OPPORTUNITY
EduFinance

Pathways to Excellence:
Assessing EduQuality school
progress in quality improvements

September 2023

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I. Introduction: The challenge of quality education

UNICEF estimates that **seven out of ten children** and adolescents around the world are not learning basic skills like reading and writing.

The temporary closure of schools for in-person learning during COVID-19 – with 1.6 billion children not in school at the peak of the pandemic – brought the global education crisis to the forefront of public discourse. As of 2022, UNICEF estimates that seven out of ten children and adolescents around the world are not learning basic skills like reading and writing.[1] This includes 244 million children and youth who never started school or already dropped out, and an additional 361 million who do go to school, but are not learning.[2] This 'learning poverty' – the challenge that many children attend school regularly, but still do not achieve minimum skills – is particularly prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa, where 9 out of 10 children and youth will not achieve minimum proficiency levels in literacy and numeracy by age 10.[3] It has recently reached similar levels in South Asia, with an estimated 8 out of 10 students (78%) not meeting minimum proficiency standards by age 10.[4]

School quality is one of the primary determinants of whether children who attend school actually learn the basic literacy and numeracy skills they need to progress in their education, their work, and their lives. There are a wide range of indicators of school quality, ranging from tangible, measurable inputs such as pupil-teacher ratio or the availability of textbooks and materials, to more nuanced factors such as the ability of teachers to deliver content in a way that is inclusive towards students of different backgrounds and learning levels. All of these factors contribute to whether or not a child learns once in school.

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[1] UNICEF, 2022.
[2] UNESCO, 2022.
[3] UNICEF, 2022.
[4] Ibid

School leaders play a significant role in creating a quality school environment and culture that is conducive to learning.[5][6] This is particularly true in low-cost private schools (LCPS), where school leaders have more autonomy than public school leaders to hire and train teachers, and enact school policies that can improve the quality of the learning environment.[7] However, studies have found that in some cases, school leaders may not fully understand what education 'quality' consists of, and they may lack clear direction, guidance, and tools to help them improve. When school leaders do receive this support – such as support in developing school improvement plans, goal-setting, and assessing progress – studies show that this can have positive impacts on student learning outcomes.[8][9]

The *Pathways to Excellence* (P2E) guide was designed as a key component of EduQuality, a three-year holistic school development program offered by Opportunity EduFinance. The guide aims to address challenges in school quality by equipping school leaders with the tools necessary to assess and improve their school's progress across 18 key domains. Ultimately, when school leaders commit to continued progress in these key areas, this will improve the learning outcomes for children who attend their schools, but who may not currently be learning. The P2E guide supports school leaders in improving three areas of school quality, school culture, school management, and teaching and learning – all of which combine to create a school environment that is most conducive to improving student learning outcomes.

Figure 1: Pathways to Excellence School Self-Assessments –
3 Areas of School Quality

AREA 1: SCHOOL CULTURE

▶ Behaviour Management

▶ Parent & Community Engagement

▶ Child Protection

▶ Learner Engagement & Welfare

▶ Staff Engagement & Retention

▶ Inclusion & Special Educational Needs

AREA 2: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

▶ Clean & Safe Environment for Learning

▶ Teacher Recruitment

▶ Finance & Business Management

▶ Marketing & Branding

▶ School Leadership & Governance

▶ Teacher Development & Oversight

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[5] Carneiro et al., 2020.
[6] Cimini et al., 2020.
[7] Scur et al., 2018.
[8] Crawfurd, 2017.
[9] de Hoyos et al., 2015.

AREA 3: TEACHING & LEARNING

▶ Teaching & Learning Resources
▶ Lesson Planning & Delivery
▶ Assessment of Learning

▶ Learner-Centred Teaching & Learning
▶ School Curriculum
▶ Early Childhood

This report presents the key findings from an analysis of P2E Year 1 self-assessments compared to results from Year 2. The report presents the results across 18 key domains in the areas of school culture, school management, and teaching and learning. It aims to understand the successes and implementation challenges of the EduQuality program, and how they have contributed to Opportunity EduFinance's overarching goals and objectives as outlined in its theory of change. Ultimately, this report provides key lessons learned to consider when working with school leaders to improve children's learning.

II. **Background** to Pathways to Excellence

P2E was designed in collaboration with international education experts to be a guide for school leaders to self-diagnose the quality of education at their school using 18 measurable indicators of school quality. P2E covers topics like school culture, school environment, teaching and learning resources, pedagogy, teacher professional development, teacher retention, school management, child-centred learning, early childhood education, behaviour management and child protection.

The P2E tool groups 18 education quality domains under 3 areas: school culture, school management, and teaching & learning. The diagnostic tool outlines clear criteria under four (4) levels of quality for each domain, with Level 4 representing excellence. This enables school leaders to review and mark the criteria that best describes their school at that time, and then select the level (score) that is most aligned with their school's quality in each domain.

Using the results of their school self-assessment, school leaders then work with stakeholders in their school community to create a school development plan to improve upon areas of greatest need. Leaders are encouraged to target 2-5 areas for improvement each year using the action points and support resources outlined in P2E. Ultimately, EduQuality works to help school leaders continue building their strategic planning skills for school improvement, institutionalizing an iterative improvement process that will be sustained beyond the three-year program.

III. Methodology

Data for this report was collected by the Opportunity EduFinance Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team in Year 1 (baseline) and Year 2 from more than 200 schools participating in the EduQuality program in Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia. This report compiles data from several different M&E tools that have been developed and refined by the EduFinance MEL team for the purpose of monitoring the EduQuality program results. Data was collected using the following M&E tools:

1. **P2E School Self-Assessments (SAs):** The SA is the subjective questionnaires in which school leaders rank their own performance on a scale of 1 to 4 across each of the 18 P2E domains. At the start of each section, this report presents the average SSA scores in each of the three areas *(School Culture, School Management, and Teaching and Learning)* to illustrate improvements across these areas from the perspective of the school leaders.

2. **School Quality and Behaviour Survey (SQB):** The SQB survey of school leaders contains 114 questions in total, of which 59 of these questions relate to School Culture. As such, most of the data for *Section IV: School Culture* of this report relies on data obtained from the SQB survey.

3. **School Leadership Assessment Survey (SLA):** The SLA survey contains 47 questions in total, of which 29 relate to School Management and 2 relate to School Culture. As such, most of the data for *Section V: School Management* of this report relies on data obtained from the SLA survey.

4. **Classroom Observations (COB):** The Classroom Observation Tool (COB) tool aims to gather valid and reliable data on the in-class teaching practices, student engagement and classroom environment at EduQuality partner schools. COB data was collected from a total of 468 classes. The COB tool captures background information including subject and grade, as well as learner engagement snapshots, materials & learning environment, planning & record keeping, and quality of teaching practice. Data for *Section VI: Teaching and Learning* was obtained using classroom observations, in addition to some data from the SQB and SLA surveys.
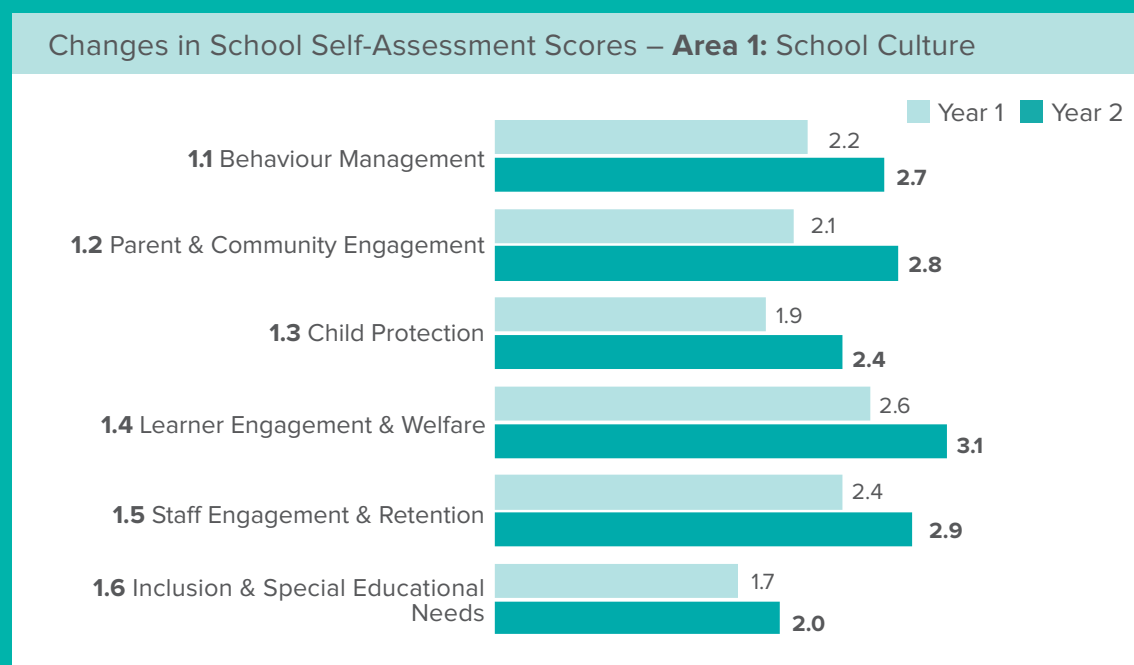
5. **School Profiles:** A small amount of data from the School Profiles was used for *Section VI: Teaching and Learning – Domain 3.6* on Early Childhood Education.

IV. Area 1: School Culture

The first area of P2E supports school leaders in developing a strong **school culture** that prioritizes parents, community, and staff engagement, child protection, and inclusion, among others. Fostering a strong school culture has been found to result in many positive outcomes, including teacher quality and retention, student attendance, and learning outcomes.[10][11] Beyond this, studies have also shown that engaging with the school community as a whole – including parents and other community groups – can lead to improved school quality, as this helps parents feel informed and empowered to provide feedback to school leadership.[12][13] In short, creating a positive school culture that extends beyond the school to include the whole community is an important element of school growth.[14]

Between Year 1 and 2, **50% of P2E schools increased their School Culture school self-assessment scores** by investing in areas such as writing behaviour management policies, collaborating with other schools, providing extracurricular activities, and holding frequent staff meetings. Overall, schools increased their School Culture domain scores an average of 0.5 points year-on-year on the 4-point scale, with *Parent and Community Engagement* seeing the highest point increase (0.7). Despite improvements across all six School Culture domains, *Inclusion and Special Educational Needs* and *Child Protection* remain more challenging areas for improvement.

Changes in School Self-Assessment Scores – **Area 1:** School Culture

Year 1 ▪ Year 2

Domain	Year 1	Year 2
1.1 Behaviour Management	2.2	**2.7**
1.2 Parent & Community Engagement	2.1	**2.8**
1.3 Child Protection	1.9	**2.4**
1.4 Learner Engagement & Welfare	2.6	**3.1**
1.5 Staff Engagement & Retention	2.4	**2.9**
1.6 Inclusion & Special Educational Needs	1.7	**2.0**

[10] Day-Ashley and Wales, 2015.
[11] Endow, 2018.
[12] Andrabi, Das, and Khwaja, 2017.
[13] Gruijters et al., 2020.
[14] Baum et al., 2014.

Domain 1.1 Behaviour Management

The first domain of School Culture – Behaviour Management – requires that school leaders have a Behaviour Management Policy (BMP) in place, and that teachers are trained on its contents. The policy should ban corporal punishment, define negative and positive behaviours and contain rewards for good behaviour and consequences for misbehaving. It should also be consistently enforced using a whole school approach and remove the burden on teachers to decide their own consequences for learners, which can be inconsistent, embarrassing and/or harmful.

Written Behaviour Management Policies

In Year 2, 76% of schools had a written BMP, up from 64% in Year 1. Further, BMPs are becoming more detailed, with nearly approximately 75% of schools confirming their BMP outlined examples of negative behaviours as well as positive behaviours, and 66% confirming their BMPs covered consequences for bad behaviour. However, rewards for good behaviour were only covered in 35% of BMPs, compared to 41% in the previous year, representing an area that can be further improved.
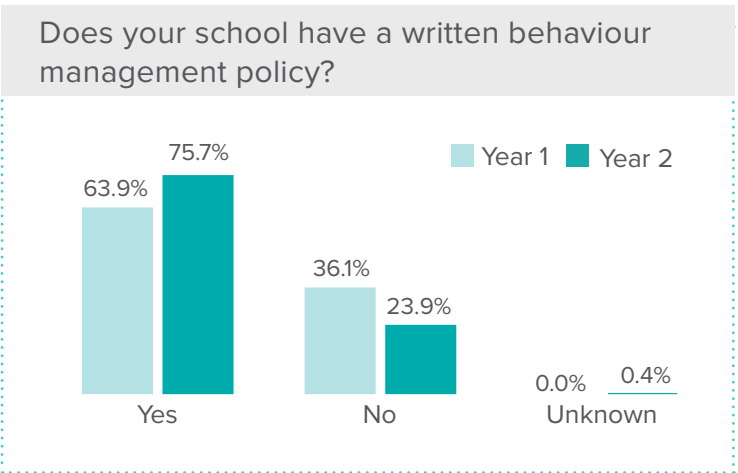
Key Findings

76% of schools confirm they have a written BMP, with most BMPs covering the topics of positive behaviours, negative behaviours, and consequences. 65% of schools do not yet outline rewards for positive behaviour in their policies.

Does your school have a written behaviour management policy?

Year 1 | Year 2

- Yes: 63.9% (Year 1), 75.7% (Year 2)
- No: 36.1% (Year 1), 23.9% (Year 2)
- Unknown: 0.0% (Year 1), 0.4% (Year 2)

% of schools confirming their written behaviour management policy includes:

Year 1 | Year 2

- Negative behaviours: 64.1% (Year 1), 75.3% (Year 2)
- Positive behaviours: 60.1% (Year 1), 74.0% (Year 2)
- Consequences: 56.1% (Year 1), 65.5% (Year 2)
- Rewards: 40.8% (Year 1), 35.0% (Year 2)

Strategies Used by Teachers and School Leaders

School leaders are playing a more active role in behaviour management, a positive shift from Year 1. In Year 2, 85% of schools reported that leadership makes decisions about consequences for misbehaviour, up from 67% in Year 1. School leaders are also able to identify effective approaches to behaviour management in the classroom, naming strategies such as class rules, expectations and routines (71%), creating a positive classroom environment (40%), and using praise or rewards for positive behaviours (40%).

Most effective behaviour management approaches to use in the classroom

Class rules, expectations, or routines
Creating positive classroom environment or culture
Warnings / verbal correction for misbehaviour
Praise or rewards for positive behaviours
School leadership involvement
Guidance and counselling
Consequences for misbehaviour
Parental involvement
Class representatives manage peers
Dismissal / Suspension / Isolation
Physical discipline
Other

Year ● Y1 ● Y2

% of responses

Lastly, school leaders report that teachers are using a variety of strategies to actively manage their learners' behaviour in the classroom in Year 2. For example, 81% reported that teachers set class rules and routines, and 61% used warnings or verbal corrections for misbehaviour. However, in Year 2 only 21% of school leaders noted that teachers use rewards for positive behaviours, down from 32% in Year 1. **As the use of rewards for positive behaviour was also missing from most schools' BMPs, this presents an area for school leaders to focus on in future years to ensure it is included in BMPs and that teachers are aware of this strategy.**

How do most teachers manage their classrooms and learners' behaviour? Can you name some approaches they might use?

| Approach	Year 1	Year 2
Class rules, expectations, or routines	74.0%	81.2%
Creating positive classroom environment	44.4%	27.8%
Warnings / verbal correction for misbehaviour	38.6%	61.4%
Praise or rewards for positive behaviours	31.8%	20.6%
School behaviour management policy	10.3%	23.8%
School leadership involvement	18.4%	43.5%
Guidance and counselling	22.4%	39.9%
Parental involvement	21.1%	28.7%
Consequences for misbehaviour	27.4%	39.5%
Class representatives / learners manage peers	9.9%	25.1%
Dismissal / Suspension / Isolation	3.1%	7.6%
Physical discipline	2.7%	3.6%
Other	7.6%	2.2%

Year 1 Year 2

Domain 1.2 Parent & Community Engagement

P2E schools strive to achieve Domain 1.2, Parent and Community Engagement, by collaborating with other nearby schools, actively engaging with the surrounding community in school events, and involving parents in Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs). Many studies illustrate the importance of inter-school, parent and community engagement. When schools are closely connected to their communities, studies have found this translates into greater teacher accountability, effort, and lower rates of absenteeism.[15] [16] Studies have also highlighted the importance of school clusters, particularly as this facilitates teacher and school leader engagement and motivation, leading to significant increases in learning outcomes for students in schools that use cluster approaches.[17] Lastly, parental engagement is particularly important for student learning, with many studies showing a positive impact on learning outcomes when parents are equipped with information on school performance, and empowered to offer feedback and hold schools accountable.[18]

Schools have been widely successful in strengthening their community and parental engagement, and have seen strong improvements from Year 1. This domain was the 10th highest scoring in Year 1 school self-assessments, and 56% of schools improved their score in community and parent engagement in Year 2. In particular, schools have seen a strong increase in inter-school cluster meetings, while maintaining high engagement with parents.

Collaboration with Other Schools

In Year 2, 95% of school leaders reported actively collaborating with other schools in the community, up from 92% in Year 1. Further, 79% of these schools collaborate via EduQuality cluster meetings, representing a 33 percentage-point increase from Year 1. Other ways that schools are collaborating include through inter-school events and extra-curriculars (45%) and consultations between school heads (59%). While inter-school extra-curriculars decreased in Year 2, consultations with fellow school heads increased from Year 1 and these peer-to-peer meetings represent an important element of school leader professional development that is shown to have positive effects on staff retention and intrinsic motivation.[19]
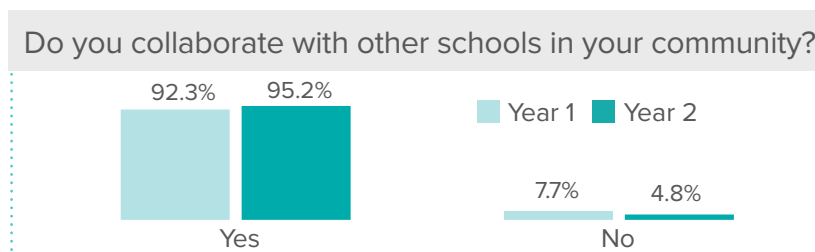
Key Findings

Schools are actively collaborating with other schools through joint events and projects, and schools have seen a strong increase in their engagement in cluster meetings.

