

## CASE STUDY

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# Engagement and Progress in a Large Group of Schools

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## CASE STUDY

## Engagement and progress in a large group of schools

This case study looks at the use of the Learning Village programme by a group of 55 schools. The Across Cultures team collected data on usage, progress and satisfaction with the programme from these schools over a six-month period from January to June 2020.

The schools are publicly funded schools, with new-to-English learners from a number of different language backgrounds. They have been using the programme for 1 year. Training is provided on an ongoing basis for all staff administering the programme.

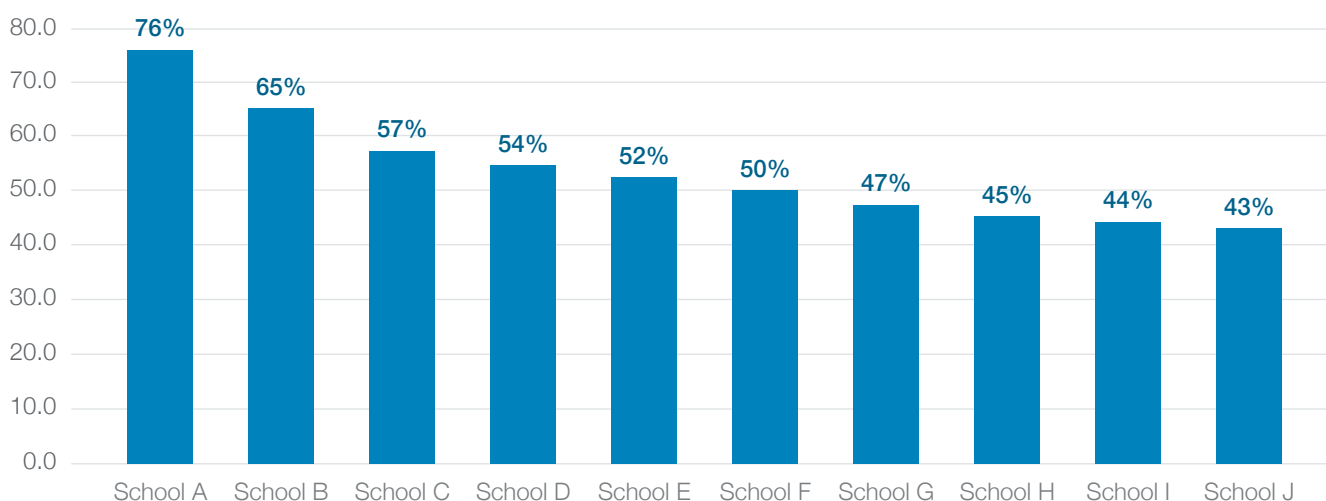
### Progress

#### OVERALL PROGRESS

Across Cultures considers progress of 10% or more to be 'good'. Progress is measured by taking the average result achieved by learners on starting the programme and comparing it with the average result achieved by the same learners at the end of the six-month period.

Learners in this group of schools made combined progress over this period of 33%. Many individual schools made significantly better progress than the combined score.

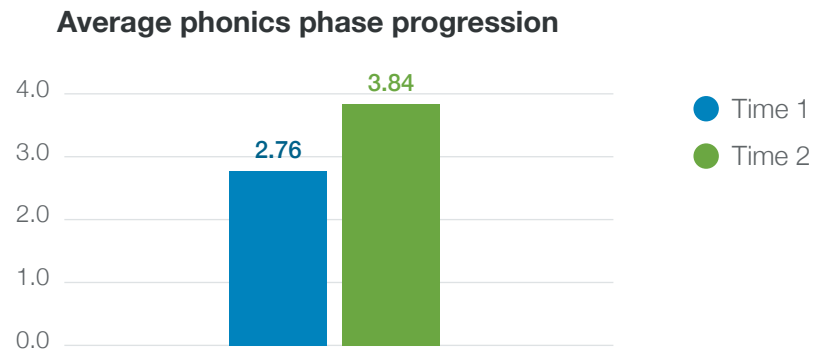
Our data shows that schools who used the Learning Village the most made the most progress. We divide schools into 'low' 'medium' and 'high' usage categories. In the 'high' category, the 'top ten' schools in this group scored as follows:



Drilling down into the data more deeply, we looked at progress in phonics, writing, reading, and vocabulary and language structures.

## PROGRESS IN PHONICS

The figure below shows average phonics 'phase' progression across the six-month period for all of the group of schools. 'Time 1' indicates the assessment made when the students first began the programme and 'Time 2' refers to the second assessment date, six months later.

