



Oak National Academy Annual Report

September 2020 — July 2021

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OAK
NATIONAL
ACADEMY

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About Oak

Oak National Academy is the national teaching resource and online classroom set up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its creation in April 2020, Oak has been incubated by Reach Foundation. It is a free, optional resource for teachers, with complete lessons for remote learning and flexible resources to use in the classroom.

Oak began with 40 teachers uploading 180 lessons a week to keep the nation learning throughout the first lockdown.

Insights and reflections into Oak's first term — April-July 2020 — can be found [here](#).

In just a year, Oak has grown to become a trusted national resource supporting millions of teachers and pupils.

We now offer over 10,000 curriculum-sequenced lessons, covering EYFS to Year 11, made up of over 40,000 resources and delivered across two custom-built online learning platforms. Known to 97% of teachers in the UK, with industry leading user recommendations (83 Net Promoter Score), pupils have now taken part in over 130 million lessons.

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Introduction

It is a privilege to write the introduction to this review, particularly given the phenomenal achievements of Oak National Academy over such a short space of time. Like so many individuals and organisations over the past 18 months, The Reach Foundation, which is otherwise focused on developing a national Cradle to Career educational model in Feltham, responded at a moment of acute need. Our role, amongst other things, has been to provide the organisational home for Oak since April 2020, and we are delighted to have seen it grow from an idea to become such a crucial part of the education landscape.

The pandemic has required our public services to operate under huge pressure. Organisations have come together to collaborate within and across sectors – developing vaccines, sourcing PPE and finding ways to feed communities.

In April 2020, at a time when schools were working out how to educate their pupils remotely, provide key worker provision, feed pupils at home and support their communities, a group of teachers in schools around the country committed to creating high quality lessons weekly to support the system. With a few days' notice, they created lessons in time for the start of the Summer Term. In the summer holidays a larger group of teachers gave up weeks of their time to record a full suite of lessons from Reception to Year 11 to support the system for the coming year.

As a parent, I can attest to the support that Oak National Academy has provided for children around the country. The statistics and case studies included in this report bear testament to Oak's impact and keep us true to Oak's purpose to support every child, everywhere. At a time of acute stress for families, having these engaging and comprehensive resources helped parents and supported learning at home in these unprecedented times.

The Reach Foundation would like to thank all of those involved in making Oak happen. We appreciate the support of the Department for Education and the Mohn Westlake Foundation, who stepped in at incredibly short notice to enable Oak to grow rapidly last July, as well as the schools, Trusts, teachers and other partners.

Finally, on behalf of everyone who has benefited from the exceptional resource that Oak has become, I would like to thank the team who have made Oak happen. They worked at remarkable speed with a focus on excellence in every aspect of the endeavour, and deserve all of our appreciation.



Jon McGoh

Chair of the Board of Trustees
The Reach Foundation

A warm welcome to Oak

We set ourselves an ambitious task this year.

With a fraction more sleep and three months of experience under our belts from Oak's whirlwind inception, we set out to deliver an online version of the national curriculum in its near entirety. We wanted to build an online classroom for pupils and a national library of lesson resources for teachers. The purpose was clear — make sure no teacher or pupil would again experience the overnight shift from normality to the incredible uncertainty of 2020's summer term. Simply put, we wanted to make sure every child continued to have fair access to a high-quality education.

Oak is a true example of the tenacity, resourcefulness and talent of the teaching community and those we worked with to build it. And it is yet another testament to what our profession can achieve when we come together for the good of young people.

The feedback from teachers who have engaged with Oak over the past 12 months has been humbling. To see the impact it's had in the numbers throughout this report offers a perspective we've often been too close to truly appreciate.

To have helped pupils across the country to access 130 million lessons — 110 million of those between September 2020 and now — is something that we are immensely proud of as a team. Yet we know that is just a fraction of the effort and challenge teachers across the country faced last year.

With public and philanthropic funds rightly comes accountability. We hope this report plays an important part in contributing to that, drawing heavily on the evaluation of our work undertaken by ImpactEd, which we're publishing in full alongside this. At under 18 months old, there is plenty more for us to improve, learn, develop and evaluate — all things we're committed to in the months ahead.

Teachers have overwhelmingly told us they want Oak to stay open and to support them through, and post, the pandemic. Oak was built by teachers, for teachers, and we're excited to continue to develop and evolve to best serve and support them.



Matt Hood OBE
Principal



Our purpose and aims

Our purpose

We want every child to have fair access to a high quality education.

Oak was the idea of a group of teachers. The aim was simple - work together to support each other through one of the most challenging periods in education's recent history.

After 20 million lessons were accessed in our first term (April-July 2020), and with disruption looking likely to define the next school year, it was clear the work of Oak needed to continue. As the 'unprecedented' became more and more 'precedented', we set to work over summer 2020 to make sure we could offer schools a comprehensive contingency for 2020/21.

Our plans were made possible by financial support from the Department for Education, the generous Mohn Westlake Foundation and a fantastic range of pro-bono supporters. Their backing allowed our team to quickly create our two core products:

1. **Online Classroom** — a purpose-built, easy to use, virtual classroom with more than 10,000 lessons created by experienced teachers for pupils to freely use;
2. **Teacher Hub** — giving teachers free access to every resource that makes up our lessons, allowing them to download and edit the majority, so they can use Oak flexibly inside the classroom, or remotely, as situations change.

Our 10,000 lessons were created by over 550 teachers, with the vast majority produced in an incredible effort in under a month during summer 2020.

Driving all we've done has been a clear purpose:

We want every child to have fair access to a high-quality education. We believe the best way to do this is to support the people who know best — teachers.

Our aim is to free them up to focus on working directly with pupils, by sharing high-quality, curriculum-aligned materials, created by fellow teachers. And when pupils are away from their classroom, we make sure they can access those same great lessons in our online classroom.

From humble roots, Oak has grown into a national resource and a community of teachers supporting one another. All to make sure every child can always receive great lessons.

Our aims

During the summer of 2020 we set out to bring together a talented team of teachers, technologists and school support experts to provide a comprehensive, flexible contingency to support as many schools as possible.

Aim #1:

Create a comprehensive, collaborative and high quality curriculum

With our goal set to develop a comprehensive national resource we knew we had a responsibility to ensure that Oak would continue with collaboration at its core.

We set out to...	We delivered...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• scale up: and create a national library of 10,000 high quality lessons that are widely used and highly recommended by teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10,007 lessons across 28 subjects• world-leading recommendations by teachers with a Net Promoter Score of 83
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• improve the quality and diversity of our curriculum: by drawing on a wide range of experts and advisors to devise an inclusive curriculum that aims to help as many schools as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• developed our curriculum with the input of 45 diverse expert advisers from a range of different organisations.• resources downloaded by 54% of all state schools in England
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be more collaborative: by contracting teachers from a wide range of backgrounds to bring expertise from across the sector to our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• increased the number of teachers we worked with from an initial 40 to over 550 from 30 schools, trusts and subject associations across the country.

Aim #2:

Give all teachers and pupils access to good lessons — inside and outside of the classroom — no matter their circumstances

We didn't know how COVID-19 would affect schools, teachers and pupils, but we knew our role was to support efforts to keep pupils learning.