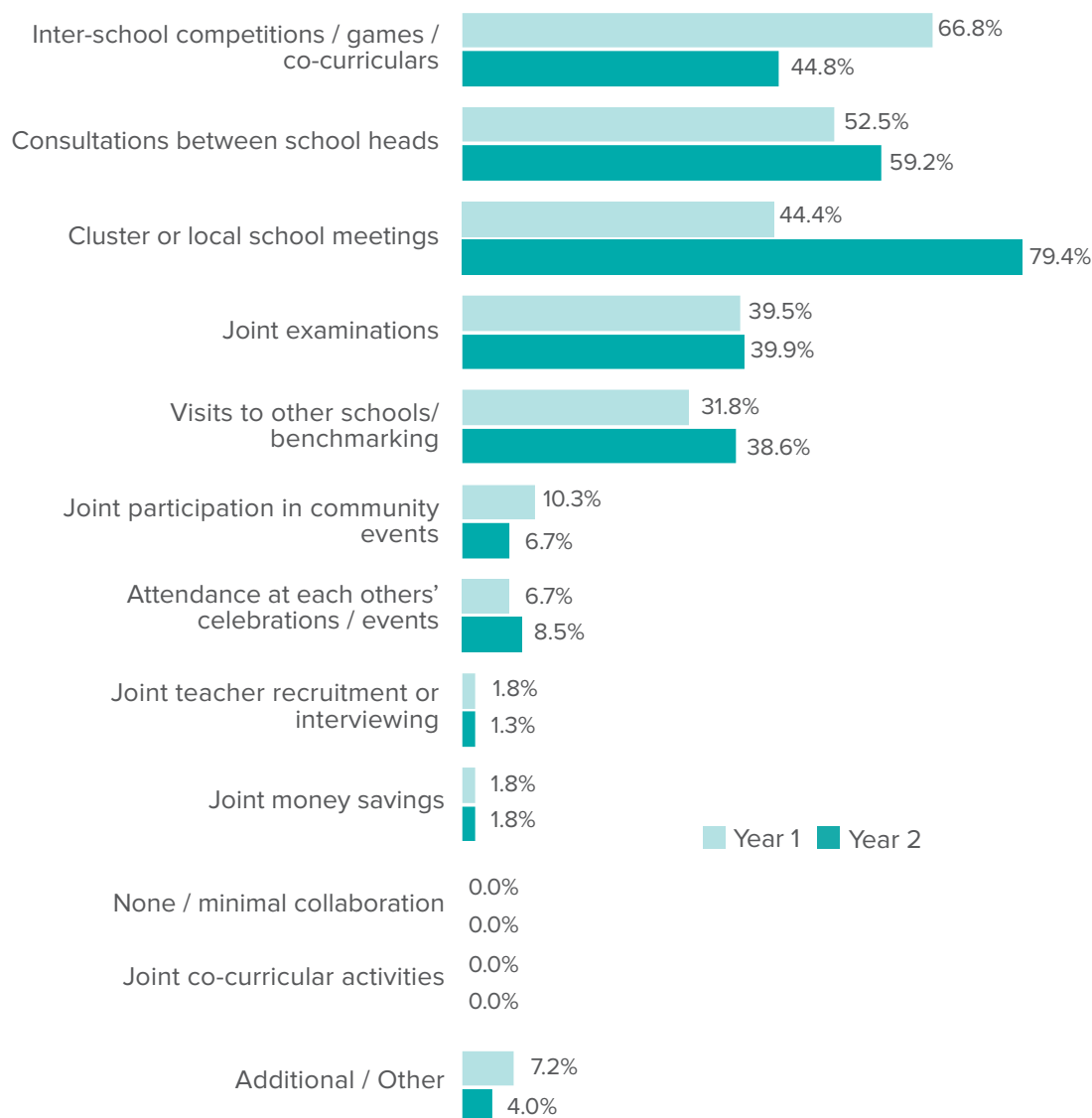**Do you collaborate with other schools in your community?**

	Yes	No
Year 1	92.3%	7.7%
Year 2	95.2%	4.8%

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[15] Mbiti, 2016.
[16] Adeyanju, 2016.
[17] Jacob, 2015.
[18] Barr et al., 2012.
[19] Jung et al., 2016.

Could you describe how your school collaborates with other schools?

Collaboration type	Year 1	Year 2
Inter-school competitions / games / co-curriculars	66.8%	44.8%
Consultations between school heads	52.5%	59.2%
Cluster or local school meetings	44.4%	79.4%
Joint examinations	39.5%	39.9%
Visits to other schools/ benchmarking	31.8%	38.6%
Joint participation in community events	10.3%	6.7%
Attendance at each others' celebrations / events	6.7%	8.5%
Joint teacher recruitment or interviewing	1.8%	1.3%
Joint money savings	1.8%	1.8%
None / minimal collaboration	0.0%	0.0%
Joint co-curricular activities	0.0%	0.0%
Additional / Other	7.2%	4.0%

Collaboration with Parents and Surrounding Community

In addition to collaboration with other schools, school leaders also report increased engagement with parents and the surrounding community. Parental engagement in schools is strong, with 95% reporting that parents are actively involved in the school. School leaders also note that parents participate in wider school life,
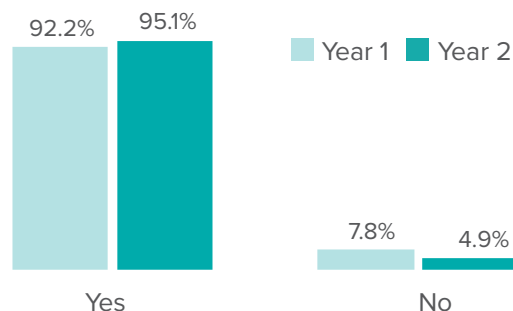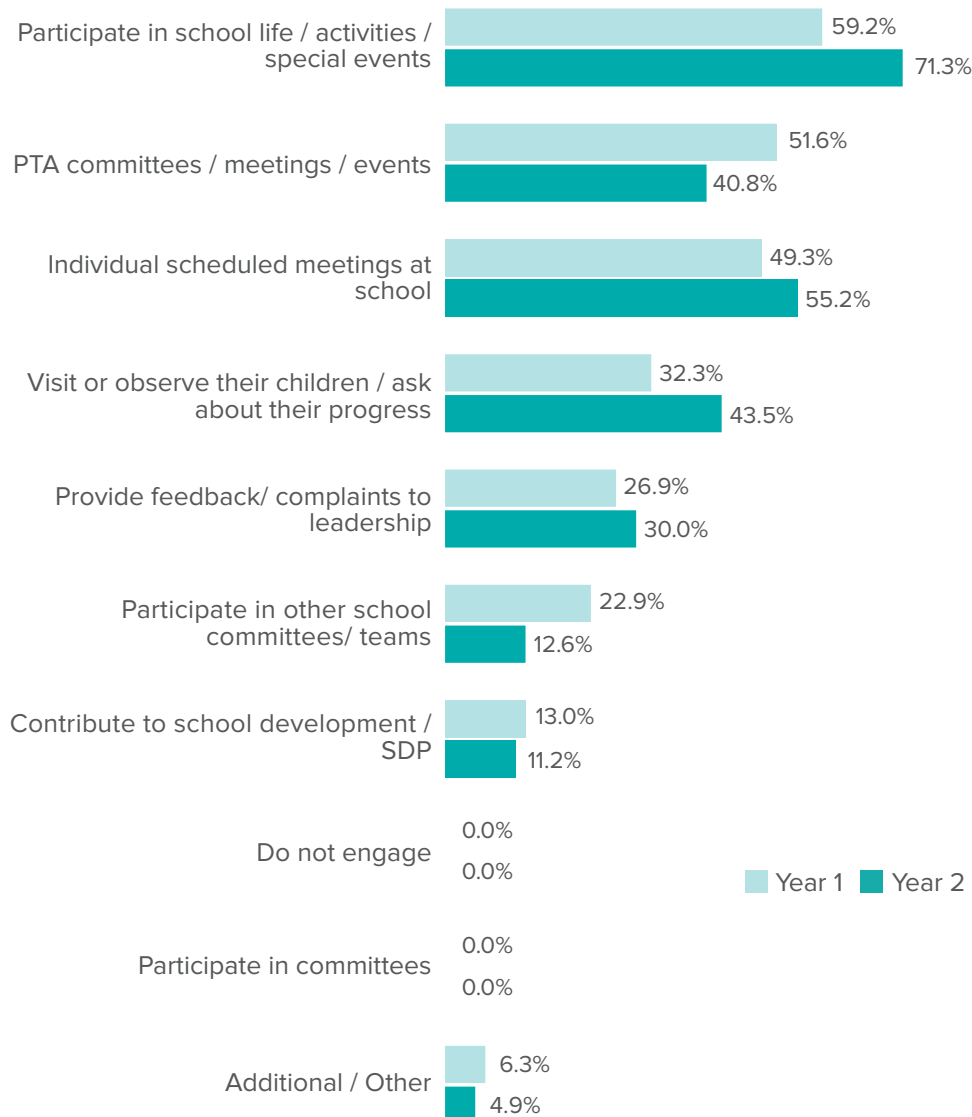
Key Findings

While Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) participation has decreased, parental engagement in wider school life remains strong, with 95% of school leaders reporting active parental involvement. The majority of schools have PTAs and most PTAs actively support school leaders by offering recommendations for improvement.

such as extra-curricular activities and special events (71%, up from 59% in Year 1.) However, school leaders note a decrease in PTA participation, with 41% reporting parents are involved in PTAs, down from 52% in Year 1. **As PTAs have been found to be effective models of improving learning outcomes,[20] additional follow-up may be necessary to understand why PTA participation has decreased.**

Are parents actively engaged with the school?

In what ways, besides paying school fees, do parents engage with your school?

Engagement	Year 1	Year 2
Participate in school life / activities / special events	59.2%	71.3%
PTA committees / meetings / events	51.6%	40.8%
Individual scheduled meetings at school	49.3%	55.2%
Visit or observe their children / ask about their progress	32.3%	43.5%
Provide feedback/ complaints to leadership	26.9%	30.0%
Participate in other school committees/ teams	22.9%	12.6%
Contribute to school development / SDP	13.0%	11.2%
Do not engage	0.0%	0.0%
Participate in committees	0.0%	0.0%
Additional / Other	6.3%	4.9%

[20] Barr et al., (2020).

Despite the decrease in parental engagement in PTAs, more than 74% of schools do have a PTA. While this has decreased slightly from Year 1 (77%), schools with active PTAs report strong engagement from their PTAs, with 60% noting that PTAs offer recommendations for improvement to school leadership, and 48% highlighting active support to the implementation of school goals. This is a positive finding, as studies show that participatory models of PTAs are most effective in improving student learning and test scores.[21]

How would you describe the PTA's relationship to school leadership?

	Year 1	Year 2
PTA can recommend improvements to school leadership	49.8%	59.6%
PTA actively supports implementations of school goals	40.4%	48.0%
PTA is inactive	13.5%	5.8%
PTA often disagrees with school leadership	3.6%	2.7%
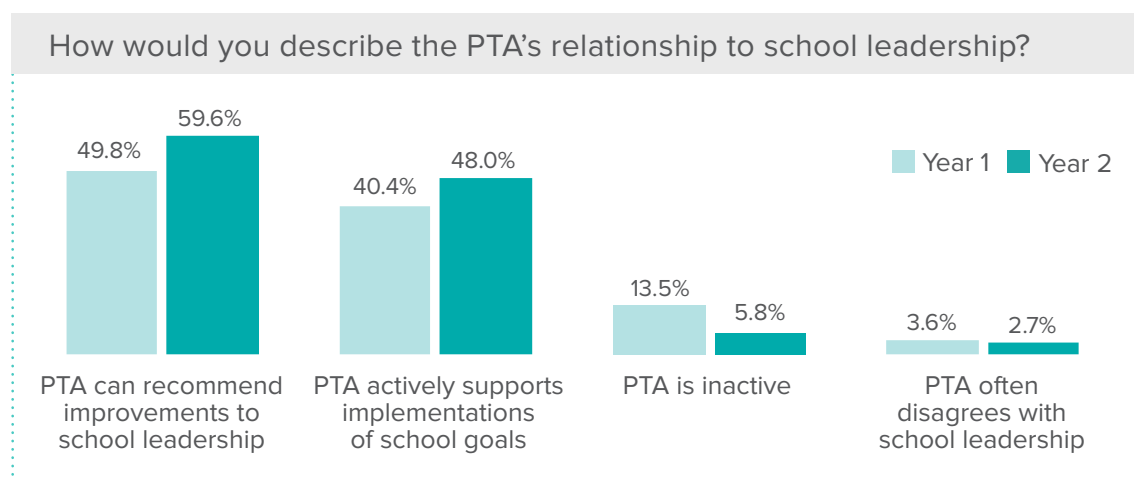
Domain 1.3 Child Protection

P2E recommends school leaders write a **child protection policy** after researching national guidelines. The policy should include a clear **code of conduct** for staff behaviour and how to respond to child protection issues. Staff should all be **trained** on the policy, and the school should also appoint a senior staff as the **Designated Child Protection Officer**. Other examples of how schools can prioritize child protection in other ways before they have a child protection policy include:

▶ Teaching staff are clear that every child has the right to be protected and corporal punishment is banned.

▶ Child protection risks have been identified in the school.

▶ The legal and national framework for child protection has been researched as part of planning a child protection policy that meets both requirements.

While schools are prioritizing and have made some improvements in their Child Protection practices, this domain remains challenging to achieve. As of Year 2, Child Protection remains the **second most frequently chosen priority** for School Development Plans. However, the domain scored **the second lowest (2.4)** in the area of School Culture. Overall, schools' knowledge and attitudes about child protection has improved, but practical implementation has been slower.

Education Specialists will be delivering a school leader workshop on Child Protection at the start of Year 3. Previous survey data of school leaders found Child Protection was a new concept to many schools and would require time for school leaders to

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[21] Ibid.

write and operationalize a clear, effective policy. This data was used to inform the placement of the Child Protection workshop at the start of Year 3 to build on the work schools have already taken to improve.
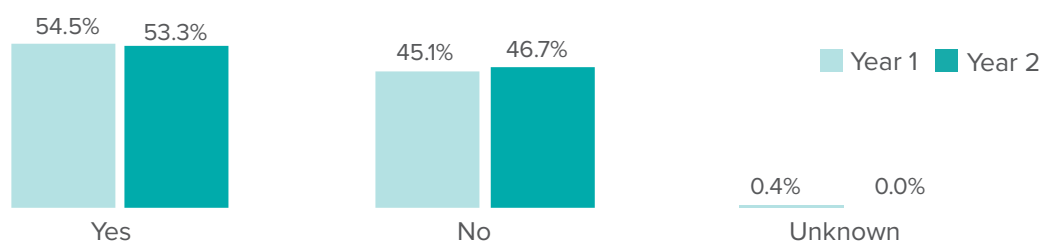
Policies and Attitudes

Almost all school leaders responded that child protection is *always* a priority (97%), an increase of 6 percentage points from Year 1. Only 3.5% of schools noted that child protection is *often* a priority, and none selected *sometimes* or *not at all*. These findings represent strong initial attitudes of school leaders towards child protection. Despite this, school leaders still face challenges in implementing a written child protection policy – in Year 2, only 53% of schools had a written policy in place, a slight decrease from Year 1. This decrease is likely not reflecting that schools have gotten rid of existing policies between Years 1 and 2 – rather, it likely reflects the fact that schools may have a better understanding of what constitutes a clear child protection policy and revised their answers accordingly in Year 2.
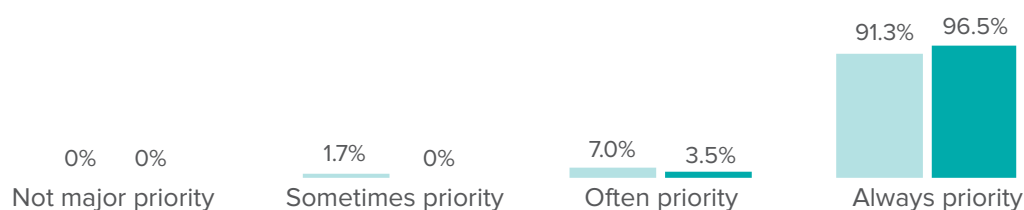
Key Findings

School leaders' attitudes towards child protection remains strong, but despite positive attitudes, only 53% of schools have a written child protection policy.

Does your school have a written child protection policy or safety protocol?

	Year 1	Year 2
Yes	54.5%	53.3%
No	45.1%	46.7%
Unknown	0.4%	0.0%

To what extent do you prioritise 'child protection' at your school?