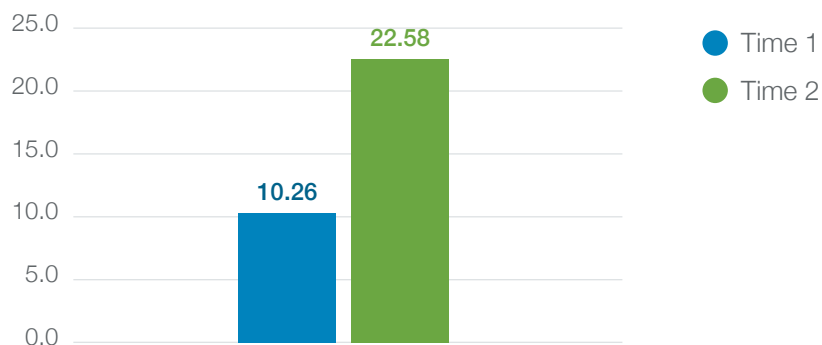


These results indicate that, on average, most learners in this group of schools progressed to being able to recognise and use initial phonemes to construct words by blending and segmenting. They are still in the process of recognising and using all letters, the digraphs, some long vowel and double-letter phonemes to construct words by blending and segmenting.

## PROGRESS IN WRITING

Across Cultures measures progress in writing through two assessments. In the first assessment, we asked learners to write words in English related to a familiar image and noted the number of words used.

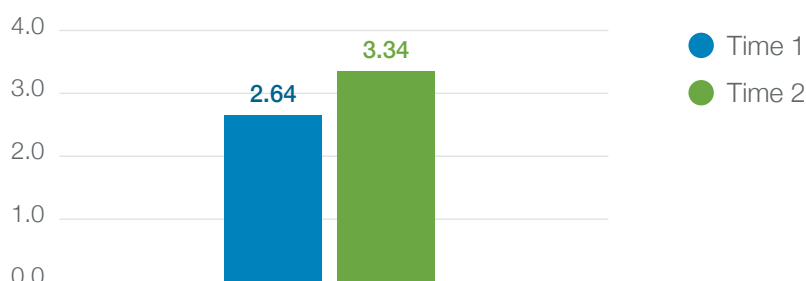
**Average number of words written in Writing assessment 1**



These results show that learners doubled the number of words they were able to use over the six-month time period. This may well indicate an overall doubling of their general vocabulary.

For the second writing assessment, we asked learners to write a passage based on an image. We recorded the results according to particular criteria levels used by this group of schools. These levels range from being unable to complete the assessment, to writing in multiple paragraphs with a mixture of complete simple, compound and complex sentences and good control of a range of grammatical structures and punctuation.

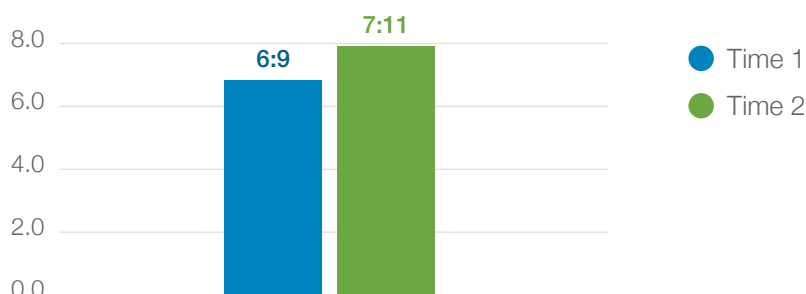
**Average Writing assessment 2 scores**



## PROGRESS IN READING

For our reading assessment, we used the New Group Reading Test (NGRT) – a standardised method of assessment. This provides an overall reading age and allows teachers to see how a student's decoding skills compare with their understanding of what they have read.

**Average reading age progress**

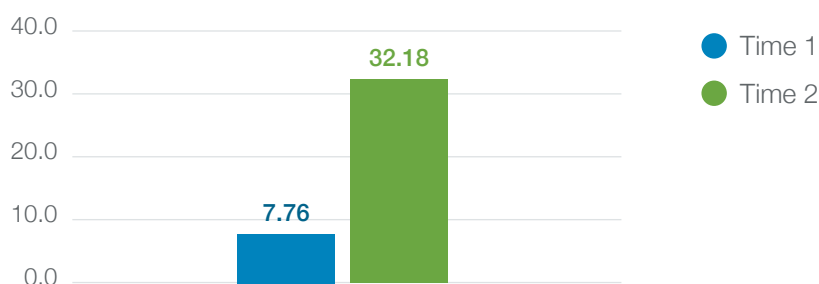


Expected reading age progress over a six-month period for an average learner is six months. The results above show a reading age improvement of 14 months over the six-month period for learners in this group of schools.

