THE W-EVER 6 ATTAINMENT GAP IN GOSPEL OAK PRIMARY SCHOOL

By

Yezi Chen
Jack Gerulskis
Siyuan Li
Dieter Teirlinck

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Abstract

Disadvantaged white British students, also known as the W-Ever 6 group, perform 38% worse than non disadvantaged white British students on their General Certificate of Secondary Education exams. Among all ethnicities, the W-Ever 6 group has one of the largest disparities in performance when compared with other white British students. At Gospel Oak Primary and Nursery School, we investigated the factors causing this gap in attainment by conducting interviews, surveys, and observational research. We found that attainment is the culmination of many intricate components, but on average, the W-Ever 6 group misses school more often, does fewer extracurriculars, and has lower aspirations. Closing the W-Ever 6 attainment gap is most effectively done by fostering a supportive school community that assists parents in providing their children with strong educational engagement at home.

Acknowledgments

Executive Summary

Are equal educational opportunities a basic human right? Unfortunately not, because these opportunities are influenced by cultural and economic factors. Furthermore, a student's educational opportunity is the culmination of many intricate components that all affect one another. This gap in opportunity leads to a gap in educational attainment between student groups who are on different sides of the cultural and economic spectrum.

An educational attainment gap is a difference in average exam scores between two different student groups. Since attainment gaps appear early in primary schools, it inevitably has a compounding effect that leads to the gap widening in later years. Attainment gaps are seen all over the world, but for the purposes of this project, we will focus on the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged white British students. Disadvantaged white British students who have ever received a free school meal in the past 6 years are referred to as the W-Ever 6 group. There are many components of the W-Ever 6 attainment gap, but our research focused on only a few aspects of the issue.

During our research, we identified parental engagement and students' linguistic skills to be two key factors that lead to the attainment gap. Therefore, the goal of this project is to collaborate with Gospel Oak Primary School to analyse parental engagement and students' linguistic awareness and how those factors impact the educational attainment of W-Ever 6 students.

This research investigated the stated problem guided by the following objectives.

1. To analyse W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 students' linguistic skills and attainment.

2. To improve students' linguistic skills by collaborating with senior faculty and parents.

3. To analyse parental engagement with the school and at home with their children.

4. To improve parental engagement by introducing effective educational engagement styles based on existing research.

Our first method of collecting data was done by conducting observational research in classrooms and focus groups. Then, we analysed grades to evaluate students' attainment in writing, reading, and maths. This allowed us to measure the attainment gap at Gospel Oak Primary School. Additionally, we conducted several interviews with senior staff members to hear the opinions of primary school educators.

We analysed the information gathered from our initial observations, focus groups, and interviews to collect findings concerning students' performance, teaching strategies, and optimal

learning environments. We learned that the school provides a supportive classroom setting, encouraging challenges, and quality oracy lessons. From the focus groups, we reinforced our findings on the importance of an effective home learning environment. High attaining students within the focus groups demonstrated a higher comprehension of the English language than the poor attaining students. It showed us that Ever 6 status is not a defining feature of a student's attainment and that students with that status have the same ability as all other students to perform well. They are able to overcome obstacles by being provided with a nurturing at-home environment that is guided by strong parental engagement.

We also administered a survey to the parent body with the aim of determining how parents engage with students at home and school. Even though no identifiable information from the survey is included in this final report, the names were stored in order to associate parents with their children. This survey allowed us to draw conclusions on how parental engagement affects students' attainment. Specifically, we found that Ever 6 parents read less to their children, attend fewer school events, and do fewer extracurriculars as seen in Figure 0.1 and Figure 0.2.
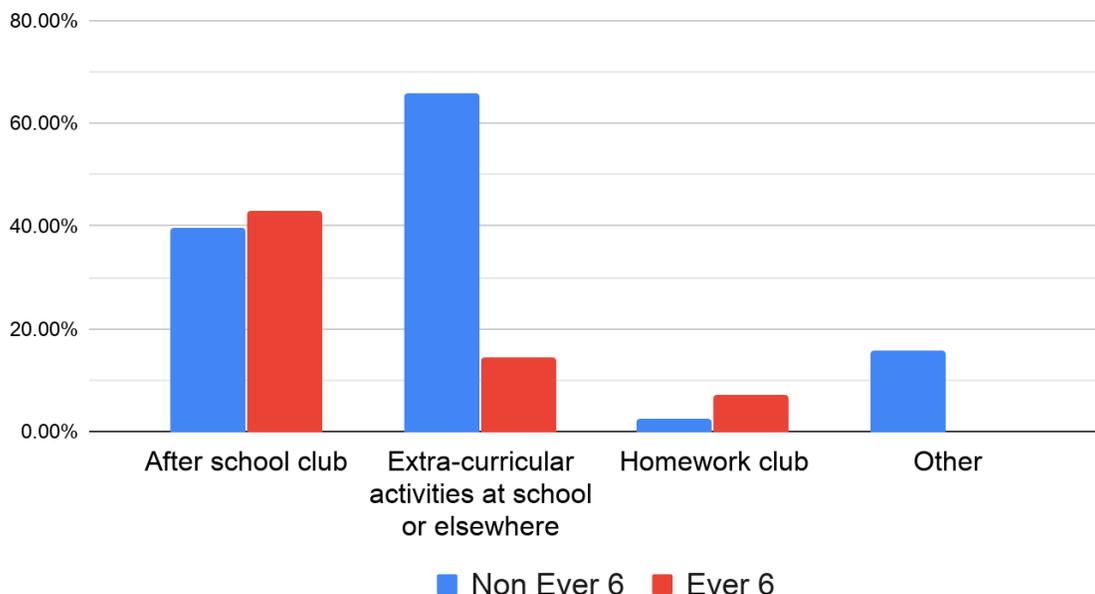

Figure 0.1: Survey Results for "What does your child do after school?"

Another interesting result from the survey is the answer to the question, "how many days a week a parent read to their children?", which is seen in Figure 0.2. There's a large difference in

the amount of time Ever 6 parents and non Ever 6 parents read to their children. The majority of non Ever 6 parents read with their children six to seven days per week, but the majority of Ever 6 parents read with their children only three to five days. Just from this information alone, we can conclude that Ever 6 parents have lower rates of engagement with reading, and therefore their children perform worse on average. The children who read three to five days per week with a parent, score an average of 102.9 on reading exams at Gospel Oak Primary School. In comparison, the children who read six to seven days per week with a parent score an average of 111.9. There is a nine-point difference between these two groups on reading exam scores, which emphasizes the dramatic effect reading can have on a student's attainment.
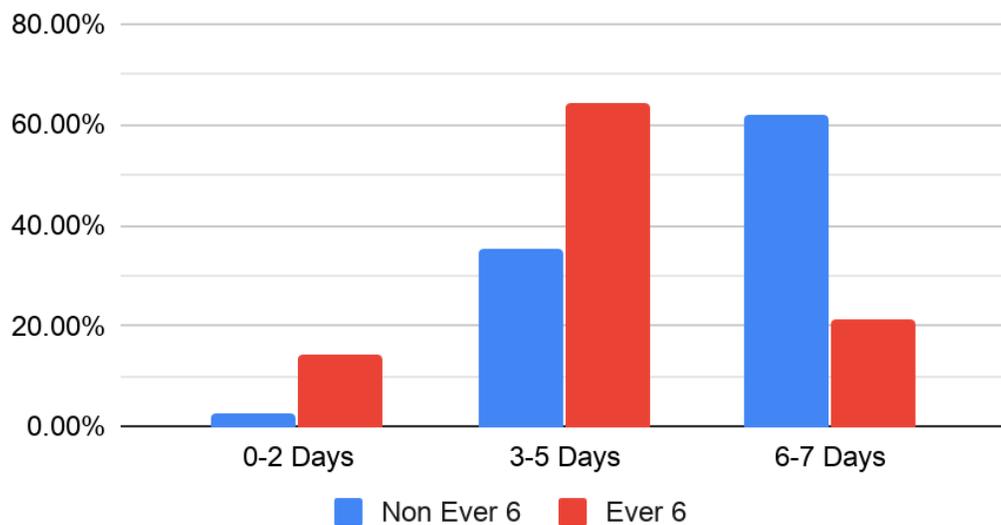
Figure 0.2: Survey Results for "How many days per week do you read to your child?"

The lack of effective engagement shows that economic status and ethnicity play roles in the way a parent interacts with their children. The reasons why Ever 6 parents engage less effectively is because they tend to have lower educational aspirations, less trust in the education system, and fewer resources for out-of-school engagement. Additionally, parents from different cultures have distinct values when it comes to educational priorities. Based on the gathered information, our project took two approaches to improve parental engagement overall.

Firstly, we created a booklet for parents to improve the at-home learning environment. We included parenting suggestions on the most effective style of educational engagement, 'parental autonomy support'. This is defined as teaching your children how to be self-sufficient learners. Effective engagement is not determined by socioeconomic status or ethnicity, therefore,

it should be a part of every student's education. The booklet also included recommended activities based on children's aspirations along with the estimated cost and duration.

Secondly, in order to improve parental collaboration with Gospel Oak Primary School, this project proposed implementing a new communication platform. Several characteristics of various online applications were analysed in order to meet the needs of Gospel Oak Primary School. A new medium of communication between parents and faculty will allow the parents to monitor their child's performance, receive clarification on assignments, and learn about upcoming school events. The platform also includes useful features for teachers such as quiet hours and two-way communication.

While these recommendations will not close the attainment gap completely, we hope to have improved parent-teacher communication as well as the parent-child at-home learning environment. Parents determine the success of their children, and we hope our research and deliverables will help them do that. Unfortunately, the impact of our research is not easily verifiable which leaves a 'gap' for further research. Nonetheless, the W-Ever 6 attainment gap is a complex issue that requires many years, if not decades, to be solved.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Educational attainment gaps appear in countries around the world and are detrimental to their societies (World Bank, 2018; Haycock, 2001). The educational attainment gap is an issue because higher achieving students will go on to commit less crime, earn higher wages, and contribute more to the betterment of their societies (Desforges, 2018). A country wants all of its citizens to reach higher attainment to improve their quality of life and the society they live in. All countries have an educational attainment gap when categorizing their population and demographics through ethnicity, language, or income (World Bank, 2018; Haycock, 2001).

Great Britain, one of the world's economic capitals, is no exception to this global phenomenon. Disadvantaged students perform 24% worse on the General Certificate of Secondary Education exams than non-disadvantaged students (Gov.uk, 2019). Furthermore, it was found that white British disadvantaged students perform 38% worse on the General Certificate of Secondary Education exams than non-disadvantaged students (Gov.uk, 2019). This makes white British disadvantaged students one of the worst academic performers in Great Britain.

Within Great Britain, parental engagement and students' linguistics are two key factors that lead to the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students (Desforges, 2018). Strong parental engagement has been positively correlated with a student's attainment. In fact, parental engagement influences attainment more than the school between ages of five to eleven (Desforges, 2018). Teaching initiatives have also been designed to improve student linguistics, specifically for disadvantaged students, as a means to increase their attainment (Jay et al., 2017). Although there are several factors contributing to the gap, this research will focus on the impacts of parental engagement and student's linguistics.

This research investigates the factors driving the attainment gap between disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged students by analyzing Gospel Oak Primary School's existing data. The school has already conducted research by holding focus groups and asking feedback from parents. With the collaboration of Gospel Oak Primary School, this research aims to continue their progress and deliver viable recommendations on ways to narrow the attainment gap.

The goal of this project is to collaborate with Gospel Oak Primary School to analyse parental engagement and students' linguistic awareness and how those factors impact the educational attainment of W-Ever 6 students.

Our objectives are:

1. To analyse W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 students' linguistic skills and attainment.
2. To improve students' linguistic skills by collaborating with senior faculty and parents.
3. To analyse parental engagement with the school and at home with their children.
4. To improve parental engagement by introducing effective educational engagement styles based on existing research.

Chapter 2: Background

The background chapter begins with a definition of an attainment gap and how the educational attainment gap is measured in the United Kingdom. Next, the gap of the target group is defined and the causes of the gap are examined. Then, we look at the gap of the target group within a particular school. Lastly, we review the literature on means to close this gap.

2.1 Broad Background of Attainment Gap

2.1.1 Measurement of the Educational Attainment Gap in the United Kingdom

An educational attainment gap is a difference in academic performance between two or more groups of students. British academic performance is most commonly measured through standardized testing. The British education system is divided into four parts: primary education, secondary education, further education, and higher education (Gov.uk, 2020). At the age of five, British students attend primary school to finish Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2). Around age eleven, students who have passed both primary school stages will move onto secondary school to finish Key Stage 3 (KS3) and Key Stage 4 (KS4). Testing is conducted at each stage and students are expected to achieve a certain level of attainment.

Primary aged students need to take three main assessments. First, a phonics screening check is taken by each student at the end of Year 1 (Gov.uk, 2020). It is designed to examine young students' pronunciation of real words and pseudo-words (Standards & Testing Agency, 2020). At the end of the following year, Year 2, students are required to take a KS1 Standard Attainment Test (SAT). The KS1 SAT examines reading, mathematics, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The KS2 SAT is required to be taken at the end of Year 6. It tests the same subjects as the KS1 SAT, but the questions are more advanced. The scores will be calculated into a scaled score to account for the difficulty of the test. A scaled score of 100, out of 120, is the expected standard that students need to achieve.

The main way to measure educational attainment in English secondary schools is by taking the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) at the end of Key Stage 4. The educational system uses a metric known as an "attainment 8" score. The attainment 8 score is the sum of a student's marks across mathematics (double weighted), English (double weighted), three more English Baccalaureate subjects, and any three other GCSE qualifications (Gov.UK, 2019). For all eligible English Baccalaureate subjects in which students can take exams, visit Appendix A. English Baccalaureate subjects include what the Department of Education considers a core subject. For all eligible non-English Baccalaureate subjects in which students can take exams, visit Appendix B. Students receive a score between one to nine on each GCSE. The sum of their best

eight scores, that fit within the guidelines of the GCSEs, is a student's attainment 8 score. Previously, GCSEs have been scored with letter grades from A* - G, but this has changed recently to the numerical scoring system.

