learning was already underway.

School staff from the externally contracted Summer School expressed frustration at the few opportunities they had to engage directly with the pupils during the course of the Summer School and were less positive on balance about the benefits for understanding pupils' needs. Similarly, the lead contact from one other school cited the greater involvement of the year 7 team as a key learning point in future years, to make the most of the opportunity to engage directly with pupils in the new intake.

The Summer School format often provided the opportunity for teachers to assess pupils' *academic needs*. The case-study schools typically favoured an 'informal' approach, using observational techniques. For example, one school developed exercises to identify pupils' abilities to deal with logical processes as part of a numeracy session. However, two schools took a more formal assessment approach, with pre- and post-testing of pupils. There was mixed feedback on this method, with a few staff considering it inappropriate in the context of a 'summer' scheme. However, very few of the pupils expressed a strong view about this.

A further dimension of the Summer Schools was to provide an insight to pupils' wider *pastoral support needs*, in a way that would not usually be possible during a busy teaching programme in the autumn term. Teachers and support staff alike frequently

commented on the benefits of being able to observe and interact with pupils in a semi-informal setting. One deputy headteacher of an Academy commented:

> *Staff get given a lot of information about the kids… details about their ADHD* [Attention Deficit Hyper activity Disorder] *… medical conditions. It's not negative information; it's honest information from the primary school. But it's easy to pre-judge the children on the information that we've got.*

Similarly, the Senior Manager of a Mainstream School said:

> [It is about] *seeing* [pupils'] *behaviour at the Summer School and putting the picture together with evidence from the primary school.*

A recurrent feature of the follow-up visits to case-study schools was that schools set in place additional support, in response to needs identified during the Summer School. All ten of the case-study schools had taken some sort of action in this respect, whether for individual pupils or for pupils as a group. Specific examples included:

- booster sessions in literacy and numeracy
- one-to-one study support
- referral for SEN assessment; and,
- counselling support.

The interviews also revealed a recurrent **safeguarding** dimension. This ranged from examples (from three different schools) where staff had observed pupils taking food away with them on a regular basis, to individual cases where pupils were identified as being exposed to specific risks outside of school. Schools took action in response to these issues in all cases.

The case studies suggest that schools had generally underestimated the scale and significance of pupils' concerns about bullying, specifically. A residual fear of bullying was commonplace amongst pupils interviewed immediately after completing the Summer School activities and in some cases these concerns continued after the start of the autumn term. Although schools had picked up on the need to address pupils' fear of bullying and incorporated it within Summer School activities, pupils wanted staff to give them evidence of tangible measures in place to tackle bullying. Only one school had tackled the subject head-on through the provision of a workshop. There was mixed evidence for the pupils who responded. Of the three pupils who mentioned bullying issues when interviewed for the evaluation, one was less worried about being bullied as a result of being more confident that teachers were there to support him. Two others felt that the session had been useful, but they still had some concerns in looking ahead to their time at the new school.

4.4.2 Familiarising pupils with the school environment, staff and other pupils

The case studies showed that the Summer School programme achieved considerable success in helping pupils to become *familiar with the school environment and routines*. The fear of getting lost was a recurrent theme amongst the pupils when they were asked to reflect on their expectations for starting at their new school, and many were intimidated by the scale of the buildings and the greater number of pupils in comparison with primary school. Familiarisation was achieved by delivering multi-site activities over the course of the Summer School; guided tours by older pupils, and one example of a 'treasure hunt'. Knowing school routines and regulations also helped to put some pupils at ease, and helped to debunk common myths about school life. Pupils from two different maintained schools commented as follows:

> *They took us all around the school so you kept all these places in your mind so when you start school you already have these in your mind.*

> [Before the Summer School] *I was anxious about doing something wrong, but not knowing you've done it wrong. At primary school you've got all of these rules, but they're not really majorly enforced.*

Teaching staff and parents/carers consistently observed reduced anxiety about starting school among Summer School attendees amongst pupils during the autumn term. A head of Year 7 commented that pupils that were likely to be very anxious at the beginning of the academic year had 'their first day of school nerves' on the first day of Summer School, leaving them more confident and calmer. One pupil from a Free School described how they went on to support other new starters: 'We knew the way around and then we helped people that we knew didn't know their way around.'

There were, however, fewer opportunities to become familiar with the school environment where more substantial parts of the Summer School were delivered off-site at a residential setting or an education centre (for Summer Schools delivered by an external provider). In another case, several pupils were disappointed because they had limited opportunities to look around the school buildings, due to major refurbishments that were taking place in the school at the time.

Pupils considered the social aspect of the Summer School to be one of the most important aspects of the programme. It was common for pupils to harbour anxieties about not knowing anyone at the start of term, not being able to make friends easily, and the possibility of being bullied by peers or older pupils.

Pupils consistently valued the opportunity to meet with other children from their year group at the Summer School and to *develop social skills and confidence* and to start forming new friendships. They felt that the Summer School format had made this process considerably easier, due to the emphasis on small group work and

informal leisure activities. Some schools also made use of drama as a vehicle to encourage the pupils to overcome any shyness. Pupils often described how there had been an initial sense of relief that it was easier than expected to make friends, which allowed them to relax and subsequently to look ahead to the new term.

This greater confidence in the social setting also had positive benefits for pupils' engagement and participation in the activities. One parent of a pupil from a maintained School commented of her daughter that:

> *It taught her not to hold back, taught her that if she believes in herself she should go for it. It's brought her out of herself a little bit. It has helped confidence; she'll do more stuff than she would have done.*

Pupils also commonly recalled how the social interaction within the Summer Schools had given them a better understanding of their peers, and encouraged mutual respect. Typical pupil comments included that: 'It wasn't straight to learning, it was learning about each other's personality', and '…it showed me who people really were, and if they were suitable for me'. Particular progress was made within the special school, as the following example explains.

Study example: Social benefits for special school pupils

This special school, attended by pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), delivered a Summer School for the first time in 2012 as a result of the Department's initiative. One teacher observed how the pupils became more supportive of each other as the week progressed. They commented on how it was unusual for the pupils to work together, and that this was a positive development that was consistent with helping to build a sense of community, which was one of the school's priorities.

The development of *positive relationships with teachers* and other school staff was evident to some extent within most of the case-study schools, but particularly so where there was a sustained opportunity for pupil-teacher interaction. This was apparent for the schools running a residential trip, all of which sent a number of their own teachers. In contrast, a drawback of the externally commissioned Summer School was that it afforded fewer opportunities for pupils to get to know the Year 7 teaching team. One teacher noted how 'valuable time was lost' to get to know the pupils. Over half of the pupils who were interviewed commented on the value of getting to know the teaching staff to some extent, and seeing them outside of a classroom setting.

The social benefits of the Summer Schools were sustained to a varying extent during the autumn term. As might be expected, it was less common for pupils to report having made lasting friendships, but they did often report a sense of reassurance from seeing familiar faces. Pupils from one maintained school said: 'we did make

friends and they looked out for you when you start', and 'people from the Summer School seem to be everywhere'.