We set out to...	We delivered...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• help teachers provide a high-quality education no matter what: by building a Teacher Hub that allows them to use our resources in any way that suits them, and which lowers their workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• used by 59% of state school teachers• over 1,000,000 lessons downloaded or shared by teachers in our Teacher Hub
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• keep pupils learning: by building a fantastic, easy to use, online classroom as a sector-backstop, for whatever disruption COVID-19 caused	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pupils have taken part in over 130 million lessons since the start of the pandemic (110 million since September 2020), completing 1,611 years' worth of video lessons and 14.4 million quizzes• 934,000 teachers and pupils taught and learned with us on our busiest day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• support teachers to understand our products: by offering comprehensive, flexible training and support to any teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40,000 teachers attended our webinars, and we responded to over 4,000 support queries
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be accessible to all: by building a robust, accessible platform and doing whatever we could to make sure pupils from low income, disadvantaged families and children with additional needs were supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 99.9% uptime, with code built to meet 'AA' accessibility standards• rebuilding our site, to allow mobile networks to make Oak data free, so any child with a device could learn• a specialist curriculum for those accessing therapies and additional support; captioning on all lessons and BSL for English and Maths up to KS2

Aim #3:

Deliver impact as a lean organisation that provides value-for-money to the education sector

Oak wasn't born out of a boardroom, but from teachers on the ground. Supporting them remains our motivation.

We set out to...	We delivered...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• constantly improve how we supported teachers: through agile working to release changes fast, then iterate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• introduced quiz result sharing and creating unit-level quizzes• constantly refined our lessons, making improvements to 1,783 since September• created a series of lessons to specifically support Initial Teacher Training• developed a comprehensive Summer Learning Support offer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide value-for-money to the sector: by building a lean organisation and securing pro-bono support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivered national support on a budget equivalent of a secondary school, with a core team similar to the staffing of a primary school
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• deliver maximum impact: by constantly evaluating our work, gathering and responding to the views of teachers and the education community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• conducted two waves of qualitative and four rounds of quantitative research with teachers to identify further improvement areas to inform our work this year and beyond• commissioned an external evaluation with ImpactedEd to measure our impact

Partners

Great teaching involves collaboration. Our work wouldn't have been possible without drawing on the incredible expertise and support of teachers and educators across the country. We're proud to have worked alongside over 550 teachers from 30 schools, subject associations and trusts to develop quality, diverse subject curricula and over 10,000+ lessons.



Impact and achievement report: 2020/21

Measuring our impact



ImpactEd is an independent, not for profit organisation that supports schools and education organisations evaluate their impact and prioritise what is working best to improve outcomes for young people. You can find out more about ImpactEd's work at impacted.org.uk.

We have worked in partnership with ImpactEd over recent months to understand the impact that we had on pupils, teachers and the wider sector. This external evaluation work applied a mixed methods approach, including a quantitative survey with 911 participants (both Oak users and non-users to allow for comparison), qualitative interviews and focus groups with 40 participants.

You can see ImpactEd's *Oak National Academy 2020/21 Evaluation Report* in full [here](#).



Other research in the report is taken from independent survey by Teacher Tapp and from surveys our Research and Evaluation team have conducted with users and non-users throughout the year.



Thanks to SchoolDash for contributing to this report with their analytical expertise. They tapped into our user analytics to understand when, where and how our users accessed Oak and what content they engaged with the most.



Oak's impact on teachers

Reach, usage and advocacy at a glance

97%

of teachers have heard of Oak*

885,000

resources (slides and worksheets) were downloaded by teachers in 20/21

56%

of teachers used Oak between January & June 2021*

239,000

lesson links shared in 20/21

73%

of teachers who use us would recommend us*

90%

are satisfied or very satisfied with the platform's ease of use†

92%

are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the content†

83

our Net Promoter Score**

40,000

teachers attended our support webinars in 2020/21

4000

teacher queries we've answered

* Source: Teacher Tapp survey (Jun 2021)

† Source: Oak user survey (Feb 2021) — 642 respondents

**Source: Oak user survey (May 2021) — 697 respondents

Impact on quality of remote teaching and learning

In creating a national contingency offer, making sure the quality and breadth of our offer was key. For us, that meant:

- **adding more subjects;** we expanded to include 28 subjects, including a wide range of creative and practical subjects, as well as developing a comprehensive offer for pupils who normally attend specialist settings;
- **increasing quality;** whilst no lesson is ever perfect, we created a robust quality assurance process, to check every lesson for accuracy, consistency and quality - and a process for updating for any that users highlight for attention;
- **maximising teachers' flexibility;** we created a dedicated Teacher Hub, where teachers could plan with and share our resources, and allow them to be downloaded and edited, so teachers could create their own lessons;
- **pandemic resilient platforms;** we rebuilt everything from scratch, to create robust online platforms that could handle millions of pupils and offer the highest quality functionality, from lightning-fast video players to quiz results that pupils could share with their teachers;
- **working collaboratively;** we worked with a diverse set of expert advisory groups to create a curriculum that aligned to and supported as many schools as possible.

The continued improvement made this academic year has led to hugely positive feedback from teachers. The ImpactEd evaluation[§] shows that of those who used Oak:

- **72%** agreed that the quality of their remote lesson delivery had improved;
- **68%** agreed that the quality of their remote lesson planning had improved;
- **56%** agreed that the quality of their in-person lesson delivery had improved;
- **58%** agreed that the quality of their in-person lesson planning had improved.

§ Source: ImpactEd 20/21 Evaluation Report

Impact on teacher workload

The early stages of the pandemic highlighted the already high demands on teachers' time and workload were quickly becoming unsustainable.

To inform our work for 2020/21, we conducted a survey in September 2020 to measure the impact of the pandemic on workload and wellbeing[‡]. Based on 423 responses of both Oak users and non-users, 90% said that their workload was higher than last September, showing that it was a serious issue due to the pandemic. The top 3 reasons cited were:

1. following new COVID-19 related safety procedures (**87%**)
2. preparing additional materials for students studying remotely (**85%**)
3. upskilling staff in remote learning technologies (**70%**)

By the end of this year, ImpactEd conducted follow up research and found that the overall teacher workload was fairly similar between Oak users and non-users. However, Oak-user respondents were likely to say that Oak had saved them time. **61% of Oak-user teachers reported that Oak's resources had saved them time** related to their job. Of those who reported Oak had added time to their job (24%) the majority were senior leaders — those more likely to be impacted with the responsibility of matching and transferring entire school curricula to a remote model[§].

The qualitative research participants unanimously stated that having Oak resources had a big impact on the amount of time they spent planning and resourcing lessons, allowing them to focus on identifying and supporting more vulnerable pupils during lockdown.

“[Oak’s] resources gave me more time to differentiate, scaffold and prepare resources and worksheets for support”

Secondary Computing teacher

“I teach three different subjects in a small school without proper Heads of Department. I can find everything here. I saved hours of planning”.

Secondary teacher of French, History and Geography

[‡] Source: Oak Teacher Concerns survey (Sep 2020) — 423 respondents, both Oak users and non-users

[§] Source: ImpactEd 20/21 Evaluation Report (July 2021)

Impact on teacher wellbeing

September 2020 brought with it an assumption teaching would be notably less stressful — school reopenings meaning the majority of pupils would be in school whilst small numbers isolated. However, as isolations increased in the autumn term, many teachers were essentially operating two schools — for those in the classroom and those at home.

ImpactEd looked at the wellbeing of Oak users compared to both non-users and the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) national benchmark from 2020. Their finding was that **Oak users had a statistically significant higher wellbeing score** than non-users and scored on par with the pre-pandemic national average benchmark[§].

National benchmark (2020)	45.7
Oak user teachers	45.9
Non-Oak user teachers	43.7

“I’ve been ill and couldn’t face live lessons. This way, I know my students are learning from great teachers and I can focus on getting better without the guilt.”

Teacher

Teaching practice and CPD

Through using Oak’s resources and observing our video lessons, we’ve been delighted to find a powerful and unexpected benefit to teachers’ continuing professional development (CPD) and subject knowledge enhancement (SKE).

The majority of teachers using Oak reported that it had improved the quality of their lesson planning and delivery. This was true for remote teaching (72%), but also improving in-person lesson delivery too (56%).