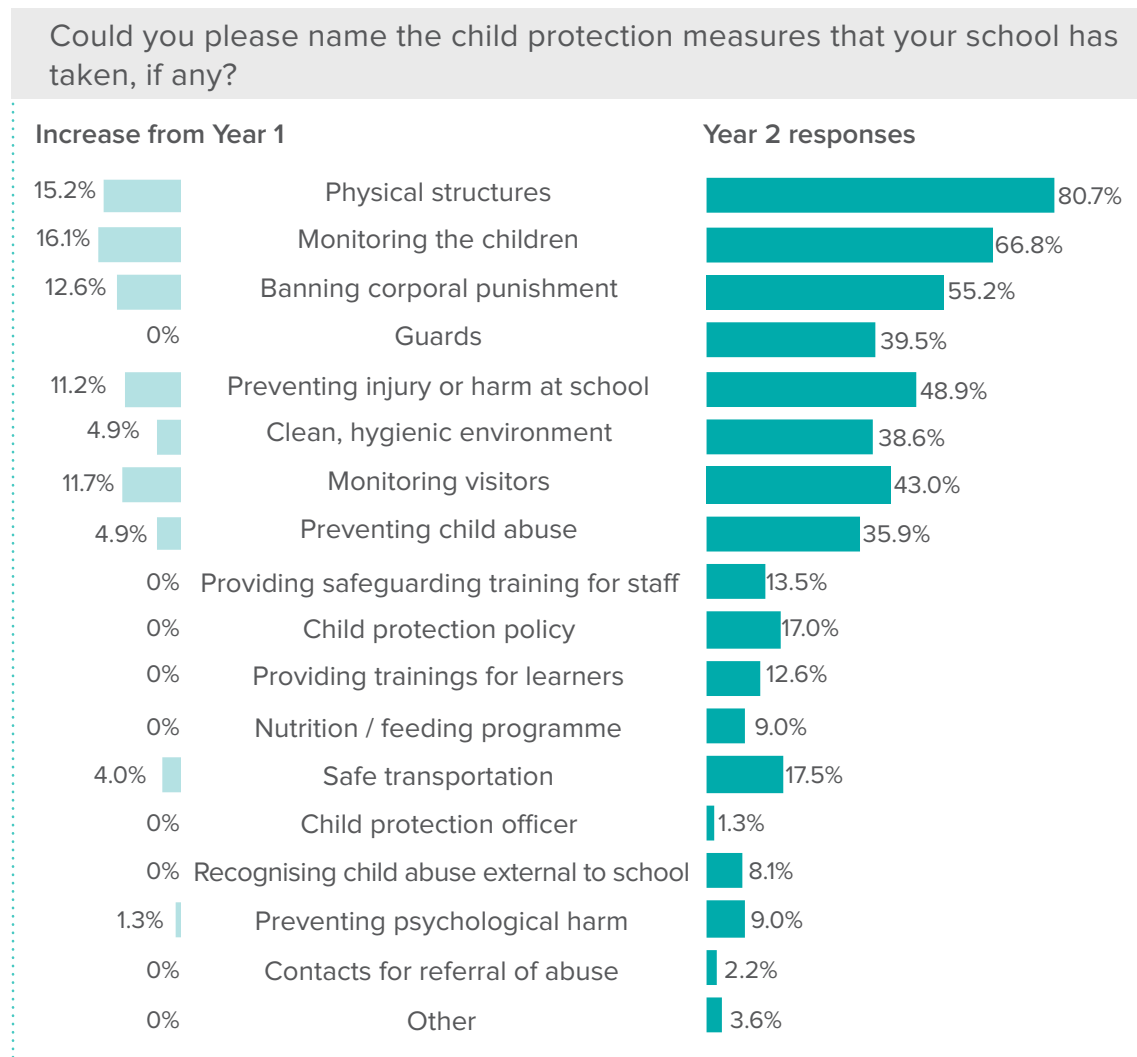|	Year 1	Year 2
Not major priority	0%	0%
Sometimes priority	1.7%	0%
Often priority	7.0%	3.5%
Always priority	91.3%	96.5%

## Current Practices in Child Protection

Key Findings

School leaders are taking active measures in child protection and see improvements from Year 1, including physical safety measures and increased monitoring. However, corporal punishment is still being used in a small number of schools.

School leaders outline several active child protection members their schools are taking, many of which have increased from Year 1. More than 80% of schools now have physical protection structures in place, including fences and boundary walls around the school. This has increased by more than 15 percentage points from Year 1. Schools have also seen significant improvements in monitoring children (67%), banning corporal punishment (55%), monitoring visitors (43%), preventing injury or harm at school (49%), and ensuring schools are clean, hygienic environments (39%). Despite these strong improvements, the majority of schools still lack child protection officers, safeguarding training for staff, or the ability to recognize or refer abuse happening outside of school.

Could you please name the child protection measures that your school has taken, if any?

| Increase from Year 1		Year 2 responses
15.2%	Physical structures	80.7%
16.1%	Monitoring the children	66.8%
12.6%	Banning corporal punishment	55.2%
0%	Guards	39.5%
11.2%	Preventing injury or harm at school	48.9%
4.9%	Clean, hygienic environment	38.6%
11.7%	Monitoring visitors	43.0%
4.9%	Preventing child abuse	35.9%
0%	Providing safeguarding training for staff	13.5%
0%	Child protection policy	17.0%
0%	Providing trainings for learners	12.6%
0%	Nutrition / feeding programme	9.0%
4.0%	Safe transportation	17.5%
0%	Child protection officer	1.3%
0%	Recognising child abuse external to school	8.1%
1.3%	Preventing psychological harm	9.0%
0%	Contacts for referral of abuse	2.2%
0%	Other	3.6%

Despite improvements in the number of schools banning corporal punishment (an increase in 13 percentage points from Year 1), 7.5% of schools continue to acknowledge using corporate punishment. However, the actual percentage of schools that continue to use corporal punishment cannot be verified and may be underreported. While this has decreased from Year 1, this represents an area for school leaders to improve their practices, particularly for school leaders who have banned corporal punishment but that may struggle to enforce this policy in classrooms. Additional training for teachers may also be needed.

Do school leaders or teachers use physical or corporal punishment as a form of discipline with learners at your school?

Year 1 ▪ Year 2

Yes	No	Unknown
11.2% / 7.5%	88.0% / 92.5%	0.9% / 0.0%
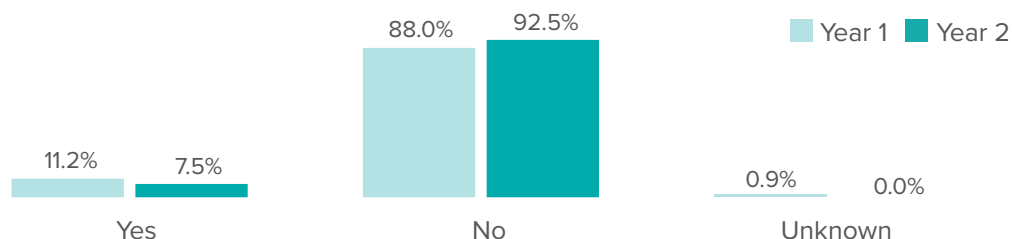
How often do school leaders and teachers use physical or corporal punishment as a form of discipline for learners?

Year 1 ▪ Year 2

Never	Rarely	Sometimes
88% / 92.5%	8.2% / 5.3%	3.0% / 2.2%
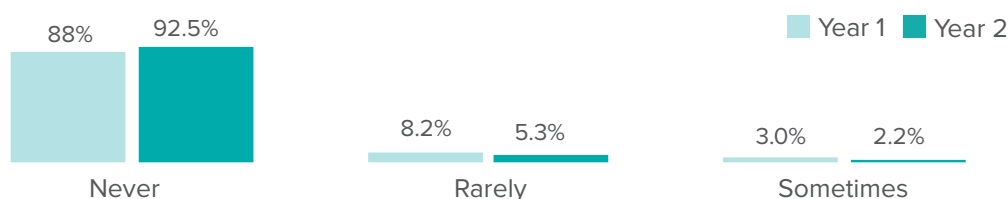
Recognizing Signs of Abuse

Cluster meetings for school leaders deliver content on the topic of child abuse, and school leaders have improved in their knowledge of this topic. School leaders named psychological signs (86%), physical signs (76%), and a child sharing experiences of abuse (60%) as being key to look for to recognise if a child is in a situation of abuse, all of which are improvements from Year 1 responses. In particular, in Year 1, only 45% of school leaders noted they would look for 'physical signs' of abuse, compared to 76% in Year 2.
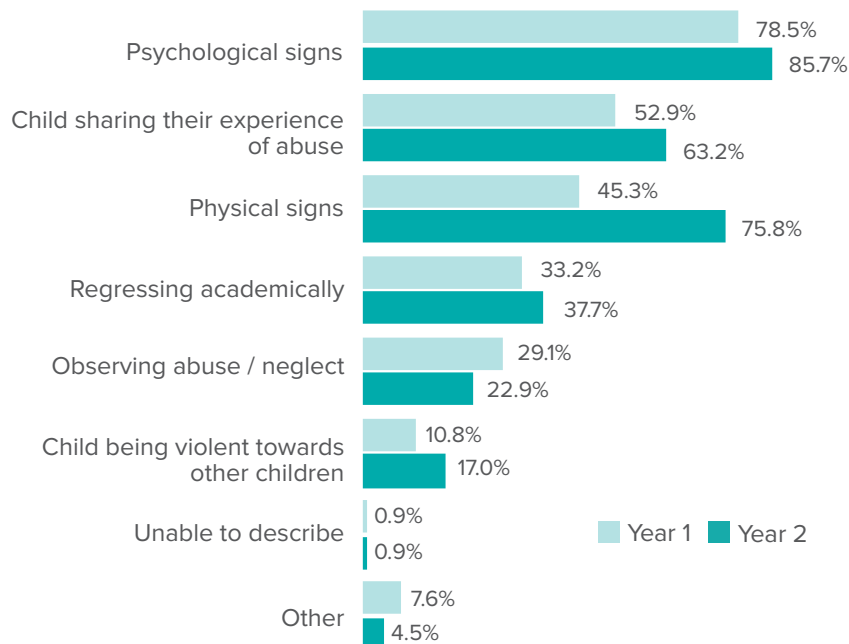
In addition to being able to recognise clear signs, school leaders also made modest improvements in recognizing signs of abuse that may be less obvious. For example, 38% of school leaders noted that a child who was regressing academically may be experiencing abuse, up from 33% in Year 1. Further, 17% of school leaders noted that a child acting violent towards other children may be a sign of abuse, an increase of 6 percentage points from Year 1. Despite these modest improvements, these findings indicate a need for cluster sessions to focus additional training and awareness-raising particularly on the signs of child abuse that might be more difficult to immediately recognize. This is particularly important for children that exhibit signs that are not physical or psychological, but rather behavioural.

Key Findings

Between Years 1 and 2, school leaders made improvements in their ability to recognize signs of abuse that may be occurring in a child's life outside of school. Schools have been able to identify more signs of abuse in Year 2 then Year 1. Less than 1% of schools were not able to describe what any signs of abuse may look like.

Could you describe what you would look for to recognise if a child from your school might be in a situation of abuse, neglect or exploitation?

Category	Year 1	Year 2
Psychological signs	78.5%	85.7%
Child sharing their experience of abuse	52.9%	63.2%
Physical signs	45.3%	75.8%
Regressing academically	33.2%	37.7%
Observing abuse / neglect	29.1%	22.9%
Child being violent towards other children	10.8%	17.0%
Unable to describe	0.9%	0.9%
Other	7.6%	4.5%

Domain 1.4 Learner Engagement and Welfare

P2E schools strive to promote Learner Engagement and Welfare by supporting students in developing life skills and social skills, providing engaging extra-curricular activities, and ensuring students are active participants and leaders in the classroom. Research finds that learners make **more progress** when they feel happy, well-cared-for, and fully engaged in the life of the school, extending beyond academic life to include well-rounded support in soft skills and other areas.[22] In P2E, schools that are meeting Level 3 of Learner Engagement and Welfare criteria use the following approaches:

▶ A learner profile shows the type of learners the school aims to develop, and teachers have high expectations of all learners and motivate them to succeed.

▶ Positive learning skills in disengaged pupils are built by developing a growth mindset.

▶ Strategies such as peer tutoring and friendship buddies are used to encourage pupils to help each other learn and play.

▶ Teachers run extra-curricular activities to engage learners outside of the classroom
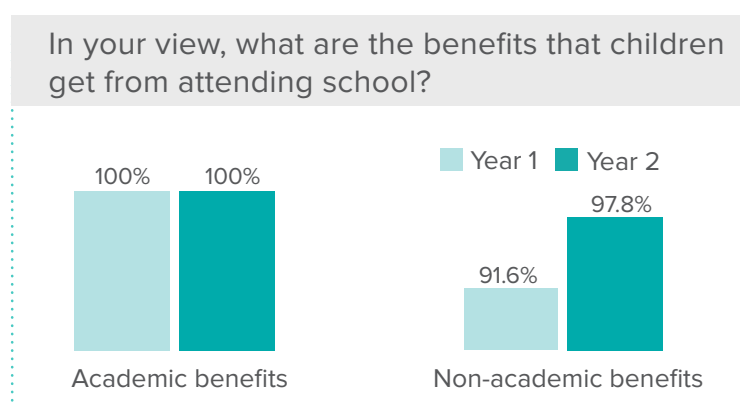
Learner Engagement and Welfare has consistently been a strong area for P2E schools, and schools continued to improve in Year 2. This domain had the highest average score in Year 1, at 2.6. In Year 2, the average score increased to 3.1, and remained the highest scoring domain.

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[22] Lindorff, 2020.

Non-Academic Benefits and Support

In Year 2, 98% of schools now mention non-academic benefits when asked about the benefits children gain from school, an increase of 6 percentage points from Year 1. Additionally, school leaders are now also able to name a more diverse range of non-academic benefits, including developing extracurricular skills (66% – an increase in 44 percentage points from Year 1); learning discipline and responsibility (61% – an increase in 38 percentage points from Year 1); social benefits (56% – an increase in 33 percentage points from Year 1); and gaining moral values (52% – an increase in 24 percentage points from Year 1).

A less-frequently cited non-academic benefit was *receiving safety and security*, with only 3% of schools naming this benefit, with no increase from Year 1. As school leaders become more proactively engaged in child protection training, awareness-raising, and policy creation, it is likely they will begin to recognize this benefit as it becomes a more critical practice in schools.

In your view, what are the benefits that children get from attending school?

Year 1   Year 2

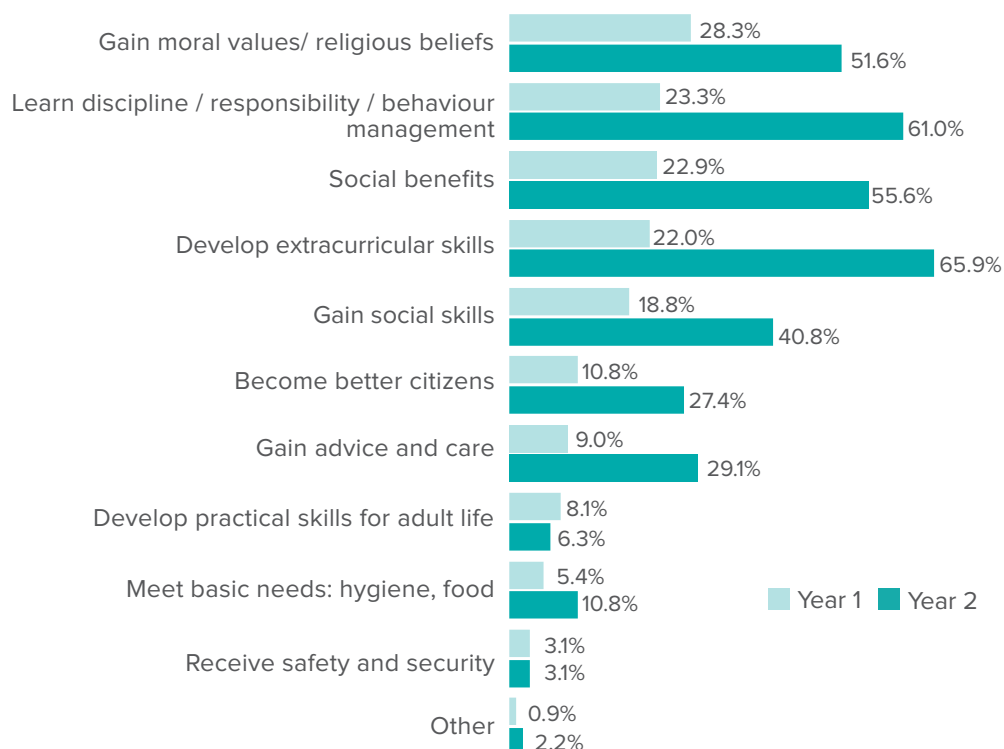|	Academic benefits	Non-academic benefits
Year 1	100%	91.6%
Year 2	100%	97.8%

Key Findings

Compared to Year 1, school leaders are better able to identify a diverse range of non-academic benefits of attending school. In addition to non-academic benefits of school being more widely recognized, school leaders also highlight a wide range of non-academic support that their school is currently providing to learners.
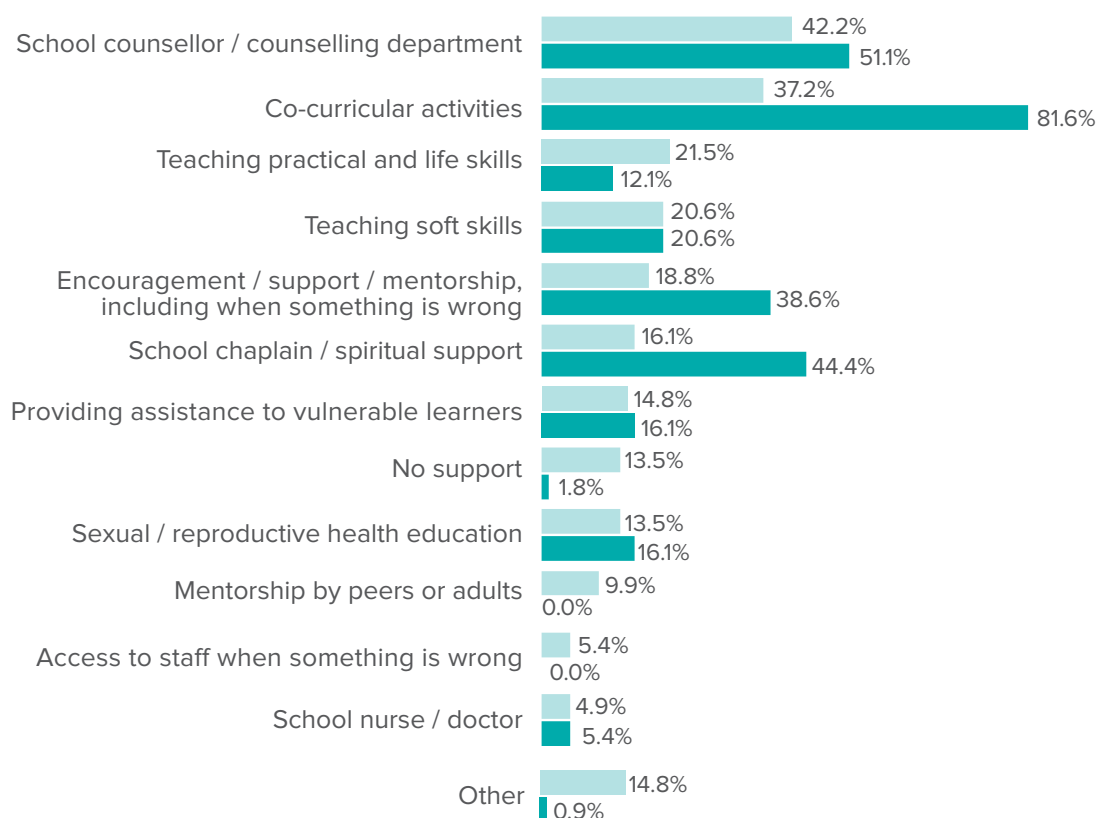
In addition to being able to name more examples of non-academic benefits, school leaders also highlight a wide range of non-academic support their schools currently provide to learners, with large increases from Year 1. In Year 2, *extra-curricular activities* saw the largest percentage point increase, and was cited by 82% of schools compared to 37% in Year 1. Other non-academic benefits currently being provided by schools include counselling (51%), mentoring and support (39%), and spiritual guidance (44%). Other benefits including providing assistance to vulnerable children (16%), school nurses (5%), and access to staff when something is wrong (0%) were less common answers. As noted above, it is possible these responses will increase after school leaders receive more training in child protection and begin to integrate child protection policies.