There were similar findings with regard to pupil-teacher relationships. Although pupils were rarely taught by the same staff who ran the Summer School, they would often 'see them around' the school. It was fairly common for pupils to describe taking confidence from knowing there was an adult who they could *'turn to if something is wrong'.* In a few examples, teachers had also experienced this directly, as the following quote serves to illustrate:

> *There are pupils who are running late and won't go up and approach a teacher because they are too scared to do so. So to have the confidence to approach adults is an important quality, and the Summer School has definitely helped.*

From the perspective of school staff, one of the strongest benefits of having been involved directly in a Summer School was the potential to utilise the rapport with pupils within the classroom. It was sometimes possible to use this familiarity to support disadvantaged pupils to take a lead, and to support them to speak out in front of their peers. As a teacher from one maintained school described:

> *If you know five or six kids in a group of 30, because of the Summer School, you can have a laugh and a joke, and it brings the others in too… It is the 'ripple effect'… instead of wasting the first four or five weeks getting to know your classes.*

4.4.3 Educational outcomes

The schools did as much as possible to reinforce pupils' learning within the scope of the Summer School programme, by presenting them with the evidence of their own progress and celebrating their achievements. This also included validating what pupils already knew from Year 6, and reinforcing their 'self-belief'. Several of the schools had ensured that their programme culminated in an award, so that pupils started the new term having achieved beyond their expectations. For example:

- accrediting the programme with a Bronze Arts Award[43].

- developing the programme as part of a widening participation initiative. This enabled some of the children to receive a certificate for 30 hours accredited training, and to 'graduate' with a cap and gown.

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[43] The Arts Award is managed by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England, working with 10 regional Bridge organisations. There are five levels, each of which aims to build pupils' confidence and to prepare them for learning. View online: http://www.artsaward.org.uk/site/?id=1977

Pupils commonly identified with the initial boost provided by the Summer School, and felt that there were educational benefits in terms of being ready to learn. For example, one pupil summed this up as follows: '[The Summer School] was getting our brains warmed up so when we started… we were all fired up.'

Three of the case-study schools attempted a more formal pre- and post-attendance assessment of pupils' skills and attitudes as part of the Summer School Programme. Each claimed to have demonstrated academic progress, even within the relatively short timescale afforded by the Summer School. However, the interpretation of the results was found to be more problematic:

- In the first example, the external delivery partner arranged for pupils to complete two online numeracy and literacy assessments before and after the Summer School, which formed the basis of a report submitted to the school. The report identified an improvement in the scores, but was received with a mixed response from school staff; who would have liked a more detailed contextualisation of the pupils' learning.

- In the second example, the school used the PASS (Pupil Attitude to Self and School) Framework with all pupils in the Year 7 cohort in July, and re-assessed all students in the cohort again in the week before October half term. The results were very positive across the range of items, including: self-regard as a learner; attitude to attendance; response to curriculum; and learner confidence. However, the school found it challenging to isolate the impact of the Summer School. There was also a very intensive programme of transition support in place with the 6 feeder schools, and some of the benefits were thought likely to be due to 'natural' change as pupils settled in and made rapid gains during the busy first term of teaching and learning.

The third school attempting a more formal assessment approach delivered a structured programme of literacy activities, with the explicit aim of pupils progressing by one level of learning between day one of the Summer School and completion. The following box explains how this was achieved and measured by the school.

> **Study example: Measuring progress in literacy**
>
> The school adopted a structured literacy programme (using the VCOP[44] approach) was very optimistic that the pupils will demonstrate sustainable progress during the autumn term. Staff tested individual pupils and set a baseline for sentence structure, punctuation, vocabulary, purpose, audience and form, with progress measured on a daily basis during the Summer School. There were measurable gains even in two weeks. Teachers were satisfied that the pupils were aware of their assessment criteria and had

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[44] Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation.

> refreshed their literacy skills.

There were mixed views across the case studies regarding whether the programme would achieve a *lasting impact* on pupils' attainment. Around half of the school staff who were interviewed felt that it was simply too early to form a judgement. However, most made a link between school readiness and longer-term adjustment and achievement. As one teacher from a maintained school commented:

> *If the students are more confident, then they are going to be more successful. If they integrate and are more sociable then they are going to be happier and if they're happier, then they are going to be more successful in their lessons.*

In contrast, one deputy headteacher reflected that:

> *All the soft outcomes like getting to know the kids are hugely beneficial, but in terms of attainment it doesn't seemed to have made any lasting impact.*

Similarly, it was uncommon for pupils to report any lasting gains to their literacy or numeracy as a result of the Summer School activities. In most cases, the intensity of the first few weeks of Year 7 – including adjusting to new teachers and subjects – considerably outweighed the significance that pupils attached to the Summer School activities. Those pupils who did feel the Summer School had a more lasting effect often identified themselves as having particular learning difficulties (e.g. 'my handwriting is bad', and 'I struggle with the maths'). They attributed improvements to the one-to-one support they had received.

Pupils from three of the case-study schools identified occasions when themes from the Summer School were re-introduced in the classroom. This was useful in reinforcing their learning. As a pupil from an Academy explained:

> *The teachers taught us tricks and methods of remembering things so when we started school we already knew the basics so it was easier. So when the teacher asks we're not just blank minded.*

One teacher from a maintained school explained that there were particular benefits for lower ability pupils or those with lower confidence in this respect:

> *Just teaching our bottom set… four or five of those were on the programme. There have been benefits…* [One pupil is] *engaged in the topics because he's not coming into it cold. He can almost be top, and he's not used to that.*

The case-study research also pointed quite strongly towards the potential benefits of running a Summer Schools programme for **pupil attendance and behaviour**. These

improvements were commonly reported during the course of the Summer Schools programme, as the following examples serve to highlight:

- Two schools identified individual pupils who had been very disruptive at the start of the Summer School, but were fully engaged by the end. One teacher attributed this to the work the staff had done to give pupils a sense of self-worth, and 'making them feel they are a part of something'.

- One school commented how staff had expected to encounter poor behaviour within the group based on the information that was passed to them by the primary schools. In the event, the pupils' behaviour was 'first rate', and staff were surprised at how smoothly the activities ran.

- A parent had observed changes in his son's demeanour at home, during the course of the Summer School: 'It's calmed him down and given him something to do… his main problem is with getting annoyed or angry when he's got nothing to do'.

One teacher reflected on how the Summer School had provided a context for teachers from different subject areas to work together to achieve greater consistency in their expectations of pupil behaviour, and in their approach to discipline. This had enabled pupils to see the teaching staff as more of a 'unit', and to avoid difficulties with perceived unfair treatment. There was also a recurrent theme of pupils wanting to make a fresh start if they had a history of behavioural problems at primary school, and the Summer School provided an opportunity to adjust and set new standards.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect, however, was the extent to which schools identified *continuing benefits* for attendance and behaviour into the autumn term. Although the evidence was largely anecdotal, all of the case-study schools commented on how well the pupils had settled compared with their expectations based on Year 6 data, and in six schools the impact of the Summer School on this was thought to have been quite significant. It was also common for teachers to compare this years' cohort favourably with the previous year's intake, although they recognised that this was not necessarily comparing like-with-like, given differences in the composition of the pupils in consecutive year groups.

The common factor in helping pupils to settle was a good rapport between pupils and staff. One deputy headteacher at an Academy explained:

> *Some of the pupils had displayed poor behaviours at primary school and we were told that we were going to have problems with these children. I can't say it's all down to taking them away* [as part of the Summer School]*, but I think giving them that experience, getting to know staff and students has helped.*

4.4.4 Wider benefits of the programme

There was some evidence of wider benefits for case-study schools, from being involved in the Summer School programme. One of the really clear messages was the extent to which the programme had provided an opportunity for teachers and other school staff to gain experience of delivering enrichment activities with pupils. Many of the teachers were volunteering for this type of programme for the first time, and routinely described having benefited from working with pupils outside of a formal classroom setting and delivering activities alongside external contractors. This was made possible by the extra funding, which allowed schools to scale-up their regular transitional activities and to draw upon a much wider pool of staff.