Time and again teachers have shared how they watch Oak’s pre-recorded videos to help prepare for and plan their own lessons and schemes of work. During qualitative interviews we conducted with Oak users in April 2021, one newly-qualified teacher said that there is “never enough time” to observe others, so he watches relevant Oak lessons to consider in his own teaching, picking up flow and structure. Another teacher revealed she watched the videos at double speed while drinking her morning coffee to refresh her memory on a new topic before school.

[§] Source: ImpactEd 20/21 Evaluation Report (July 2021)

Many primary teachers referenced not being subject specialists, particularly in history and geography, and found exploring the language and delivery of specialist teachers in unfamiliar topics improved pupils' learning opportunities.

In some focus groups, participants discussed how Oak could change the future of shared practice by giving access to outstanding lessons at all times and therefore increasing CPD opportunities not restricted by timetables.

Some KS3 teachers commented on the energy levels in the video lessons and how this gave them a renewed energy in their own teaching.

One teacher commented that she felt the expectations and delivery styles through the English and Latin videos 'forced her to be more ambitious' for her pupils.

Often Oak's impact was subtle but significant; as one teacher said: "When you use Oak, you are doing CPD". Adapting lesson slides, watching a teacher explain a tricky concept in a video, taking inspiration from quizzes or 'magpieing' a questioning technique are some of the ways in which teachers have told us Oak has directly benefited their own practice.

Lessons for ITT

In March 2021, we were approached by the DfE Initial Teacher Training team to develop a response to the challenges facing trainee teachers in accessing placements and good observation practice. In collaboration with the DfE, with other experts within the ITT sector and Oak teachers, we created a series of lesson videos explicitly to support trainees in observing, deconstructing, analysing and adapting lessons.

Our dedicated Lessons for ITT offer videos in which Oak teachers reflect upon the pedagogical decisions that went into a lesson they created. Breaking each down into the 'hows' and 'whys' — not as a benchmark of 'best practice' but as a tool for shared practice.

Representatives from at least 60% of ITT providers in England engaged with our webinar launching the project. The 27 lessons developed across Key Stages 1-4 have since been viewed by almost 7,500 people and will remain available to trainees next year.

Transitional use cases

We created Oak to respond to the pandemic. But the ingenuity of teachers quickly saw them adapt and use our resources in new and innovative ways.

From lesson planning, to using quizzes and videos in-class or for homework, to setting reliable cover lessons, we've seen how teachers have continued to find Oak valuable since schools have reopened. It's been through listening to how teachers want to keep using Oak that we've shaped our future plans (outlined in the 'Uses Beyond the Pandemic' section later in the report).

"I trust the content and I like the AFL tasks. If I am not able to give a live lesson I trust that Oak is the next best thing."

Teacher

Curriculum design

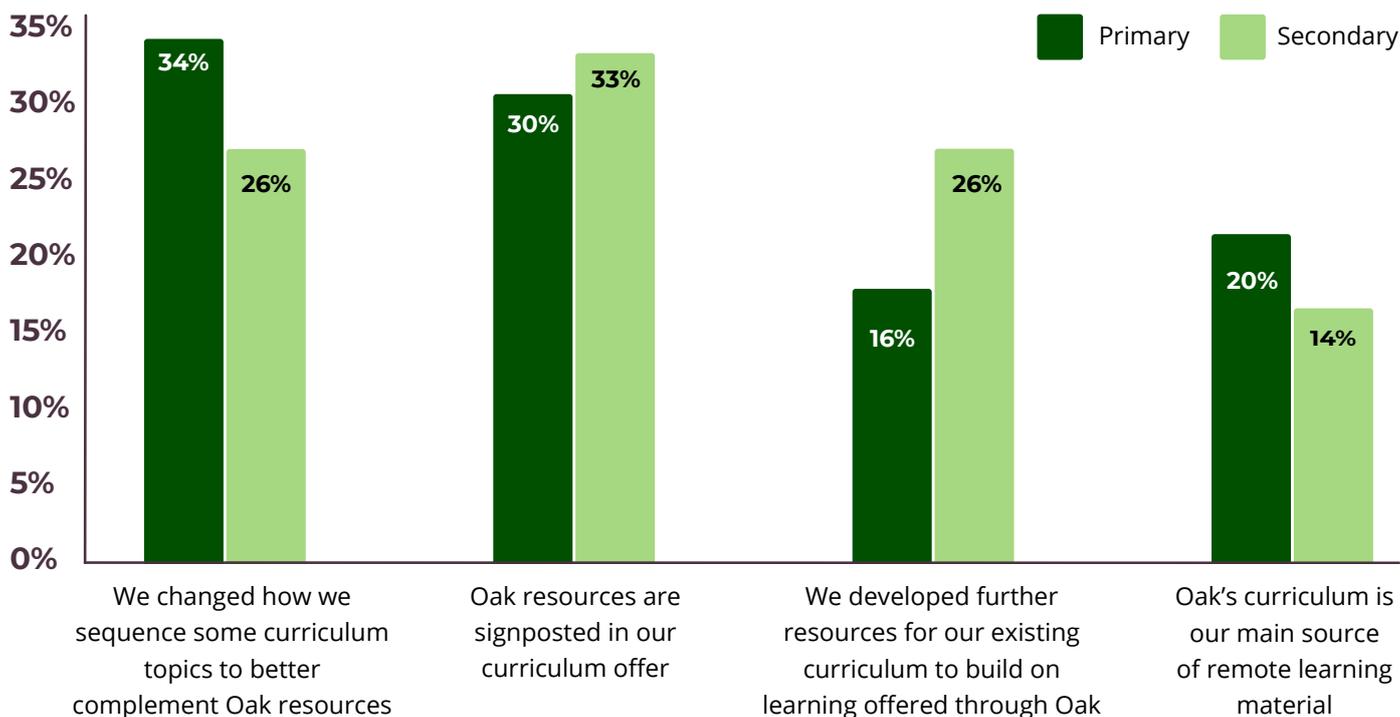
We worked with over 550 teachers and 30 expert curriculum partners to develop our national resource this year. Our goal has been to provide a rigorous, high-quality and flexible curriculum, able to meet the needs of as many schools and pupils as possible.

Almost **three-quarters of teachers highly rated the quality of our curriculum sequencing and structure, and our curriculum content.** Overwhelmingly, teachers felt that the resources provided a good base for their remote teaching and that they could adapt where necessary to better fit their approach, or to suit lower or higher attainers.

All senior leaders in our focus groups stated that they felt confident to direct their teams and departments to the Oak resources to help manage their workload, because they were broadly in line with their current curriculum, in terms of both content and pedagogical approach. This freed them up to support the wellbeing of staff and identify vulnerable children for pastoral and academic intervention.

We've also seen indications that in some cases, schools were adapting the sequencing of some of their curriculum topics to complement Oak resources.

How does Oak fit in with your curriculum?[§]



ImpactEd's research found access to, and inspiration from, Oak's curriculum had a positive impact on teachers' engagement with their own curriculum thinking. The majority of Oak users reported that Oak's curriculum and resources had increased their own confidence in curriculum design (56%) and that it had made them more likely to discuss curriculum design in their own or other schools (55%)[§].

"During the first lockdown we had planned for our Year 10's to complete a Living Well topic on Cold Environments. We had planned the unit before lockdown and it involved a lot of practical application to try and engage the children.

"When we realised we were going to have to teach this lesson remotely, it became apparent that the way we had planned it would not work via Google classrooms. As a department, we turned to Oak to try and find an equivalent unit but they only had a Hot Climate: The Desert. We talked as a department and decided that the skills and knowledge covered matched what we had wanted from our own planning and went with it.