Lastly, only 2% of school leaders said their school provided no non-academic support, down from 14% in Year 1.

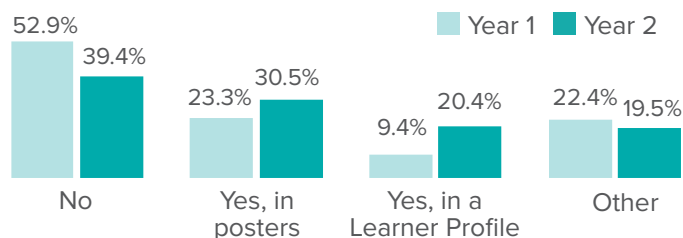## What are the non-academic benefits of children attending school?

Benefit	Year 1	Year 2
Gain moral values/ religious beliefs	28.3%	51.6%
Learn discipline / responsibility / behaviour management	23.3%	61.0%
Social benefits	22.9%	55.6%
Develop extracurricular skills	22.0%	65.9%
Gain social skills	18.8%	40.8%
Become better citizens	10.8%	27.4%
Gain advice and care	9.0%	29.1%
Develop practical skills for adult life	8.1%	6.3%
Meet basic needs: hygiene, food	5.4%	10.8%
Receive safety and security	3.1%	3.1%
Other	0.9%	2.2%

Year 1   Year 2

Does your school provide any non-academic support to the learners?

Support	Year 1	Year 2
School counsellor / counselling department	42.2%	51.1%
Co-curricular activities	37.2%	81.6%
Teaching practical and life skills	21.5%	12.1%
Teaching soft skills	20.6%	20.6%
Encouragement / support / mentorship, including when something is wrong	18.8%	38.6%
School chaplain / spiritual support	16.1%	44.4%
Providing assistance to vulnerable learners	14.8%	16.1%
No support	13.5%	1.8%
Sexual / reproductive health education	13.5%	16.1%
Mentorship by peers or adults	9.9%	0.0%
Access to staff when something is wrong	5.4%	0.0%
School nurse / doctor	4.9%	5.4%
Other	14.8%	0.9%

Vision of a Successful Learner

In Year 2, 60% of schools in have a vision of a successful learner reflected in a written document, poster or learner profile, up from 47% in Year 1. This written document supports school leaders in identifying ideal characteristics in learners and encouraging them. When naming ideal characteristics of a successful learner, in Year 2 the percentage of school leaders who said they value *creative/artistic* learners increased by 24 percentage points. Other characteristics, such as *polite/respectful, actively engaged, intelligent* and *social/collaborative* remained consistent.

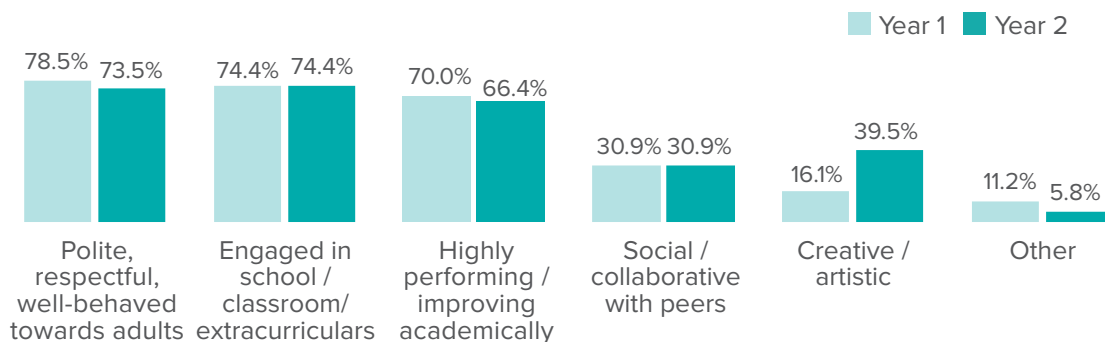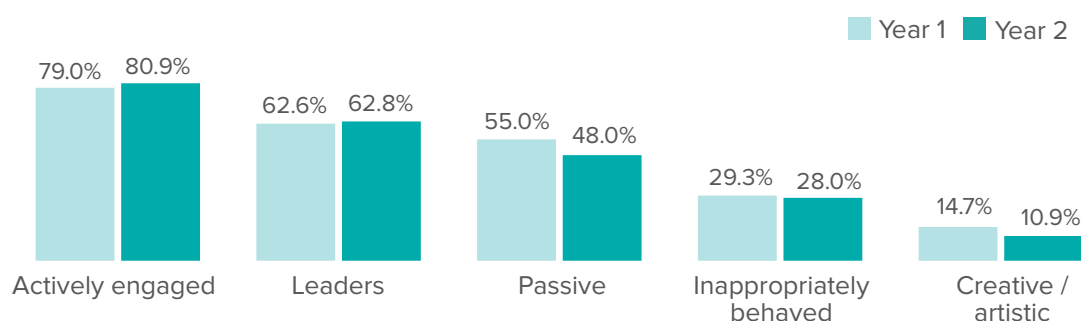**Key Findings**

60% of schools in Year 2 have a vision of a successful learner reflected in a written document, poster or learner profile. The percentage of school leaders who value *creative/artistic* learners also increased in Year 2.

Is your vision of a successful learner reflected in any written documents or displays at your school?

	Year 1	Year 2
No	52.9%	39.4%
Yes, in posters	23.3%	30.5%
Yes, in a Learner Profile	9.4%	20.4%
Other	22.4%	19.5%

Imagine an ideal learner that you would want at your school, can you name upto 3 characteristics that you value most?

	Year 1	Year 2
Polite, respectful, well-behaved towards adults	78.5%	73.5%
Engaged in school / classroom/ extracurriculars	74.4%	74.4%
Highly performing / improving academically	70.0%	66.4%
Social / collaborative with peers	30.9%	30.9%
Creative / artistic	16.1%	39.5%
Other	11.2%	5.8%

Lastly, when surveyed about their perception of learners, school leaders reported the percentage of learners who were actively engaged and those acting as leaders remained consistent between Year 1 and Year 2, while the percentage of passive learners decreased from 55% to 48%. The percentage of learners who are inappropriately behaved also remained consistent and relatively high, at 28% in both Year 1 and Year 2. Given the improvements being made in other domains such as Behaviour Management and Learner Engagement and Welfare, it is likely school leaders will soon start to see incremental progress and improvements in learner behaviour in their classrooms.

What percentage of the learners at your school currently display these attributes?

Year 1 | Year 2

Actively engaged: 79.0% / 80.9%
Leaders: 62.6% / 62.8%
Passive: 55.0% / 48.0%
Inappropriately behaved: 29.3% / 28.0%
Creative / artistic: 14.7% / 10.9%

Domain 1.5 Staff Engagement and Retention

Research finds that one of the most important indicators of school quality is teacher engagement and motivation.[23] Research highlights a variety of ways to support teachers and improve performance and motivation, all of which have been found to improve student learning. These include methods such as providing teachers with more resources and materials to use in teaching[24] [25], supporting teachers through mentorship[26], and allowing teachers more time to focus on teaching quality rather than administrative tasks.[27] The use of financial incentives has also been found to improve teacher performance and has a positive impact on learning outcomes.[28] Lastly, ensuring teachers have the opportunity to collaborate with their peers, either through one-on-one mentorship or large-group workshops, training, and meetings, has also been found to lead to improved morale, motivation, and a stronger culture of shared goals.[29] All of these strategies contribute to improved teacher performance, and ultimately have a positive impact on student learning.

P2E encourages schools to improve teacher engagement and retention by using a combination of all these strategies. Year 2 saw large increases in the number of schools that provide teachers with additional resources and materials, teacher mentors, and use of peer-to-peer learning and group work. The time that teachers devote to teaching rather than administrative tasks also remains high, while school leaders are also prioritizing financial incentives for teachers. As a result, schools are reporting fewer staff being dissatisfied (6% reduction). However, some schools continue to face staffing challenges. The teacher turnover rate in Year 2 remained at 11% on average.

[23] Conn, 2017.
[24] Angrist et al, 2020.
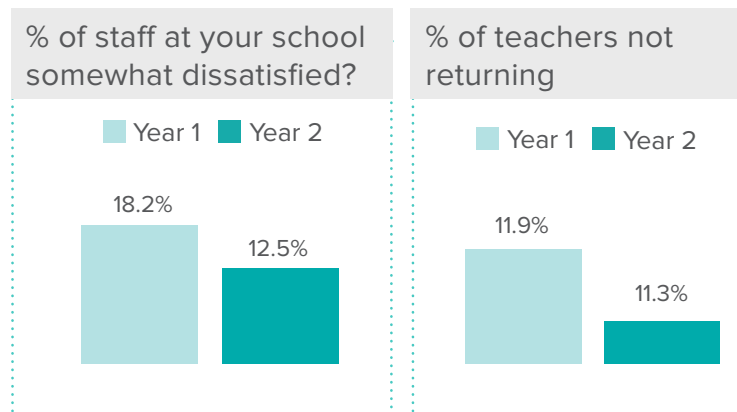[25] Allier-Gagner et al, 2020.
[26] Haßler et al, 2020.
[27] Aslam et al. 2017.
[28] Duflo, Hanna, & Ryan, 2012.
[29] Orr et al, 2013.
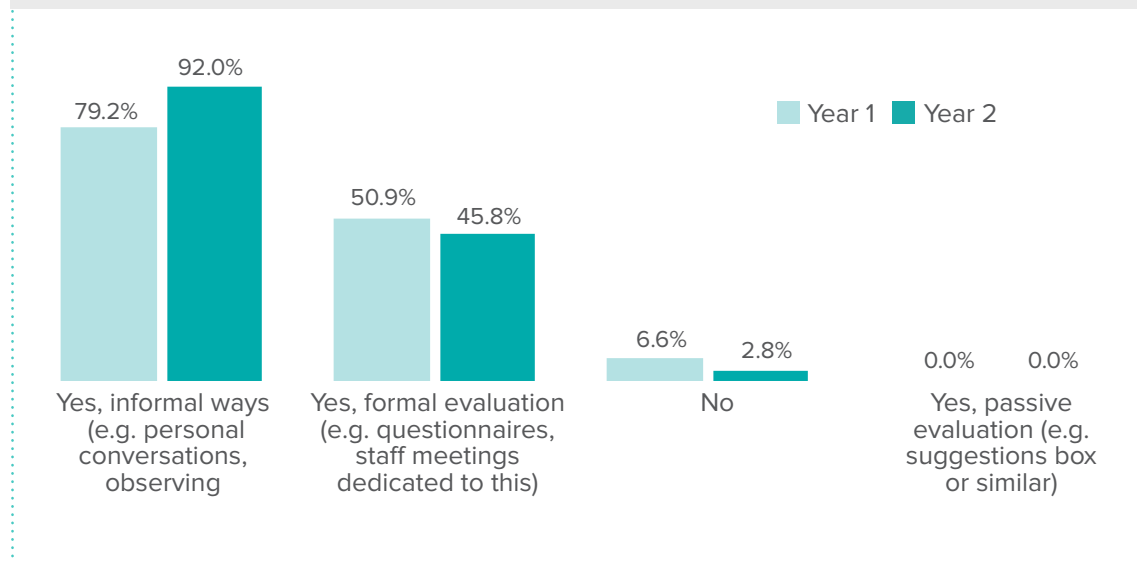
Staff Satisfaction and Retention

Teacher turnover in Year 2 is consistent with Year 1, at approximately 11%. There was a 5 percentage-point decrease in the percent of teachers who school leaders believe to be dissatisfied, with only 13% reporting dissatisfied staff in Year 2 compared to 18% in Year 1. However, school leaders also note that most do not have formal methods of evaluating staff satisfaction. 92% of schools evaluate satisfaction in informal ways, such as through personal conversations or observation. Only 46% of school leaders use formal methods such as surveys or questionnaires. As such, it is possible that actual satisfaction rates are lower, as teachers may be less inclined to share feelings of dissatisfaction in non-anonymous settings.

% of staff at your school somewhat dissatisfied?

Year 1   Year 2

18.2%
12.5%

% of teachers not returning

Year 1   Year 2

11.9%
11.3%

Do you have a way of evaluating how satisfied your staff are with their jobs and the school?

Year 1   Year 2

79.2%   92.0% — Yes, informal ways (e.g. personal conversations, observing

50.9%   45.8% — Yes, formal evaluation (e.g. questionnaires, staff meetings dedicated to this)

6.6%   2.8% — No

0.0%   0.0% — Yes, passive evaluation (e.g. suggestions box or similar)

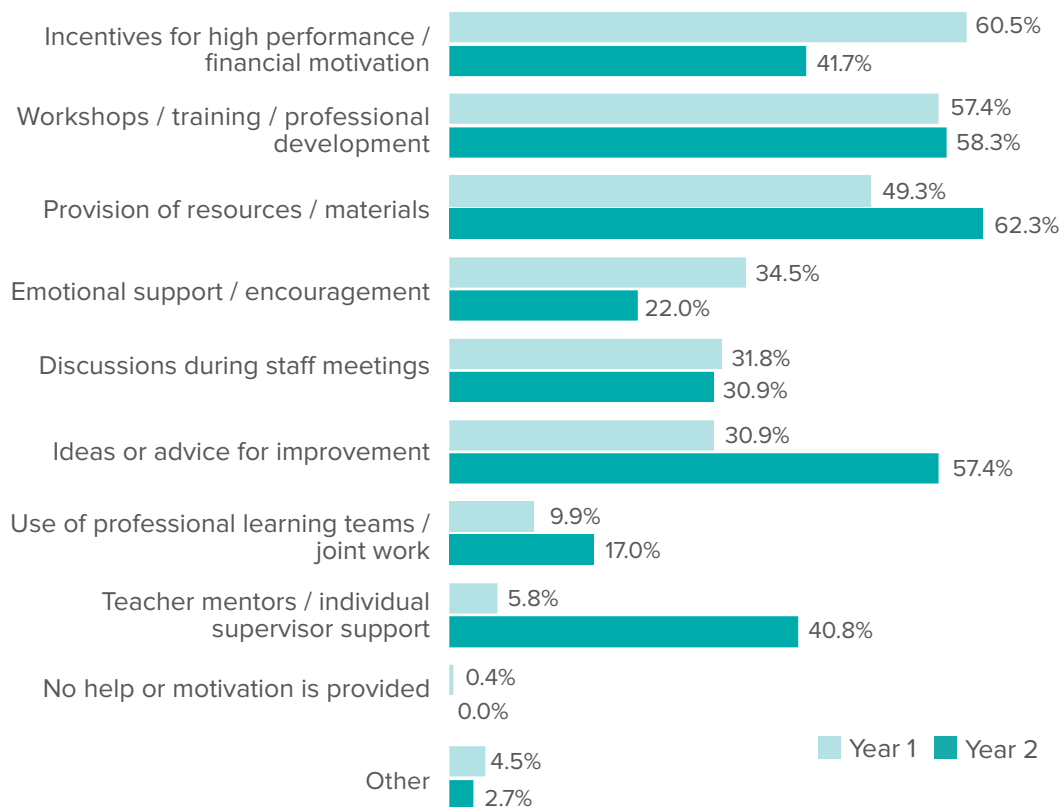## Strategies to Improve Teacher Motivation and Performance

Using financial incentives to improve teacher quality fell from 61% to 42% in Year 2. While school leaders still use financial incentives to motivate performance, they have begun to use a more diverse range of other methods in Year 2. In Year 2, 63% of schools provided resources and materials to teachers (up from 49% in Year 1). Year 2 also saw a 35 percentage-point increase in the schools reporting support for teachers through mentors – a percentage that is expected to continue increasing, as awareness of the programme grows and EduFinance continues to deliver the teacher mentorship programme to schools. Other popular methods of support include workshops, trainings and professional development (58%) and offering ideas or advice to teachers (57%).
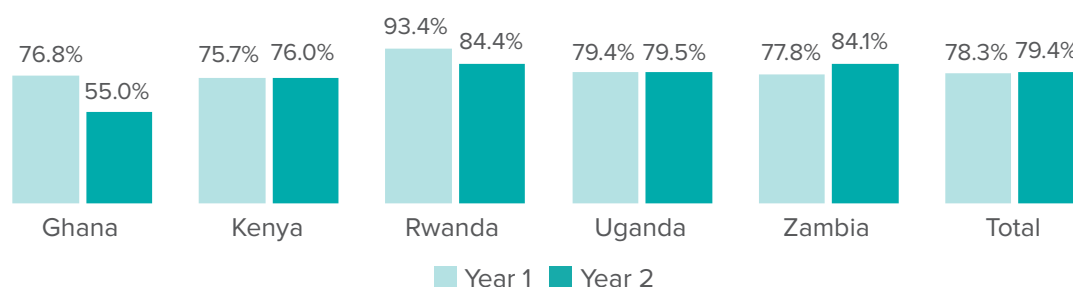
Key Findings

Schools are using a variety of methods to ensure teachers are motivated and satisfied, and to incentivize teachers to improve the quality of their teaching. The most common methods include the provision of resources and materials, financial incentives such as on-time payments, frequent staff meetings, and advice and encouragement from teacher mentors.