Another way of measuring the attainment gap is by examining how many additional months of school one group would need to reach the same academic ability as another group as shown in Figure 2.1.
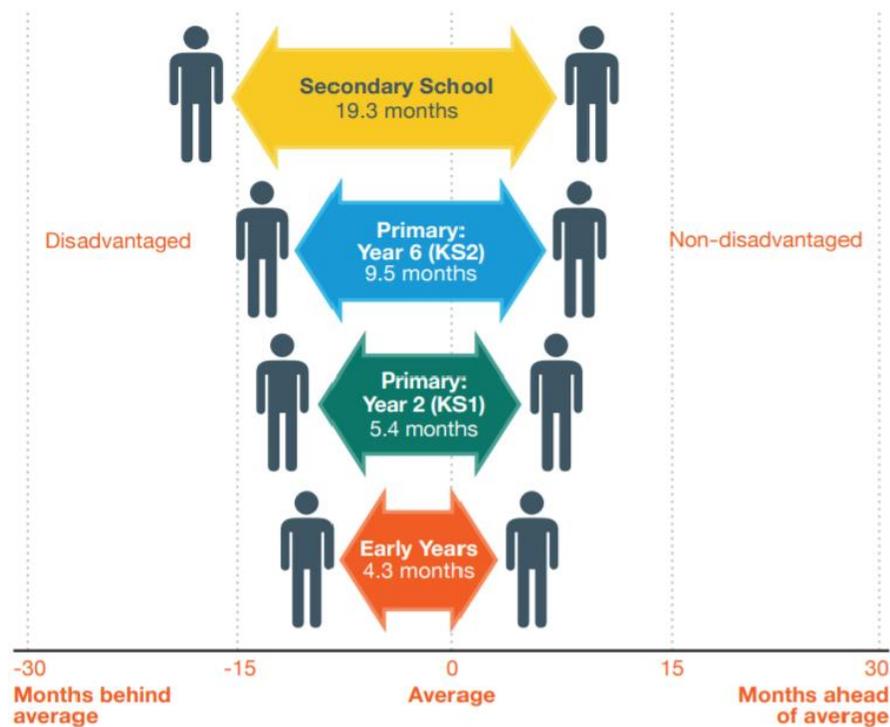
Figure 2.1: The Attainment Gap Grows with Age. From *Educational Attainment Gap in Britain,* by Educational Policy Institute, 2017.

2.1.2 W-Ever 6 Group

When comparing disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, white British pupils have the largest attainment gaps in Britain as shown in Figure 2.2. The criteria used in our research to define disadvantaged students is their eligibility for free school meals in the last 6 school years (Gov.uk, 2019). This group of students is referred to as Ever 6, and white British students within this group are referred to as W-Ever 6. Furthermore, the gap between non-disadvantaged students and disadvantaged students continuously grows with age, as shown in Figure 2.1. It increases from 5.4 months by the end of KS1 to 19.3 months by the end of KS4.

In addition, the educational attainment gap between Ever 6 students and non-Ever 6 students shows distinct patterns when we separate those students by ethnic groups. W-Ever 6 students perform 51% worse on their GCSEs than non W-Ever 6, as shown in Figure 2.2. In comparison, the gaps between Ever 6 and non Ever 6 for ethnic groups such as Chinese, Bangladeshi, and Indian students are much smaller.
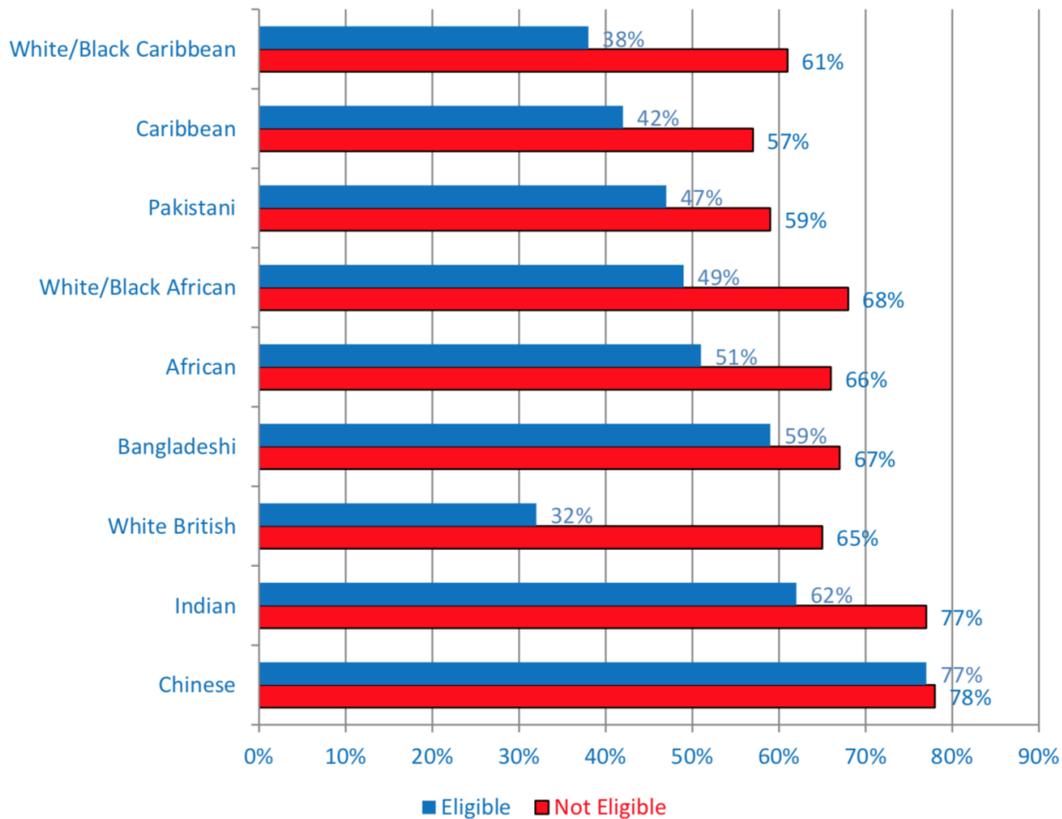
Figure 2.2: GCSE attainment by Free Meal Receiver and Ethnic Background in England (5+ A*-C), by Lambeth Council, 2013

2.2 Literature Review on the Causes of the Attainment Gap

The causes of the educational attainment gap have been discussed by many experts all around the world. Several studies have come to a variety of different conclusions on what these specific causes are. There is, however, no one single solution that closes the gap; it is a case by case issue. In the initial interview with the project sponsor, it was agreed that this chapter will focus on past literature of economics, ethnicity, student oracy, and parental engagement.

2.2.1 The Impact of Social Class and Ethnicity on Attainment

Previous research suggests that social class and ethnicity are key factors that contribute to the widening of the attainment gap (Gillborn, 1997). Families with high socioeconomic status have more access to educational resources, including private tutors, extra lessons and reading materials. While these are only feasible for high-income families, there are a number of other benefits these homes have that allow for a better learning environment.

Research on character development in households with a higher socioeconomic status has found that children "are less likely to be exposed to family conflict and divorce, and less likely to have homes that are crowded or noisy" (De Vries, 2015). Additionally, it was found that "outside the home [these children] are less likely to experience bullying or to fight with other children" (De Vries, 2015). High socioeconomic status comes with more benefits than just tutors or better educational materials. The student's home learning environment directly affects the educational attainment of a young student.

The home learning environment is not only affected by income, but also by various cultural differences. In fact, "ethnic origin has emerged as one of the most important variables when considering educational performance… it is not, however, the only factor that deserves attention" (Gillborn, 1997). The reason for this is that families from different cultures have different values regarding education. Educational systems across the world use exams and effort to measure intellect and potential. Performing well on these leads to higher learning and better jobs. A report states, "[testing] results in greater motivation to work hard at this crucial time in their academic career" (Stokes, 2015). The director for the Centre of Employment and Education research at Buckingham University, Professor Alan Smithers said, "ethnic minorities value education more than the white British do". This greater importance of educational value seen in ethnic minorities partially explains why they outperform the average white British student.

Even though different cultures and social classes contribute separately to the educational attainment gap, both factors may contribute to child-directed speech. Child-directed speech is the type and quality of speech parents use with their children (Rowe, 2008). During early childhood, language is mostly learned and practised at home, so parents become teachers in that respect. The quality of their teaching is dependent on their own personal background. It was found that "educated and advantaged parents have children with greater vocabulary skills and faster vocabulary growth during early childhood" (Rowe, 2008). Since these parents are more comfortable and adept at proper grammar and pronunciation, their children will immediately learn a more formal way of speaking. The level of education parents have received is merely an extension of social class. Social class also influences parental behavior when it comes to communication with their children. For example, "low-SES (low socioeconomic status) parents more often verbally discourage and prohibit their children's behavior than high-SES parents"

(Rowe, 2008). These tendencies can be observed due to their own personal educational struggles as well as their different beliefs and understandings of child development. In the case of low-SES parents, this may create an inefficient learning environment for formal language. Without a gradual increase in linguistic difficulty at home, the development of their child's oracy may be delayed. This is particularly challenging for parents of origin outside of the UK who may not speak fluent English.

Children that experience their childhood in a different culture than where their parents grew up, known as 'third culture children', experience additional difficulties at school (Lijadi, 2014). Their childhood causes an innate feeling of not belonging and may induce a sense of discomfort regarding inclusion into the school community, and even making them feel outcasted from the social group (Burgoyne, 2011). A report states, "Relationships with peers… are fundamental at this [young] stage and living in a different country with different value systems and cultural traditions may affect the teenager in a positive and/or negative way" (Cockburn, 2002). While these children may start their educational careers with a significant disadvantage when it comes to vocabulary and grammar capabilities, students with English as an additional language tend to adapt quickly, which includes a faster progression in curricular learning (Burgoyne, 2011). Nevertheless, the culture and language at home may create unequal language learning opportunities if parents are unfamiliar with English. Even though it was seen that ethnic minorities may outperform white British students academically, these difficulties that third culture children may experience could still lead to isolation from the local community.

This divide in the social school community may cause additional educational competitiveness with regards to white British students, due to the trend in their comparative lack of educational value. However, it does not mean this will necessarily be a healthy competitive motivation.

2.2.2 Students' Oracy

Oracy is described as the ability to speak and listen (Wilkinson, 1965, p.13). Expression of personal ideas, hypotheses, questions, arguments, and reasons are all closely linked to oracy (Alexander, 2012, p.4). Aspects of oracy include physical, linguistic, cognitive, social, and emotional skills (Voice21.org, 2019). With these skills, students are able to organize their thoughts, problem solve, think critically, and improve performance on standardized tests (Vygotsky, 1962; Vygotsky, 1978; Voice21.org, 2019). This research shows a link between oracy and attainment.

Oracy directly impacts the way of talking and improving oracy has proved to be a reliable method to increase reading and writing scores (Jay et al., 2017). While oracy may be important because it impacts cognitive development, it is also key to developing new ways of thinking,

developing identity, and gaining social capital (Alexander, 2012). With good oracy, pupils are able to provide reasonable feedback and have higher attainment at school.

The oracy gap between disadvantaged children and others is apparent even before they go to primary school. After analyzing different factors, researchers found that the oracy gap was impacted by family and environmental factors (Fernald and et al, 2013; Oliver, Dale & Plomin, 2004). Ever 6 students are more likely to have limitations regarding safety, physical resources, family dynamics, and parent-child interactions (Evans, Gonnella, Marcynyszyn, Gentile & Salpekar, 2005). These limitations can lead to poor language processing skills and underdeveloped vocabulary (Jay et al., 2017). Students with weaker oracy are at a disadvantage, and it is difficult for schools to individually address the implicit demands of each student without compromising the learning of the group (Sullivan, 2001). Thus, this lack of oracy widens the Ever 6 attainment gap.

2.2.3 Parental Engagement

Parental engagement, especially at the primary school level, plays a critical role in student attainment (Desforges, 2018). Attainment at age 7 is 29% based on parents and 5% on the school. At age 11, it is 27% based on parents and 21% on the school (Desforges, 2018). At age 16, attainment is 14% based on parents, 51% on the school (Desforges, 2018). Evidently, primary aged students rely heavily on parental engagement, but once they reach secondary school, a student's attainment is based more on the school. Regardless, even in secondary school, parental engagement can help students achieve higher scores on tests (Desforges, 2018). Students with personal tutors reach much higher attainment than those in a traditional classroom setting, but it is impossible to give this amount of attention to every student in the public schooling system (Desforges, 2018). This is the main reason why parental engagement is important: parents that work with the schools to be an extension of the classroom are able to provide their children with a one-to-one learning environment that is otherwise not economically feasible.

Most students recognize the value of engaging with their parents. A study showed that 86% of students would invite parental assistance on ideas for a project and 66% would work with their parents to improve grades (Deslandes and Cloutier, 2002, p.226). One of the most common ways parents may engage with their children is by helping them with homework. In a sample of 292 parents with children between grades 5 and 8, 57% reported that they are involved with their student's homework on a daily basis (Cortina, 2014). Yet, even with an understanding of the value of parental engagement, sometimes there is a lack of understanding of what effective parental engagement is.

Although there are many styles of parental engagement at home, the 3 most common forms are autonomy support, interference, and control. The most effective style 'parental autonomy support' can be defined as parental encouragement of students' problem-solving, selection and

decision-making (Cortina, 2014, Grolnick, 1989). Parental interference is the least effective strategy for boosting a student's attainment and is most commonly seen in parents that believe their child is lacking in academic efficacy (Cortina, 2014). This style is seen when a parent reviews the work that is being done and tells their children that they've made a mistake. Lastly, parental control is described as parents who engage with their children's work to the point where the parent's own thoughts and conclusions replace their child's.

An important way that parents can engage with young children is through reading. It was found that the children whose parents read more often with and to them, become better readers (Silinskas, Lerkkanen, 2012). The earlier a student begins learning how to read, the better their reading skills become because it allows the student to develop an interest in reading and do it more often on their own (Silinskas, Lerkkanen, 2012). Teaching reading skills is a more effective form of engagement than reading directly to a child (Silinskas, Lerkkanen, 2012). Instead of reading the book themselves, parents should encourage their children to read while assisting them when they struggle. Parents with children that are poor readers sometimes confuse effort with learning difficulties. This could lead them to create a negative connotation, resulting in their child disliking reading (Silinskas, Lerkkanen, 2012).