For one school in particular, the broad curriculum planning aspect was felt to have been one of the major successes, and had highlighted other areas within the school timetable where this type of approach might be used on a more regular basis. One teacher from an Academy commented as follows: 'Running this Summer School has pushed us forward as a school to look much more creatively at the curriculum.' For other schools, the Summer School had encouraged a degree of reflection on alternative ways to engage disadvantaged pupils and to test out new ideas or approaches within the classroom. However, it was recognised that the Summer School provided a relatively unique context, which was more difficult to recreate within the context of a busy school timetable.

Three of the case-study schools reported improved levels of on-going contact with parents/carers into the new term, which were directly linked to the Summer School. The summer activities were thought to have provided the opportunity for the school to start on a positive footing, by inviting parents/carers to celebrate their children's achievements rather than to discuss attendance or behavioural problems.

5.   Discussion, conclusions and recommendations

Overall, findings on the implementation of the Summer Schools programme are very positive. A total of 1,748 Summer Schools were delivered in 2012 which enabled schools to support disadvantaged pupils who might not otherwise have had access to such opportunities. Moreover, for schools already planning to offer a Summer School, the funding enabled them to deliver a more ambitious and higher quality programme.

The majority of schools widened the reach of their Summer Schools by inviting other pupils to participate in addition to those categorised as disadvantaged. This was one of the main ways schools sought to overcome the potential stigma of a programme targeted at disadvantaged pupils, although places were not funded by the Department unless the place was originally offered to a disadvantaged child and had been turned down. As a result, a broader range of pupils have benefited from additional support to make a smooth transition from primary to secondary school.

A small number of schools that applied to take part in the programme were unable to run their Summer Schools in 2012, largely due to a lack of planning time.

The programme had three specific aims: to allow pupils to see their new school environment; allow schools to familiarise themselves with their new pupils, and to improve the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils, ensuring gains in primary school are not lost on transfer.

The vast majority of Summer Schools provided **opportunities for pupils to engage with their new school environment**. This was particularly valued by the pupils interviewed and teachers felt it had an impact on pupils' self-confidence as they began Year 7. The case studies showed that opportunities for pupils to visit their new school could be limited if the school building was undergoing refurbishment, if the Summer School involved a residential trip, or it was delivered entirely by external contractors in an alternative venue.

The survey data demonstrated that the Summer Schools enabled staff **to familiarise themselves with their new pupils**, although this was a specific aim for only a third. However, the case studies provided numerous examples of direct action taken by schools to put in place additional learning support for disadvantaged pupils following transition. Findings suggest that in order to fully meet this aim, there is still further work that schools can do through their Summer Schools to identify and address the anxieties of pupils, particularly in relation to bullying. Despite teachers' general reassurances, pupils' fears about being bullied continued as they transferred into Year 7, which suggests that schools need to give more specific attention to this issue during their Summer Schools.

Many schools appear to have taken an indirect approach to **improving the educational attainment of disadvantaged children** through their Summer School

provision. Schools typically sought to improve disadvantaged pupils' engagement in learning by boosting their confidence and providing the social and emotional support to cope with transition. This is consistent with previous research that highlights the importance of school engagement in the early teenage years for later attainment (Gutman and Vorhaus, 2012). However, the emphasis on directly improving attainment was less strong: just over half of the Summer Schools in the survey had specific aims to develop literacy and numeracy skills and less than half aimed to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and others.

The average costs of Summer Schools ranged considerably between schools, reflecting the diversity of activities on offer. The majority of Summer Schools were able to operate well within the allocated budget of £250 per pupil per week, although about a quarter drew on additional funding to supplement their funding. Staff costs were the most significant expenditure. Many schools had a small surplus from the Department's funding. This suggests that some schools may also have been over-cautious with their expenditure in the first year of the programme to avoid an overspend and could consider planning a more extensive programme in future.

Most schools rated their Summer Schools as **highly successful** and the overwhelming majority would wish to participate again in future (including those where the Summer School did not take place in 2012). However, the case studies identified a weakness in schools' ability to evaluate the success of their Summer Schools, especially in relation to the reasons why some disadvantaged pupils did not take up the offer and in assessing the impact on disadvantaged pupils' educational attainment. In this respect, the findings of this research are similar to those of Ofsted's (2012) report on the use of Pupil Premium, which included the following recommendation for improved accountability and evaluation among schools: 'School leaders, including governing bodies, should evaluate their Pupil Premium spending, avoid spending it on activities that have little impact on achievement for their disadvantaged pupils, and spend it in ways known to be most effective' (Ofsted, 2012, p.6).

The identification and recruitment of disadvantaged pupils was by far the greatest challenge. Schools faced difficulties in obtaining data on disadvantaged pupils and, subsequently, encouraging identified pupils to sign up for the programme. As this was the first year of the programme, primary pupils, staff and parents/carers were not necessarily aware that a Summer School would be available. In the future, schools can plan accordingly and put strategies in place to encourage recruitment. Related to this, parental engagement was highlighted as an issue, but some of the staff responding to the survey explained that this was something they struggled with in general and was not unique to the Summer School experience. Some schools were designing and running a Summer School for the first time, which could explain some of the difficulties they experienced.

The evaluation has identified a range of factors schools considered important to the effective planning and delivery of the Summer Schools initiative. These included

having clear aims and objectives to inform the timing of the Summer School activities; working closely with partner organisations to draw upon external expertise and provide an attractive offer of 'extended' activities (such as sports, arts and drama); and engaging with feeder primaries at an early stage to identify disadvantaged pupils and to design the programme around their needs.

The case studies suggested that Summer Schools worked particularly well where they combined curricular and enrichment activities with an emphasis on 'fun'. This enabled pupils to enjoy new experiences, build confidence, reinforce learning and develop positive patterns of behaviour. Teachers emphasised the importance of providing opportunities for pupils to mix with their peers and school staff, to become familiar with the expected behaviours and boundaries at secondary school, to understand the differences between Year 6 and 7 'ways of learning' and to become more comfortable with the school environment and routines.

Conclusion

Given this is the first year of the initiative and that schools had a limited time in which to plan and prepare their Summer School, it is a significant achievement that so many Summer Schools took place.

The findings from this study indicate that the Summer Schools programme has been successfully implemented by the vast majority of schools that applied to take part. The initiative is viewed extremely positively by schools, pupils and their parents/carers. As with any new programme, some of the difficulties encountered relate to issues which could be prevented in the future by providing schools with a greater lead in time to plan and develop their provision. The funding allocation for the programme is sufficient and allows for a broad range of Summer School activities to be delivered, although it is clear that schools varied in the proportion of the funding that was actually spent on disadvantaged pupils. Early outcomes of the Summer Schools programme (based on self-reported impacts) suggest that it appears to be supporting disadvantaged pupils' social and emotional wellbeing in particular, providing a positive foundation for successful transition. Fewer schools had a direct focus on improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and there would appear to be a need for schools to demonstrate that the funding has been used for its intended purpose and to monitor the impact of the Summer Schools on disadvantaged pupils more closely in future.

Recommendations

The findings have identified the following areas which schools participating in the 2013 programme may wish to consider when developing their Summer Schools:

- Make early contact with feeder primary schools so that they can help identify disadvantaged pupils and market the Summer School to families. They will

have a wealth of knowledge about the pupils which can be used to inform the content and timing of the Summer School.

- Identify disadvantaged pupils who meet the funding criteria by making use of the Department's Key to Success website[45].

- Set clear aims and objectives for the Summer School, so that there is a shared understanding about what the school wants to achieve. This will ensure the activities are designed appropriately.

- Involve disadvantaged pupils and their parents/carers in the design of the activities and in the recruitment and awareness-raising process, so that they can take ownership of the programme. For schools that have already run a Summer School as part of the 2012 programme, this might include a role for alumni as advocates for the Summer School.