"It was a real success and the children learnt a lot from it, so we have now switched our curriculum overview to include this topic instead of the Cold Environment unit we had originally planned."

Secondary Teacher

[§] Source: ImpactEd 20/21 Evaluation Report (July 2021)



Oak's impact on pupils and families

Impact, reach and usage at a glance

130,000,000

lessons taken in our Classroom this and last year

2,500,000

average pupils per week in our Classroom from January-March

934,000

pupils and teachers were using Oak on our peak day

14,400,000

quiz responses from January-June 2021

10,007

curriculum-aligned lessons produced

54.1%

of all state schools in England have used Oak this year[†]

88%

of teachers are **satisfied** or **very satisfied** with the learning experience[†]

1,611 years'

worth of **video lessons watched** by pupils since September

54,900

video views of our **specialist curriculum** content

108,000

pupils took our **most popular lesson:**
Understanding Pulse & Rhythm

[†] Source: Oak survey (February 2021) — 642 respondents

Impact, reach and usage

We hoped when Oak began it would help as many pupils to keep learning as possible in tough circumstances. What we couldn't have anticipated was seeing over 130 million lessons started since the start of the pandemic — 110 million of those just this school year.

Usage of our Classroom grew steadily throughout the autumn term in 2020, before widespread school 'closures' to the majority of pupils saw our average weekly users between January to March rise to **2.5 million**. 934,000 learnt with Oak on our peak day (12th January). We had an average of **208,000 teachers** on our Teacher Hub each week before schools fully 'reopened' to all pupils.

Quality was just as important as quantity. Our Education and Technology teams have worked hard to make sure that the content, design, production and user experience of these millions of lessons is continuously improving. In our February 2021 survey, 88% of teachers told us they are satisfied or very satisfied with the overall learning experience of their pupils[†].

Usage by subject and Key Stage

The core subjects of English, maths and science have been the most widely-accessed Oak lessons to date, followed by humanities, music and computing. We moved as quickly as possible to satisfy demand for additional popular subjects in early 2021. This reflects why our newer additions such as physical education, design and technology and drama were accessed proportionally less than other foundation subjects as they became available in February.

By Key Stage

Key Stage 2	44.2%	Key Stage 1	14.3%	EYFS	3.2%
Key Stage 3	24.6%	Key Stage 4	13.7%		

By subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2

English	32.9%	History	4.0%	French	0.6%
Maths	28.5%	RSHE and PSHE	3.2%	Spanish	0.3%
Science	14.4%	Religious Education	2.7%	Design and Technology	0.3%
Geography	5.8%	Computing	1.7%	Physical Education	0.2%
Music	4.6%	Art and Design	0.6%	Drama	0.1%

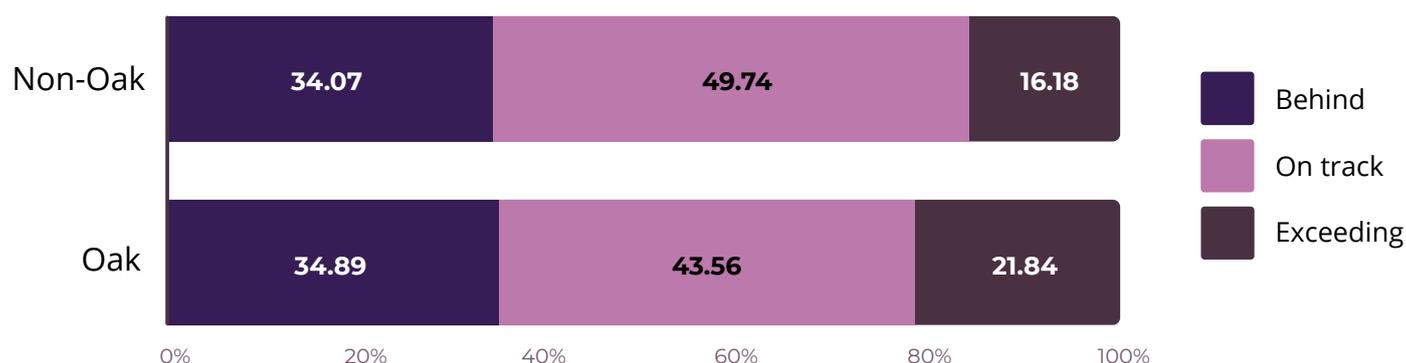
By subjects in Key Stages 3 and 4

Science	37.7%	Religious Education	3.7%	German	0.5%
English	14.1%	Music	3.4%	Design & Technology	0.4%
Geography	10.8%	French	2.4%	Physical Education	0.3%
Maths	9.1%	Citizenship	2.1%	RSHE and PSHE	0.3%
History	6.7%	Art & Design	1.7%	Latin	0.1%
Computing	5.0%	Spanish	1.7%	Drama	0.1%

Impact on pupils

With limited time and resources this year, we've not yet been able to carry out direct research with pupils to assess Oak's impact on their learning. Instead we've sought to gain an understanding through teacher-reported engagement and impact. We've been delighted to find that teachers reported that roughly three quarters of pupils engaged as or more than expected with Oak's resources, with a slightly higher average for secondary pupils[§]. Encouragingly, Oak-user teachers identified a slightly higher proportion of their pupils as exceeding expectations compared to a matched sample of Oak non-users[§].

Proportion of pupils behind, on track, and exceeding expectations (accounting for exceptional circumstances)



Through our research, teachers discussed how the simple structure of each Oak lesson allowed most pupils to access the learning and removed anxiety for many children.

§ Source: ImpactEd 20/21 Evaluation Report

“This boy who had suffered a bereavement during the first lockdown, struggled to return to school or even put pen to paper. I set Oak as an informal opportunity for him to access learning when he was ready — which he did — and as result he is now achieving in line with his peers.”

Year 9 geography teacher

Most teachers felt that the Oak resources were very accessible to SEND and EAL pupils and that the use of Oak resources had a positive impact on them, despite some initial problems adapting to remote learning. One child with ASD found the structure of Oak so comforting that his parents contacted the school to comment on the impact it was having on his learning, which was sustained in school.

“A boy who had developed severe maths anxiety from the first lockdown found Oak incredibly useful and has now closed the gap with his peers.”

SENDCO

Primary and Secondary phase usage

Over half of all schools in England have used Oak National Academy this year.

Oak was widely used across every kind of school during 2020/21, though with some notable variation.

Our usage figures show Oak was used in a higher number of secondary schools than primary schools, and by more teachers in state schools than in independent schools.

52.8%	of all schools in England used Oak in 2020/21
74.1%	of all secondary schools in England
48.8%	of all primary schools in England
54.1%	of all state schools in England
39.0%	of all independent schools in England

Specialist resource usage

Offering remote provision for pupils enrolled in specialist education — many with complex additional educational and therapeutic needs — was a key feature of our expanded offer. Uniquely placed in the sector, we have offered a 600-strong bank of specialised materials since September 2020.

Designed to be used by carers and families of children in both special and mainstream school settings with limited access to their usual support, 54,900 specialist lesson videos were watched between January-July 2021, with an additional 5,337 specialist resources downloaded during that time.

Reaching disadvantaged pupils

Social Mobility Index (SMI) coldspots

Committing ourselves to provide access to a quality education for all pupils during the pandemic meant we needed to actively address the existing imbalance of those already at a disadvantage.

We used the Social Mobility Index (SMI) to track Oak's use in the areas with lower and higher expected educational and life outcomes for young people — 'cold spots' vs 'hot spots'. Our School Support team actively sought to reach and support schools in social mobility cold spots, resulting in higher use here, with 58.7% of teachers reporting usage compared with 54.1% in hot spot areas¹.