Another key factor in parental engagement is educational extracurricular activities. Some examples include visiting a museum or monument, doing at-home science experiments, or watching the news. It is important to extend the learning environment into the home because students have been reported to learn faster out of school (Reay, 2018). These extracurricular activities were shown to have a strong correlation with cognitive stimulation which may directly improve a student's attainment (Mayger, Hochbein, Dever, 2017). These activities expose children to new subject knowledge and a larger vocabulary. The cultural capital gained from educational extracurriculars allows a student to become well rounded, which helps them absorb new information easily (Sullivan, 2001). Students will be able to quickly understand topics that are related to an extracurricular they have done because of previous exposure to the topic (Sullivan, 2001). Extracurriculars also help students develop a larger and stronger vocabulary because of the additional exposure to 'educational English' (Sullivan, 2001). Since using formal English is often an expectation at school, students with weaker linguistics have a harder time understanding the curriculum (Sullivan, 2001). Parental engagement through educational extracurriculars will make children more prepared for an academic setting (Sullivan, 2001).

In addition to parents engaging with their children, parental engagement also occurs with the school. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) reports that the best performing schools have a strong collaboration with the parents (Ofsted, 2011). These schools and parents often meet to talk about individual student performance and attendance. They also collaborate on the educational material being taught so that parents can make their homes an extension of the

classroom. Parents who engage with the school and children simultaneously, help their child reach higher attainment than parents who engage with them separately (Ofsted, 2013).

2.2.4 Contradicting Findings on Parental Engagement

Although an overwhelming majority of research supports the conclusion that parental engagement is the leading factor of student attainment, some studies question the approach of this research. In a review of the research on parental engagement, only one study was found to have a substantial amount of evidence in which parental involvement had a positive impact. Thirty-five reports that stated parental engagement had a positive impact on attainment had relatively weak evidence (Gorard, 2015). The table of results of this study can be found in Appendix D. The study showed that there were small samples, poorly structured control groups, and a lack of random sampling.

A clear picture of how exactly parental engagement shapes student attainment still requires a substantial amount of research. The more data that is collected, the better understanding researchers will have on the specific effects of different types of parental engagement.

2.2.5 Barriers to Parental Engagement

Good parental engagement isn't a guarantee in every household and there are some barriers that can prevent parents from engaging. Socioeconomic status, for example, is one of the barriers to parental engagement. Less advantaged families may not be able to afford some of the educational extracurriculars that advantaged families can (Reay, 2018). Unfortunately, educational extracurriculars are important to a student's attainment because students learn at higher rates outside of the classroom (Reay, 2018). Socioeconomic status also affects the time parents have to engage with their students because less advantaged families work more hours and often have more than one job (Reay, 2018). This means a family's socioeconomic status limits the time available for engagement and the type of activities families can do.

Another factor that creates barriers in parental engagement is the parent's own educational achievements. In one study, a group of researchers found that there was a direct correlation between parents' education and their children's attainment in the Program for International Student Assessment (Martins, Veiga, 2010). In other words, parents with higher levels of education tend to have children that reach higher attainment. Furthermore, this issue is exacerbated by a correlation between education and income as parents with less education, on average, make less money (Baron, 2017). Therefore, the parent's engagement also suffers from the effects of low socioeconomic status as mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Sometimes, children create barriers that stop parents from engaging, especially with parental engagement at school. In a research survey given to over a thousand students, 67% of them would not invite parents to visit their class and 65% would not have parents come on a class trip (Deslandes and Cloutier, 2002, p.226). In these scenarios, parents may be discouraged from engaging with the school because a majority of students believe that parental engagement should not occur with the school.

Finally, engagement can also be affected by a parent's English linguistics. If a parent has not developed a strong oracy, they will have a hard time communicating with the school. In addition, helping their children with homework will limit their ability to engage if they can not properly understand the work assigned.

2.3 Attainment Gap at Gospel Oak Primary School

2.3.1 Socioeconomic and Ethnic Diversity at Gospel Oak

Our sponsor Gospel Oak Primary School is state-funded with 459 students aged from 3 to 11. It is located in Camden, an extremely diverse borough, both economically and ethnically.

John Hayes, the headteacher of Gospel Oak Primary School, says that the majority of students live nearby, in Camden. By estimation, approximately 10% of working-age Camden residents have no or low-level qualifications (The Annual Population Survey, 2018). In addition, the median household income of Camden is £35,917, far higher than the Greater London median (£30,677) and United Kingdom median (£27,494).

However, the ward with the highest median income in Camden has 2.4% of residents with a household income lower than £15,000, while 12.8% for Gospel Oak (CACI Ltd, 2018). As a typical state-funded school, the percent of students from disadvantaged families is even higher. 26% of the pupils in Camden are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than 15.8% in England. (Gov.uk, 2019)
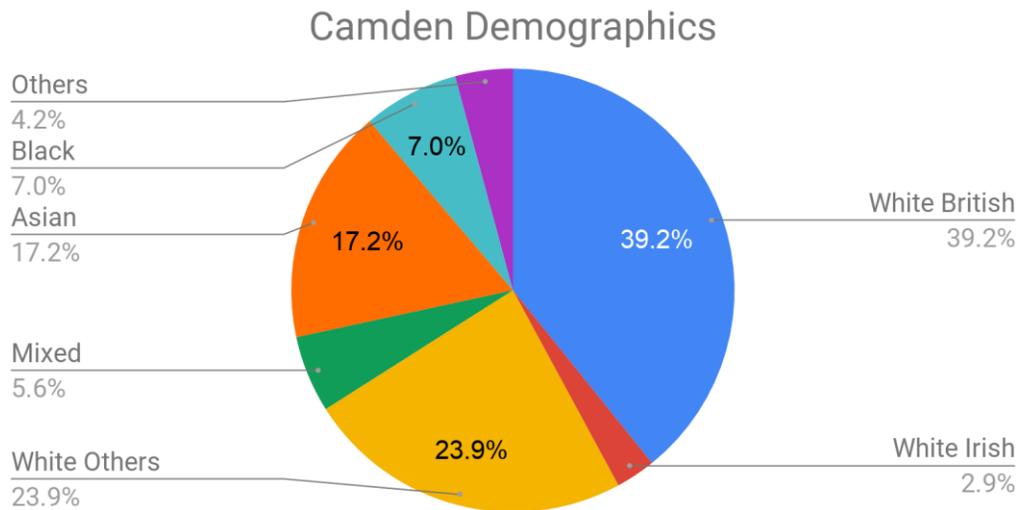
Figure 2.3: Camden Demographics, based on statistics from 2011 Census, by Gov.uk, 2011

Fewer than 40% of Camden residents are white British, as shown in Figure 2.3 (2011 Census). Furthermore, those non-British white (White Irish and White Others, 26.8%) are mainly from English-speaking countries (Office for National Statistics, 2011). The remaining 34% of Camden residents identify themselves as Black, Asian, and other ethnic minorities (BAME) (GLA, 2018). Although 23% of Camden residents don't speak English as their first language, 86% of them said they spoke English "very well" or "well" (Office for National Statistics, 2011). The demographics of Gospel Oak follow the same pattern as the distribution of Camden. In Gospel Oak, 39% of pupils identify as white British, and 61% of the pupils are from an ethnic minority group (Ofsted, 2016). 45% of the students speak an additional language other than English (Office for National Statistics, 2011).

2.3.2 Attainment at Gospel Oak Primary School

The educational attainment gap at Gospel Oak Primary School is measured using testing results from Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments. Only 87% of disadvantaged students at Gospel Oak Primary School achieve the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths (Gov.uk, 2020). Within both the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups there are some students that are performing well. Only 7% of disadvantaged students at Gospel Oak Primary School achieve a high standard on testing (Gov.uk, 2019). In comparison, 21% of non-disadvantaged students in Camden achieve a high standard in reading, writing, and maths (Gov.uk, 2019). It is important to note that a student's attainment is not predetermined by socioeconomic status. There are a significant number of disadvantaged students that have overcome the challenges and reached high attainment.

Although there is no public data on the attainment gap between different ethnicities at Gospel Oak Primary School, there is data on the gap between students that speak English as a first language and those who don't. For students with English as their first language at Gospel Oak Primary School, 72% achieved the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths (Gov.uk, 2019). For students with English not as their first language at Gospel Oak Primary School, 76% achieved the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths (Gov.uk, 2019). This indicates that even though some students don't speak English as a first language, they seem to have developed relatively stronger literacy and oracy skills in English.

2.4 Literature Review on Means to Reduce the Gap

2.4.1 Improving Student Oracy

The importance of improving student oracy was highlighted as early as the 1960s (Wilkinson, 1965). For the Key Stage 1 students, the Department of Education in the United Kingdom has a phonics screening check and its guidance is updated each year for the teachers to support students' pronunciation (Gov.uk, 2019). For the Key Stage 3 to 5 students, two associations, the National Association of Teachers of English (NATE) and the London Association of Teachers of English (LATE) in the 1960s focused on the importance of practicing language by speaking and its strong correlation with learning. These two associations stated the importance of talking and also created a large number of practices to improve oracy (Jones, 2017). Based on all of the research and projects in the 1960s, the Language in the National Curriculum (LINC) project was funded by the UK government in 1990 (Department of Education, 2013). This provided teachers with training and produced materials to support their teaching and improve students' oracy.

At home, oracy can be improved by increasing parent-child interaction. Besides family factors, teaching styles, teacher and student expectations, curriculum, and pupils' interaction are all important factors for students (Gorard et al., 2015). Contemporary scholars explored different strategies to overcome the difficulty of improving oracy at a school and class level (Mannion, 2016; Dockrell et al. 2012).

At a school level, the program 'Learning to Learn' is one methodology to improve students' oracy and close the attainment gap (Mannion, J., & Mercer, N., 2016). This program was implemented at the Sea View secondary school in England (Mannion, J., & Mercer, N., 2016). During three years of study, Mannion and their team provided 118 Key Stage 3 students with different curriculums, projects, workshops, and activities to improve their learning skills. By helping students improve their studying, communication, thinking, and reasoning skills, the

attainment gap between the disadvantaged students and others had been narrowed down from 25% to 2% (Mannion, J., & Mercer, N., 2016).

At a class level, Dockrell and their group found some different strategies that can be applied in classes to improve students' oracy (Dockrell et al. 2012). First, students are provided with group work that can help them gain the confidence to speak up (Dockrell et al. 2012). Secondly, elementary philosophy questions promote open-ended discussions in group settings that will improve oral communication skills (Dockrell et al. 2012). Also, encouraging students to use new words and practise critical thinking are effective strategies that teachers and parents should do more to help students improve their oracy (Dockrell et al. 2012). Lastly, other strategies also include providing the classrooms with oracy tips, discussion guidelines stickers, and arranging students in groups to provide a supportive learning environment to the students (Dockrell et al. 2012, Rowe, 2006).

2.4.2 Improving Parental Engagement

Parents who engage effectively with their children and the school help improve their children's attainment (Desforges, 2018). One of the biggest issues with parental engagement is time available and a willingness to engage (Reay, 2018). The best solution for parents that have limited time is to make sure they are engaging by supporting autonomy (Cortina, 2014). This is often the best way to support students' attainment and takes less time than parental control and interference (Cortina, 2014). The more time a parent spends helping their children develop the ability to be self-sufficient learners, the better they will perform, and the less engagement they will require from parents in the future.

In some circumstances, parents don't engage often. One of the leading reasons is because of their low aspirations for their child (Sodha and Margo 2010; Strand 2007). Parents with low aspirations for their child are more frequently from disadvantaged families (Sodha and Margo 2010; Strand 2007). These families are the hardest to reach and occasionally reschedule parent-teacher conferences four or more times (Demie and Lewis 2010 p 44; DCSF 2008). It is important for schools to be persistent with hard-to-reach parents to get them more engaged. As previously mentioned, the Office for Standards in Education reported that the best performing schools have a strong collaboration with the students' parents (Ofsted, 2011). This strong relationship can help improve parental aspirations for their children, which therefore will improve parents' willingness to engage (Sodha and Margo 2010; Strand 2007).

A program known as Supporting Parents on Kids Education in Schools (SPOKES) has improved the quality of parental engagement for those who have attended (Educational Endowment Foundation, 2010). This program allows parents to engage with their students reading by using the most effective strategy, teaching reading skills (Silinskas, Lerkkanen, 2012). One of

the primary strategies taught is 'Pause, Prompt, Praise'. This approach explains that parents should give at least five seconds to let their children pronounce a word, teaches what sort of feedback to give, and then positively reinforce with praise (Educational Endowment Foundation, 2010).

Students that receive one to one1 to 1 tutoring perform better than 97% of students in traditional schooling (Desforges, 2018). The better parents can become at teaching, the closer the education system can get to closing the attainment gap. Yet, the educational system needs to help support parents with this process. Sometimes there are barriers to this engagement, but optimal parental engagement is done by giving parents the ability to teach and support their children effectively.

Additionally to tutoring, parents should work with their children to improve their cultural capital. Cultural capital is defined as 'familiarity with the legitimate culture within a society' (Bordieu, 1984). Students who have more cultural capital have an advantage in testing, especially in the United Kingdom. One question from a 2018 English GCSE exam asks students to describe four things a character notices about their surroundings around the Pyrenees Mountains in France. Students who have been previously exposed to that location or similar locations will be able to assimilate the content easier than someone who hasn't (Peterson, 1992). While reading is the most effective at building cultural capital, the best students are 'culture omnivores' (Peterson, 1992). 'Cultural Omnivores' discuss news, visit museums, visit galleries, use proper language, and use proper mannerisms which help them feel more comfortable discussing the merits and values of different cultures (Peterson, 1992). Therefore, these students will attain higher. Enhanced cultural capital has been shown to lead to higher educational attainment. When parents work with their children to improve cultural capital, they should ensure their children are seeing historic and modern content through a variety of mediums.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Mission Statement and Objectives

The goal of this project is to collaborate with Gospel Oak Primary School to analyse parental engagement and students' linguistic awareness and how those factors impact the educational attainment of W-Ever 6 students.

Our objectives are:

1. To analyse W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 students' linguistic skills and attainment.

2. To improve students' linguistic skills by collaborating with senior faculty and parents.

3. To analyse parental engagement with the school and at home with their children.

4. To improve parental engagement by introducing effective educational engagement styles based on existing research.

3.2 Analyzing Students' Oracy and the Attainment Gap

We conducted observational research to analyse students' oracy at Gospel Oak Primary School. Then we analysed grades to evaluate students' attainment in reading and maths. This allowed us to measure the attainment gap at Gospel Oak Primary School.