How does your school help or motivate teachers to improve the quality of their teaching, if at all?

Method	Year 1	Year 2
Incentives for high performance / financial motivation	60.5%	41.7%
Workshops / training / professional development	57.4%	58.3%
Provision of resources / materials	49.3%	62.3%
Emotional support / encouragement	34.5%	22.0%
Discussions during staff meetings	31.8%	30.9%
Ideas or advice for improvement	30.9%	57.4%
Use of professional learning teams / joint work	9.9%	17.0%
Teacher mentors / individual supervisor support	5.8%	40.8%
No help or motivation is provided	0.4%	0.0%
Other	4.5%	2.7%

The percent of time teachers dedicate to working with learners, rather than administrative duties, has remained consistently high at 84%. This is a positive result, as research shows teachers are more satisfied when they can devote more time to teaching without administrative burdens.[30]
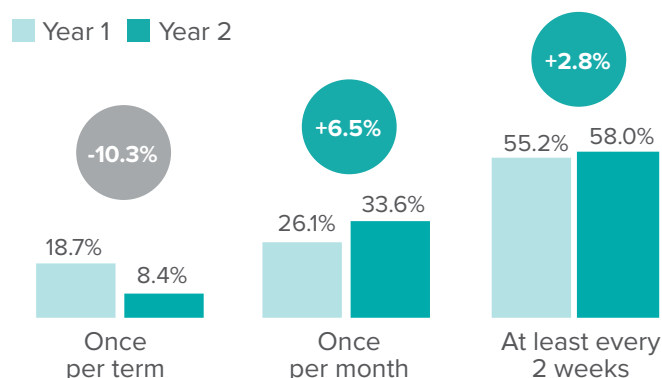
At your school, what % of their time are teachers expected to devote to work directly with learners, rather than other administrative or planning duties?

	Ghana	Kenya	Rwanda	Uganda	Zambia	Total
Year 1	76.8%	75.7%	93.4%	79.4%	77.8%	78.3%
Year 2	55.0%	76.0%	84.4%	79.5%	84.1%	79.4%

Whole staff meetings have become more frequent, with 58% of schools now holding meetings at least every 2 weeks, while 93% of schools hold meetings at least every month. Regular staff meetings allow teachers to engage more frequently with other teachers and leadership, which has been found to have positive effects on teacher morale and motivation, as it may prevent teachers from feeling isolated or unsupported.[31][32]

How often do you have staff meeting with all teachers at your school?

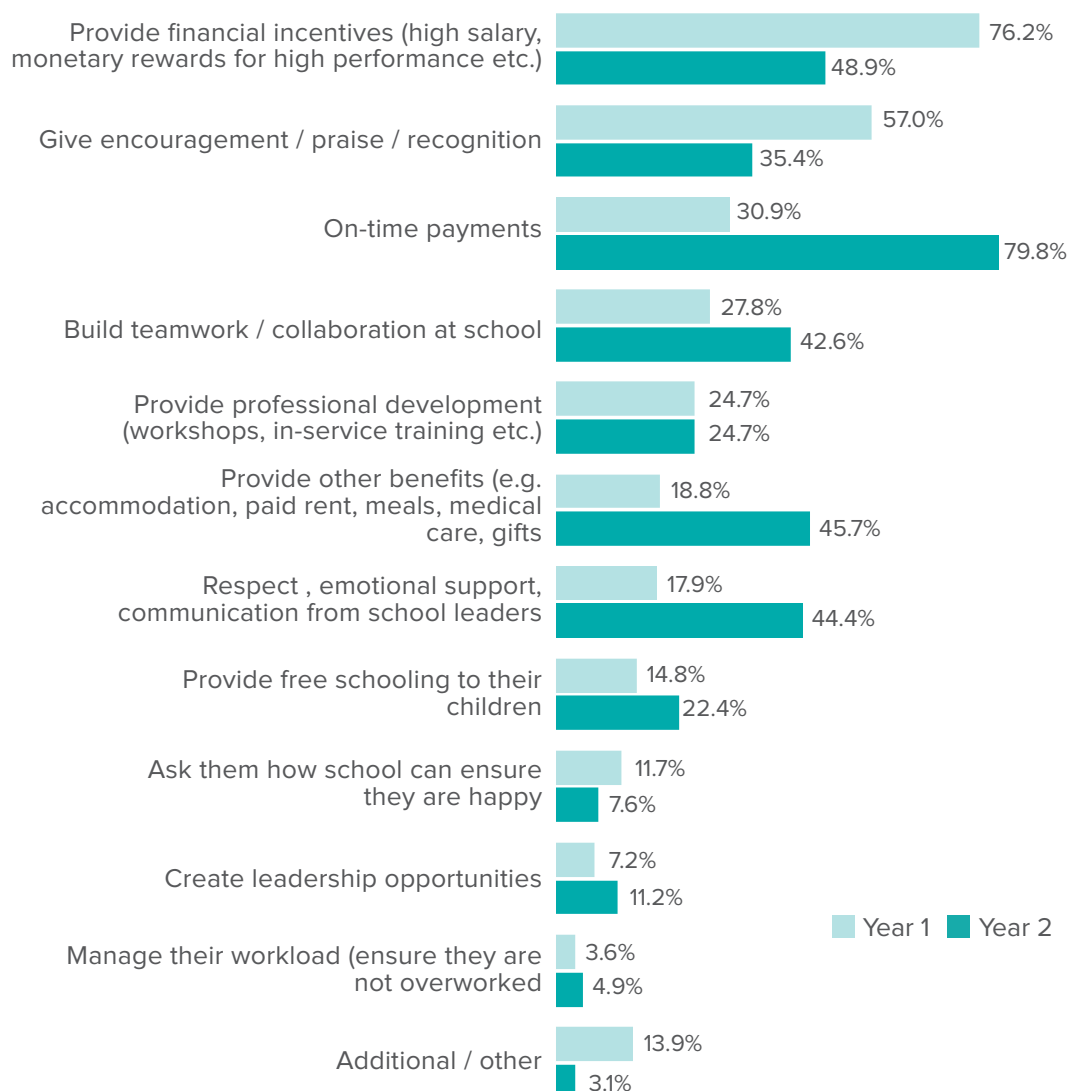|	Once per term	Once per month	At least every 2 weeks
Year 1	18.7%	26.1%	55.2%
Year 2	8.4%	33.6%	58.0%
Change	-10.3%	+6.5%	+2.8%

Lastly, in addition to motivating teachers to improve teaching quality, school leaders use a variety of strategies to ensure teacher retention and job satisfaction. While school leaders mentioned *finances* (such as salary) 19 percentage points less in Year 2 than Year 1, mention of *on-time payments* and *providing other benefits* increased by 39 and 13 percentage points respectively. Other strategies such as improving communication and respect from school leaders (45%) and building teamwork and collaboration (43%) also saw large increases from Year 1, all of which are positive improvements. Providing teachers with leadership opportunities was less frequently cited by only 11% of schools, and represents an area for school leaders to prioritize in future years.

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[30] Crawfurd, 2017.
[31] Allier-Gagner et al, 2020.
[32] Haßler et al, 2020.

What does your school do to make sure teachers are happy with their jobs and stay at the school?

Provide financial incentives (high salary, monetary rewards for high performance etc.)
- Year 1: 76.2%
- Year 2: 48.9%

Give encouragement / praise / recognition
- Year 1: 57.0%
- Year 2: 35.4%

On-time payments
- Year 1: 30.9%
- Year 2: 79.8%

Build teamwork / collaboration at school
- Year 1: 27.8%
- Year 2: 42.6%

Provide professional development (workshops, in-service training etc.)
- Year 1: 24.7%
- Year 2: 24.7%

Provide other benefits (e.g. accommodation, paid rent, meals, medical care, gifts
- Year 1: 18.8%
- Year 2: 45.7%

Respect , emotional support, communication from school leaders
- Year 1: 17.9%
- Year 2: 44.4%

Provide free schooling to their children
- Year 1: 14.8%
- Year 2: 22.4%

Ask them how school can ensure they are happy
- Year 1: 11.7%
- Year 2: 7.6%

Create leadership opportunities
- Year 1: 7.2%
- Year 2: 11.2%

Manage their workload (ensure they are not overworked
- Year 1: 3.6%
- Year 2: 4.9%

Additional / other
- Year 1: 13.9%
- Year 2: 3.1%

Legend: Year 1, Year 2

Domain 1.6 Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (SEND)

Despite some improvements, overall SEND inclusion remains one of the most challenging domains for school leaders to integrate into school policies and classrooms. Inclusion and SEND had the lowest average score in Year 1 school self-assessments, at 1.7. This increased to 2.0 in Year 2, but remains the lowest average score. While findings show that school leaders maintain positive attitudes towards SEND inclusion, they may lack the resources and know-how to meaningfully implement inclusive policies in their school environments.

Knowledge and Attitudes

More than 75% of school leaders responded that including SEND learners in instruction in their school is *very important* (76%), representing a 5.4 percentage-point increase from Year 1. 21% of school leaders said SEND inclusion is *somewhat important*, while only 3.1% reported SEND inclusion was *not very important*, a slight decrease from Year 1. While these findings show strong attitudes of school leaders towards inclusion, more than 20% still do not view it as a top priority for their school.

How important is it for your school to include children with special needs and disabilities in your instruction?

Year 1 Year 2

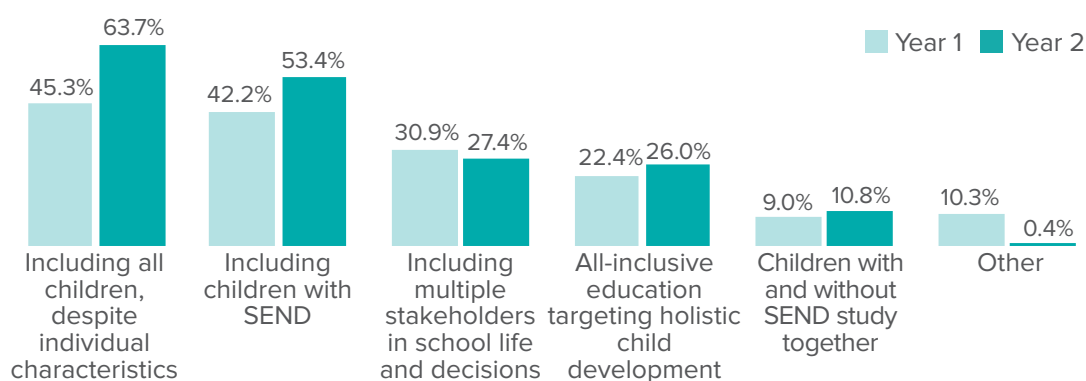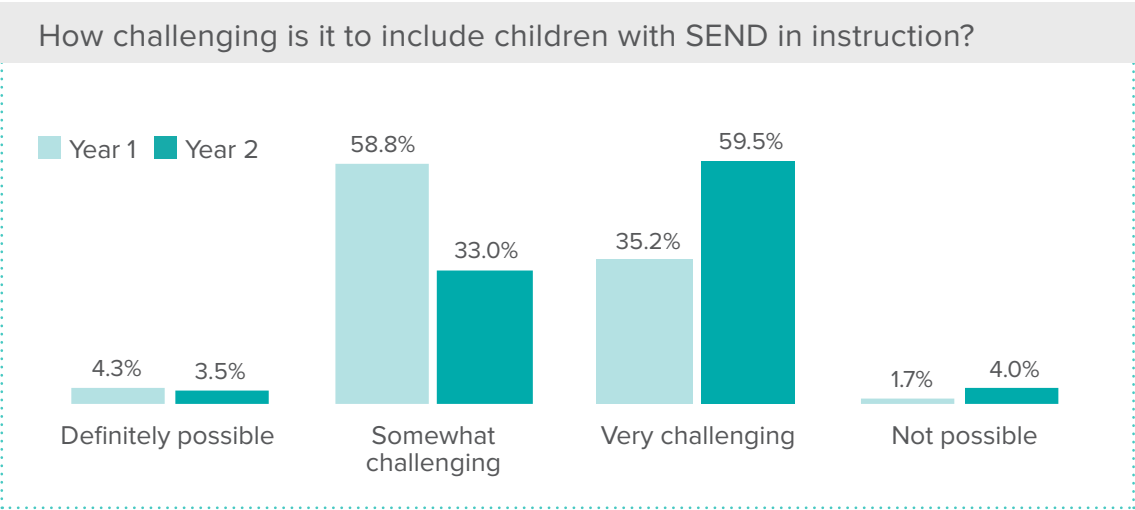|	Not important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
Year 1	1.3%	3.4%	24.9%	70.4%
Year 2	0.0%	3.1%	21.1%	75.8%
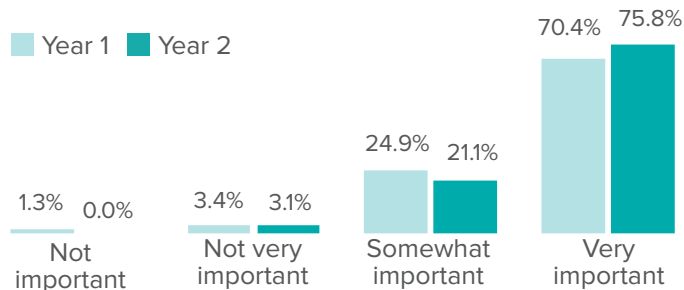
Key Findings

School leaders show improved attitudes towards inclusion of SEND learners, and increased knowledge of the meaning of inclusion. However, there is room for improvement in both knowledge and attitudes. Further, many schools still view SEND inclusion as *very challenging*.

In addition to improved attitudes, school leaders also improved their understanding of inclusion. When asked what inclusion means, school leaders' responses encompassed a wider range of definitions, aligning with international best practice to define inclusion using an intersectional lens. These broad definitions cited by school leaders covered: inclusion of all children regardless of gender or socio-economic status (64%), inclusion of SEND learners in education (53%), inclusion of multiple stakeholders in school life (27%), and well-rounded, holistic child development (26%). However, only 11% of school leaders defined 'inclusion' as arrangements for SEND learners to study in the same classrooms as other learners, which is another important component of SEND.

What does inclusion in education mean to you, as contrasted with 'exclusion'?

Year 1 Year 2

|	Including all children, despite individual characteristics	Including children with SEND	Including multiple stakeholders in school life and decisions	All-inclusive education targeting holistic child development	Children with and without SEND study together	Other
Year 1	45.3%	42.2%	30.9%	22.4%	9.0%	10.3%
Year 2	63.7%	53.4%	27.4%	26.0%	10.8%	0.4%

Despite positive attitudes and understanding towards SEND inclusion, 60% of schools believe that including children with SEND in instruction is 'very challenging.' This has increased by 24.3 percentage points, up from 35% in Year 1. This increase is possibly due to more school leaders now understanding what it means to include SEND learners in instruction – thus, leading them to more fully understand the challenges involved. This finding demonstrates the importance of giving school leaders clear tools and guidelines towards implementing inclusive policies that can help motivate and encourage school leaders amidst challenges.

How challenging is it to include children with SEND in instruction?