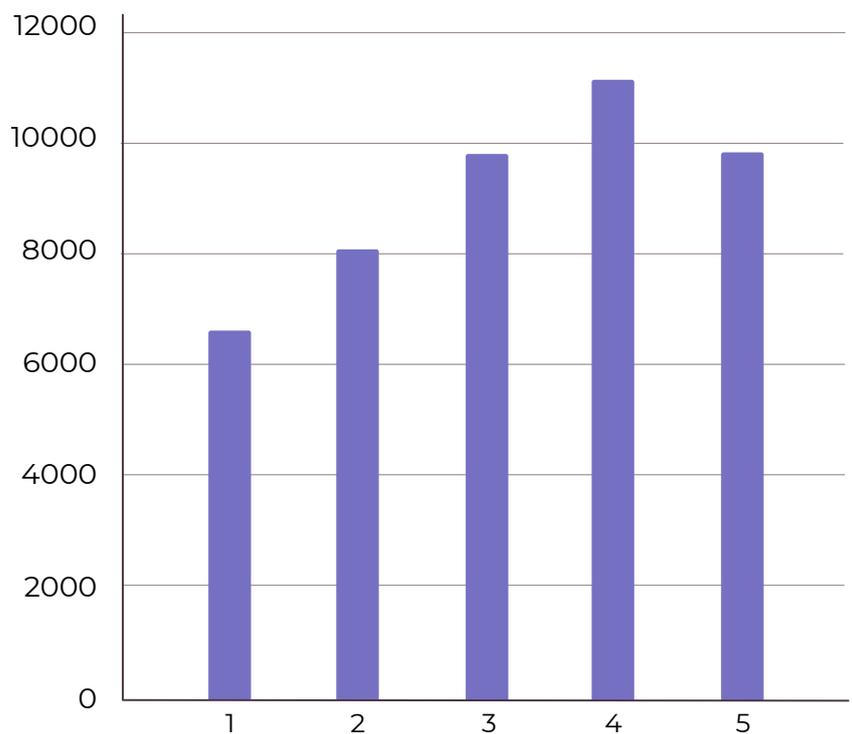
Oak was also disproportionately popular among schools with lower Ofsted ratings.

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

The increase in reach to pupils classed as disadvantaged was also shown when measured by the The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). Pupils in the 4th IDACI quintile started 69% more lessons compared to pupils in the 1st IDACI quintile (the most affluent households).

Our second highest usage was in the most disadvantaged quintile (IDACI 5). We suspect the fact this group had less usage than IDACI 4 can be explained by the national issue of connectivity presented by the pandemic.

Lesson starts per 1000 pupils by IDACI quintile



The prevalent digital divide, especially early on, suggests that access to technology (coupled with other factors such as engagement) may have been a barrier to the most disadvantaged.

* Source: Teacher Tapp survey (Jun 2021)

Zero-rating campaign

As disruption to schools through the autumn term increased, this concern around access grew. Education now required both a device and internet access with significant data.

Whilst positive efforts were being made to get laptops to families in most need, Ofcom's 2020 Technology Tracker found that up to 913,000 children could only access the internet using mobile data. Given streaming four lessons a day required 10GB of data, those from poorer families were at risk of being cut off from education.

We therefore embarked on a project to 'zero-rate' educational content, so no users would be charged for this data.

Previous efforts to achieve this by others had stalled because many websites use third-party content providers, such as hosting videos on YouTube. Our engineering team and video hosting provider, Mux, rapidly rebuilt significant parts of our platform so all 10,000 lessons were hosted on our own domain. We've since [published a guide](#) to assist other educational providers looking to zero-rate their sites.

Whilst developing the technical solution, we still needed mobile networks to take action and remove data charges. We launched a campaign to close the digital divide, and in just one week gained mentions across nearly 700 media pieces, including BBC News, Sky News, Radio 4 and Newsnight. The response from the telecoms companies was fantastic, with Vodafone, Three, O2, EE, BT, giffgaff, SMARTY, Tesco Mobile, Sky, Virgin Media and Plusnet all removing data charges for any child using Oak throughout the remainder of the academic year.

As we look beyond the pandemic, it's now clear that digital learning will remain a part of education. Basic education now requires a device and data, so a long term strategy is needed to make sure no child is cut off from their right to education.

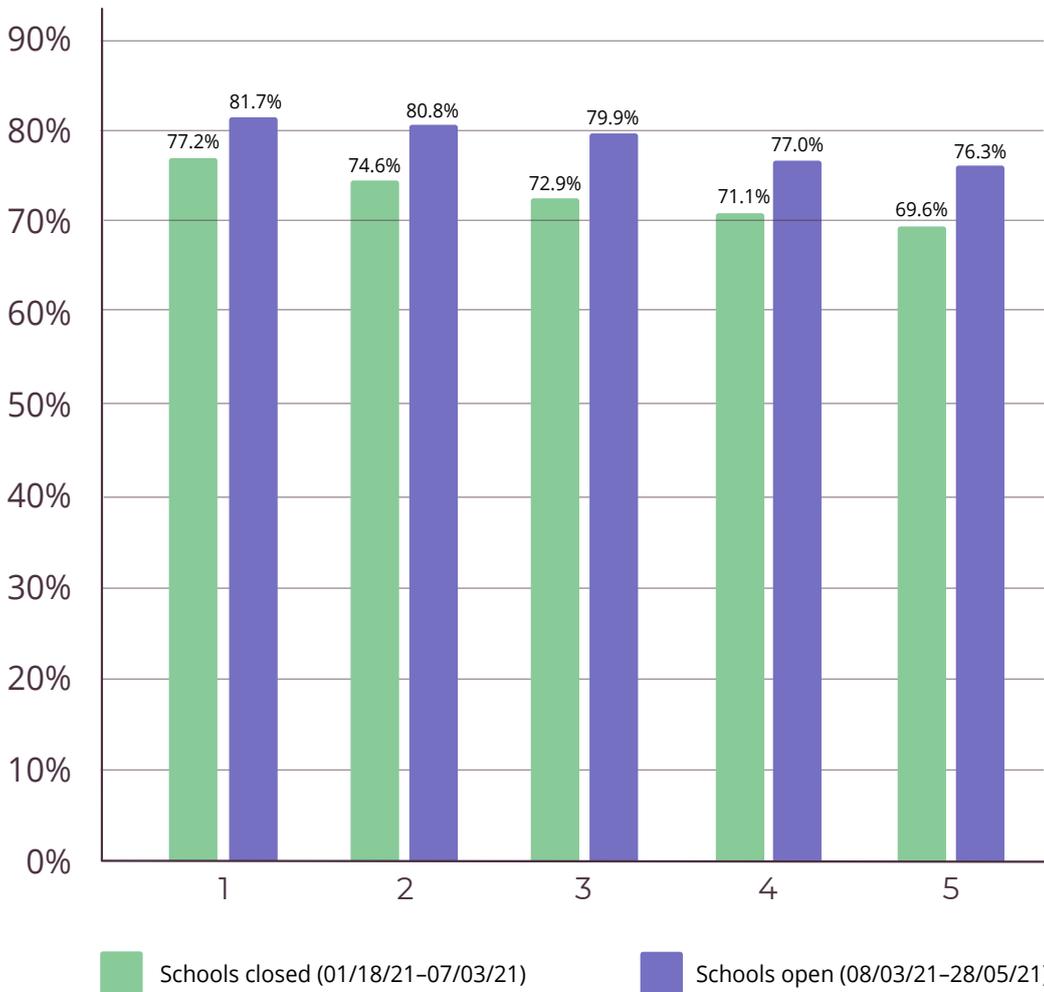
Not all devices are equal

When we look at solutions to make sure every child has an internet enabled device, it's clear that not all devices are equal.

Our data showed the most affluent areas had around 8-9 percentage points higher computer use than the most deprived areas during the period of school closures. Following school re-openings in March, these gaps reduced to about 5-7 percent.