## VOCABULARY AND LANGUAGES STRUCTURE BASELINE ASSESSMENT

We administer a baseline assessment to identify whether a learner has the vocabulary and language structures needed to work comfortably in their new environment. Results are based on the 68 Survival Language sessions from the Learning Village programme.

## Average vocabulary and language structure



The data shows that the average learner in this group of schools began by being able to use only minimal English (for instance, knowing colours, numbers and some classroom language). At the end of the six-month period the average learner had passed, on average, the following Survival Language topics:

- » What's this in English
- » Possessive adjectives
- » Extended counting
- » Subject + verbs + object
- » Likes and dislikes
- » Plurals
- » Identifying objectives
- » Imperatives
- » Family and extended members
- » Have got/has got
- » Sports
- » Do you questions
- » Wh questions (what/where)
- » Can/can't for ability and permission
- » Ordinal numbers
- » Question tags: Have you/do you
- » Countable nouns
- » Food
- » Classifying food
- » How much/many
- » There is/are
- » Home
- » Feelings and wants
- » To be (is am/are)

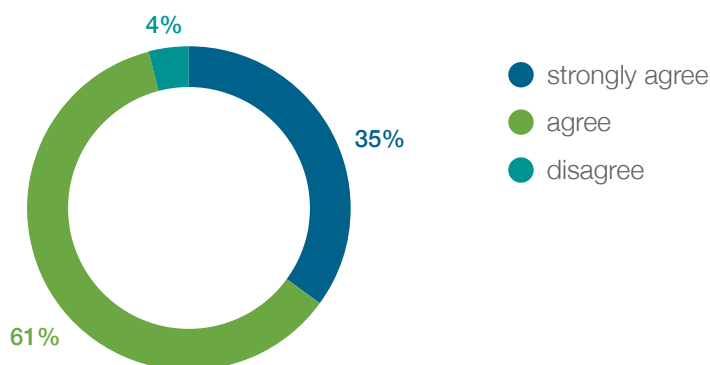


## Engagement and Satisfaction

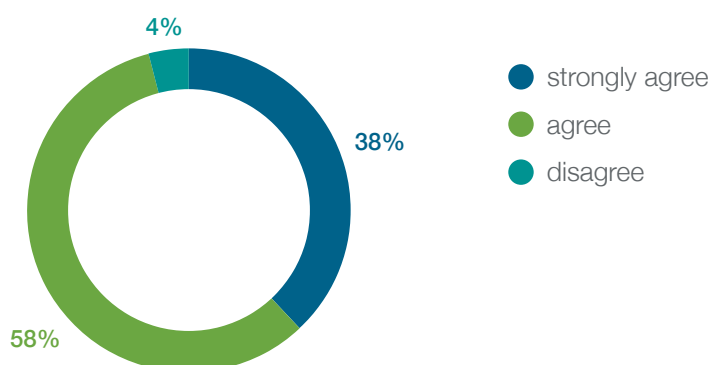
We also collected data and information about student engagement and student and teacher satisfaction with the programme.

96% of the teachers from this group of schools 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the Learning Village was engaging for their students. The same percentage 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the programme was relevant to their students' needs.

### Responses to 'The Learning Village is engaging for students.'

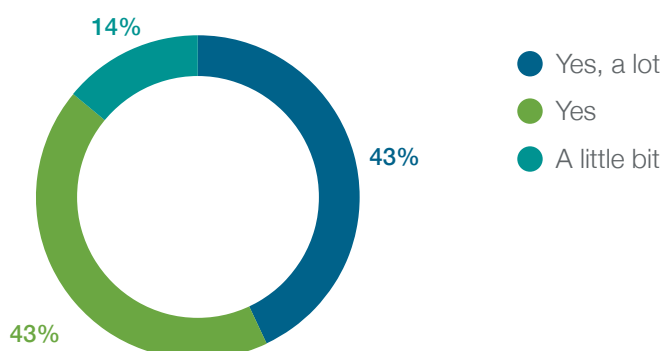


### Responses to 'The Learning Village content is relevant to my student's needs.'



To the students themselves, we asked: 'Does the Learning Village help you learn English?'. Of the 90 respondents, 86% answered 'Yes' or 'Yes, a lot' to the question. A full 100% of the students agreed that their English had improved as a result of using the Learning Village.