- Work with external partners where they can offer added value. Ensure that activities are planned jointly with school staff to ensure a coherent programme.

- Devise creative ways to generate interest in the Summer School, and to incentivise participation. Give a deadline for parents/carers to confirm their child's attendance and investigate the reasons why disadvantaged pupils do not take up the offer.

- Include a combination of activities such as 'fun' sports and arts, together with numeracy and literacy activities delivered through engaging themes. This ensures that pupils have a well-rounded experience and remain engaged.

- Ensure pupils have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the secondary school environment and to meet with older pupils from the school to ask questions.

- Provide specific activities and support to help pupils overcome pupils' fear of bullying, including details of strategies the school has in place to counteract bullying and what pupils should do if it happens to them.

- Where Summer Schools are offered to other pupils, in addition to those who are disadvantaged, ensure that there are strategies in place to provide disadvantaged pupils with targeted support (such as individual target-setting and mentoring) to identify their needs and support their learning.

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[45] Schools will be required to upload the Unique Pupil Number (UPN) of all pupils expected to join Year 7 in September and the Key to Success system will identify which of those pupils are eligible for the Summer School. This will include both pupils eligible because of their FSM history and those eligible due to being looked after by the local authority. Guidance on how to use this system will be issued by the Department in due course.

- A celebration event is a positive means of recognising pupils' success and engaging parents/carers. Other ways of engaging with parents/carers include family activities, such as cookery workshops.

- Ensure that there is effective follow-up after the Summer School, to set in place additional pastoral and/or learner support for pupils in response to the issues identified during the Summer School, and to monitor their progress.

- Monitor the expenditure, success and impact of Summer Schools. This should include reporting on expenditure per disadvantaged pupil per week and assessing the impact on pupils' personal, social and educational outcomes. Evaluate the impact of attending a Summer School on improving disadvantaged pupils' attainment and ensure this is reported to governors.

In addition, the Department may wish to consider:

- Notifying schools earlier of their Summer School funding in order to help them plan and source high quality extended activities.

- Disseminating effective Summer School practice to schools, particularly in relation to the identification and retention of disadvantaged pupils. Help schools to access a bank of educational resources and materials developed by other schools, and encourage schools to network and share ideas.

- Promoting the Pupil Premium aims to ensure schools prioritise them (especially improving the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils) within their Summer Schools, whilst further clarifying the funding criteria and options for topping-up the funding to involve a wider range of pupils.

- Establishing the longer-term impact of the Summer Schools programme through a follow-up evaluation of 2013 Summer Schools and by studying the subsequent progress of the cohort of pupils who attended the 2012 Summer Schools. This will help to identify the sustained impact of Summer Schools on pupil outcomes.

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Appendix 1: Research questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

Delivering on the Summer Schools programme: how has the programme been implemented in its first year?

1. How secondary schools engaged with feeder primaries and identified disadvantaged pupils. How did secondary schools approach pupils, parents and carers to inform them of the Summer School?
2. How were issues of potential stigma addressed by schools when recruiting pupils?
3. Whether secondary schools were already planning to run any summer activities, and how the new programme fitted with these.
4. How the programme was delivered, including: the type of activities offered, whether an external contractor was used, and the ease with which partnerships with other schools or the voluntary sector were established.
5. The anticipated and actual cost to the school per participating pupil.
6. Barriers to implementation and how they might be overcome in future years.

Whether the programme is meeting the aims and objectives of the Department and participating schools.

7. How do schools choose their aims and objectives and subsequently design their programme of activities? Did the programme meet their aims and objectives?
8. What was the anticipated and actual number of pupils attending? Why did some pupil and their parents/carers choose not to participate?
9. How do parents/carers view the programme? What influenced their decision to send their child to the Summer School?
10. How does the programme interact with schools' wider aims for the pupil premium funding and the National Curriculum?
11. What are teachers' perceptions of the impact of the programme on early Year 7 teaching and learning, and on the self-confidence and readiness for school of disadvantaged pupils?

Appendix 2 Survey sampling and analysis

This section of the report provides details of the survey and case-study samples.

A2.1 The survey sample

The sample was drawn from the list of schools provided by the Department. This list consisted of 1,981 schools which were due to run a Summer School for disadvantaged pupils. The NFER drew a random sample of 1,604 schools from this list. All available special schools were selected to ensure special schools were sufficiently represented in the sample. There were 104 special schools in the population, 64 of which (62 per cent) responded.

Table A2.1: Overall school response

Stage	Number of schools
Drawn in sample	1,604
Number of schools invited to participate[46]	1,597
Completed the questionnaire	**877 (55%)**

Table A2.2: Response by questionnaire format

Questionnaire Format	Number of responses	% of total responses
Paper	608	85
Online	269	15

A2.2 Sample representation

Once school responses were collated, characteristics of the responding sample were compared against the population of Summer Schools. The random sample of mainstream schools was stratified using FSM eligibility and size of the school. Table A2.3 presents school characteristics for all mainstream responding schools. As seen in the table, proportions of responding schools in each category of FSM band and school size match closely with those of the population and there were no statistically

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[46] Where schools were withdrawn from the original sample due to closure/amalgamation.

significant differences between the population and the responding sample in terms of these key characteristics. Respondents were from a range of school types, which were fairly representative in terms of proportions of the overall numbers of secondary schools across England.

Table A2.3: Sample representation

		Responding schools		All Summer Schools	
		n	%	n	%
Percentage pupils eligible for FSM 2010/11 (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	68	8.4	165	8.8
	2nd lowest 20%	176	21.6	376	20.1
	Middle 20%	222	27.3	491	26.3
	2nd highest 20%	205	25.2	471	25.2
	Highest 20%	142	17.5	367	19.6
	Total	813	100.0	1870	100.0
School size	Smallest	173	21.3	436	23.3
	Medium	249	30.6	613	32.8
	Largest	391	48.1	821	43.9
	Total	813	100.0	1870	100.0
School type	Middle deemed Secondary	15	1.8	33	1.8
	Secondary Modern	21	2.6	46	2.5
	Comprehensive to 16	235	28.9	522	27.9
	Comprehensive to 18	225	27.7	540	28.9
	Grammar	5	.6	17	.9
	Academy	312	38.4	706	37.8
	Not Known	0	0	6	.3
	Total	813	100.0	1870	100.0

A2.3 Survey analysis

Completed paper questionnaires were scanned and added to the online dataset. Responses from the closed survey questions were processed by NFER's data team and automatically coded. Responses to the small number of open questions were manually coded using coding frames developed by NFER researchers.

- Survey responses were analysed using SPSS, in terms of frequencies of responses. A number of cross-tabulations were undertaken including:

- responses broken down by school type (secondary state sector, Academies and special schools.)

- responses broken down by geographical location, (region: North of England, Midlands and South of England) and type of location (urban, small town, village).

A variety of statistical tests were used to ascertain a statistical difference across sub groups. If variables of interest were categorical, chi square was used. To ascertain a difference between two sub groups for quantitative variable, t-test or ANOVA was used.

Analysis of funding and expenditure

The analysis of funding and expenditure used the following calculations:

A. **Costs per pupil per week**: total costs reported/total pupils attending (disadvantaged and others) x number of weeks of Summer School provided by the school.

B. **Funding surplus per funded place per week**: difference between total funding provided by the Department per week and total reported costs per week/total number of places funded.

C. **Funding surplus per disadvantaged attendee per week**: difference between total funding provided by the Department per week and total reported costs per week/number of disadvantaged attendees.

D. **Spending on non-disadvantaged pupils per funded place per week**: total non-disadvantaged pupils attending x A/total number of places funded by the Department.