3.2.1 Observing Students' Oracy Skills in Classrooms and Focus Groups at Gospel Oak School

In the first week, our team attended several lessons from Nursery to Year 6, including reading, writing, and maths. During these observations, our team assessed the class learning environment. We also observed students' participation, communication, writing, and other learning skills based on the Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool. Notes were taken individually for each class, including teaching strategies, questions asked by teachers and students, students' vocabulary complexity, and students' pronunciation. The notes are presented in Appendix G.

In addition to observational research conducted in the classroom, we held focus groups. There were two groups selected from Year 2 students. One group with seven Ever 6 students and another with seven W-Ever 6 students. Within each group, some students were doing relatively well in school and some were struggling. Before conducting the focus group, a consent form and

disclaimer was sent to parents. The disclaimer explained that it was optional and no personal and identifiable information would be stored. Once we received consent from our target pupils, we held the focus group with faculty supervision.

In order to conduct an in-depth analysis, one person asked questions and another person was recording results. We created a list of questions, and through a rubric, we analysed their linguistics. The criteria included the use of complete sentences, proper grammar, pronunciation, coherence, and vocabulary complexity. To encourage students to talk, follow up questions were asked based on their answers. Questions with present tense and past tense were asked to check students' grammar. We used the data from these sessions to formulate results on the differences between the groups. The question list and evaluation form can be found in Appendix J.

3.2.2 Analysing Existing Grades

After obtaining an overview of the pupils' oracy skills at Gospel Oak Primary School, our team analysed students' grades from an existing database, known as 'Tracker'. This is a system with sets of Google Sheets and was only accessed after our team signed a confidentiality form. The pupils are grouped by ethnicity and eligibility for free school meals. That is to say, pupils can be categorized as W-Ever 6, non Ever 6 white British, Ever 6 ethnic minority, and non Ever 6 ethnic minority. Year 1 students were excluded from our analysis because there were not enough academic records for them. In addition, students with special educational needs (SEN) were excluded from our analysis.

Scaled scores from the latest exams were collected. As mentioned before, the scaled score is out of 115 for Key Stage 1 and 120 for Key Stage 2; the minimum passing score is 100. We utilized an excel data sheet to record and calculate data. The data collected in each subject included the number of pupils, Ever 6 status, and their average scores. Using the collected data, we also calculated the pass rate by groups in the latest subject exams. Histograms were created to compare the pass rates of specific groups each year. If the pass rate in the same exams varied significantly, it showed the attainment gap between W-Ever 6 and their peers in that subject. The x-axis represents the year, and the y-axis is the average scaled score.

During the analysis, Tracker would not be downloaded or copied, and our team would only access it in a secure network environment. None of the children's names would be recorded, and their personal information would not be given to a third party. These results are reported in Section 4.2.1 along with the raw data available in Appendix I.

3.3 Analyzing Parental Engagement at Gospel Oak Primary School

3.3.1 Surveying Gospel Oak School Parents

Our primary method of data collection was through administering a survey to the Gospel Oak Primary School parent body. The aim of our survey was to determine how and how much parents engage with students at home and at school. This method was chosen instead of interviews as it allows for the highest number of responses while requiring minimal effort from parents. It included questions covering parental demographic information, engagement with the school, and educational practices at home. The survey is attached in Appendix H.

The survey included a disclaimer and three sections with twelve questions in total and took about ten minutes to fill out. The disclaimer contained a brief description of our project and the objective of our survey. Additionally, we stated that the survey would be completely confidential and optional. We asked the respondents for their children's names. This was to correspond with the parent's responses to their child's attainment. No identifiable information from the survey was included in the final report. The first section asked general demographic questions including the highest educational degree achieved, how many children they have attending Gospel Oak Primary School, and whether English is their native language. The second section focused on how and how much parents participated in school activities. With these questions, we intended to get a better understanding of how Gospel Oak Primary School can better interact with the parents to improve collaboration. Both multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions were asked. The third section focused on parental engagement with the child at home. In essence, our team found out how parents participated in their children's learning. Some sample questions included "How many days a week do you read with your child or discuss with them what they have been reading on their own?", "On average, how many hours a week do you help your child with homework?", and "Who would your child like to be when he or she grows up?".

We used Qualtrics as a platform to distribute the survey. The team set up Chromebooks during parent activities at Gospel Oak Primary School. In addition, scannable QR-codes were distributed when parents picked up their children after school, so the survey could also be completed on a smartphone. A fifty pound Marks and Spencer voucher was awarded to one of the participants randomly to incentivise participation.

3.3.2 Analyzing the Correlation Between Parental Survey Results and Student Attainment

Even though no identifiable information from the survey is included in this final report, for data collecting purposes, the names were stored in order to associate parents with their students. The aim of the survey was to analyse how parents engaged with their children at home and with

Gospel Oak Primary School. As illustrated in the background section, we expected a correlation between effective parental engagement and higher attainment.

We anticipated higher scores for students who read more with their parents, who practise more English, and who do more educational extracurricular activities outside of the classroom. In addition, we predicted higher attaining students also visit museums more often hence the question "What will your child or children be doing during February Half Term?". Regarding parental engagement with their children at home, more collaboration should equate to a higher attaining student.

The survey was also intended to collect information concerning parental engagement with Gospel Oak Primary School. If there was a correlation between high parental engagement with the school and the attainment of their student, it would be necessary for this project to increase the parent-school communication. The survey determined the direction of our investigation on the means to improve parental engagement with the school. The gathered information was detrimental to the content of our final deliverable to tailor to the exact needs of Gospel Oak Primary School.

Since all data and information we gathered from parents were stored in Qualtrics, initial graphs and charts were processed by the application itself. We exported data to Microsoft Excel as other types and more detailed plots were required. Survey data and graphs that were created are included in section 4.2.1 of the report.

3.4 Interviews with Senior Faculty

In order to contribute with closing the W-Ever 6 attainment gap, it was important we utilized the knowledge of educators. In Camden, there were many candidates for interviews, and each interviewee had a different perspective from their own professional experience. Most of the interviews were with Gospel Oak Primary School faculty, but we conducted interviews with Camden officials as well. Each interview was given its own section in the methodology. Because of the different areas of experience, each teacher had questions tailored to them. The interviews helped us get quick answers and feedback on our project. After all of these interviews, we had a better understanding of how the W-Ever 6 attainment gap appears from the perspective of the student, school, and Camden borough.

3.4.1 Interview with John Hayes, Headteacher

The first interview we held was with the Headteacher of Gospel Oak Primary School, who has worked there for over eight years. He gave us a holistic view of the attainment gap at Gospel Oak School with his experience working with students and parents. He also has a strong understanding of the British education system. In this interview, the questions included an

overview of the attainment gap, the types of parental engagement, and the support the school was currently providing. This interview provided us with a clearer idea of the causes of the gap and the methods Gospel Oak Primary School has already applied. The findings from this interview helped guide the following interviews.

3.4.2 Interview Educational and Pastoral Support Team

Our second interview was with the Education and Pastoral Support Team (EPST) at Gospel Oak Primary School. The EPST is made up of Dawn O'Driscoll and Tracy Storey, who both have experience with supporting children's education on a personal level. The EPST supports pupils, directly works with families, and was a great resource for our research. Dawn O'Driscoll was specifically knowledgeable about linguistics, students with English as an additional language, and W-Ever 6 students. This interview helped us understand the student experience at Gospel Oak Primary School, and for those who needed individual attention. The interview included questions based on their expertise, interventions for students that need additional help, and their opinion of the W-Ever 6 attainment gap.

3.4.3 Interview with Lindsay Vaughan, Year 2 Teacher

Our third interview was conducted with Lindsay Vaughan, a Year 2 teacher, phase leader, and expert on oracy at Gospel Oak Primary School. She has been involved with designing many of the activities intended to increase students' oracy skills. We asked her about effective strategies to improve oracy and the differences in oracy between W-Ever 6 students and others. In addition, we asked her about child-directed speech and phonics.

3.4.4 Interview with Abi Johnson, Year 6 Teacher

Our fourth interview was with Abi Johnson, a Year 6 teacher that is one of the main educators in mathematics at Gospel Oak Primary School. During this interview, we got a better understanding of the connection between oracy skills and attainment on maths exams. The correlation between oracy and attainment on writing exams is clear, but with maths, it was more ambiguous. This interview helped us understand how a student's oracy skills can affect attainment in all subjects, not just writing. Since the gap grows with age, Year 6 teachers have the clearest view on the attainment gap within a primary school.

3.4.5 Interview with Tamsin Edmunds, Year 5 Teacher

Our fifth interview was with Tamsin Edmunds, a Year 5 teacher, phase leader, and one of the main English educators at Gospel Oak Primary School. Since she is focused on English, she has a lot of expertise in recommended engagement practices for parents when it comes to

reading. We asked other questions about the increasing difficulty of the curriculum, and how this hurts parental engagement. Lastly, we asked about the influence of friend groups on academic performance.

3.4.6 Interview with a Nursery Teacher

Our sixth interview was with a nursery teacher at Gospel Oak Primary School. She is the only educator that we interviewed with students that are not required to go to school. Nursery school is optional because school is only required for children once they reach age five. She was able to understand the advantages of nursery school and how students are more likely to succeed in further years. She had a unique view on the development of young children and what shapes their attitudes towards school. Specifically, she had good information about the basics of oracy and linguistic development.

3.4.7 Interview with Jon Abbey and Martin Cresswell

Our final interview was with Jon Abbey and Martin Cresswell. Jon Abbey is the Managing Director for education in Camden. He has a different view on the attainment gap than our other interviewees because he oversees all of the schools within the borough, including Gospel Oak Primary School. He has seen schools that have made some strides closing the gap and knows what solutions have worked. In addition, he has seen schools that have wider gaps and notices the differences with the more successful schools. Jon Abbey's colleague, Martin Cresswell, is an expert on school improvement and student behavior. He has done his own research on the W-Ever 6 attainment gap before. Much like Jon Abbey, Martin Cresswell has a good idea of why there is a W-Ever 6 attainment gap. These two interviewees also allowed us to get answers from any remaining questions we had from our previous interviews.

3.5 Improving Students' Linguistic Skills and Parental Engagement

Improving students' linguistic skills and parental engagement was an important part of the methodology to help raise attainment overall. We felt there was no need to make a distinction for who we presented the material to since the information is beneficial to all students and parents.

Some aspects of parental engagement are outside the scope of this project such as parents' time and resources. These factors were not addressed because we could not implement solutions for these issues. Instead, we addressed the effectiveness and methods of good parental engagement with their children given the availability of their time and resources.

At the same time, parental engagement with schools is also essential. For these reasons, we created a booklet designed to improve student linguistic skills and parental engagement. We also suggested the school and parents communicate through a new online platform.

3.5.1 Creating a Booklet on Effective Engagement and Improving Students' Linguistics at Home

To help the students' linguistics and parents' engagement, we decided to create a booklet with recommended activities and tips. Our booklet provides readers with detailed examples that are easily accessible. Compared with group activities or presentations, a booklet can contain more materials and access more parents and students.

The booklet has around twenty pages and takes less than ten minutes to read. It includes a clear list of suggested extracurricular activities such as museums, galleries, and 'Flipped Learning'. We divided the recommended activities into different sections based on children's aspirations. It provides examples for students to practise linguistics at home as well as a section on why 'parental autonomy support' is the best way for parents to engage with their children.

To reach as many families as possible, we provided an electronic copy to Gospel Oak Primary School. Through this booklet, we hope students can have better linguistic practicing strategies and parents can practise more effective engagement. The overall goal is that this will improve their student's attainment.

3.5.2 Improving Parental Communication with Schools and Teachers

To improve parental communication with schools and teachers, we suggested a two-way communication platform for Gospel Oak School to use. Based on our research, good collaboration between the school and parents improves students' attainment overall. Thus, we suggested Gospel Oak Primary School use a new platform to communicate with parents.

We listed nine different important factors to choose a platform for Gospel Oak Primary School which can be found in Table 4.1. The list of measured factors was as follows: cost efficiency, instant communication, availability of sharing documents, group size, separate channels for classes, familiarity, "quiet hours", follow-up function, and follow-up each individual parent. Due to the limited budget, cost efficiency is one of our top considerations. Instant communication, ability to share documents, and the ability to include all parents and teachers are necessary requirements for all platforms. The ability to follow-up with specific people or topics is useful for teachers to send notifications to a group or individual. Familiarity is important when introducing the platform to the parents and teachers. Using the communication app may also increase teachers' working load. Two-way communication requires more time input for teachers. Extra working

hours will be needed to respond to parents' messages. In addition, the teacher might need to respond to them individually even if they have similar questions. Thus, it is important for the platform to have a 'Quiet Hours' function to allow teachers to set their own availability.

We selected the following communication apps and websites to compare with the newsletter, what Gospel Oak Primary School is currently using. WhatsApp is a familiar app for many parents, Slack is best at sharing documents, and Class Dojo is specifically designed for schools and parents. These apps all have two-way messaging but they have different strengths. Another reason for choosing these specific apps is because every app provides a free version, so the school does not need to pay for premium plans.

These platforms were evaluated using nine variables in order to determine which would be the best option for Gospel Oak Primary School. The newsletter was our baseline and all other platforms were ranked to be better (+1) or worse (-1) for every category. Based on these scores, the most adept communication platform was recommended to meet the needs of Gospel Oak School.

Chapter 4: Results and analysis

4.1 Analysis of the Attainment Gap at Gospel Oak Primary School

4.1.1 Class Notes and Initial Observations

We analysed the information gathered from initial observations at Gospel Oak Primary School and developed findings concerning students' class performance, teaching strategies, and the class environment. We observed that the school provides a supportive learning environment, teachers provide encouraging challenges to each student, and students practise their oracy skills in each class. On the other hand, it was also found that students struggle with formal language and correct spelling.

Based on the Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool in Appendix G, our initial observation was that the classroom environment is engaging for students, especially for practicing oracy skills. Each classroom we observed provided the nineteen recommended elements for an effective learning environment listed in the Observation Tool. In fact, most classrooms provide even more resources than the recommended list. For example, learning materials such as the phonics alphabet table and a variety of sentence starters are displayed throughout the class. These displays are also updated weekly with regard to what they are learning. By using the second part of the Observation Tool, we also found that each class complies with all twenty Language Learning Interactions. For example, teachers imitated the improper use of the students' linguistics and expected the class to correct them. This encourages students to expand their vocabulary and use more complex sentence patterns. Teaching assistants are also available to help students individually if they need to catch up with the class. In general, our findings show that students are encouraged to work and discuss in group settings to further develop their oracy skills.