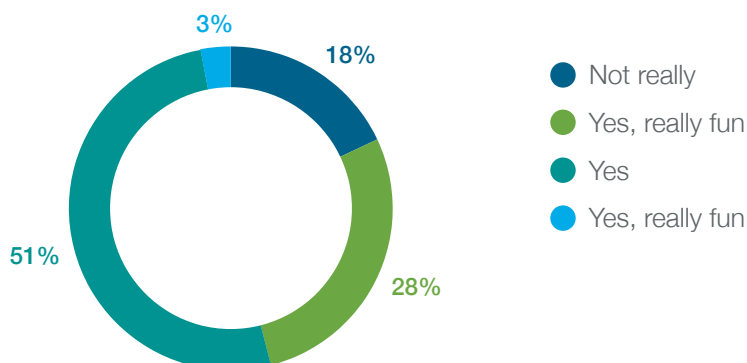
### Student Survey: 'Does the Learning Village help you learn English?'





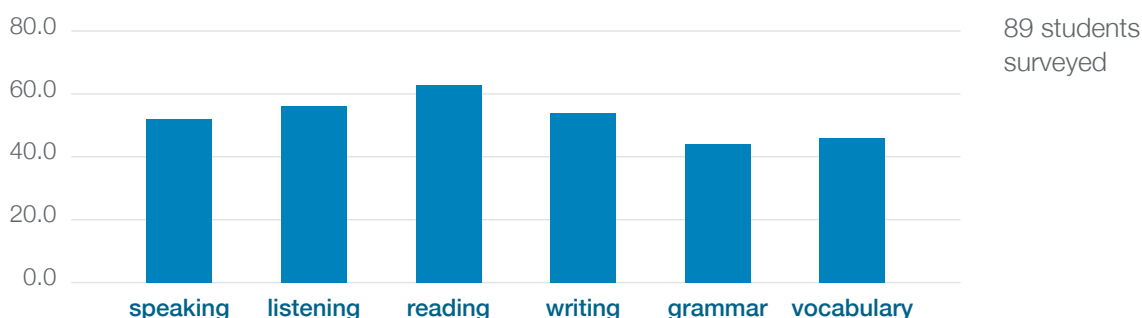
The majority of the student respondents (79%) also agreed that the Learning Village was fun or 'really fun' to use – a useful measure, as we believe that this translates into higher levels of engagement.

#### Student Survey: 'Is the Learning Village fun to use?'



We asked our student respondents to pinpoint the skills the Learning Village had helped them with. In their responses, all skills were well represented, with reading nudging slightly ahead.

#### Student Survey: 'What has the Learning Village helped you with?'



## STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Finally, we asked students to tell us, in their own words, about their experience of the programme and what they like about the Learning Village.

*"It helps me with my spelling and having fun. I am learning really fast."*

*"It helps me to learn new words every day and I can practise all the words I know. The pictures help. It is not as hard as other programmes."*

*"It is easy to use and access from Home and in-school."*

*"The Learning Village helps me with my Spelling and my Writing it helps me with my speaking because when I do the Learning Village we have to say the word out loud the learning Village is amazing because it helps me with everything even the thing I do in School or at home."*

*"Multiplayer is my favourite thing to do on the learning village"*

*"[I like] playing against my teacher and winning."*



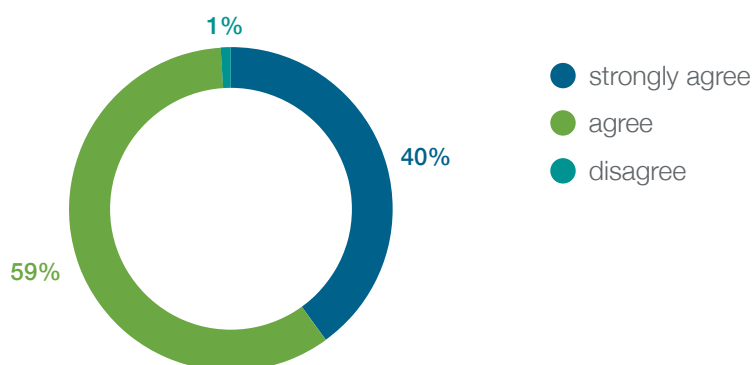
## Training, Support and Teacher Feedback

Across Cultures ensures that teachers and their assistants are fully trained in using the Learning Village. Teachers and assistants have continual access to our bank of webinars and bi-monthly newsletters outlining best practice and highlighting new resources. We also offer ongoing technical support.