E. **Spending on non-disadvantaged pupils per disadvantaged attendee per week**: A x number of non-disadvantaged pupils/number of disadvantaged attendees.

Most of the above calculations resulted in skewed distributions, indicated by the mean value (total cost divided by number of surveyed schools) being different from the median (the middle value of the distribution). Table A2.4 gives the mean values for each of the calculations.

Table A2.4: Summer School average funding and expenditure

	Mean	Median	Number of schools
A. Cost per pupil (disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged) per week	£190.85	£185.19	575
B. Funding surplus per funded place per week	-£12.37	£33.33	540
C. Funding surplus per disadvantaged attendee per week	£105.68	£48.70	535
D. Spending on non-disadvantaged pupils per funded place per week	£165.72	£99.89	392
E. Spending on non-disadvantaged pupils per disadvantaged attendee per week	£336.22	£150.00	412

In the case of Calculation A, the mean and median are relatively close in value, indicating a relatively normal distribution of results. However, this is not the case with the other calculations. Figure A2.1 presents a histogram showing the distribution of schools with different values for Calculation B.

Figure A2.1:Distribution of the amount of leakage from the Summer Schools Programme per funded place per week in 540 responding schools
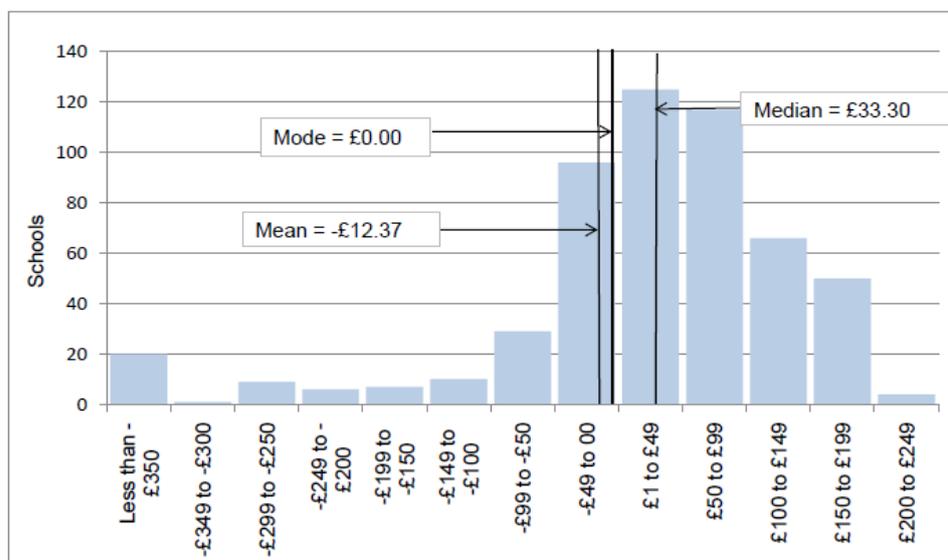
Figure A2.1 shows the number of surveyed schools with a loss or a surplus on the costs per funded place. The distribution is skewed, as indicated by the fact that the mean (-£12.37) is considerably below the median value of £33.30. This is because several schools included in the bar to the extreme left ('less than -£350') appeared to have made relatively large losses for each place offered to a disadvantaged pupil. For example, the school with the biggest funding deficit spent £25,000 on their Summer School which ran for two weeks. It offered two places for disadvantaged pupils. Two disadvantaged pupils actually attended along with 40 non-disadvantaged pupils. The school received funding from the Department of £1,000 (£250 per disadvantaged place for two weeks) which left them with a deficit of £24,000 overall to find from other sources, equating to £6,000 per funded place for a disadvantaged pupil per week. At the other extreme, the school with the largest funding surplus offered 40 places to disadvantaged pupils and had five non-disadvantaged attendees. Their Summer School ran for one week with a total estimated expenditure of £1,250. Their total funding from the Department was £10,000 so their funding surplus was £8,750 overall, or £218.75 per funded place for a disadvantaged pupil per week.

Segmentation analysis

The segmentation method used was latent class analysis. Technically speaking, latent class analysis (LCA) is a statistical method that searches for underlying types of individuals (known as latent classes) such that the proportion of individuals within each type and the probabilities of different responses to each item within each type serve to explain the relationships that exist between variables within the data.

The latent class model uses a maximum likelihood approach that estimates two important parameters which can be used to define the response patterns of the individuals (or latent classes): (i) the proportion of the sample composing each class and (ii) the probability of reporting each behaviour within a particular latent class. These are also known as response probabilities which are calculated on the basis of ticking a particular response category and the combination of responses across all observed variables including multiple response items (which were treated as single response dichotomous items). Once the latent classes were defined, it was possible to use the survey responses to calculate the probability of any school belonging to any of the defined segments.

The aim of this analysis was to find common features of the Summer Schools which grouped together. These features included information such as when the Summer School was run, how long it was run for, the number of pupils who attended the Summer School, whether it was offered to the broader population of children, challenges encountered and overall costs (see Chapter 3 for a full list of the questions included in the analysis).

Four classes or groups of schools were identified from this analysis. Further analysis was then applied to explore the extent to which responses from these four groups of

schools correlated (or otherwise) with responses to the full range of survey questions and the school characteristics to test the robustness of the categories identified, and help provide further descriptive accounts of each of the four school types. These are set out in Figure A2.2.

Figure A2.2: Four groups of schools

Confidence and relationships focus

- Focus on confidence, learning engagement and staff/pupil relationships
- Lower cost; more likely to involve contractors and parents
- Most people involved in delivery
- More likely to have additional funding
- Key challenge: engaging primary schools.

Academic focus

- Focus on literacy and numeracy skills
- More likely to run for 2 weeks
- Most had no additional funding
- Key challenges: parental engagement, targeting disadvantaged pupils and time to plan.

School readiness focus

- Focus on improving familiarity with the new school environment and school readiness
- More likely to run for 1 week
- Least likely to involve contractors
- No challenges specific to this group.

Teamwork focus

- Focus on teamwork
- Longest duration and lowest cost/pupil/week
- Most likely to offer places to other pupils
- More likely to involve contractors
- More likely to have additional funding
- Several key challenges.

Group 1 (22) **Group 2** (476)
Group 3 (324) **Group 4** (16)

The main finding revealed by the segmentation analysis was a difference in aims and focus, especially between schools which had a stronger academic focus (Group 2) and those with a stronger emphasis on preparing pupils for Year 7 (Group 3).

Group 1 is a small group whose Summer Schools were more likely to aim to enhance pupils' confidence and self-esteem, improve pupils' engagement in learning and develop relationships between school staff and pupils. The costs of their Summer Schools were relatively low (the median costs per pupil per week was £77 compared with median cost of £187 overall). On the other hand, they were more likely to involve external contractors in running their Summer School (64 per cent, compared with 54 per cent overall) and parents/carers (14 per cent compared with two per cent overall). This group of schools had the highest number of staff involved in delivery (a mean of 11 people, compared with a mean of four to five staff across the sample as a whole). They were more likely to have additional funding for their Summer School (45 per cent compared with 22 per cent for the whole sample). A key challenge that distinguished them from other schools was securing engagement from feeder primary schools.

Group 2 was the largest group, accounting for 57 per cent of the 838 schools responding to the questionnaire which ran a Summer School. A higher proportion of this group said their Summer School aimed to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills (59 per cent compared with 52 per cent overall). They were more likely to run their Summer School for 2 weeks. Only 17 per cent of this group had any additional funding for their Summer Schools (compared with 38 per cent overall). Their key challenges were parental/carer engagement in the Summer School, targeting the programme at disadvantaged pupils and not having enough time to plan for the Summer School.