Even though students at Gospel Oak Primary School have abundant learning opportunities, the attainment gap is still apparent. Incorrect spelling, informal language, and long response time to questions are observed in several classes. For example, some students may take double the amount of time as other students to complete a maths quiz. Students may also have incorrect spelling or grammar due to informal spoken language. The use of informal language is one of the most concerning constituents of this investigation because primary school students are required to speak and write in standard formal English (Bennett, 2014). Since we found that many students are not aware of the difference between formal and informal language when talking, their linguistic awareness, especially the use of formal language, requires improvement. Furthermore, improving their linguistic skills has been proven to help with their attainment as mentioned in previous sections.

4.1.2 Analysing Gospel Oak School's Existing Data

After our observational study, our team analysed students' grades in order to obtain a quantitative understanding of the attainment gap at Gospel Oak Primary School. We identified the gap in maths and reading of each year and verified whether it had the same trends as the national attainment gap. More raw data is in Appendix I.

Regarding the attainment in maths tests, we created a bar graph to record the pass rate by each group in the White Rose Maths for Year 2 to Year 5 shown in Figure 4.1. Regarding the attainment of each year, non Ever 6 students consistently performed well above average. Their pass rates in maths were always ahead of the other Ever 6 groups. Therefore, socioeconomic status is seen to have influenced student attainment in maths at Gospel Oak Primary School.
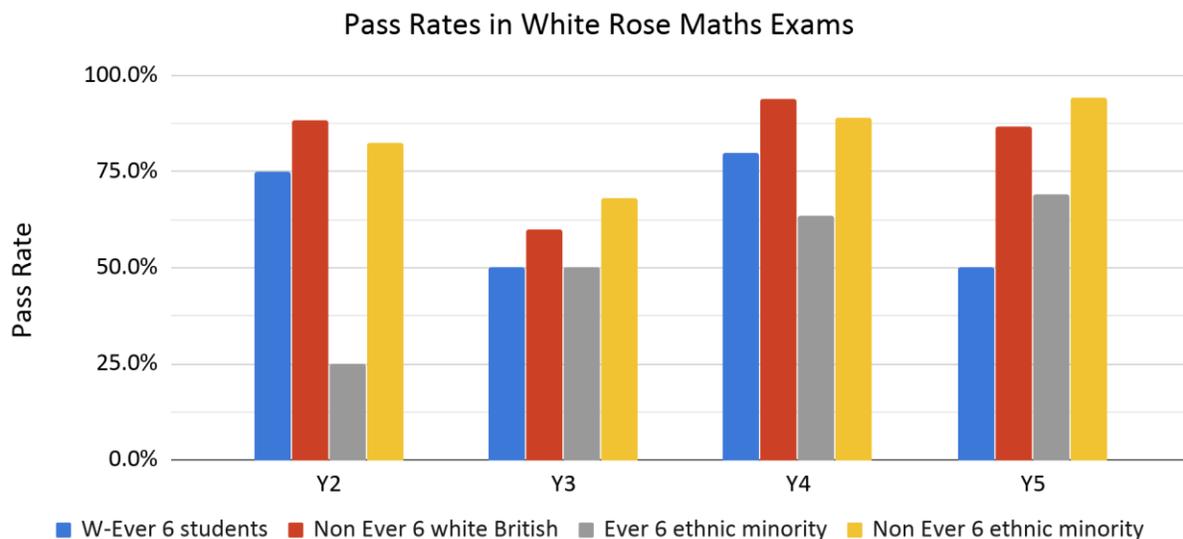
Figure 4.1: Pass Rates in White Rose Maths at Gospel Oak Primary School

If we consider the attainment by year, the four groups demonstrate distinct progress patterns, shown in Figure 4.1. The gap between W-Ever 6 students and non Ever 6 white British students is about ten percentage points (pp) in Year 2. By Year 5, the gap at Gospel Oak Primary School between these two groups widens. Ever 6 ethnic minority groups, however, show a different pattern. Although they have the lowest attainment in the early years, they are seen to continuously make positive progress with each year.

Next, we calculated the average scaled score in the latest maths exam for Year 6. Then, we analysed their scores in their last year at primary school, shown in Figure 4.2.

Attainment in Maths for Year 6
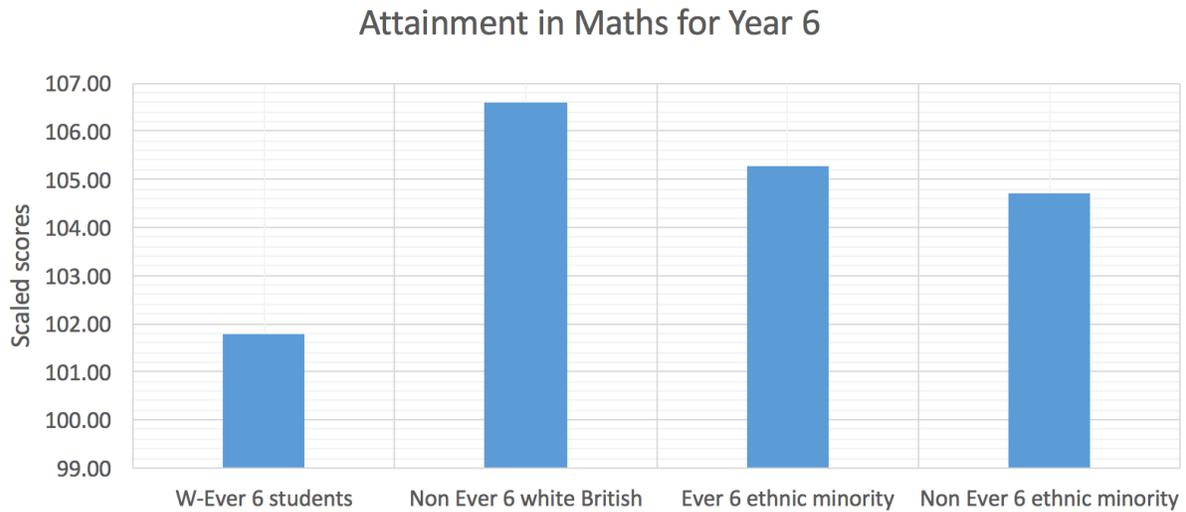
Figure 4.2: Attainment in Maths by scaled score for Year 6 at Gospel Oak Primary School

Among the four groups, non Ever 6 white British students, with an average score of 106.60, have the highest attainment. W-Ever 6 students have the lowest attainment with an average score of 101.78. This shows a gap of 4.82 points. By the time the students get to Year 6, the gap between the Ever 6 and non Ever 6 ethnic minority groups is less than 1 point. This shows that for this group the attainment gap appears to be closing.

Reading scores, on the other hand, indicate very different trends at Gospel Oak Primary School. Since the overall attainment in reading is relatively high, measuring their average attainment by pass rates will not provide accurate results. Instead, we calculated their attainment by scaled scores in PIRA (Progress In Reading Assessment). Full marks in PIRA are 115 for Year 2, and 120 for Year 3, Year 4, and Year 5. The processed data is shown in Figure 4.3.

Generally, non Ever 6 white British students perform better than the others in each year, as seen in Figure 4.3. In the early years, the attainment gap by scaled scores between W-Ever 6 students and non Ever 6 white British students is only 2.66, which is a relatively small gap. Meanwhile, Ever 6 ethnic minority groups have the lowest attainment. Because of the high progress rate and their rapid adaptation to the English learning environment, the gap between Ever 6 ethnic minority groups and their peers becomes almost non-existent in the later years. W-Ever 6 students are about three points behind their ethnic minority peers, yet are still making progress in reading. Even though their peers also have similar or greater progress rates, their starting points at Year 3 are different. While the attainment gap between W-Ever 6 students and ethnic minority groups is relatively small, the attainment gap between W-Ever 6 and non Ever 6 white British students remains wide.
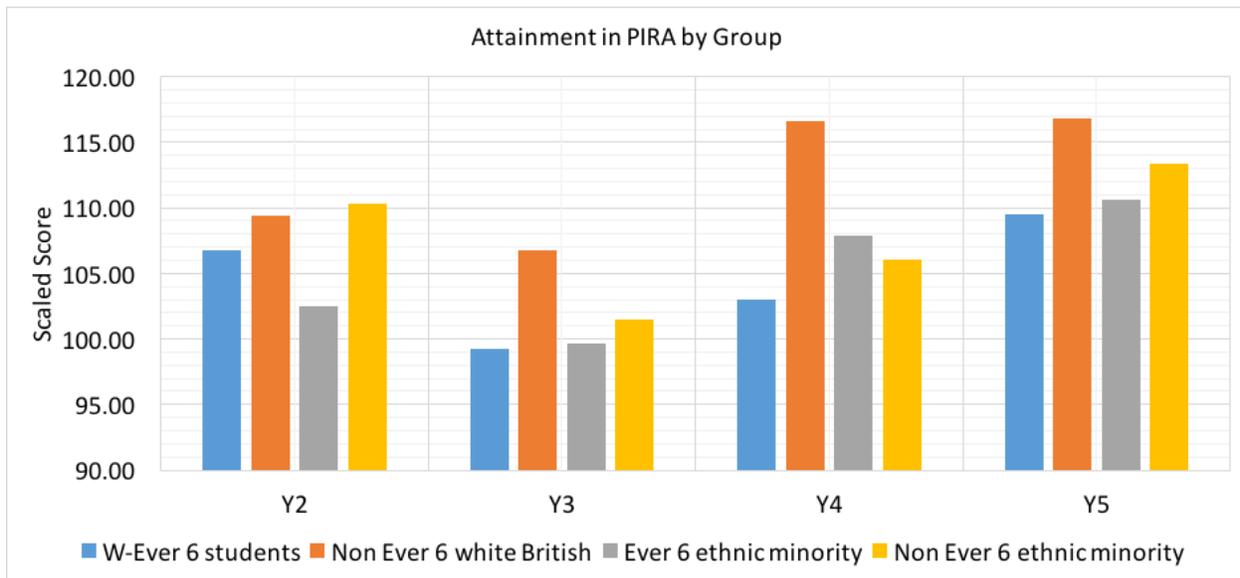
Figure 4.3: Attainment in PIRA by group at Gospel Oak Primary School

It is evident that the attainment of a majority of students in Year 3 drops dramatically. The reason for that is because Year 3 is the beginning of Key Stage 2. The curriculum changes and academic expectations are far higher than in Key Stage 1.

Some limitations required extra concern. One limitation of the analysis is that there are about four W-Ever 6 students in one year. The sample size is very small: one student's attainment might dramatically change the overall attainment of W-Ever 6 groups. Another limitation is that we did not include SEN students' grades in our analysis. However, there is a higher proportion of SEN students in W-Ever 6 groups than any other group. We learned that SEN students are identified by the school itself, not by medical statutes. This difference might influence our results and possibly even data from other authorities.

In conclusion, from our grade analysis, the attainment gap between W-Ever 6 students and their peers is evident. In their early years, the attainment gap is relatively small. W-Ever 6 students perform better than the Ever 6 ethnic minority groups both in maths and reading. However, the advantage disappears after students finish Key Stage 1. Due to the high progress rate, Ever 6 ethnic minority groups are able to catch up and reach a similar attainment level as non Ever 6 ethnic minority groups. W-Ever 6 students have relatively slow progress in maths, which increases the gap between them and other groups. Regarding attainment scores in reading, the W-Ever 6 students' progress rate is almost the same as others. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, they are seen to be significantly behind. Thus, even though they have the same progress rate, it is challenging to catch up. Overall, the gap between W-Ever 6 students and other white British students widens by the end of primary school.

4.1.3 Interview of Senior Faculty

The educational attainment gap is seen on a class-based level, as we learned from interviewing seven faculty at Gospel Oak Primary School. One such teacher, Ms. Lindsay Vaughan, stated, "lower attaining children have lower oracy skills, [and often] have lower attendance." When asked if these specific reasons for low attainment were uniform throughout the school, she stated, "every individual is different, it seems the most important is that students practise good formal oracy at home." Since teachers expect a certain standard of good oracy and general attendance on a daily basis, they believe that parents should be able, and willing, to contribute to the student's learning experience. In addition, she noted that at the primary school level, student attainment is not necessarily about individual study habits, however, more about language and career expectations at home. According to Ms. Vaughan, high-quality teaching is striving to make the learning experience as interactive as possible, with clear communication and expectations from both students and parents. These statements will be corroborated in the following sections as well as taken into account regarding the development of our booklet on effective parental engagement.

Another interview we conducted was with Ms. Abigail Johnson. She agreed with Ms. Vaughan that educational success is largely determined by "the level of knowledge they come in [to school] with." Being a maths teacher and that maths is a rather linear learning system, she proclaims that the knowledge foundations are paramount since the gap grows with age. For this reason, Ms. Johnson also observes the attainment gap due to a lack of effective parental engagement. She said, "children who have a wider diverse experience when it comes to jobs, will strive to do better at school." Parents who do not expose their children to this complex diversity of the world put a ceiling on their social experience, and thus put a ceiling on their educational potential.

These concerns on the importance of effective parental engagement seem to be a familiar theme at Gospel Oak Primary School. Ms. Tamsin Edmunds, Year 3 Phase Leader also stated, "the atmosphere at home needs to value learning and curiosity." Once again, the emphasis in order for a student to attain higher is expected from the home experience. To her, a struggling education is "not about the lack of wealth, but the lack of interest from the parents." We have learned from our interviews that some parents simply put a tablet in front of their child as soon as they get home. In one case, a student has developed an American accent simply because of the online videos he watches. While this proves the effect directed speech has on a student along with its educational potential, it also shows how damaging ineffective parental engagement is on the child. In the end, Ms. Edmunds said, "if the parents aren't motivated to encourage academics, it's difficult to get the children to attain highly."

John Hayes, the headteacher of Gospel Oak Primary School, had a different perspective on the issue. He communicated greater importance in learning educational practices and values from students who speak English as an additional language. According to him, "they have a higher general work ethic and educational value and [we] find that they wish to see their children do better than the local W-Ever 6 group." This is validated by the fact that these students have higher Progress 8 scores across the board, hypothesized to be because of a different cultural expectation.