This matters because we also found those accessing Oak on computers had sessions lengths 4-5 times as long as those on mobile phones. If we want children to learn, they need laptops where they can more meaningfully engage and participate, not relying on mobile phones, with their small screen and unending potential for distraction.

Proportion of lessons started on a computer by IDACI quantile





Collaborative approaches and partnerships

Notable partnership initiatives



National Literacy Trust

With most school and public libraries closed or restricted, In January 2021 we joined forces with the National Literacy Trust. We launched the Virtual School Library, offering a free e-book or audiobook by popular children's authors each week.

[Research by the National Literacy Trust during the initial lockdown found](#) the benefits of reading during the pandemic for children to be significant: 3 in 5 (59.3%) said that reading made them feel better and 3 in 10 (31.6%) said that it helped them when they felt sad because they couldn't see their family and friends. Yet this impact was restricted, with [1 in 8 children from disadvantaged backgrounds](#) not owning a book of their own.

The initiative was met with wide recognition for increasing access to reading materials during lockdown. And it contributed to [Arts Council England \(ACE\) announcing a £3.4m investment](#) to progress the launch of the long-planned 'single digital presence' (SDP), a national website for all public libraries.



Children's Mental Health Week

In February 2021 we were thrilled to support the efforts of children's mental health charity Place2Be and host a national assembly in partnership with BAFTA.

Place2Be estimated that [85% of the young people they support were negatively affected](#) during school closures, alongside figures rising to show [1 in 6 school-aged children](#) are now identified as dealing with diagnosable mental ill health conditions.



Centred on the theme of 'expressing yourself', the assembly amassed well over 300,000 views across the week and beyond, many sharing it with classes of vulnerable and key worker children in school for significant further reach.

Summer Learning Support

Following disruption into the summer term, our remit was extended to develop and curate provision as part of the DfE's education recovery plan across the summer.

Our Summer Learning Support offer provided resources and lessons for both face-to-face summer schools and summer home learning for teachers, pupils and parents. This included 'priority' units and lessons identified in core subjects and developed with the support of Oak's curriculum partners, to help prepare pupils for the next academic year, and new formative 'unit quizzes' to identify gaps in knowledge.

We also worked alongside partner organisations to make sure we took a careful and measured approach, offering creative, physical and wellbeing enrichment resources alongside the academic, signposting pupils to vital wellbeing support.



Over the course of 2021's summer break, nearly 300,000 'priority' lessons were taken in the Summer Classroom with a further 4.5 million lessons accessed via our regular Classroom, whilst 15,000 unique visitors made use of the additional enrichment activities.

Future research collaboration

At the start of the school year, we commissioned a literature review from ImpactEd to understand the existing evidence that exists on asynchronous learning. We wanted to build on what's proven to work, yet we found the existing body of literature is thin on school-level education.

Of the 108 articles identified in the leading ERIC (Education Resource Information Center) database, just nine articles look at secondary level education; none at all explore primary.

We see this as an important contribution we can make. We know that expert (particularly quantitative) educational researchers may be able to gather valuable insights from our work, which could help teachers and improve pupils' education.

To date, a small number of specialist researchers have accessed our anonymous data — providing vital insights to help us keep improving. For example, we've been able to spot lessons that have the highest completion rates and identify common elements. We've then incorporated advice, such as the importance of 'pause points' when presenting in a remote context, into the design of our latest lessons.

We're keen to do more and are now working with the research community to identify and share wider insights. At the forefront of this is taking all ethical considerations into account. We don't hold any personally identifiable information on pupils, but understand that our billions of anonymous data points about the usage of Oak hold great potential to give insight into remote learning in a way that's never been explored before. This will only be done where that insight is then published to benefit teachers and pupils' education, or to support Oak's own development and improvement. We're excited to share more in the coming year.



Beyond the pandemic: Oak as a national teaching resource

Beyond the pandemic

While Oak was set up as an emergency response to COVID-19, over the past 16 months teachers have shown their trademark ingenuity in making use of our resources in a wide range of ways. We're delighted our online classroom and the 40,000 lessons, slides and resources in our Teacher Hub will remain available and free until at least Easter 2022, and we're exploring what role we may play beyond that.

Teachers want Oak to continue

We all hope we have seen the end of school closures and major disruptions. Yet, even with these gone, teachers have been clear that Oak has significant benefits.

In February 2021, 74% of teachers told us they plan to use Oak beyond this school year[†]. Why? Teachers identified five top strengths that Oak provided:

- 1. Quality lessons:** teachers appreciated Oak's high quality video lessons and complementary resources, noting how lessons follow a consistent structure and include continuous assessment for learning;
- 2. Easy to use platform:** teachers found our platform easy to use, navigate and find the right materials;
- 3. Flexibility:** teachers loved our downloadable materials, allowing them to take charge to adapt lessons to their needs and seamlessly use in and out of classroom;
- 4. Coverage of lessons:** teachers valued Oak's comprehensive range of subjects and lessons, which clearly linked to the National Curriculum;
- 5. Teaching/Classroom-feel:** teachers enjoyed how Oak replicates some of the best of in-class teaching, with clear explanations from professional, engaging teachers.

"Keep these free lessons on because by using these lessons I have seen a massive improvement in my teaching. These match with my teaching style. Thanks for all your effort."

Teacher

Uses beyond 2022

The pandemic's requirement for a rapid shift to remote learning undoubtedly brought its challenges. The best place for a pupil is to be in their classroom with an expert teacher and their peers. But we now need to consider if any of the new approaches can support teachers' efforts long-term.

[†] Source: Oak survey (February 2021) — 642 respondents

[Ofsted research from February 2021](#) identified where remote learning offers new solutions:

- video lessons to provide teacher **cover**;
- video lessons to support subject-specific **teacher recruitment** and retention issues;
- **supporting anxious or excluded students** off site or in other on-site learning areas;
- availability of pre-recorded lessons for **revision/missed lessons** due to pupil illness;
- provision during **snow days and extended periods of pupil illness** or absence;
- improvements to **homework** delivery
- for some **pupils with SEND**, to overcome issues that may have previously excluded pupils from parts or all of certain lessons (e.g. sensory overload issues).

This research has been closely matched by Oak's experience.

