

Whizz Education Quantifies Maths Lockdown Learning Loss

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Whizz Education, provider of the leading virtual tutor Maths-Whizz, has quantified the lockdown learning loss in maths experienced by 5–13-year-olds in the UK. Whizz Education's research shows that 46% of the 1,721 children assessed experienced a learning loss, exhibiting an average of knowledge decline of eight months during the first lockdown.

Dr Junaid Mubeen, Director of Education explains: "Learning loss is such a loaded term. At Whizz we simply take it to mean a decline in students' knowledge levels, which is hardly surprising in the face of severe disruptions this past year. Despite the tireless efforts of teachers to adapt lessons and provide remote classes, the global pandemic has had a drastic effect on pupils' learning.

"We found that pencil and paper multiplication was the skill that fared worst, along with pencil and paper addition, both demonstrating more than six months of knowledge declines across the sample.

"Knowledge declines were less severe in topics such as integers, powers and roots and also decimals (5 months' learning loss). Children studying these topics are generally older, however, so these findings reflect similar studies we have conducted in other regions around the world, where younger pupils with a limited store of knowledge to draw on, suffered a higher degree of learning loss.

"It is also likely that those in our underserved communities have been hardest hit - a sad consequence of the pandemic is that it has exacerbated the attainment gap, with disadvantaged students falling further behind due to lack of access to online learning during school closures. We've observed this in both the UK and globally.

"While we recognise that some students have lost almost a year's worth of maths knowledge, when addressing how best to move forwards it is important that teachers are not put under further pressure, or that students are made to feel penalised, for events which have, frankly, been out of their control. We should not expect quick fixes; it will take months, even years, for students to regain any lost ground. The emphasis needs to be on informal assessment of gaps and ensuring each student receives individualised support that addresses their specific knowledge gaps. Virtual tutors can play an important part in the battle against learning loss, without inducing further burdens on teachers.

"At Whizz Education, we believe that every child deserves a learning experience that caters to their individual needs and pace of learning. We work closely in partnership with schools to develop quality bespoke learning programmes delivered via our virtual tutoring platform, Maths-Whizz. Maths-Whizz uses powerful AI to build a completely personalised plan for each child, and then continues to tailor it as they complete lessons.

"Maths-Whizz provides more than 1,250 pre-prepared lesson plans, assisting teachers to deliver measurable learning gains for children with a range of abilities. Our research shows with just 60 minutes per week of Maths-Whizz over a six-week summer period, students can expect to acquire a 4-month learning advantage. This year of all years, this seems like too great an opportunity to pass up."

To find out more about Whizz Education and the Maths-Whizz virtual tutor please see:
www.whizzeducation.com

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Notes to Editor

About Whizz Education

Whizz Education is an education partner accountable for learning outcomes. Since 2004, we have partnered with schools, ministries of education and development agencies to bring the power of individualised learning to over a million students worldwide. Guided by a wealth of live learning data from the world's first personalised, scaffolded, and adaptive virtual tutor, Maths-Whizz, and our in-field implementation experience, we have learned what does and doesn't work in a variety of learning environments.

For further information please see: www.whizz.com

About Dr Junaid Mubeen

Dr Junaid Mubeen is a research mathematician turned educator, working at the nexus of education, innovation and technology. As Director of Education at Whizz Education, Junaid oversees the educational strategy and development of the Maths-Whizz virtual tutoring service, which has reached over half a million students worldwide. Junaid has a PhD in mathematics from Oxford and a Master's in International Education Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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