Our last interview with Jon Abbey and Martin Cresswell brought a different perspective than our other interviewees. Since they overlook all of the schools within Camden, they have the ability to assess successful and unsuccessful interventions in closing the attainment gap at each school. They stated the importance of collaboration between school and parents. The ideal school and parent community should be primarily supportive. In order to address concerns with parents about their children's attainment, Jon and Martin suggested a supportive environment.

4.1.4 Focus groups

Our last method for measuring student linguistics at Gospel Oak Primary School was through our focus group sessions. As was stated in the methodology chapter, two separate sessions were held for W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 students. We also had identifiable information regarding which students were attaining highly and which students were attaining poorly. Responses were evaluated through five factors: comprehension, complete sentences, proper grammar, formal language, and vocabulary complexity. If the response was correct, a point would be given in the 'plus' column of the variable being studied, and in the 'minus' column should the response have been incorrect. The full table of collected data and the list of questions can be found in Appendix J.

The first observation from our focus group sessions is the total response difference for the highly attaining W-Ever 6 group compared to the other student groups. This group only had a total of forty-six responses compared to the poorly attaining W-Ever 6 group who had sixty responses, and the highly attaining Ever 6 group who had seventy. This difference is explained due to the fact that highly attaining native British children are more comfortable in English, therefore if they had something to say, they tended to speak for longer and use more complex sentence structures.

When comparing highly attaining versus poorly attaining students within their own demographic group, W-Ever 6 and Ever 6, contrasting differences need to be considered. First of all, the only instances of not understanding the question were by poorly attaining students, in both the W-Ever 6 group and the Ever 6 group. Half the time, however, the hesitation in response

was not due to incomprehension, but due to lack of concentration as the question had to be repeated.

Overall, the highly attaining W-Ever 6 group made the least amount of total linguistic errors compared to any other groups. In fact, even the Ever 6 highly attaining group made fewer mistakes than the W-Ever 6 poorly attaining group of students. Out of all poorly attaining students, the errors for W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 were recorded to be very similar. Interestingly, while the highly attaining Ever 6 group had little problems responding with complete sentences and good vocabulary, their linguistic issues seemed to primarily reside in the usage of proper grammar and formal language.

The most significant hindrance for both our focus group sessions was concentration. Even though this is expected from a group of primary school students, lack of concentration might account for extra mistakes that might skew our data in an already very limited data set. A more accurate overview of the linguistic differences between W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 students would be obtainable with more and larger focus group sessions. One specific response was noted in relation to an educational aspiration for an Ever 6 poorly attaining student, she said "I don't like reading. I think it's boring. I prefer to jump on trampoline." Not only does this response show weak sentence structure, but the subject also did not use proper formal language by omitting the article in front of the noun. This response also shows the lack of value and interest in education.

4.2 Analysis of Parental Engagement

4.2.1 Analysing Parent Surveys

Our surveys were created to understand the differences in culture and expectations between Ever 6 and non Ever 6. In addition, parents were asked what they would like to see Gospel Oak Primary School do better. After gathering eighty responses to the parent survey, we were able to reach a little over half of the families with children attending the school. What we learned is how the differences in expectations affect parental engagement and how this widens the attainment gap.

Days per week a parent reads with their child
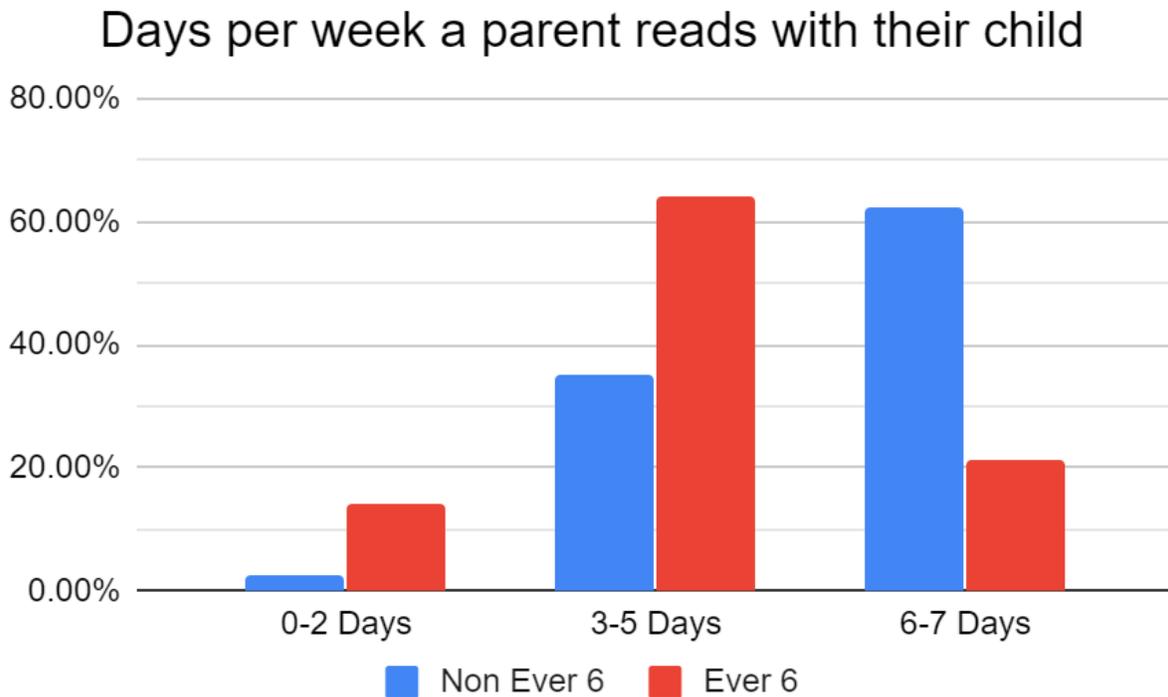
Figure 4.4: Days per week a parent reads with their child based on Ever 6 status

From our background section and interviews, we concluded that reading is the most effective extracurricular a primary aged student can do to improve linguistic skills. Therefore, our first analysis of the parent surveys was to look at the amount of days parents spent reading with their children. All educational professionals agree that it is best to read with your child every day, but Figure 4.4 shows only 21.4% of Ever 6 parents read to their children 6-7 days a week. In contrast, 62.1% of non Ever 6 parents read to their children 6-7 days a week. This disparity immediately put the Ever 6 group at a disadvantage. The frequency of practically not reading at all within the Ever 6 group is even more concerning than the lack of routine reading. Among the Ever 6 parents, 14.2% read to their children 0-2 days a week. These children will have to compensate for the lack of reading at home in school, and this alone will widen the attainment gap.

What does your child do after school?
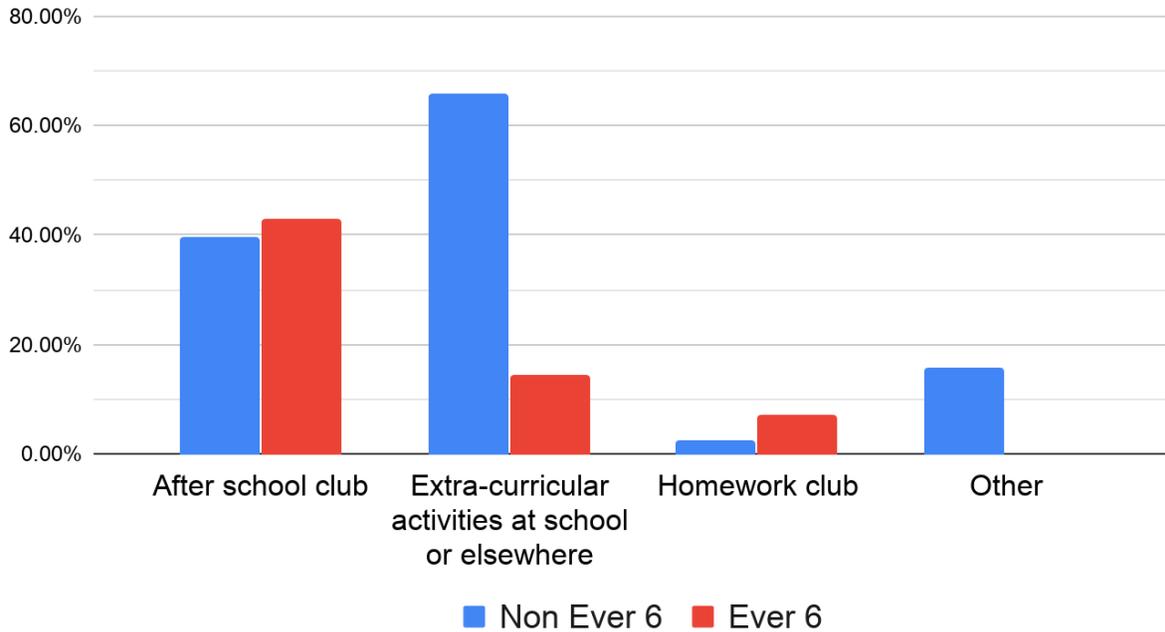
Figure 4.5: Some activities children do after school based on Ever 6 status

In addition to reading, Gospel Oak Primary School recommends doing additional extracurriculars. However, Figure 4.5 shows only 14.3% of Ever 6 students are doing extracurricular activities in comparison to 65.8% of non Ever 6 students. In addition, 15.8% of non Ever 6 are doing an activity not listed. The 15.8% of respondents who selected the 'other' category had to specify the activity being done. Generally, these activities would also fall under the guidelines of Gospel Oak Primary School's recommendations. No Ever 6 parent selected the 'other' category. Encouragingly, 7.1% of Ever 6 students attend Homework Club. However, it was found in our interviews that rather than attendance being self-motivated, students are more commonly compelled by teachers to attend. In addition to the Homework Club, Ever 6 students are partaking in other clubs as well. Even so, the responses indicate that non Ever 6 students are more frequently doing activities outside of school than Ever 6 students

.
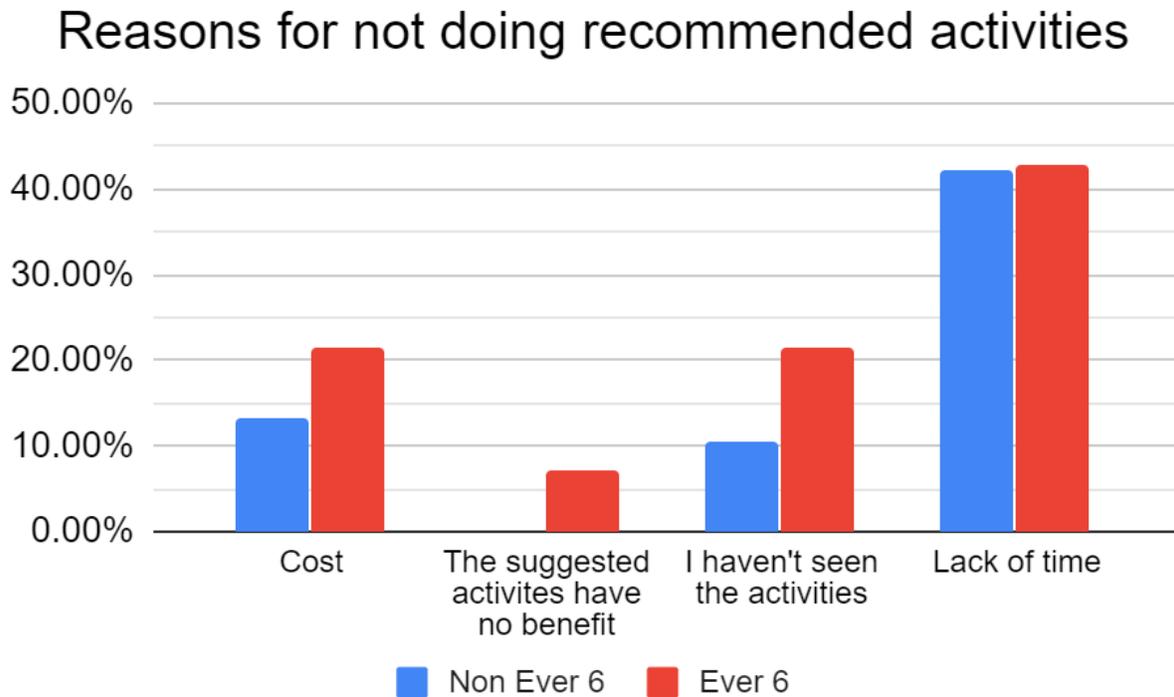
Figure 4.6: Reasons for not doing recommended activities

The question raised by Figure 4.4 and 4.5 is why are Ever 6 students doing recommended activities less frequently than non Ever 6 students? Based on the responses shown in Figure 4.6 parents indicated that a lack of time is the biggest obstacle to providing their children extracurriculars. Yet a lack of time is a barrier to both groups, so this does not fully explain the discrepancies. Other barriers such as cost and not seeing the recommended activities disproportionately affect the parents of the Ever 6 group. In addition, some parents of the Ever 6 group feel like the suggested activities have no benefit at all.

Beyond Figure 4.6, the responses to the question 'Who would your child like to be when they grow up?' reveals additional reasoning as to why Ever 6 students are doing fewer extracurriculars. Some responses indicated that either the parents either didn't know what their child wanted to be or felt they were too young to be thinking about their potential careers. More interestingly was the response given only by Ever 6 parents that can be paraphrased as 'my child wants to be happy'. Firstly, this response does not properly answer the question of 'who they want to be' and instead answers 'what they want to be'. It is not possible to tell whether these parents misunderstood the question or rejected the intentions of the educational system as a

whole. It could be speculated that these parents were not concerned about raising children with aspirations to pursue something their child was passionate about as long as they were happy.

Beyond the previous comparisons, we also looked at the responses to the question "How can Gospel Oak Primary School further support you to assist your child or children's learning?". There was a wide range of responses to this question. Many respondents only had good things to say about the quality of education the school provided to its students and the parents. There were many respondents that wanted to see more 'alerts', 'notifications', 'more information' and 'reminders' from Gospel Oak Primary School. This indicates that Gospel Oak Primary School could somehow improve their communication methods to help better reach parents. A specific example of information that could better be sent to the parents is the newsletters. One parent complained that these would be thrown into their children's bags. By the time their child reached home, the newsletter would be crumbled and destroyed. Besides improving communication, one respondent also pointed out that it is difficult to make school events. In some households, both parents work, so these families find it more difficult to attend school events frequently, so they only attend the 'essential' school events.