Group 3 was the second largest group, accounting for 39 per cent of the sample. A higher proportion of this group said their Summer School aimed to improve pupils' familiarity with their new school environment (78 per cent, compared to around 72 per cent overall) and improve secondary school readiness (53 per cent, compared to 49 per cent overall). A higher proportion of this group ran the Summer School for one week. They were least likely to involve external contractors in delivering their Summer School (46 per cent compared with 54 per cent overall). They had no particular key challenges that distinguished them from the other groups.

Group 4 was the smallest group. A higher proportion of this group said their Summer School aimed to develop pupils' teamwork skills. Their Summer Schools had the longest duration (5.4 weeks) and had the lowest median cost per pupil per week at £56 (compared with median cost of £187 overall). A higher proportion of this group said they offered the Summer School to other pupils in addition to those eligible for FSM and those looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority (88 per cent, compared with 74 per cent overall) and had additional funding for their Summer School (44 per cent, compared with 38 per cent overall). This group identified a number of key challenges which distinguished them from other groups, namely: not having enough time to plan for the Summer School; engagement from feeder primary schools; targeting the programme at disadvantaged pupils; and 'other challenges'.

Further analysis was carried out to see if there were any differences between the groups in relation to their school characteristics, activities offered or self-reported outcomes. In terms of school characteristics, the groups differed in relation to three variables:

- the percentage of pupils eligible for FSM;

- percentage of pupils with SEN; and

- region.

- Schools in Group 1 had the largest proportion of pupils in the highest FSM quintile[47] (46 per cent) and Group 4 had the lowest proportion of pupils in this quintile (16 per cent) compared with the average across all four groups of 23 per cent in the highest quintile.

Schools in Group 1 had the highest percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (27 per cent of this group had 30 per cent or more pupils with statements of SEN, compared with only seven per cent in this category overall).

Group 4 had a higher proportion of schools located in the North of England (41 per cent) compared with 34 per cent in whole sample.

There were no statistically significant differences between the groups for the following school characteristics: school type (middle deemed secondary, grammar, secondary modern, special school, Academy); the number of different ethnic backgrounds served by the school; the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language; urban/rural location; school size; or GCSE performance.

There were several differences between the groups in relation to the activities offered. These are summarised below:

- A higher proportion of schools in Group 1 (77 per cent, compared with 66 per cent of all schools) provided visits to places outside the school, but this group was least likely to offer curriculum taster sessions (14 per cent compared with 36 per cent overall).

- A higher proportion of schools in Group 2 (72 per cent compared with 66 per cent overall) offered numeracy activities. They were also more likely to offer visits to places outside the school (73 per cent compared with 66 per cent overall).

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[47] All secondary schools in England were into quintiles, based on the percentage of their pupils eligible for FSM in 2011.

- Schools in Group 3 were least likely to offer certain activities, namely: sports (79 per cent compared with 85 per cent overall); life skills (47 per cent, compared with 56 per cent overall); and residential experiences (two per cent compared with five per cent overall).

- Schools in Group 4 were most likely to offer ICT/technology activities (75 per cent compared with 62 per cent overall); residential experiences (44 per cent, compared with five per cent overall); and also to say they offered 'other' activities (50 per cent, compared with 34 per cent overall). They were least likely to offer literacy activities (69 per cent, compared with 80 per cent overall) or numeracy activities (44 per cent, compared with 65 per cent overall).

In terms of self-reported impact, there were no statistically significant differences between the groups in their ratings of the success of their Summer School or their willingness to apply for to take part in the Summer School programme in future. However, there were some differences in their views of their Summer School's greatest impact, which appear to be related to their stated aims. These are set out below:

- Improved engagement in learning was reported by a higher proportion of schools in Group 2 (53 per cent) and a lower proportion of schools in Group 3 (40 per cent, compared with 48 per cent overall).

- Development of pupils' literacy and/or numeracy skills was most commonly reported by schools in Group 1 (50 per cent) and least frequently by schools in Group 3 (27 per cent, compared with 36 per cent overall).

A2.4 Study constraints

The main constraints affecting this research were:

- The short time available for design and piloting the surveys

- The initiative was not strictly defined and encouraged schools to implement it in very different ways which made it more challenging to evaluate as there were few common requirements

- The evaluation was largely reliant on teachers' self report data to indicate the success and impact of the Summer Schools. In particular, it lacked assessment data by which to judge the impact of Summer Schools on disadvantaged pupils' attainment

- The involvement of parents/carers in the case studies was limited.

A2.5 Ethical conduct

The research was carried out in accordance with NFER's Code of Practice (2011). In particular, the team used the following procedures:

- Research participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research and how their data would be used and stored.
- The research team asked all participants (both survey and case-study interviewees) for their active consent to take part.
- All staff that had access to the data had undergone Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) enhanced checks.
- All information identifying participants (personal data) was kept confidential and not divulged to anyone outside the research team. The data is located in a secure hosting facility that undergoes regular security audits and has full backup and redundancy policies in place. Interviewees were informed that individuals and schools would not be identified in our report.

Appendix 3: Full version of the school questionnaire populated with responses

Evaluation of the Summer Schools Programme for Disadvantaged Pupils, for the Department for Education: 2012 survey

The Department for Education (DfE) has commissioned NFER and Ecorys to undertake a survey of schools involved in the DfE-funded Summer Schools programme for disadvantaged pupils. The purpose of the survey is to explore how the programme has been implemented and whether it has met its aims and objectives. The survey findings will help the DfE to refine the programme in the future.

The questions relate specifically to the **DfE-funded Summer Schools programme for disadvantaged pupils**, which is aimed at pupils who are about to start secondary or middle school and are either eligible for Free School Meals or looked after continuously for more than six months by the local authority. The programme aims to help disadvantaged pupils make a successful transition from primary to secondary/middle school. Further information can be found on the DfE website: http://education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/summer/b00204241/ssprog

We would still like to hear from you even if you have commissioned an external partner or contractor to run your Summer School.

All your responses will be treated in confidence and reported only in aggregated or anonymised form. The information collected will be used for research purposes only and no information that can identify individuals will be used for any other purpose without the permission of the individual concerned. This survey will take about **20 minutes** to complete.

The survey is also available **online** at **www.nfer.ac.uk/essp**. You will be asked to enter your log-in ID, which is the number at the top right hand corner of this page. If you prefer to complete the paper questionnaire, please complete in **black ink** and return it to NFER in the pre-paid envelope provided.

If you have any queries, please contact NFER.

A. About the DfE-funded Summer School

1. When did your DfE-funded Summer School take place?
(Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 877)

w/c 9th July	**1%**	w/c 30th July	**34%**	w/c 20th Aug.	**26%**	Another date	**1%**
w/c 16th July	**2%**	w/c 6th Aug.	**18%**	w/c 27th Aug.	**18%**	Summer school did not take place	**4%**
w/c 23rd July	**47%**	w/c 13th Aug.	**16%**	w/c 3rd Sept.	**1%**	No response	**0%**

Schools could give more than one response

2. What was the duration of your DfE-funded Summer School programme?
(Please tick **one** only (n = 838)

Less than a week	One week	More than one week but less than two	Two weeks	More than two weeks
2%	**37%**	**2%**	**54%**	**6%**

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding

3a. If you were already planning to offer a Summer School for the 2012 summer holidays, did you change it to fit with the DfE-funded Summer Schools programme?
(Please tick **one** only) (n = 838)

Yes	No	Don't know	No response	Not previously planning to offer a Summer School
27%	**23%**	**2%**	**7%**	**42%**

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding

3b. How did you change your Summer School to fit with the DfE-funded Summer Schools programme? (Please tick **all** that apply) (3a = Yes, n =233)

