



Summer schools without a clear academic component are not usually associated with learning gains

Cost

£££££

Evidence strength



Impact (months)

+2

Effect size

0.18

What is it?

Summer schools are lessons or classes during the summer holidays. They are often designed as catch-up programmes, although some do not have an academic focus and concentrate on sports or other non-academic activities. Others have a specific aim, such as supporting pupils at the transition from primary to secondary school or preparing high-attaining pupils for university.

How effective is it?

On average, evidence suggests that pupils who attend a summer school make approximately two additional months' progress compared to similar pupils who do not.

Greater impacts (as much as four additional months' progress) can be achieved when summer schools are intensive, well-resourced, and involve small group tuition by trained and experienced teachers. In contrast, summer schools without a clear academic component are not usually associated with learning gains. Other variables, such as whether the teacher is one of the student's usual teachers, seem to make less difference on average.

Research in the Arab world about the effect of summer schools on learning outcomes is very limited. Studies in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Kuwait show some evidence that summer school programs can be effective in developing students' knowledge and enhancing their communication and social skills when the course is well-designed, and teachers are well trained.

Researchers have also highlighted the impact of summer school camps on promoting positive attitudes and beliefs of students towards the computing field. Some summer schools programs offered students a technology-integrated learning environment and aimed to increase their technological knowledge and skills and develop their innovation and creativity.

More research is needed in the region to establish a strong relationship between summer schools participation and learning outcomes. Further research could also look at the factors that could support a successful implementation of these programs on a variety of school subjects.

How secure is the evidence?

Overall, the level of evidence related to summer schools is extensive. There are a number of meta-analyses, which consistently find small average effects. Studies include both primary and secondary school pupils and mainly focus on reading and literacy. Some studies indicate that gains are greater for disadvantaged pupils, but this is not consistent.

What are the costs?

Overall, costs are estimated as moderate. They include the employment of teachers for the duration of the summer school, hiring a venue and providing resources (for example, books and photocopying). Courses typically cost in the region of 250.0 GBP to 300.0 GBP (321.6 USD to 385.9 USD; 228.0 JOD to 273.6 JOD) per week per student. Recent evaluations of summer school programmes in England estimated the costs as being slightly higher for a summer programme, at between 1,370.0 GBP and 1,750.0 GBP (between 1,762.3 USD and 2,251.2 USD; between 1,249.5 JOD and 1,596.1 JOD) per pupil over four weeks, or 340.0 GBP to 440.0 GBP (437.4 USD to 566.0 USD; 310.1 JOD to 401.3 JOD) per pupil per week. However, overall costs are estimated as moderate, at less than 720.0 GBP (926.2 USD, 656.7 JOD) per pupil per year, because these particular programmes were unusually long.

Costs originally calculated in GBP; USD and JOD calculated via oanda.com on 22/09/20.

As yet there is no information about local costs.

What should I consider?

Summer school provision that aims to improve learning needs to have an academic component. Does your summer school include an intensive teaching component (small group or one to one)?

Summer schools are relatively expensive. Have you considered providing additional learning time during the school year, which may achieve similar benefits for a lower cost?

Maintaining high attendance at summer schools can be a challenge. What steps will you take to

engage pupils and their families?

Copyright © [The Education Endowment Foundation](#). All rights reserved.