4.2.2 Potential Communication Platforms

Although the importance of parent-teacher communication is well known, our results from the interview and survey showed that the current communication needs to be improved. Teachers mentioned that some parents are too busy to be contacted. The same result was found in the parent survey that they have many barriers to do the recommended activities with their children. Lack of time was the most common barrier based on the responses. Parents also wanted clearer instructions about where to find the activities. Thus, to solve the lack of engagement, a platform for teachers and parents to communicate can save time for both parties. Table 4.1 contains the results of our evaluations of five platforms across nine factors. Using the newsletter as a baseline, we found that the two communication apps, Slack and Class Dojo, have the most benefits.

School newsletters and websites are good traditional methods to send notifications to parents. These methods are familiar to parents and teachers and are low cost if they are electronic. However, these methods are usually one-way communication channels, where teachers can't hear back from parents. They also can hardly provide instant communication or send notifications to specific people. Currently, if teachers wanted to contact different parents they needed to make a phone call or send an email.

Using web applications minimizes the difficulty for teachers and parents to communicate. Instead of trusting students to bring home hard copies of newsletters to their parents, teachers are able to send notifications to parents immediately and directly. Parents are also able to reply directly to teachers in their own time. Instead of trusting students to bring hard copies of

newsletters to their parents, teachers are able to send notifications to parents. Parents are also able to send messages to teachers in their own time.

Table 4.1: Evaluation of different communication platforms

	Newsletter	Website	WhatsApp	Slack	Class Dojo
Cost efficiency	0	+1	+1	+1	+1
Instant communication	0	-1	+1	+1	+1
Availability of sharing documents	0	+1	+1	+1	+1
Group size	0	0	+1	+1	+1
Separate channels for parents	0	0	-1	+1	+1
Familiarity	0	0	+1	-1	-1
'Quiet Hours'	0	0	-1	+1	+1
Follow up function	0	0	-1	+1	+1
Follow each parent	0	-1	0	0	+1
Even Weighted Total score	0	0	+2	+6	+7

Chapter 5: Recommendations

Through our various methods of collecting data at Gospel Oak Primary School, we developed recommendations and strategies tailored to the needs of the faculty, students, and parents. From the parent survey, it was found that Ever 6 students do substantially less extracurricular activities when compared to the non Ever 6 student group. The reason for this was due to either the cost of the recommended activities, that the parents haven't seen them, or that they believe that they have little to no benefit to their child. Additionally, as seen in Figure 4.1, it should be noted that the Ever 6 group reads considerably less than the non Ever 6 group.

For these reasons described above, we decided to create a booklet for parents detailing various educational activities available in London. Some of these activities include, but are not limited to, visiting museums, galleries, and zoos. We categorized these activities based on the responses from the question, "Who does your child want to be when they grow up?". The intention was to tailor the booklet to the majority of students' interests. In addition, information such as cost, duration, and descriptions was added in order to inform families about their low-cost, yet educational availability.

This lack of awareness regarding out-of-school education was not the only hindrance to parental engagement. While there are some parents who are aware of effective educational engagement, there are inevitably some parents that do not know how to effectively engage with their children. For this reason, included in the booklet are also several examples of effective and ineffective parental engagement styles that could prove efficient for at-home student learning.

Overall, the booklet was designed to visually appeal to elementary students, even though the targeted audience was the students' parents. With these suggested activities, we hope that parents will be able to provide the best educational experiences for their children regardless of personal obstacles such as time or money. All content of the booklet is based on the specific needs of the parent body at Gospel Oak Primary School as well as information from our past research.

In addition to the parent booklet, we decided to also recommend a more efficient way of faculty to communicate with parents through an online platform. Since many parents were unaware or did not understand classroom material, through this new platform, parents are given direct communication with their child's teacher. This improves the parental engagement between the parent and the school and may also indirectly improve the parent-student collaboration. The new communication method may allow parents to feel more comfortable helping with educational material at home.

In conclusion, the recommendations for this project were aimed primarily towards increasing parental awareness on the importance of education. Given our inability to make structural changes to the British education system, we felt the biggest impact could be made by improving parental engagement.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Discussion

The goal of this project was to collaborate with Gospel Oak Primary School to analyse parental engagement and students' linguistic awareness and how those factors impacted the educational attainment of W-Ever 6 students. In our initial research, we were able to assume that an improvement in the two factors we analysed would raise attainment. However, the scope of our project did not include measuring any changes in test scores. Instead, our background research explained how parental engagement and linguistic awareness are closely correlated with student attainment. Based on the positive feedback from our deliverables, we hope that Gospel Oak Primary School notices an increase in the performance of its W-Ever 6 students.

Our project successfully completed all of our objectives. In our results section, we documented new findings on parental engagement at Gospel Oak Primary School utilizing a survey. From our survey, we found that W-Ever 6 parents engage less often and effectively. There are barriers to parental engagement that were noted in the background section, and the survey responses indicated that the parents at Gospel Oak School faced similar issues. Some of the main barriers to parental engagement included lack of time, cost, and not being aware of recommended activities. In addition to our objectives regarding parental engagement, we were able to analyse W-Ever 6 and Ever 6 students' linguistics through focus groups. The results aligned with the research from our background section. The conclusion we came to regarding students' linguistics is that it can be improved by raising awareness with parents about child-directed speech.

After completing our goals, the limitations of our research became apparent, such as the scale of our initial problem. This project set out with the task of closing the W-Ever 6 attainment gap when in reality a small improvement would be a momentous accomplishment. Another limitation of our research was not having enough time to test the impact of this project. The improvement our deliverables had on the W-Ever 6 attainment gap was not something we were able to quantify.

Regardless of this research's limitations, we were able to make progress on a complex national issue. The lasting impact of this research was improving collaboration at Gospel Oak Primary School with parents through our booklet along with recommendations for a new communication platform. In addition, we were also able to analyse parental engagement and students' linguistics in ways Gospel Oak Primary School had not been able to in the past. We believe our work has made strides towards solving this issue and, more importantly, has left a strong starting point for the continuation of similar research.

We encourage further research to be conducted in a similar systematic approach that attempts to solve a single factor of the issue instead of the issue in its entirety. This is because we

have concluded that the W-Ever 6 attainment gap's manifestation is a generational issue. After interviews, surveys, focus groups, and extensive analysis, we learned that this generational trend is difficult to resolve. If a child's attainment is affected by their W-Ever 6 status, chances are their grandparents and parents were as well. To close the gap, we must break the cycle one step at a time. Eventually, future projects will improve the quality of education by improving factors of at-home and in-school learning. Through iterative research and successful implementation of recommendations, Britain will one day succeed in their attempts to remove economic inequalities from educational equality.

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Appendix A: English Baccalaureate of General Certificate of Secondary Education Exams

Subject	Topic
English	Language
English	Literature
Mathematics	N/A
Science	Combined Science (worth 2 GCSEs)
Science	Chemistry
Science	Physics
Science	Biology
Science	Computer Science
Languages	Modern Languages (Arabic, Bengali, Mandarin, French, German, Greekm Gujarati, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Panjabi, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russain, Spanish, Turkish, Urdu)
Languages	Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Biblical Hebrew, Latin)
Humanities	History
Humanities	Geography

Gospel Oak
Primary & Nursery School

Appendix B: Other Qualifications of General Certificate of Secondary Education Exams

Subject	Topic
Science	Astrology
Science	Geology
Science	Psychology
Maths	Statistics
Humanities	Ancient History
Humanities	Citizenship Studies
Humanities	Classical Civilization
Social Studies	Religious Studies
Social Studies	Sociology
Social Studies	Philosophy
Business	Business Studies
Business	Economics
Business	Entrepreneurship
Business	Retailing
Business	Marketing
Business	Financing
Design and Technology	Electronics
Design and Technology	Engineering
Design and Technology	Food Preparation and Nutrition

Design and Technology	N/A
Arts	Film Studies
Arts	Media Studies
Arts	Music
Arts	Drama
Arts	Dance
Arts	N/A
Other	Physical Education

Appendix C: British Education

Britain is the second most popular study destination among all the countries. According to 2020 QS World University, 19 British universities are titled the top 100 universities in the world. In 2017-2018, the total population of international students who attended British university in the UK reached 458,490. Nevertheless, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) run by the OECD ranks students' academic performance based on tests taken by 16-year-olds in over 70 countries. In the PISA report published in 2015, the UK is ranked 27th in math, 22nd in reading and 15th in science. Compared to the general appreciation at British higher education, it seems that the UK does not have a coherent connection between its fundamental education and higher education.

Each year, the British government spends about 5% of its GDP supporting education. The data collected by our world data, government expenditure on primary education is 1.69% of GDP in 2014, 2.28% for secondary education and 1.36% for tertiary education. It shows that more education funding is used to improve public education.

More importantly, in order to increase the education level, the Parliament of the United Kingdom published The Education and Skills Act in 2008 and announced that raised the minimum age at which a person can leave education or training is 17 from 2013. Also, the British government releases a Free school meal and pupil premium policy. The policies allow students from a family with an annual net earned income no more than £7,400 to receive £1,320 grants per year.

There are differences in the testing done at primary schools in England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland but they all have some way of monitoring students' development early on. At age 5, students in England take a phonics check test (Breathnach, 2019). This is a way to monitor their English literacy to ensure they are progressing at a sufficient rate. At age 7, students in England and Northern Ireland will then take a Key Stage 1 (KS1) Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) (Breathnach, 2019). At age 11, students in England and Northern Ireland take a Key Stage 2 (KS2) SATs (Breathnach, 2019). In Scotland, students take a Primary 1, 4, and 7 assessment at ages 5, 8, and 11 (Breathnach, 2019). These exams are used to measure students' progress and the attainment gap within primary schools. Wales does less testing, but they compile student profiles to monitor students' development throughout primary school (Breathnach, 2019).

Appendix D: Review on Parental Engagement Reports

Studies on Parental Engagement for Students Ages 5-11

	No benefit	**Mixed or unclear**	**Positive impact**
Strong evidence	0	0	0
Medium Evidence	1	0	1
Weak Evidence	18	5	35

Appendix E: Percent of Children Who Are Learning-poor, by Country Groups and World Bank Lending Status

Figure 4: Percent of children who are learning-poor, by country groups and World Bank lending status
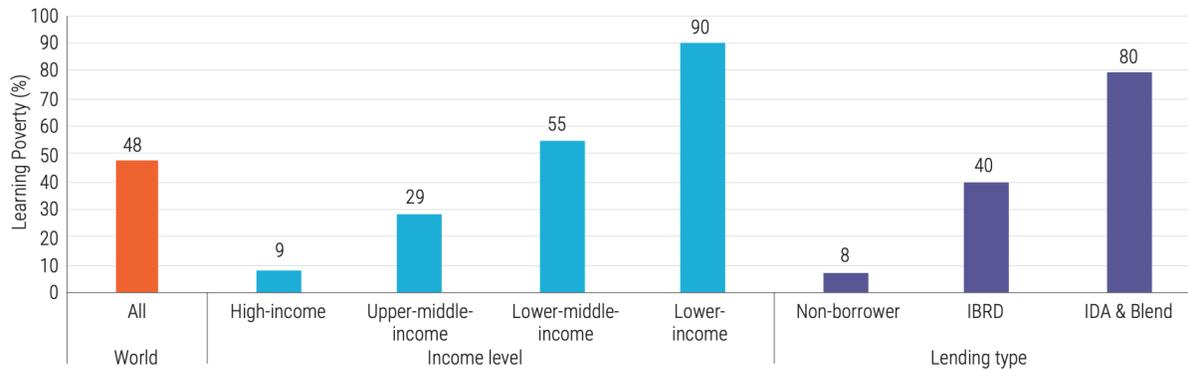
Source: Azevedo and others (2019) using the Global Learning Assessment Database (https://github.com/worldbank/GLAD); UIS Enrollment Data; and UN Population numbers.

Appendix F: Ground Rules for Exploratory Talk

Source:
https://languageresearch.cambridge.org/images/Language_Research/CambridgePapers/Cambridge
PapersInELT_Oracy_2018.pdf

We decided to use the following guildine from the report published by Cambridge primary school
to observe how students in class and in a focus group.

Ground rules for talk
1. Everyone should be invited to speak.
2. Everyone should listen carefully. (Look at and listen to the people talking)
3. We will ask for, and give, reasons. (Ask "What do you think?" and "Why do you think
   that?")
4. We can agree or disagree.
5. Everyone respects what is said in the group.
6. We will share what we know
7. We will make a group decision after talking.

Appendix G: Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool

Dockrell, J. E., Bakopoulou, I., Law, J., Spencer, S., & Lindsay, G. (2012). Developing a communication supporting classroom observation tool. London: DfE.

Language Learning Environment This dimension involves the physical environment and learning context		Not Seen	Observed	Comments
1	The classroom is organised to emphasise open space.		✔	
2	Learning areas are clearly defined throughout the classroom.		✔	
3	Learning areas are clearly labelled with pictures/words throughout the classroom.		✔	
4	Space for privacy/quiet areas where children can retreat to have 'down time' or engage in smaller group activities. These areas are less visually distracting.		✔	
5	Children's own work is displayed and labelled appropriately.		✔	
6	Some classroom displays include items that invite comments from children.		✔	
7	Book specific areas are available.		✔	
8	Literacy specific areas are available.		✔	
9	Background noise levels are managed consistently throughout the observation, and children and adults are able to hear one another with ease.		✔	
10	Transition times are managed effectively, so that noise levels are not excessive and children know what to expect next.		✔	

3

11	There is good light.		✔	
12	The majority of learning resources and materials are labelled with pictures/words.		✔	
13	Resources that are available for free play are easily reached by the children or easily within their line of vision.		✔	
14	An appropriate range of books is available in the book area (e.g, traditional stories, bilingual/dual language books and a variety of genres and books related to children's own experiences).		✔	
15	Non-fiction books, books on specific topics or interests of the children are also available in other learning areas.		✔	
16	Outdoor play (if available) includes imaginative role play.		✔	
17	Good quality toys, small world objects and real/natural resources are available.		Present: / Used: ✔	
18	Musical instruments and noise makers are available.		Present: / Used: ✔	
19	Role play area is available.		Present: / Used: ✔	
Total Score	**19** /19 **Notes:**			

Language Learning Interactions

This dimension involves the ways in which adults in the setting talk **with** children.