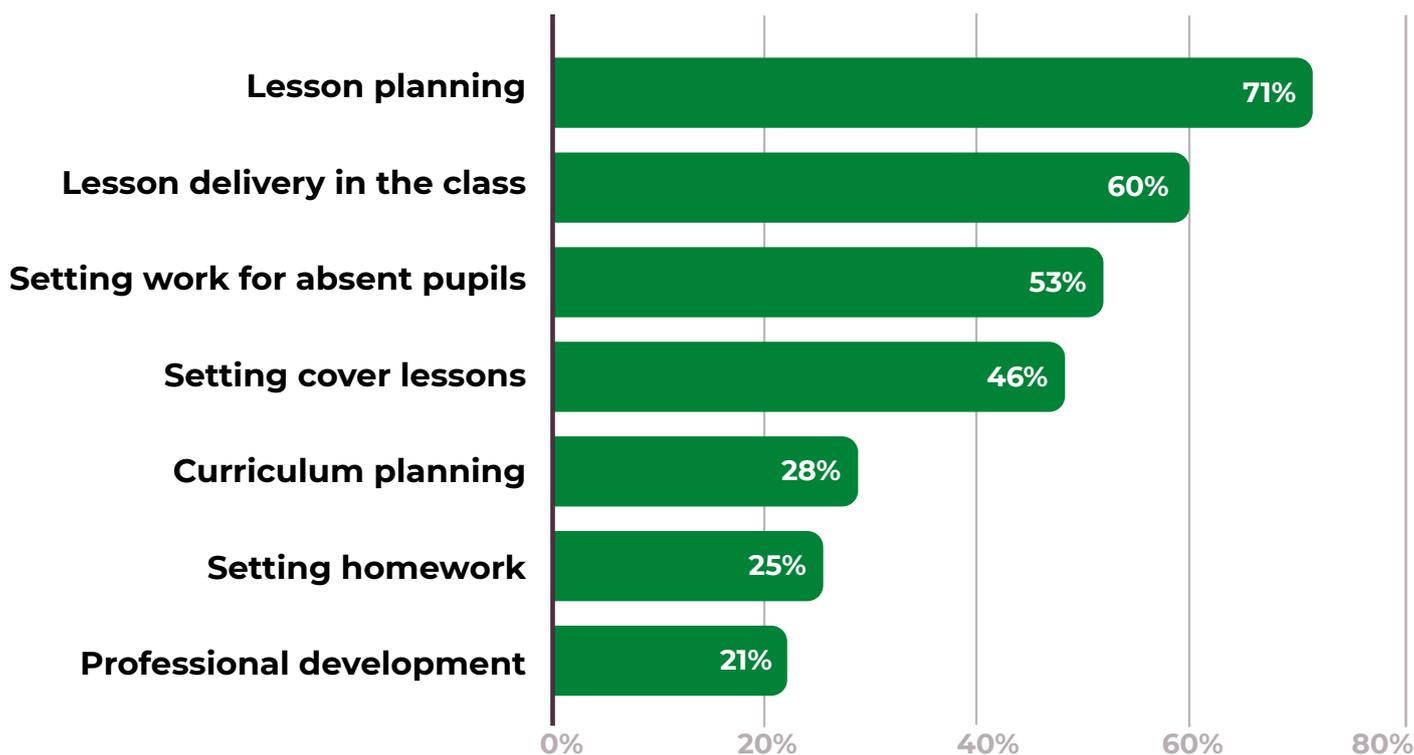
Since schools fully reopened, on average 30,000 teachers and over 150,000 pupils per week have continued to access Oak. In May 2021, we therefore carried out research to explore exactly how these teachers were using Oak.** We found that teachers' innovation has seen them continuing to access our Teacher Hub to save themselves time and ease their workload around:

- **lesson planning:** 71% of users were making use of Oak's national curriculum-mapped resources to help as a planning tool;
- **teaching in-class:** 60% of teachers were using Oak in many ways in the classroom – from creating and supplementing lessons with our editable resources; to 'team-teaching' with our videos; to projecting quizzes for whole-class engagement;
- **absent pupils:** 53% of teachers were continuing to use Oak to support pupils missing schools – be that from illness, exclusion or isolation;
- **cover lessons:** nearly half of teachers were drawing on Oak to deliver ready-to-teach cover lessons - especially useful for teachers covering outside their subject specialisms and potentially saving schools significant time and expense;
- **homework and revision:** Oak's huge range of lessons mean teachers can set quality, tailored recap, stretch or revision work for any pupil, with minimal effort;
- **CPD:** as explored above, we've seen trainee and early career teachers observing others' approaches, whilst experienced teachers have found inspiration and ideas.

Teachers adopting these wide range of uses shows the great opportunity for how Oak can continue to support teachers.

** Source: Oak survey (May 2021) — 697 respondents who were still using Oak after school reopenings

**“Do you use Oak for any of the below now that schools are open again?
(Choose all that apply).”**



Source: May 2021 survey
Number of respondents = 431 Oak user teachers

Continued contingency

As schools fully reopened, in addition to the innovative uses, teachers also continued to rely on Oak as a COVID-19 contingency.

Towards the end of the academic year, the Delta variant again caused significant disruption, with a reported 820,000 pupils missing school at the start of July 2021.

Oak's usage closely matched the rises in cases - with weekly usage jumping to 300,000. The trend provided an early warning signal of disruption - showing where disruption was growing — and a vital back-up support for teachers to keep pupils learning.

As we head into autumn and winter, we remain hopeful of a smoother term, but Oak's continuation means we stand ready to provide a contingency should pupils need to self-isolate, or if there is further wider disruption to school attendance, alongside supporting a range of innovative uses to reduce teachers' workload.

Oak's long-term future

Looking further forward, we're continuing to explore a sustainable future for Oak. We know there's significant demand from teachers for our support and we're committed to keeping Oak open and free to schools as long as possible.

Maintaining and improving our offer, and the direct support we provide to teachers, requires significant ongoing funding— some details of which we've shared below. We therefore need to find a way to secure sustainable ongoing funding.

As part of exploring options for our future, we have been asked by the Department for Education to consult with our partners and stakeholders about transferring the ownership of Oak's brand, platform and intellectual property to the Department.

In any model, Oak and the DfE want to maintain these important principles:

- for Oak to continue to be produced “**by teachers, for teachers**”, with the production of future curriculum materials to be independent of government;
- for Oak to be **free**, and not compulsory, for schools in England to use;
- for Oak to continue to draw on a **broad range of curriculum partners**;
- for Oak resources to be **evidence based**, in line with evidence informed curriculum principles.

We'll continue to explore this as we look to maintain this national resource to support teachers and pupils.

Improving our offer

Oak is little more than a year old, and has been built at pace by a dedicated and talented team. But we know there is more to do.

We're indebted to the thousands of teachers and parents who've provided feedback on our offer. Every change and improvement we make is driven by better supporting them. The top suggested improvement areas from teachers[†] are:

- **more lessons**: increased coverage across UK countries, subjects and exam boards;
- **learning management**: ability to track student progress and attainment;
- **improved lessons**: improved lesson quality and the ability to feedback directly;
- **customisation**: downloadable, adaptable and printable slides, worksheets and quizzes for every lesson, also enabling differentiation;
- **more resources**: more activities, worksheets and assessments to use both in and out of class (eg. homework), addition of lesson plans.

[†] Source: Oak user survey (Feb 2021) — 642 respondents

Through 2021/22, whilst we won't be adding significant new content, we'll continue to provide a national contingency, support teachers' in-class planning and delivery and look to act on teachers' feedback to improve our offer and support.



Organisational efficiency and financial review

Our governance and management

We have continued to be legally incubated by The Reach Foundation throughout 2020/21. This has allowed us to respond effectively to the pandemic as we built out the operational and legal functions to allow us to operate as an independent entity going forward.

Reach's support has been invaluable in Oak's success — supporting all aspects of our work. Their teachers delivered engaging, quality lessons, their team enabled us to quickly have finance and HR systems in place and they secured the generous support of the Mohn Westlake Foundation to enable Oak to thrive.

Project Board

Alongside the support from the Reach Foundation, we have convened a project board made up of a wealth of experience from the education sector to advise us on our curriculum, operations and product development in 2020/21. The members have included:

- **Ian Bauckham CBE (Chair)**
- **John Blake / Lucy Heller**
- **Daisy Christodoulou**
- **Sir Jon Coles**
- **Leora Cruddas**
- **David Thomas OBE**
- **Ed Vainker OBE**
- **Bonnie Wang**

Staffing

All organisations will tell you the secret is in the people — and that couldn't be more true at Oak. In summer 2020 we began the process of recruiting a team to sustain the momentum of our initial, mostly voluntary, effort and deliver our plans for 2020/21. We now have a core team of around 30 curriculum experts, product and platform developers as well as operations, school support and production professionals.

Despite being fully remote, having only ever met together once, we've worked hard to create a positive culture that values transparency, agility and autonomy. This is reflected in our staff ambassadorship score, which measures the pride and likeliness of recommending Oak as a place to work, of nine out of ten.