Year 1 ▮ Year 2

Definitely possible	Somewhat challenging	Very challenging	Not possible
4.3% / 3.5%	58.8% / 33.0%	35.2% / 59.5%	1.7% / 4.0%

Policies and Implementation

An important tool in implementing SEND inclusion is a written Inclusive Education Policy, which can provide clear guidelines and goals for schools to follow and a pathway for them to build towards. However, in Year 2, only 18% of schools had a written policy in place, which is consistent with Year 1 (17%). This presents a clear area for improvement and a tangible next step that schools can take towards greater SEND inclusion.
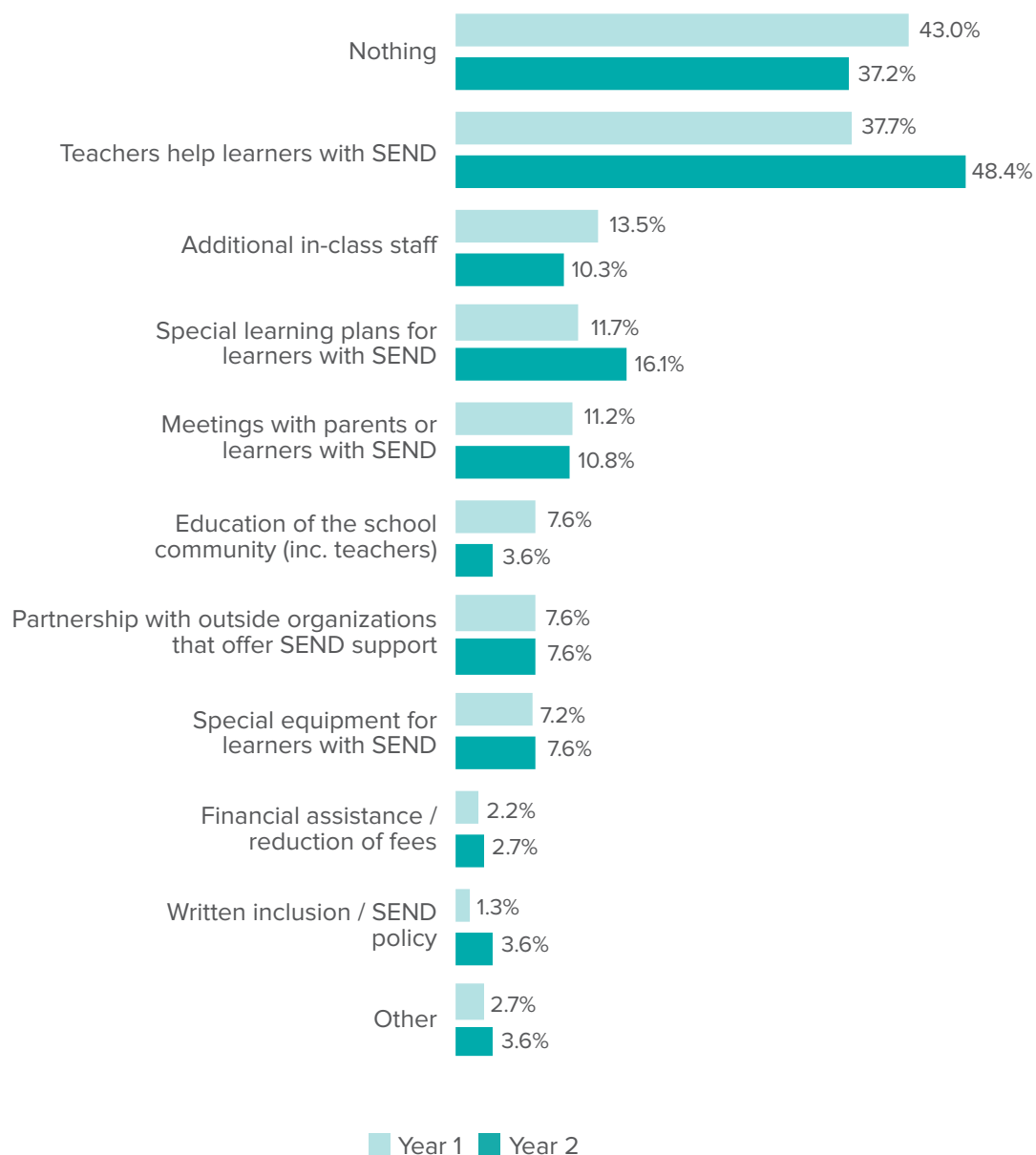
Does your school have a written 'inclusive education ' policy?

Year 1 ▮ Year 2

Yes	No	Unknown
17.4% / 18.1%	81.7% / 81.0%	0.9% / 0.9%
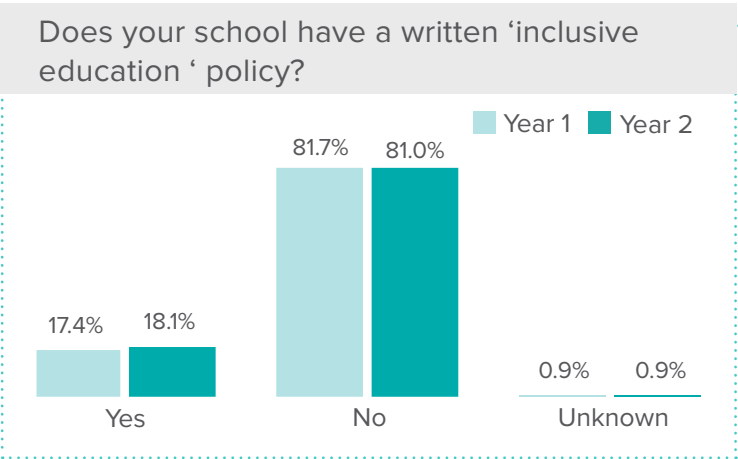
Key Findings

Despite the perspective from many school leaders that inclusion is important, most schools still struggle to implement inclusive policies. This suggests schools do not yet have the tools to practically support SEND children.

In addition to written policies, some schools are taking the first steps to practically support SEND learners, though many schools still struggle in this area. In Year 1, 43% of schools were doing *nothing* to support SEND learners, which has since fallen to 37%. The most common response in Year 2 is *Teachers help learners with SEND*, with 48% of schools choosing this response. Creating *special learning plans* has also risen by 5%, at 16% of school choosing this option in Year 2. While these are positive improvements, it will also be important, moving forward, to ensure that responsibility to support SEND learners does not fall entirely on individual teachers.

What does your school currently do to support learners with special needs or disabilities?

Category	Year 1	Year 2
Nothing	43.0%	37.2%
Teachers help learners with SEND	37.7%	48.4%
Additional in-class staff	13.5%	10.3%
Special learning plans for learners with SEND	11.7%	16.1%
Meetings with parents or learners with SEND	11.2%	10.8%
Education of the school community (inc. teachers)	7.6%	3.6%
Partnership with outside organizations that offer SEND support	7.6%	7.6%
Special equipment for learners with SEND	7.2%	7.6%
Financial assistance / reduction of fees	2.2%	2.7%
Written inclusion / SEND policy	1.3%	3.6%
Other	2.7%	3.6%

■ Year 1 ■ Year 2

Cross-cutting Findings, Lessons Learned, and Areas for Future Research

▶ **School leaders have improved knowledge, understanding and attitudes, a critical first step:** Across all six domains, school leaders show improved *knowledge and understanding* and maintain positive *attitudes* towards each domain. This is a positive finding, as in many cases, building basic knowledge and understanding of the importance of each domain is a necessary first step before school leaders are willing or motivated to take the necessary action towards implementing change. In many domains, school leaders have progressed from building understanding into implementing change, but struggle particularly in child protection and inclusive education. As it is clear that this 'first step' has been achieved in child protection and inclusion and leaders are knowledgeable, willing, and ready, more support is now needed in translating this knowledge into actual implementation.

▶ **Schools need more robust written policies to drive change:** Written policies provide a concrete basis for school leaders to translate knowledge and attitudes into action, and these policies can lead to implementing changes in schools. For example, while schools have made steady progress in implementing Behaviour Management Plans, some areas are still missing from these policies including outlining the use of rewards for positive behaviour. Alongside this, a low percentage (21%) of school leaders report that teachers use rewards for positive behaviour in their classrooms – likely due a lack of policy leading to lower awareness among teachers of this strategy. Likewise, a lack of child protection policies in most schools has likely led to a very low percentage of school leaders understanding that a non-academic benefit of schools is to provide *safet*y and *security* to learners.

▶ **Leaders are using a variety of feedback mechanisms to solicit input from parents and teachers:** Formal and informal feedback loops between school leaders, parents, and teachers are strong, but there is room for improvement. Schools have been widely successful in strengthening their community and parental engagement through PTAs that are actively engaged in offering feedback and recommendations to school leaders. It is important that feedback loops and communication channels are also created between teachers and parents directly, potentially through informal

engagement in community events. School leaders also highlight that they have methods for providing feedback to teachers on their performance, and informal ways of soliciting feedback from teachers. However, less than half of schools use formal ways of evaluating staff satisfaction (such as surveys), which may be an important feedback mechanism as it more inclusive of all teachers.

▶ **Leaders need more support on inclusive education:** Despite improvements, greater support may be needed for school leaders particularly in the domain of inclusive education. While knowledge, understanding, and attitudes has improved, many more school leaders are now reporting that they find inclusive education to be very challenging. Additional training – accompanied by resources, toolkits, and support – may be needed as an intermediary step before schools can develop written inclusive education policies.[33]

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[33] In response to this identified need, Opportunity EduFinance is developing additional SEND content in 2023 to integrate into the EduQuality program to ensure schools have the additional support they need to implement concrete, inclusive education practices.

V. Area 2: School Management

The second area of P2E supports school leaders in strengthening **school management** practices, such as providing a safe and clean learning environment, improving teacher recruitment, development, and oversight, and strengthening financial and business management. Improved school management practices have been shown across many contexts to have significant positive impacts on student learning.[34]

Between Year 1 and 2, schools increased their School Management domain scores an average of 0.5 points year-on-year (4-point scale), with *Teacher Development and Oversight* seeing the highest point increase in the School Management area (0.52). Despite improvements across all six School Management domains, *Finance and Business Management* started at the lowest base (1.8) and saw the lowest point increase at 0.37 points on average.
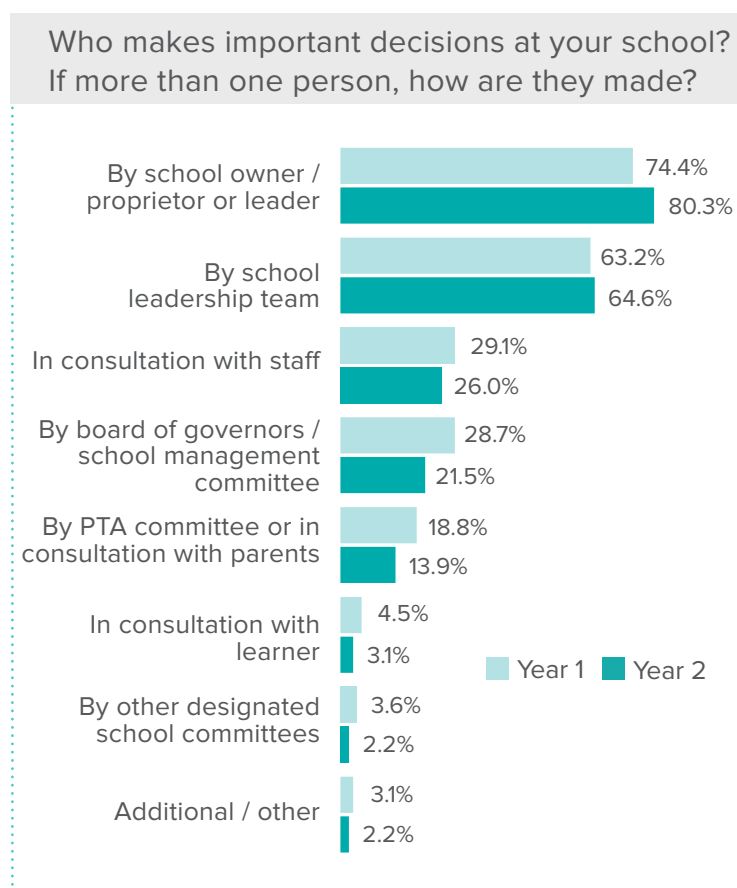
Area 2: School Management Changes in School Self-Assessment Scores

Year 1   Year 2

	Year 1	Year 2
2.1 Clean and Safe Environment for Learning	2.5	**3.0**
2.2 Teacher Recruitment	2.1	**2.6**
2.3 Finance and Business Management	1.8	**2.2**
2.4 Marketing and Branding	2.1	**2.6**
2.5 School Leadership and Governance	2.0	**2.4**
2.6 Teacher Development and Oversight	2.4	**2.9**

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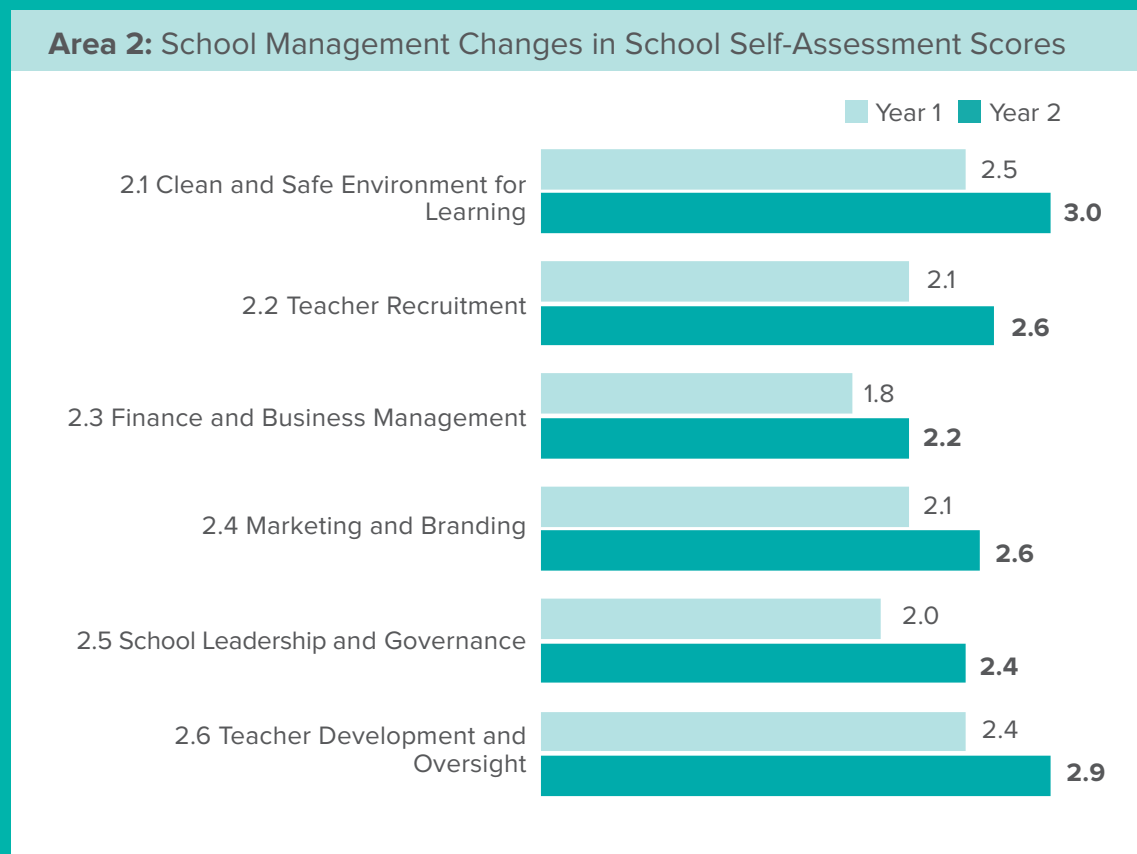
[34] Anand et al (2023).

Domain 2.1 Clean and Safe Environment for Learning

Research has found that the physical learning environment can have large impacts on student performance.[35] Between Year 1 and Year 2, schools are making positive improvements in providing safe learning environments, with 48% of schools improving their self-assessment score and with the average school self-assessment score increasing by 0.5 out of 4 points. During the pandemic, schools had experienced temporary school closures and were focused on standard operating procedures required to safely reopen when they completed Year 1 school development plans. EduFinance believes this experience played a key role on schools' work to make improvements for a clean and safe learning environment.

Physical Facilities

In 80% of schools in Year 2, owners make important decisions about improving its physical properties, an increase of 6 percentage points from Year 1. 64% of schools also make decisions in collaboration with the entire school leadership team, while 26% consult other staff.
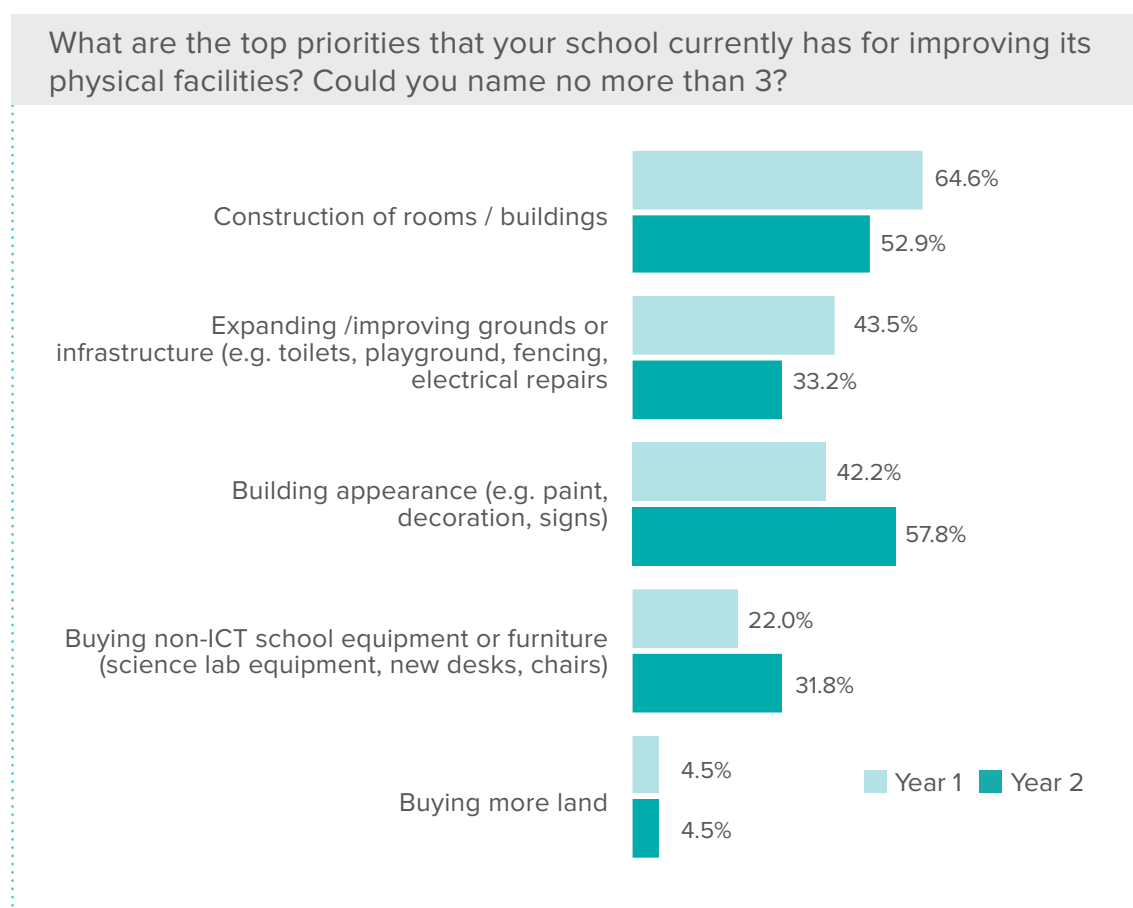
Who makes important decisions at your school? If more than one person, how are they made?