		Not Seen	Observed				Observed by all staff in classroom	Comments
1	Adults use children's name, draw attention of children.						✔	
2	Adults get down to the child's level when interacting with them.					✔		
3	Natural gestures and some key word signing are used in interactions with children.						✔	
4	Adults use symbols, pictures and props (real objects) to reinforce language.						✔	
5	Pacing: Adult uses a slow pace during conversation; give children plenty of time to respond and take turns in interacting with them.						✔	
6	Pausing: Adult pauses expectantly and frequently during interactions with children to encourage their turn-taking and active participation.						✔	
7	Confirming: Adult responds to the majority of child utterances by confirming understanding of the child's intentions. Adult does not ignore child's communicative bids.						✔	

8	Imitating: Adult imitates and repeats what child says more or less exactly.					✔		
9	Commenting: Adult comments on what is happening or what children are doing at that time.					✔		
10	Extending: Adult repeats what child says and adds a small amount of syntactic or semantic information.				✔			
11	Labelling: Adult provides the labels for familiar and unfamiliar actions, objects, or abstractions (e.g. feelings).					✔		
12	Adult encourages children to use new words in their own talking.					✔		
13	Open questioning: Adult asks open-ended questions that extend children's thinking (what, where, when, how & why questions).				✔			
14	Scripting: Adult provides a routine to the child for representing an activity (e.g. First, you go up to the counter. Then you say "I want milk..") and engages the child in known routines (e.g. "Now it is time for circle time. What do we do first?").					✔		
15	Adult provides children with choices (for example: "Would you like to read a story or play on the computer?").				✔			

16	Adult uses contrasts that highlight differences in lexical items and in syntactic structures.			✔				
17	Adult models language that the children are not producing yet.					✔		
18	Turn-taking is encouraged.					✔		
19	Children's listening skills are praised.					✔		
20	Children's non-verbal communication is praised.			✔				

Total Score	92	/100	Notes:

Notes: Due to the small sample size we observed, the actual number of observed interactions should be higher.

Appendix H: Survey for Parents

Appendix H.1: Disclaimer

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States currently working at Gospel Oak Primary School on a research project. The project is investigating topics including the development of children's linguistic skills and parents and carers' current and preferred ways of supporting their children in partnership with the school.

We would like to invite you to contribute to this research by completing an online survey that will take less than 10 minutes. WPI is offering all survey participants the chance to be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 Marks and Spencer voucher.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time and your data will be removed from the study. If you wish to withdraw consent after completing the survey, please contact gr-lonc20-gop@wpi.edu.

Data collected from the survey will be analysed and published anonymously. All personal data will be stored securely and disposed of in line with General Data Protection Regulation. Your personal data will be kept for up to three months after the last output from the project is published and no later than the end of 2020. If you have any queries about how we use our data, please contact gr-lonc20-gop@wpi.edu.

Appendix H.2: Questions

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Selecting "yes" below indicates that:

• you have read the above information
• you voluntarily agree to participate
• you are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by selecting the option labeled "No".

If you select "No", you will not be considered for the £50 Marks and Spencer voucher. In order to qualify, you must enter an email or phone number at the end of the survey.

[Options: yes, no]

Where did you grow up? (Select all that apply)
[Options: In Camden, Somewhere else in London, Outside of London in UK, In Another Country]

What languages are spoken at home? (Select all that apply)
[Options: English, Bengali, French, Spanish, Italian, Somali, German, Arabic, Portuguese, Polish, Other]

How frequently do you speak English at home?
[Options: Never, Sometimes, About half the time, Most of the time, Always]

Where does your child or children go after school? (Select all the apply)
[Options: After school club, Extracurricular activities at school or elsewhere, Goes straight home, Goes to other family or friend's house, Homework Club, Other (Please Specify)]

What will your child or children be doing during the February Half Term? (Select all that apply)
[Options: Going on holiday outside the UK, Going on holiday inside the UK, Visiting museums, Visiting monuments, Going to the theater, Going to the zoo / aquarium, Other (Please specify)]

Which of the following activities hosted by the school have you attended this academic year? (Select all that apply)*[Options: Parents Evening, School Assemblies, Christmas Production, Sports Day, Parents WelcomeMeeting, Winter Fair, International Evening, Other (Please Specify)]*

Have you done any of the out of school activities suggested by Gospel Oak Primary School? (Select all the apply)
[Options: Flipped Learning, Visit museums / galleries, Talk about the news, Other online activities Gospel Oak has subscribed to, I am not aware of the activities the school has suggested]

Why have you not done some of the suggested activities? (Select all that apply)
[Options: Lack of time, Cost, I don't feel the suggestions would benefit my child, I haven't seen the curriculum letters, Other (Please Specify)]

How can Gospel OAk further support you to assist your child's or children's learning?
[Open response]

Enter your child's or childrens names that currently attend Gospel Oak Primary School
[Open response]

On average, how many days a week do you read with your child or discuss with them what they have been reading on their own?
[Options: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7]

On average, how many hours do you help your child with homework?
[Options: 0, 0-2, 2-4, 4-6, 6+]

Who would your child like to be when they grow up?
[Options: Open response]

Appendix I: Processed Grades Analysis

Appendix I.1: Attainment in Year 2

Table I.1: Distribution by groups in Year 2

Year 2	Ever 6	Non Ever 6	In total
White British	4	17	21
Ethnic minority	4	23	27
In total	8	40	48

Table I.2: Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 2

Number of students who pass the exam	Total	Pass rate (%)	
W-Ever 6 students	3	4	W-Ever 6 British	75.00%
Non Ever 6 white British	15	17	non Ever 6 white British	88.24%
Ever 6 ethnic minority	1	4	Ever 6 ethnic minority	25.00%
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	19	23	non Ever 6 ethnic minority	82.61%
Non W-Ever 6	35	44	non W-Ever 6	79.55%
Class in total	38	48	Class pass rate	79.17%

Table I.3: Attainment gap of groups by Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 2

Attainment gaps (pp)	
W-Ever 6 & non W-Ever 6	4.55%
Within white British	13.24%
Within ethnic minority	57.61%

Table I.4: Scaled Score and attainment gap in PIRA in Year 2

Average scaled score		Attainment gaps by scaled score	
W-Ever 6 students	106.75	Within white British	2.66
Non Ever 6 white British	109.41		
Ever 6 ethnic minority	102.50	Within ethnic minority	7.85
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	110.35		
Non W-Ever 6	109.27	W–Ever 6 & others	2.52
The class in total	109.06		

Appendix I.2: Attainment in Year 3

Table I.5: Distribution by groups in Year 3

Year 3	Ever 6	Non Ever 6	In total
White British	4	10	14
Ethnic minority	10	25	35
In total	14	35	49

Table I.6: Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 3

Number of students who pass the exam	Total	Pass rate (%)

W-Ever 6 students	2	4	W-Ever 6 students	50.00%
Non Ever 6 white British	6	10	non Ever 6 white British	60.00%
Ever 6 ethnic minority	5	10	Ever 6 ethnic minority	50.00%
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	17	25	non Ever 6 ethnic minority	68.00%
Non W-Ever 6	28	45	non W-Ever 6	62.22%
Class in total	30	49	Class pass rate	61.22%

Table I.7: Attainment gap of groups by Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 3

Attainment gaps (pp)	
W-Ever 6 & non W-Ever 6	12.22%
Within white British	10.00%
Within ethnic minority	18.00%

Table I.8: Scaled Score and attainment gap in PIRA in Year 3

Average scaled score		Attainment gaps by scaled score	
W-Ever 6 students	99.25	Within white British	7.55
Non Ever 6 white British	106.80		
Ever 6 ethnic minority	99.7	Within ethnic minority	1.74
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	101.44		
Non W-Ever 6	102.24	W-Ever 6 & others	2.99
The class in total	102.00		

Appendix I.3: Attainment in Year 4

Table I.9: Distribution by groups in Year 4

Year 4	Ever 6	Non Ever 6	In total
White British	5	16	21
Ethnic minority	11	18	29
In total	16	34	50

Table I.10: Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 4

Number of students who pass the exam		Total	Pass rate (%)	
W-Ever 6 students	4	5	W-Ever 6 students	80.00%
Non Ever 6 white British	15	16	non Ever 6 white British	93.75%
Ever 6 ethnic minority	7	11	Ever 6 ethnic minority	63.64%
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	16	18	non Ever 6 ethnic minority	88.89%
Non W-Ever 6	38	45	non W-Ever 6	84.44%
Class in total	42	50	Class pass rate	84.00%

Table I.11: Attainment gap of groups by Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 4

Attainment gaps (pp)	
W-Ever 6 & non W-Ever 6	4.44%
Within white British	13.75%
Within ethnic minority	25.25%

Table I.12: Scaled Score and attainment gap in PIRA in Year 4

Average scaled score	Attainment gaps by scaled score

W-Ever 6 students	103.00	Within white British	13.63
Non Ever 6 white British	116.63		
Ever 6 ethnic minority	107.91	Within ethnic minority	-1.91
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	106.00		
Non W-Ever 6	110.25	W-Ever 6 & others	7.25
The class in total	109.52		

Appendix I.4: Attainment in Year 5

Table I.13: Distribution by groups in Year 5

Year 5	Ever 6	Non Ever 6	In total
White British	4	15	19
Ethnic minority	13	17	30
In total	17	32	49

Table I.14: Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 5

Number of students who pass the exam	Total	Pass rate (%)	
W-Ever 6 students	2	4	W-Ever 6 students	50.00%
Non Ever 6 white British	13	15	non Ever 6 white British	86.67%
Ever 6 ethnic minority	9	13	Ever 6 ethnic minority	69.23%
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	16	17	non Ever 6 ethnic minority	94.12%
Non W-Ever 6	38	45	non W-Ever 6	84.44%
Class in total	40	49	Class pass rate	81.63%

Table I.15: Attainment gap of groups by Pass Rate in White Rose Maths in Year 5

Attainment gaps (pp)	
W-Ever 6 & non W-Ever 6	34.44%
Within white British	36.67%
Within ethnic minority	24.89%

Table I.16: Scaled Score and attainment gap in PIRA in Year 5

Average scaled score		Attainment gaps by scaled score	
W-Ever 6 students	113.35	Within white British	7.30
Non Ever 6 white British	109.50		
Ever 6 ethnic minority	116.80	Within ethnic minority	2.70
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	110.61		
Non W-Ever 6	113.31	W-Ever 6 & others	4.19
The class in total	113.69		

Appendix I.5: Attainment in Year 6

Table I.17: Distribution by groups in Year 6

Year 6	Ever 6	Non Ever 6	In total
White British	9	10	19
Ethnic minority	11	23	34
In total	20	33	53

Table I.18: Scaled Score and attainment gap in Maths in Year 6

Average scaled score		Attainment gaps by scaled score	
W-Ever 6 students	101.78	Within white British	4.82
Non Ever 6 white British	106.60		
Ever 6 ethnic minority	105.27	Within ethnic minority	-0.57
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	104.70		
Non W-Ever 6	105.27	W−Ever 6 & others	3.49
The class in total	104.68		

Table I.19: Scaled Score and attainment gap in Reading in Year 6

Average scaled score		Attainment gaps by scaled score	
W-Ever 6 students	104.50	Within white British	7.10
Non Ever 6 white British	111.60		
Ever 6 ethnic minority	105.18	Within ethnic minority	-1.57
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	103.61		
Non W-Ever 6	105.82	W−Ever 6 & others	1.32
The class in total	105.60		

Appendix I.6: Attainment in All Years

Table I.20: The pass rates by demographic groups in the White Rose Maths

Pass Rates in the White Rose Maths[1]

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[1] Not including students with Special Education needs

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
W-Ever 6	75.0%	50.0%	80.0%	50.0%
Non Ever 6 White British	88.2%	60.0%	93.8%	86.7%
Ever 6 Ethnic Minority	25.0%	50.0%	63.6%	69.2%
Non Ever 6 Ethnic Minority	82.6%	68.0%	88.9%	94.1%
All Except W-Ever 6	79.5%	62.2%	84.4%	84.4%
Attainment Gap within white British	13.2%	10.0%	13.8%	36.7%
Overall Class Pass Rate	79.2%	61.2%	84.0%	81.6%

Table I.21: Attainment in Reading by scaled score in each year

PIRA	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
The class in total	109.06	102.00	109.52	113.35	105.60
W-Ever 6 students	106.75	99.25	103.00	109.50	104.50
Non Ever 6 white British	109.41	106.80	116.63	116.80	111.60
Ever 6 ethnic minority	102.50	99.70	107.91	110.61	105.18
Non Ever 6 ethnic minority	110.35	101.44	106.00	113.31	103.61
Attainment within white British	2.66	7.55	13.63	7.30	7.10

Appendix J: Focus Group Questions and Evaluation Form

Focus Group questions
Time: 10-15 mins
One person talk
One person takes notes
Backup plan: Dawn can hold the children's attention back

Students: Group 1: 7 Ever 6 students, Group 2: 7 non Ever 6 students

Questions:

Ice breaker questions

1. Introductions/Ice breakers

Parental engagement & oracy

1. Raise your hand if you like to read?
2. What do you do after school?
    a. If little response, provide options: TV, sports, arts, clubs, read and take polling (warm up)
    b. Who likes reading (poll)
    c. Is there anyone who reads stories to you at home?
    d. Who has any interesting storybook to share with others?
3. Did you have dinner with your family yesterday? (Check Past tense)
4. Who did anything fun over the half term?

Evaluation:

	W-Ever 6 (Attaining well)		W-Ever 6 (Attaining poor)		Ever 6 (Attaining well)		Ever 6 (Attaining poor)	
	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-
Comprehension	IIIIIIIII		IIIIIIIIII	II	IIIIIIIIIII		IIIIIIIIII	III
Complete Sentence	IIIIIII	IIII	IIIII	IIIIIIIII	IIIIIIIIII	III	IIIIIIII	IIIII
Proper Grammar	IIIII	II	III	IIIIIIII	IIIIIIII	IIIIII	IIIII	IIIIIII
Formality	IIIII	II	III	IIIIIII	IIIIIIII	IIIII	IIIII	IIIIIII
Vocabulary	IIIII	III	III	IIIII	IIIIIIII	II	IIIII	IIIII
Total responses	46		60		70		68	