Increased the duration	**54%**	Decreased the duration	**0%**
Changed the activities	**50%**	No changes made	**0%**
Changed the focus to 'disadvantaged pupils'	**49%**	Other	**13%**
Changed the target year group of pupils	**33%**	No response	**1%**

4a. Was your DfE-funded Summer School offered to 'other' pupils in addition to those eligible for free school meals/looked after children? (Please tick **one** only) (n = 838)

Yes	No	Not sure	No response
74%	**23%**	**1%**	**2%**

4b. If yes, how many 'other pupils' attended the DfE-funded Summer School at least once? (Please write the number of pupils below. If none, put '0') (4a = Yes, n =624)

Median = 18

4c. Which criteria did you use to select the additional pupils? (Please provide details below) (4a = Yes, n =624)

(Top five responses)	N	%
None - available to all students joining the school	150	**24**
Vulnerable by virtue of a combination of factors	82	**13**
Students identified as likely to struggle with transition	61	**10**
Primary school identified them - criteria unknown	48	**8**
Low confidence/self esteem	53	**8**
SEN/statemented	36	**6**

5. Please indicate the number of 'disadvantaged pupils' who: (Please complete **all 3 questions** with the number of pupils. If none, put '0') (n = 838)

Were invited to participate in the Summer School	Agreed to take part ('signed up')	Actually attended the Summer School at least once
Median = 32	**Median = 19**	**Median = 16**

6. If any disadvantaged pupils did not attend the whole DfE-funded Summer School, what were the main reasons for this? (Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

We do not know the reasons for non-participation	**46%**	Pupils no longer transferring to this school	**8%**
Competition from other summer activities (e.g. with family and friends)	**39%**	Did not want to participate as pupils/ parents/carers felt there was stigma attached	**4%**
The days (or weeks) of the activities were not suitable	**20%**	Activities were not suitable	**2%**
Parents/carers did not want them to take part	**19%**	Other reason	**27%**
Transport issues	**8%**	No response	**3%**

Other reason (top 5 responses)

Illness/injury/medical appointments

Religious activities (e.g. Ramadan)

Pupils did not want to come (often because friends not invited)

Lack of engagement/support from parents/hard to reach/disengaged families

Difficulty making contact with parents

7. Which of the following activities did your DfE-funded Summer School provide?

(Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

Team building activities	**88%**	Celebration event	**56%**
Sports activities	**85%**	Life skills	**56%**
Arts/creative activities	**85%**	Science activities	**41%**
Literacy activities	**80%**	Curriculum taster sessions	**36%**
Familiarisation with the layout of the school	**73%**	Residential	**5%**
Visits to places outside the school	**66%**	Other activities	**34%**
Numeracy activities	**65%**	No response	**0%**
ICT/technology activities	**62%**		

B. Summer school recruitment

8. How did your school identify disadvantaged pupils to invite to your DfE-funded Summer Schools programme? (Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

Pupils were identified by your school in consultation with primary schools	**59%**	Local authority information	**28%**
Pupils were identified by primary schools	**47%**	Virtual School Headteacher for looked after children	**1%**
Pupils were identified by your school, using pupil background data (e.g. 2012 PLASC data)	**38%**	Other method	**11%**

9. How easy or difficult was it to identify and invite 'disadvantaged pupils' to participate in the DfE-funded Summer School programme without creating a sense of stigma? (Please tick **one** only) (n = 838)

Very easy	Quite easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Quite difficult	Very difficult	No response
34%	**35%**	**15%**	**12%**	**3%**	**1%**

10. Please tell us of any steps your school took to address/avoid any stigma associated with a programme targeted on disadvantaged pupils.
(Please write in below) (n = 838)

(Top five responses)	N	%
Summer school offered to a broader range of pupils (not only to disadvantaged pupils)	149	**18**
Direct contact with parents (e.g. letter home, phone calls, face-to-face)	134	**16**
No mention of disadvantage as being the criterion for selection/use of an alternative term	95	**11**
Invitations/information/verbal invitations carefully worded	44	**5**
Recruitment through feeder primary schools rather than direct contact with pupils/parents	37	**4**

C. Summer school planning and delivery

11. Who was involved in planning your DfE-funded Summer School?
(Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

Teaching staff	**79%**	Governors	**6%**
Senior leadership team	**74%**	Parents/carers	**6%**
Support staff	**70%**	Local voluntary agencies	**4%**
External partners/contractors	**37%**	Local authority staff	**4%**
Pupils	**18%**	Staff from other secondary/middle schools	**3%**
Staff from feeder primary schools	**14%**	Others	**8%**

12. Who was involved in delivering your DfE-funded Summer School?
(Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

Staff at your school	**88%**	A *group* of schools working together *with* external partners/contractors	**2%**
Staff at your school working with external partners/contractors	**43%**	Parents/carers	**2%**
External partners/contractors only	**13%**	Other	**12%**
Local authority	**5%**		

13. How many people were involved in delivering the DfE-funded Summer School overall (excluding extra adults involved in trips)? (Please complete **all** totals. If none, put '0') *If you were involved, please include yourself in the relevant category* (n = 838)

Teachers from your school	**Mean = 6**	Local authority staff	**Mean = 1**
Support staff	**Mean = 5**	Adult volunteers/helpers	**Mean = 1**
External partner/contractor staff	**Mean = 4**	Parents/carers	**Mean = 0**
Pupil or student volunteers/ helpers	**Mean = 4**	Others	**Mean = 1**
Teachers from other schools	**Mean = 1**		

D. Funding arrangements

14. What is your estimate of the total expenditure by your school to deliver the DfE-funded Summer School to all participating pupils? (Please state below)

When answering this question, please consider all direct (i.e. identifiable) costs. This is likely to include for example, staff, external partner/contractor, venue, refreshments and travel costs. Your total does not need to be precise: a rough estimate will suffice.

Please note that your answers will <u>not be used</u> to calculate your programme funding. (n = 838)

Median = £7833

15. Did your school receive additional funding for your Summer School for 'disadvantaged' pupils from any source(s) other than from the DfE? (Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

No, our programme did not have any additional funding	**76%**
Our programme used other school funds	**15%**
Our programme had funding from parental contributions/charges	**8%**
Our programme had funding from another source (e.g. an external funder)	**4%**
No response	**1%**

E. Aims, successes and challenges

16. What were your school's <u>main</u> aims for your DfE-funded summer school? (Please tick the **top 5** aims only) (n = 838)

Enhance confidence and self-esteem	**85%**	Improve secondary/middle school readiness	**49%**
Improve pupils' familiarity with their new school environment	**72%**	Close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in our school	**44%**
Improve pupils' engagement in learning	**60%**	Develop school's understanding of pupil need	**33%**
Develop relationship between school staff and pupils	**57%**	Develop independent learning skills	**23%**
Develop literacy and numeracy skills	**54%**	Improve pupils' attainment	**21%**
Develop teamwork skills	**52%**	Other	**7%**

17. How would you rate the overall success of your DfE-funded summer school? (Please tick **one** only) (n = 838)

Highly successful	Successful	Partially successful	Unsuccessful	No response
68%	**26%**	**5%**	**0%**	**1%**

18. What have been the greatest challenges associated with your DfE-funded Summer School programme for disadvantages pupils? (Please tick all that apply) (n=838)

Pupil attendance at the Summer School	**42%**	Insufficient funding	**10%**
Targeting the programme at disadvantaged pupils	**30%**	Pupil engagement in the Summer School	**6%**
Not enough time to plan for the Summer School	**26%**	Insufficient staff resource	**4%**
Parental/carer engagement in the Summer School	**25%**	Duration of the Summer School	**2%**
Engagement from feeder primary schools	**17%**	Other	**15%**
Logistical issues (e.g. travel, venue, weather) prevented activities taking place	**13%**	No response	**7%**
Timing of the Summer School	**11%**		