Category	Year 1	Year 2
By school owner / proprietor or leader	74.4%	80.3%
By school leadership team	63.2%	64.6%
In consultation with staff	29.1%	26.0%
By board of governors / school management committee	28.7%	21.5%
By PTA committee or in consultation with parents	18.8%	13.9%
In consultation with learner	4.5%	3.1%
By other designated school committees	3.6%	2.2%
Additional / other	3.1%	2.2%

Key Findings

School owners prioritize building appearance over other forms of facility improvements, despite facilities such as infrastructure, classrooms, and latrines being more important contributors to student learning.[36] Further follow-up is needed to understand why school leaders have begun prioritizing physical building appearances over other areas.

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[35] Kitonyi, 2013.
[36] Naude & Meier, 2019.

In 58% of schools, leaders prioritize building appearance (including paint, decorations, and signs) over other facility improvement, which is an increase of 16 percentage points from Year 1. 53% of school leaders also prioritize constructions of classrooms and buildings, while 33.2% prioritize improving infrastructure (washrooms, playgrounds, fencing, etc), both of which have decreased by 11.7 and 10.3 percentage points, respectively.

What are the top priorities that your school currently has for improving its physical facilities? Could you name no more than 3?

Priority	Year 1	Year 2
Construction of rooms / buildings	64.6%	52.9%
Expanding /improving grounds or infrastructure (e.g. toilets, playground, fencing, electrical repairs	43.5%	33.2%
Building appearance (e.g. paint, decoration, signs)	42.2%	57.8%
Buying non-ICT school equipment or furniture (science lab equipment, new desks, chairs)	22.0%	31.8%
Buying more land	4.5%	4.5%

Domain 2.2 Teacher Recruitment

Research has shown that well-qualified and capable teaching staff make significant impacts on the learning outcomes of pupils.[37, 38] Other education interventions such as reducing class size or the provision of textbooks, ICT, and other resources will fall flat if teachers do not know how to best take advantage of these resources and incorporate them into their teaching.[39] School leaders are making strong improvements in recruiting qualified teachers, in addition to ensuring teacher motivation through career and salary progression. Average school self-assessment scores increased by 0.5 points, from 2.1/4 in Year 1 to 2.6/4 in Year 2, and 49% of schools improved their overall score.

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[37] Glewwe and Muralidharan, 2015.
[38] Evan and Popova, 2016.
[39] Conn, 2017

Teacher Qualifications and Recruitment

91% of schools in Year 2 report their teachers have official teaching qualifications or certifications, consistent with Year 1. Processes for teacher recruitment are also becoming more effective, with 67% of schools conducting reference checks by contacting former employers prior to hiring teachers, up from 63% in Year 1. 40% of schools also ask for letters of recommendations prior to hiring, up from 37%. These practices are important in ensuring teachers are knowledgeable of pedagogical methods and classroom best practices, and have the prior experience necessary to succeed. Despite these improvements, 1 in 5 schools (19.7%) are still not conducting any background checks or reference checks. While this is an improvement from 27% in Year 1, this represents an area for further improvement among schools. Further, only 23% of schools report requiring candidates model a lesson as part of their recruitment process to demonstrate their skills.

Key Findings

Schools are continuing to recruit qualified teachers, with teaching qualifications checked via employer references, reference letters, and other methods. Schools have also seen increases in the numbers of job applications received, which helps recruit qualified teachers by increasing competition. However, 1 in 5 schools still do not conduct background or reference checks when hiring teachers.

How many of the teachers at your school have teaching certifications?

90.8%   91.0%

Year 1   Year 2

Does your school conduct any reference checks, background checks or criminal record checks for teachers and staff? If yes, what does the school check?

Year 1   Year 2

62.8%   67.3%
37.2%   40.4%
26.9%   19.7%
7.6%   3.1%
2.2%   4.5%

Check / contact references | Request reference letter(s) | No checks | Criminal record check | Additional / other
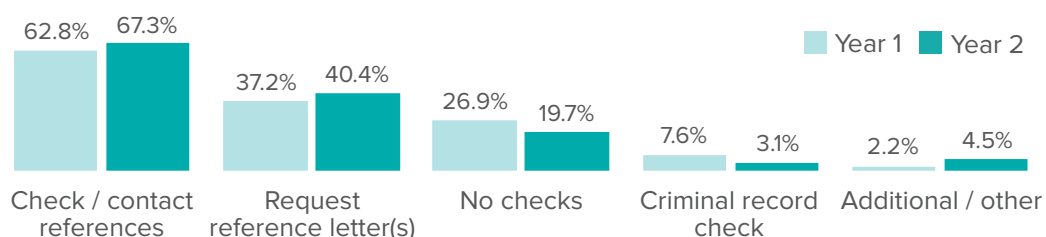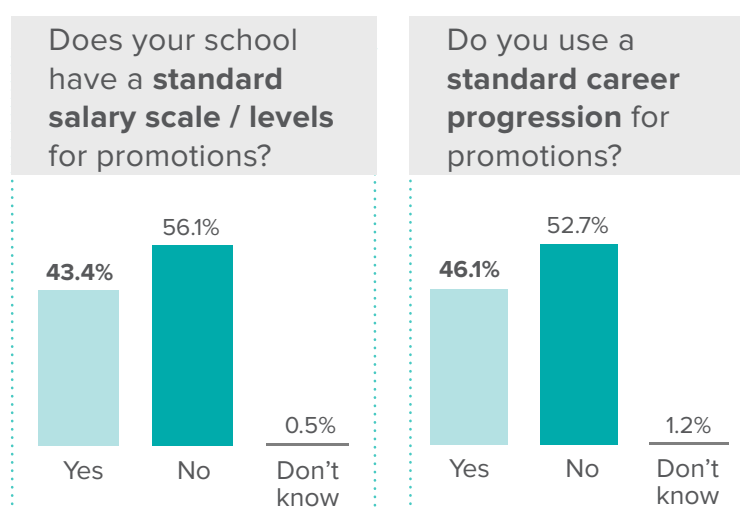
Schools are also seeing increasing numbers of job applications to their teaching positions. To recruit the best teachers, positions are advertised widely, with clear lists of requirements, incentives, and an induction program. 66% of schools are advertising positions publicly, up from 48% in Year 1, and 83% of schools are now using formal job applications, up from 77% in Year 1. This has likely increased the number of applications, thus increasing the competition and better ensuring schools have the widest selection of competitive applicants to hire the best teachers available.

Increase in number of job applications

- 77.1% Year 1
- 82.5% Year 2

| Year 1 | Year 2 |
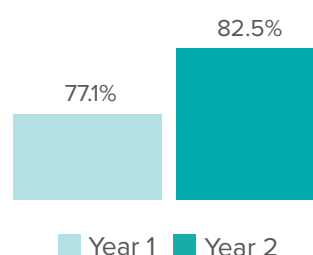
Teacher Career and Salary Progression

Studies have found that salary incentives are important to ensuring teacher retention, effort, and motivation.[40] Further, when teachers are aware of standard salary scales and their opportunities for career progression, they devote greater effort to student learning and in applying their training.[41] Despite this importance, only 43% of schools have a standard salary scale, and only 46% offer a clear trajectory for career progression.

Does your school have a standard salary scale / levels for promotions?

- **43.4%** Yes
- 56.1% No
- 0.5% Don't know

Do you use a standard career progression for promotions?

- **46.1%** Yes
- 52.7% No
- 1.2% Don't know

> **Key Findings**
>
> Less than half of schools have a standard salary scale and career progression, enabling staff to know the salaries and opportunities for promotion, indicating further need for improvements in these areas as they are linked to teacher retention and efforts towards student learning.

Lastly, in Year 2, 62% of schools now decide the staff's salaries based on their role or responsibilities at the school, 56% of schools decide salaries based on qualifications, and 31% of schools decide based on how long staff have been at the school. This is a largely positive finding, as studies have found that linking promotions or salaries to longevity, rather than qualifications or performance, can have detrimental effects on student learning, as longevity of teaching is not necessarily a determinant of quality teaching.[42]

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[40] Popova and Arancibia, 2016.
[41] Haßler et al, 2020
[42] Adelman and Lemos, 2020

Domain 2.3 Finance and Business Management

Good financial management is critical for successful schools who are striving to continually improve on quality. Financial management is a common challenge cited by low-cost private school owners across multiple country contexts.[43] Moreover, one recent study in Ghana found that 24% of low-cost private schools surveyed were not aware of their financial standing or whether they had lost or made profits in the last year.[44] Business plans and regular budgets help significantly in effective management of school finances – including the accurate maintenance of financial records and controls that are regularly reviewed by school leaders. In the past year, schools have made progress in business and financial management, with 43% improving their overall school self-assessment score, and with average scores increasing by 0.4, from 1.8/4 in Year 1 to 2.2/4 in Year 2.

Strategies to Increase Profit and Revenue

In Year 2, 61% of schools are more focused on operations management improvement as a strategy to increase profits, an increase of 9 percentage points from Year 1. Furthermore, 33% schools have made financial management improvements in Year 2 which has slightly increased by 3 percentage points from Year 1. These new strategies to increase profits demonstrate positive changes in schools' business strategies, as they are likely more sustainable and reliable methods compared to relying on enrolment rates improve profits.

In order to meet financial needs when revenue is lower than expected, 49% of schools have a specific plan to raise finances. Strategies cited in this plan include seeking external sources of financing through loans and donations (22%), generating additional revenue by proactively collecting more school fees and selling goods and services (20%), and reducing spending through cuts in expenses, etc. (12%). Schools are also finding ways to generate additional revenue through school uniforms (42%), school canteens (29%), extra-curricular activities (20%), and transportation (13%).

Do you have a plan in place if revenue is less than expected?

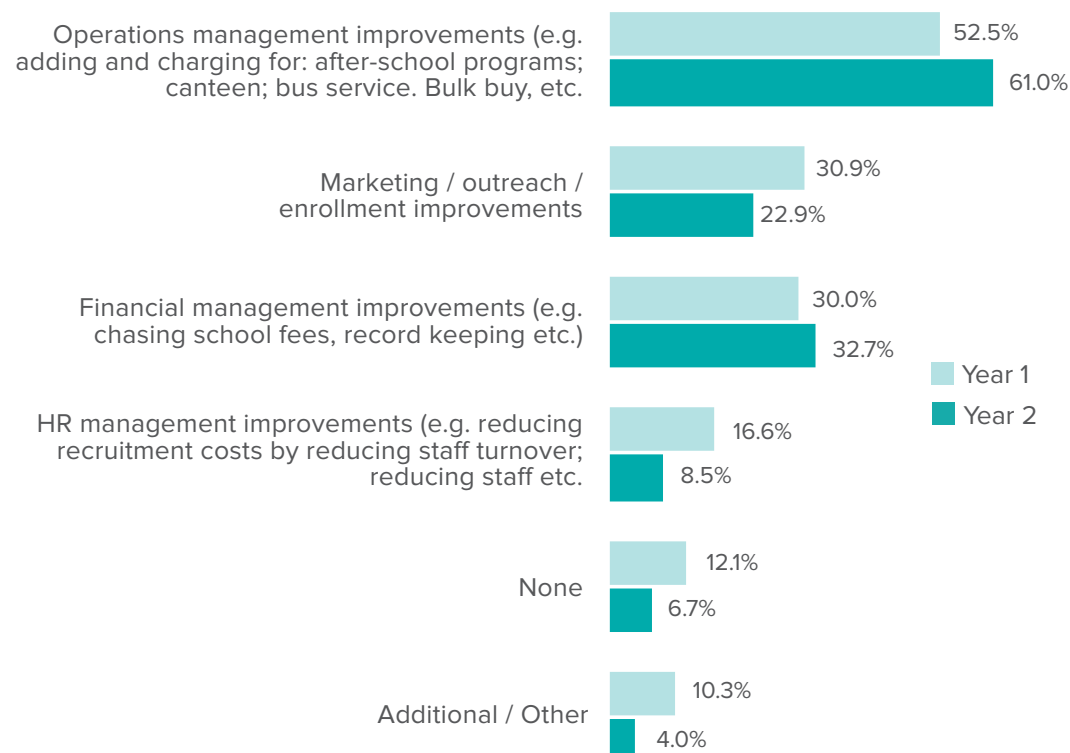| Yes	No
49.3%	50.7%

Key Findings

To increase profits, more schools shifted focus to operational management and financial management improvements in Year 2, while decreasing focus on marketing and outreach. Schools are also finding ways to generate additional revenue, such as school uniforms, canteens, and extra-curricular activities.
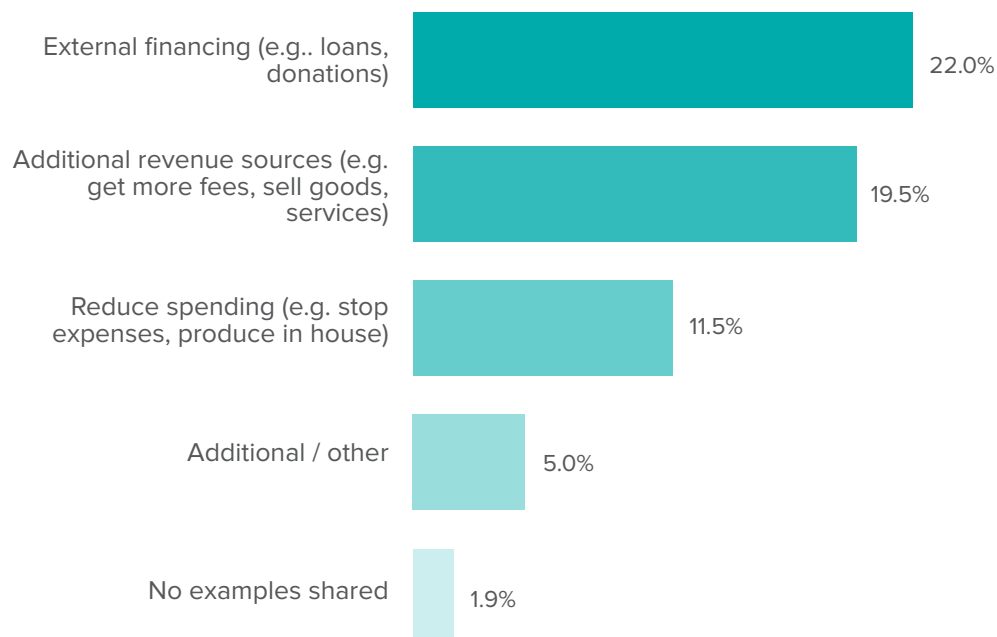
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[43] CapitalPlus Exchange, 2017.
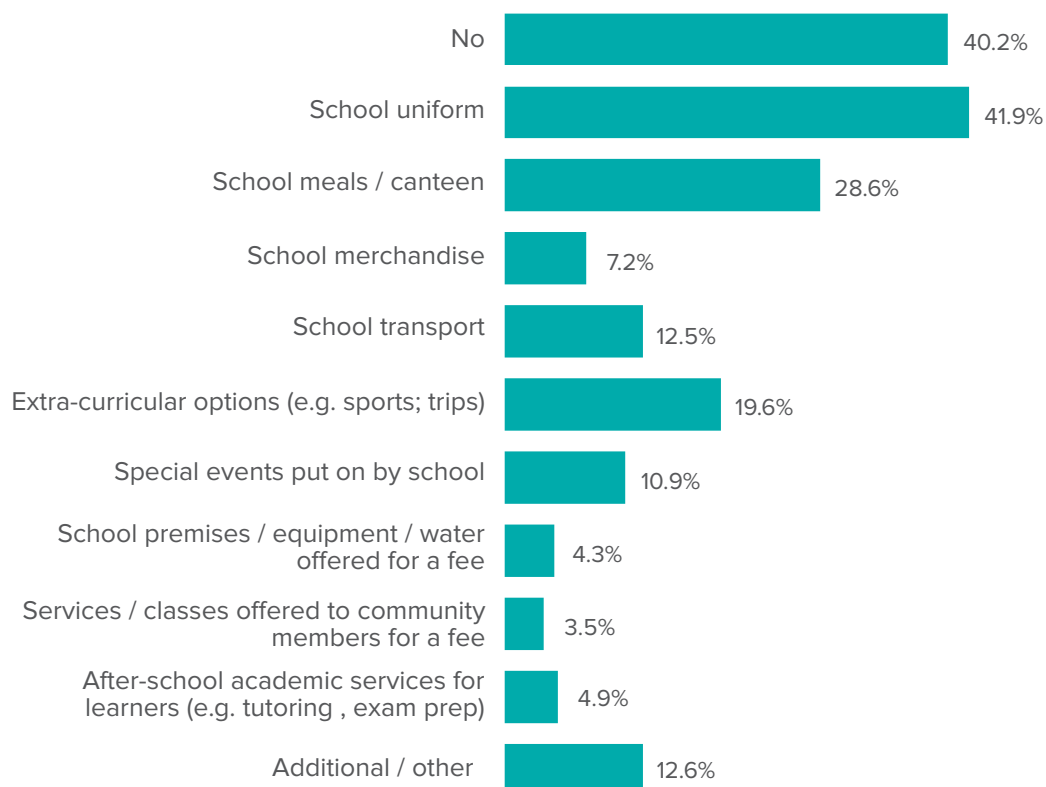[44] Results for Development, 2016.

What strategies are you taking to **increase profits** and/ or **reduce operating costs** at your school, if any?

Operations management improvements (e.g. adding and charging for: after-school programs; canteen; bus service. Bulk buy, etc.
- Year 1: 52.5%
- Year 2: 61.0%

Marketing / outreach / enrollment improvements
- Year 1: 30.9%
- Year 2: 22.9%

Financial management improvements (e.g. chasing school fees, record keeping etc.)
- Year 1: 30.0%
- Year 2: 32.7%

HR management improvements (e.g. reducing recruitment costs by reducing staff turnover; reducing staff etc.
- Year 1: 16.6%
- Year 2: 8.5%

None
- Year 1: 12.1%
- Year 2: 6.7%

Additional / Other
- Year 1: 10.3%
- Year 2: 4.0%

Legend: Year 1, Year 2

Please give some examples of what is included in the raising finances plan

External financing (e.g.. loans, donations): 22.0%

Additional revenue sources (e.g. get more fees, sell goods, services): 19.5%

Reduce spending (e.g. stop expenses, produce in house): 11.5%

Additional / other: 5.0%

No examples shared: 1.9%

Besides school and textbook fees, does your school have any other ways to generate revenue?