Statement of financial activity

Financial review of audited grants for the period of April 1st 2020 through to March 31st 2021

Oak is incubated within the charity the Reach Foundation. Our finances are therefore audited and reported as part of the wider charity, which has a financial year running from 1st September through to the 31st August. For this reason, Oak's audited financial end of year data will be available as a part of Reach Foundation's annual report in spring 2022.

However, given the public and philanthropic investment in Oak, we wanted to share an overview of how our budget has been spent to achieve our impact.

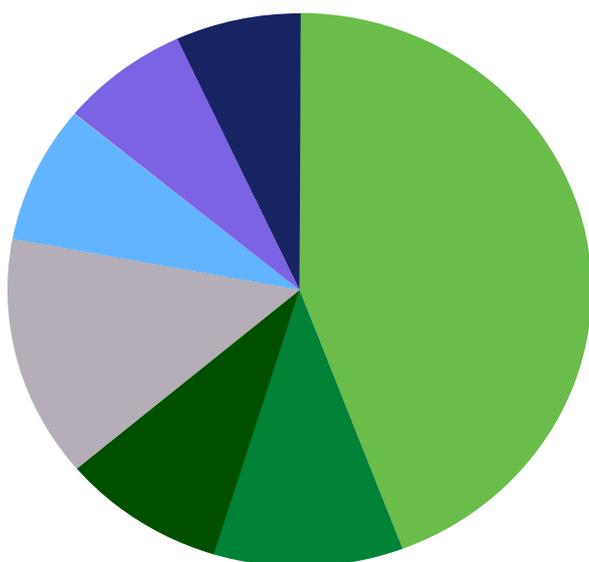
Oak has been funded through a blend of Department for Education (DfE) grants and philanthropic support from the Mohn Westlake Foundation. Oak has carried out two audits in relation to its DfE funding for the period of April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021.

The first audit covers the full period of Oak's first wave of funding from the DfE. This covers the period from April 1st through to July 10th 2020.

The second wave of DfE funding covers the period from July 11th 2020 through to September 1st 2021.

An audit for part of wave 2 funding was completed for the DfE financial year end, March 31st 2021. In the data below, we show philanthropic donations for this period as well as DfE funding from wave 2. This audit shows expenditure from July 11th 2020 through to March 31st 2021.

Expenditure breakdown



Pass-through

- Lesson creation: curriculum partners
- Lesson creation: production and accessibility
- Hosting

In-house

- Technology
- School Support
- Operations and Executive team
- Education

Audited grant period from 1st April 2020 - March 31st 2021

		DfE Wave 1 Completion Audit 1/4/20 - 10/7/20	DfE End of Financial Year Audit (Partial Wave 2) 11/7/20 - 31/3/21	Total
Expenditure				
Pass-through	Lesson creation: curriculum partners	£ 141,000	£ 2,028,000	£ 2,169,000
	Lesson creation: production and accessibility		£ 423,000	£ 423,000
	Hosting	£ 20,000	£ 477,000	£ 497,000
In-house	Education	£ 21,000	£ 302,000	£ 323,000
	Operations	£ 66,000	£ 271,000	£ 337,000
	School Support	£ 105,000	£ 270,000	£ 375,000
	Technology	£ 150,000	£ 499,000	£ 649,000
	Total	£ 503,000	£ 4,270,000	£ 4,773,000
Income				
	Funded by DfE	£ 498,000	£ 3,202,000	£ 3,700,000
	Funded by donations	£ 5,000	£ 1,068,000	£ 1,073,000
	Total	£ 503,000	£ 4,270,000	£ 4,773,000

Pass-through expenditure

Lesson creation: curriculum partners:

pass-through funding to curriculum partners (a range of schools, school trusts, subject associations and national subject centres) and their teachers to develop and quality assure curricula, lessons and their associated resources.

Lesson creation: production and accessibility:

pass-through funding to third-party services and hardware to ensure Oak's lessons are of high quality, to include captions and, where possible, British Sign Language.

Hosting:

video streaming, secure data storage, server hosting and server licensing.

In-house expenditure

Education:

in-house production and quality assurance of Oak lessons and resources; and external research and evaluation of Oak services to the sector.

Operations:

finance, human resources, legal, professional fees and the academy principal.

School Support:

supporting teachers and users of Oak, advice and support to schools, and awareness raising and outreach.

Technology:

developing the Oak National Academy platform, the software licenses and all IT equipment.

Value for money

One of our core aims has been to provide value-for-money to the sector. We are proud that, for the equivalent budget of one secondary school, and with a core staff team similar to a primary school (~30), we have provided every school with a resilient back-up and a national set of high-quality resources for all the country's teachers.

Our success, however, was also only possible due to the incredible support of a range of generous partners, providing discounted or free services. These reductions equate to around £4m in additional value and include:

- **Mux** — provided video hosting and delivered significant changes to their platform to enable zero-rating
- **Vodafone, Three, O2, EE, BT, giffgaff, SMARTY, Tesco Mobile, Sky, Virgin Media and Plusnet** — removed mobile data charges for the whole academic year
- **Google** — provided free hosting and adword credits alongside engineer support
- Numerous [technology providers](#) — provided free or discounted services such as **Kinsta, GitHub, Vimeo, Detectify, Contentful, Rev, Slack, and Intercom**
- **Clifford Chance LLP** — helped effective operations and meeting necessary regulations
- **McKinsey & Company** — for their support over the past 18 months
- **KPMG** - provided a team of Project Managers to manage our summer lesson production
- **Johnson Banks** — led the work to create our brand



130,000,000 thank yous

Curriculum partners

Firstly, to the schools, professional bodies, associations and trusts who helped to develop and continue to shape our curricula at each subject and key stage:

Ark Schools

Association for Citizenship Teaching

Association for Physical Education

Bright Futures Educational Trust

Brookfields

Design and Technology Association

Dixons Academy Trust

Fox Federation

Future Academies

Ideas Education

Inspiration Trust

**Interaction and communication
Academy Trust**

**National Centre for Computing
Education**

**National Centre for Excellence for
Language Pedagogy**

National Drama

National Literacy Trust

**National Society for Education in Art
and Design**

Reach Academy Feltham

Research in Primary Languages

St Giles School, Retford

St Martins School, Derby

Star Academies

Storytelling Schools

Swiss Cottage School

Tenax Schools Trust

The Sea View Trust

Trinity Multi-Academy Trust

United Learning

University of Gloucestershire

Youth Sport Trust

Oak teachers

Our thanks go to every one of the **550+ teachers** who have let the country into their classrooms (and living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens and spare bedrooms) and shared their experience for the benefit of colleagues and pupils.

Governmental support

We are grateful to the Department for Education and policy teams for their confidence and collaboration this year, with particular gratitude to Gavin Williamson MP, Nick Gibb MP, Kate Green MP and Wes Streeting MP for supporting and sharing our work.

Funding and financial support

We'd like to thank the Department for Education for their funding and support, and The Mohn Westlake Foundation for their generous philanthropic backing.

Pro-bono and low-bono heroes

Oak would not exist without the generous technology, operational, legal and communications resources provided for low or no cost by organisations who recognised and shared our mission. Our gratitude goes to so many, including:

Atlassian	Denford Associates	Kinsta	Mux
Bugsnag	Google	KPMG	PLMR
Clifford Chance	Havas	LightDash	Rev
Contentful	Intercom	McKinsey & Company	Slack
Detectify	Johnson Banks		Vimeo

Collaborators and partners

Our special thanks to ImpactEd, Teacher Tapp, SchoolDash, National Literacy Trust, Place2Be and BAFTA for their collaboration and shared commitment to creating long-term, positive impact.

And most importantly — **thank you** to all the teachers, teaching assistants, leaders and school staff who have kept pupils learning in extraordinary circumstances.

 help@thenational.academy

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