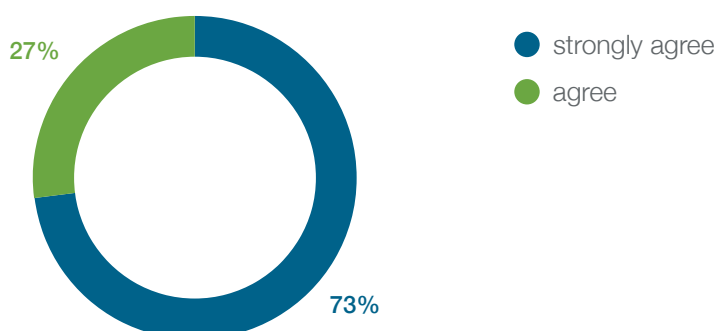
First, we gathered views from teachers in this group of schools on our online training. This survey covers the whole of 2020, which is a slightly different time period to the previous data collection period. This time period was selected because it best reflected our training provision.

We asked teachers participating in the online training whether it met their needs, and whether they considered the trainer to be knowledgeable. The results were overwhelmingly positive.

**Responses to 'The online training met my needs.'**

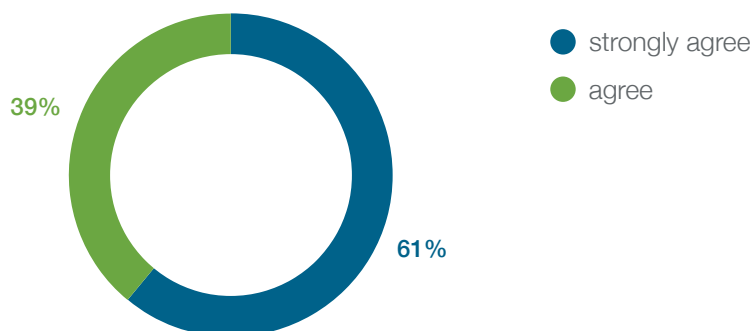


**Responses to 'The EAL specialist who trained me/us was knowledgeable and able to support my/our learning.'**



Despite COVID-19, some in-person training was held in this group of schools. Feedback on the in-person workshops held in 2020 was likewise extremely positive.

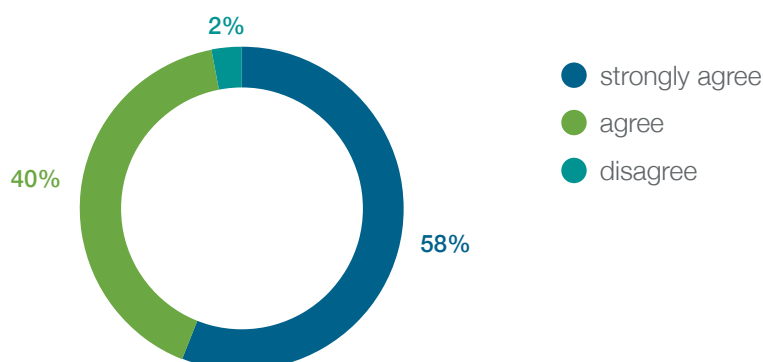
**Responses to ‘Today’s Learning Village workshop will help me to further support my students.’**



## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

We surveyed 81 Learning Village users in 2020 to assess our technical support offering. Of these, 98% said they ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the ongoing technical support was prompt and helpful.

**Responses to ‘Ongoing programme and technical support has been prompt and helpful.’**



## TESTIMONIALS

Several teachers from the group of schools provided testimonials on our training sessions.

*“My student, who is an absolute beginner, is loving the programme. It’s like a light has come on for her (and me). Thank you for a wonderfully valuable day of learning.”*

*“You all have such a wealth of knowledge and passion. Thanks for today.”*

*“A very informative and professionally run day. Thank you very much.”*

*“Today’s session was helpful for networking...and for gaining a greater understanding of the program and how it works.... today gave clarity and practicals and useful modelling that was helpful.”*

*The Learning Village team managing this group of schools produced certificates to be awarded to those engaging in training as an acknowledgement of their progress. These were well-received!*

*“Thanks for that. It’s a nice recognition.”*

## Conclusion

Progress in this group of schools has been good overall, and in several schools has been excellent, with those schools using the Learning Village the most making the best progress. Progress has been highly satisfactory in all areas of the programme: phonics, writing, reading, and vocabulary and language structures. Scores on measures of engagement, satisfaction and relevance have been high, while, our training – both online and in-person – and our technical support has been very well-received.

To conclude, teachers and assistants from this group of schools gave their views on the usefulness of the Learning Village in general:

“Thank you so much for making this programme for our students. The resources are remarkable. All staff are absolutely wonderful, very approachable and extremely helpful.”

“Thank you got a well thought-out tool.”

“Really impressed with all the different learning opportunities that this provides. It is very useful for schools isolated from the main centres.”

“This is an excellent tool/resource and has definitely prompted us to consider how we can integrate the Learning Village into our curriculum school wide.”