Other (Top five responses)

Late notice/receipt of funding

Not being able to include other pupils (e.g. all/SEN)

Accessing FSM/LAC data early enough to identify eligible students

Difficulties in contacting/chasing parents

High workload/time commitment for coordination

19. In your view, where has your DfE-funded Summer School had the greatest impact on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils? (Please tick **all** that apply) (n = 838)

Improved pupils' confidence/self esteem	**88%**
Improved relationships between pupils in the year group	**71%**
Improved relationships between pupils and staff	**68%**
Improved attitudes to school	**66%**
Developed pupils' teamwork skills	**61%**
Improved pupils' engagement in learning	**47%**
Developed pupils' literacy and/or numeracy skills	**36%**
Developed pupils' independent learning skills	**29%**
Too early to say	**12%**
Other	**6%**
No response	**1%**

F. The future

20. If the DfE-funded Summer Schools programme for disadvantaged pupils is offered again, will your school apply to take part? (Please tick **one** only) (n = 877)

Yes definitely	Not sure	No	No response
95%	**4%**	**0%**	**1%**

G. Further information

21. Please select one of the following categories which best describes your role. (Please tick **one** only) (n = 877)

Senior leadership team member	**52%**	Pastoral support coordinator	**8%**	Learning mentor (LM)	**2%**
Teacher	**17%**	Support staff – other than LM	**8%**		
No response	**3%**	Other role	**11%**		

22. Please add any further reflections on the DfE-funded Summer Schools programme. (n = 877)

(Top five responses)	N	%
Pupil enjoyment /positive feedback	61	**7**
Improved readiness for secondary school/transition (e.g. meeting new staff, familiarity with school buildings)	54	**6**
Selection criteria (FSM/LAC) too narrow	54	**6**
Need earlier notice/confirmation of funding (e.g. to aid planning/preparation)	54	**6**
Other positive comment (e.g. thank you)	55	**6**

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete our survey.

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Appendix 4: Case-study sample

Table 4: Case-study sample

School	School type	Socio-demographic	Region	% FSM	Duration	Phase 1 interviews	Phase 2 interviews
A	Maintained	Urban	North	Low	2 weeks	Pupils (x8); Lead Contact; Business Manager; Partner Organisation; Parents (x4)	Pupils (x4); Lead Contact; Parents (x1)
B	Maintained	Urban	South	High	2 weeks	Pupils (x10); Lead Contact; Deputy Headteacher; Teachers (x2); Parents (x2)	Pupils (x6); Deputy Head-teacher; Parents (x2)
C	Maintained	Urban	Midlands	Medium	1 week	Pupils (x4); Lead Contact; Parents (x3); Teachers (x2); Deputy Headteacher	Pupils (x5); Parents (x2); Lead Contact; Teachers (x4) Partner Organisation (1)
D	Maintained	Urban	North	High	2 weeks	Lead Contacts (x2); Headteacher; Teacher; Pupils (x4); Parents (x2)	Lead Contact; Senior Manager; Pupils (x2); Parents (x1)
E	Academy	Urban	North	Medium	2 weeks	Lead Contact; Headteacher; Senior Manager; Teachers (x2); Pupils (x6); Parents (x2)	Lead Contact; Senior Manager
F	Free School	Urban	South	Low	1 week	Lead Contact; Deputy Headteacher; Teachers (x2); Pupils (x7); Partner Organisation	Lead Contact; Senior Manager; Pupils (x6)
G	Academy	Rural	East	Low	1 week	Lead Contacts (x2); Deputy Headteacher; Support Staff (x2);	Deputy Headteacher; Pupils

School	School type	Socio-demographic	Region	% FSM	Duration	Phase 1 interviews	Phase 2 interviews
						Pupils (x6); Parents (x5)	(x5); Parents (x3)
H	Academy	Urban	North	High	2 weeks	Lead Contact; Teacher; Police Officer; Pupils (x4); Parents (x2)	Lead Contact; Teacher; Partner Organisation; Pupils (x3); Parents (x2)
I	Academy	Rural	East	Medium	2 weeks	Lead Contact; Teachers (x2); Pupils (x7); Parents (x2)	Lead Contact; Pupils (x3); Parents (x1)
J	Special School	Urban	West	Low	1 week	Lead Contact; Deputy Headteacher, Partner Organisation; Pupils (x5)	Lead Contact; Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 5: Costs Pro-forma

This pro-forma is designed to capture basic information about the costs of planning and delivering the Department for Education Summer Schools Programme for Disadvantaged Pupils. The data will be used <u>solely</u> for the purpose of the independent evaluation, which is being carried out by the NFER with Ecorys. This data is being gathered to provide an indication of how much it has cost schools to run a Summer School. It will not be used to monitor schools' or contractors' individual financial performance.

Please complete as much of this form as possible in advance of the case-study visit by the evaluators. The Pro-Forma will then need to be updated in the autumn term to factor-in any additional costs. The completed Pro-Forma should be emailed to [INSERT EMAIL CONTACT]. Thank you for your participation.

School name:

Date completed:

Table 1 – Total Funding

We are mainly interested in the costs of providing the free Summer School activities for pupils, i.e. the activities that pupils and their families did not have to pay for. However we would also like to know if parents/families made a contribution to the Summer School activities, and there is space to add this in the table below.

Please complete the table below. This does not need to be the exact figures, a rough indication of the funding for each category (where applicable) is sufficient.

Funding source	Total (£)	Notes
Department for Education Summer Schools Programme funding		
Other school funds (specify which if possible)		
Parental contributions (if so, was this from particular parents/families?)		
Other external funding source (e.g. external funder) [please specify who]		
Add rows as necessary		
Total funding allocated		

Table 2 – Expenditure

Please complete the following table to show how the funding for your Summer School was spent using the categories provided. This does not need to be the exact figures, a rough indication of how the costs were split is sufficient.

There is space for you to add additional categories if required.

Please fill in as much detail as you can at this stage. The information can be topped up and/or updated during the follow up visit in the autumn term.

	Totals (£)	
	Planned	Actual
Direct staff costs (e.g. additional wages for teachers running the Summer School)		
Cost of an external partner or contractor to run the Summer School		
Equipment hire (e.g. hire of sports equipment)		
Venue hire		
Meals/lunches for pupils (includes final day banquet for pupils and parents)		
Tickets/event entry		
Transport		
Other costs (please specify what) certificates, MDF, fabric		
Total expenditure		

Benefits 'in kind'

Please use the tables below to enter any resources that were provided for free. This can include people's time (e.g. parents or other volunteers), amount and type of equipment donated/loaned, venues used free of charge or anything else. If you know the quantity or the equivalent cost, please provide this where possible, although this is not essential.

Table 3a volunteer time

Who (provide role, rather than name. e.g. parent, governor)	Number of days

Table 3b other benefits in kind

Item donated or loaned	Circumstances (e.g. loaned, donated)	Equivalent cost (if known)

Table 4 – Numbers of pupils

When completing the 'planned' column, please enter the number of pupils that agreed to take part ('signed up')

When completing the 'actual' column please enter the number of pupils that actually attended the Summer School at least once.

		Planned (Number)	**Actual** (Number)
Pupils eligible for FSM	Boys		
	Girls		
Looked after pupils	Boys		
	Girls		
Other pupils who were allowed to attend the Summer School activities for free.	Boys		
	Girls		

Thank you very much for your time in recording this information.

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

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