Category	Percentage
No	40.2%
School uniform	41.9%
School meals / canteen	28.6%
School merchandise	7.2%
School transport	12.5%
Extra-curricular options (e.g. sports; trips)	19.6%
Special events put on by school	10.9%
School premises / equipment / water offered for a fee	4.3%
Services / classes offered to community members for a fee	3.5%
After-school academic services for learners (e.g. tutoring , exam prep)	4.9%
Additional / other	12.6%

Financial Management and Budgeting

In Year 2, 93% of schools report making an annual school budget, up from 81% in Year 1. Further, 47% of schools in Year 2 are making school budgets for each school term which is a 4-point increase from Year 1.

In 39% of schools, a dedicated school bursar maintains the accounting or financial records. However, in 44% of schools, financial records are still being maintained by the school leader, indicating a gap where schools may not have enough resources to dedicate more staff to administrative roles. Ideally school leaders would not have to dedicate a significant about of time to maintaining financial records, as their time may be better spent devoted to improving academic performance or student and teacher well-being.

Key Findings

Schools are meeting expectations in their financial management and tracking practices, with more than 90% of schools now creating annual budgets. Further, 77% of schools use school fee ledgers to monitor payments and parents' debt. Despite this, only 38% of schools have had their finances reviewed by an external party, such as an auditor or accountant.
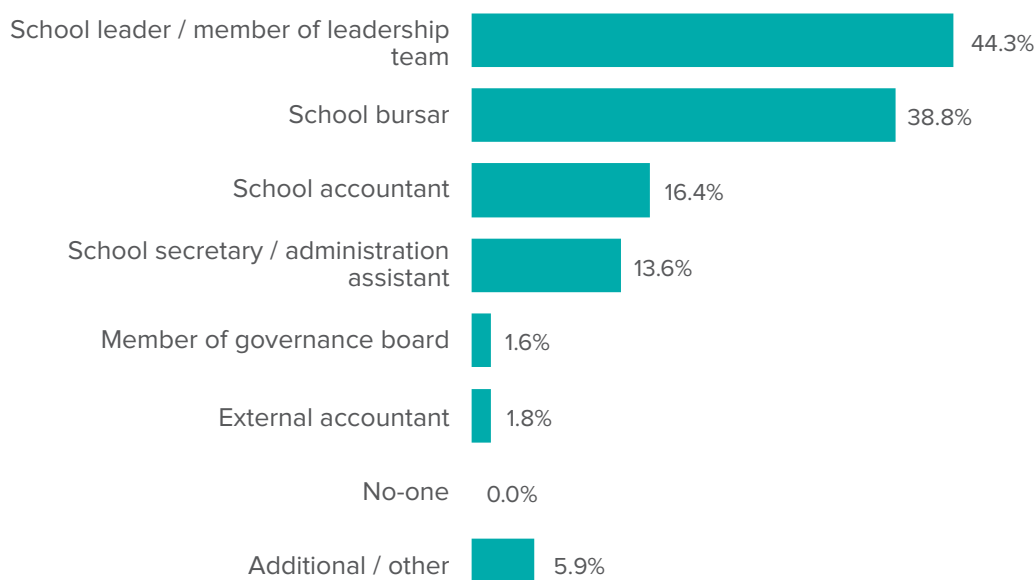
Do you make an annual school budget?

Year 1 ◼ Year 2

- Yes: 81.1% (Year 1), 92.5% (Year 2)
- No: 18.9% (Year 1), 7.5% (Year 2)
- Unknown: 0.0% (Year 1), 0.0% (Year 2)
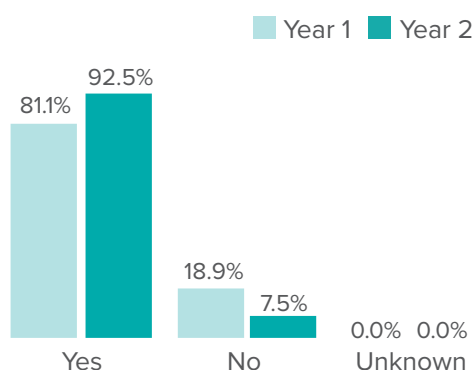
Do you make a school budget for each school term?

Year 1 ◼ Year 2

- Yes: 42.9% (Year 1), 47.1% (Year 2)
- No: 57.1% (Year 1), 52.0% (Year 2)
- Unknown: 0.0% (Year 1), 0.9% (Year 2)
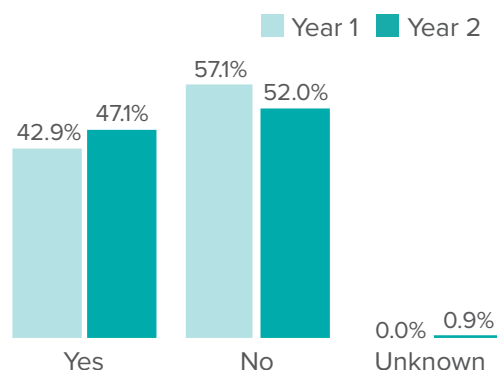
Could you specify who at your school maintains the accounting or financial records?

- School leader / member of leadership team: 44.3%
- School bursar: 38.8%
- School accountant: 16.4%
- School secretary / administration assistant: 13.6%
- Member of governance board: 1.6%
- External accountant: 1.8%
- No-one: 0.0%
- Additional / other: 5.9%

To review these financial records, 38% of schools invite an external party to review the school's accounts, out of which 30% of schools share their financial documents to an external accountant. This represents an area for improvement, as inviting external review of finances can be important sources of financial controls or accountability.

Do you ever invite someone external to review your school's budget or accounts?

- Yes: 38.2%
- No: 61.6%
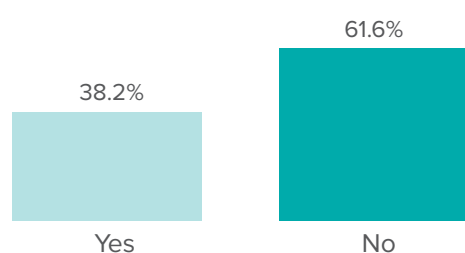
Could you please share who, outside the school has reviewed your financial documents?

29.8%	4.9%	3.3%	1.9%	1.9%	1.7%	2.0%
External accountant / auditor	Governing board	Other external advisor	PTA	Government / tax officials	Financial institution/ bank	Additional / other
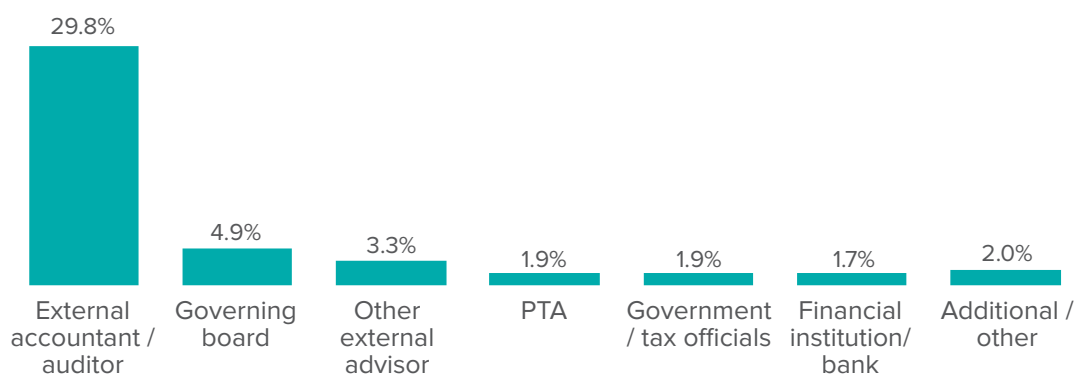
Schools are keeping relatively good financial records, with 87% of schools using receipt books for maintaining the financial records and 77% of schools using school fee ledgers. School fee ledgers, which include parent debts, are important sources of financial tracking as parental income is likely irregular, resulting in short-term losses of revenue that must be recuperated later in order for schools to maintain profits. Despite this, only 40% of schools keep income and expense statements, and only 23% maintain cash flow statements.

What types of financial records does your school currently keep, if any?

School fee ledger / log including parents' debts	76.5%
Petty cash book / log	62.8%
Income & Expense (Profit & Loss statement)	40.1%
Receipt book	86.5%
Cash Flow statement	23.3%
General Accounting Ledger (Credits & Debits)	32.4%
Balance Sheet	23.3%
I do not know	0.2%
None	0.2%
Additional / other	4.2%
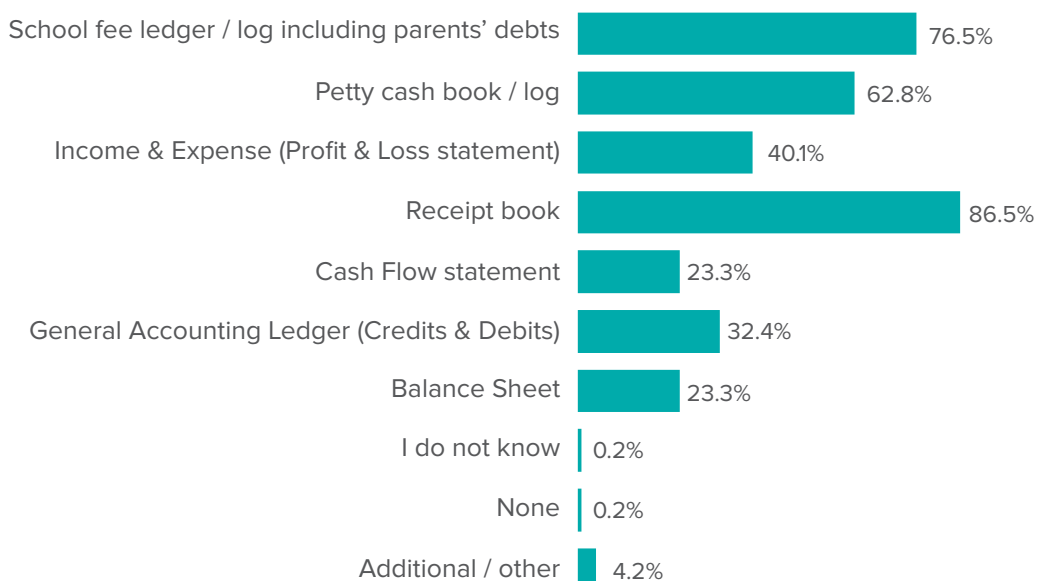
Lastly, in 75% of school's financial records are checked regularly – a positive result given research that finds when school leaders are not aware of their school's finances, this negatively impacts school revenue and sustainability.[45]

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[45] Ibid.

How do you ensure tracking and accountability of your schools revenues and expenditures, if at all?

75.0%	**45.2%**	**37.9%**	**26.6%**	**23.3%**
Financial records are checked regularly	Only certain staff handle money at the school	Cash is counted regularly / daily	Approval needed for purchases	Both teachers and bursars keep track and compare
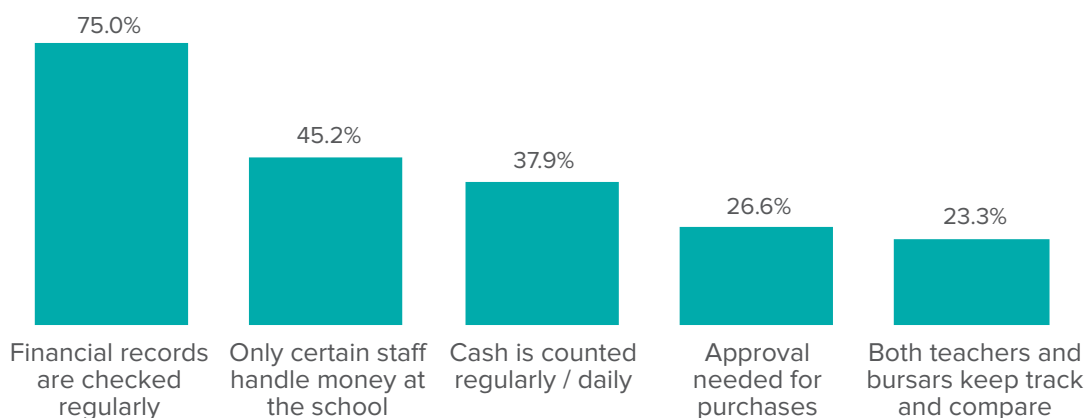
School Governance

In 54% of schools the leadership team relies "very much" on the school's financial statements when considering school's performance, reporting that financial statements are the only way through which they judge the school's performance. 31% of schools report relying "somewhat" on the financial statements to make decisions, while also relying on other evidence to make decisions accordingly. This finding emphasizes the importance of maintaining financial records to base decisions on accurate data. However, it may also be necessary to train school leaders in other forms of evidence available to them, such as student learning outcomes or parental feedback, on which to judge school performance.

In Year 2, 65% of school leaders believe that having knowledgeable school governors is the most important characteristic of an effective school governance. This has increased slightly from Year 1 and is a positive finding, as research indicates that when school leadership is knowledgeable about academic performance, it has a positive impact on student learning outcomes.[46] Further, in Year 2, 53% of schools believe that leadership should be evenly distributed among several leaders, compared to 46% in Year 1.

Key Findings

Many schools rely heavily on financial statements to make school-level decisions, demonstrating the importance of maintaining consistent, high-quality financial tracking to accurately feed into decision-making. Most schools are also demonstrating strong governance, leadership, and accountability structures.

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[46] de Hoyos et al., 2015.

How heavily do you or the leadership team rely on the school's financial statements when considering the school's performance or when making decisions for the future, such as in your SDP?
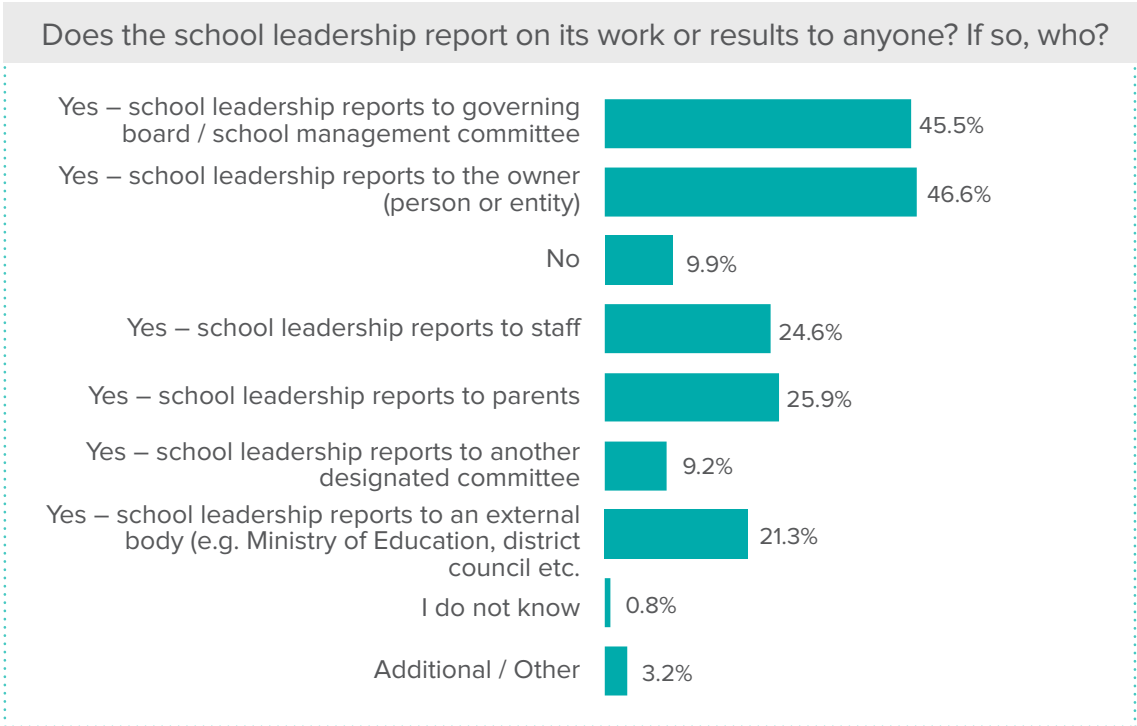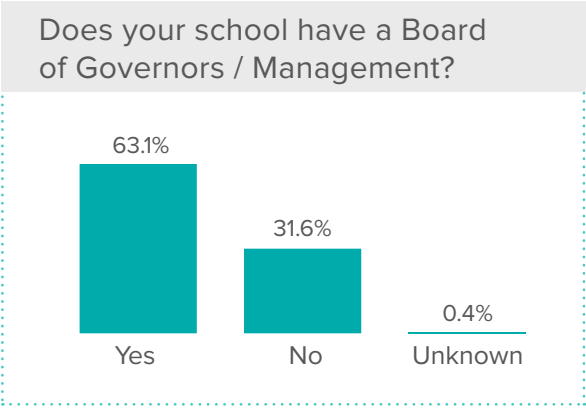
Response	Percentage
Very much: financial statements are the main or only way we judge the school's performance and make decisions	53.9%
Somewhat: we use the financial statements among other evidence for judging the school's performance and making decisions	31.0%
A little: we consider financial statements but prefer other evidence when judging the school's performance or making decisions	11.0%
Not at all: we use other evidence when judging the school's performance or making decisions	3.2%
I do not know	0.9%

What are the characteristics of effective school governance? Please name upto 3

Characteristic	Year 1	Year 2
School governors are knowledgeable (e.g. of finances, academics etc.)	62.8%	64.6%
Leadership is distributed among several leaders (e.g. academic, non academic etc.)	46.2%	52.9%
There is no corruption / dishonesty / family appointments	30.0%	47.1%
School leader is accountable to a governing board	28.3%	33.6%
I do not know	2.7%	1.8%
Additional / other	26.9%	12.1%
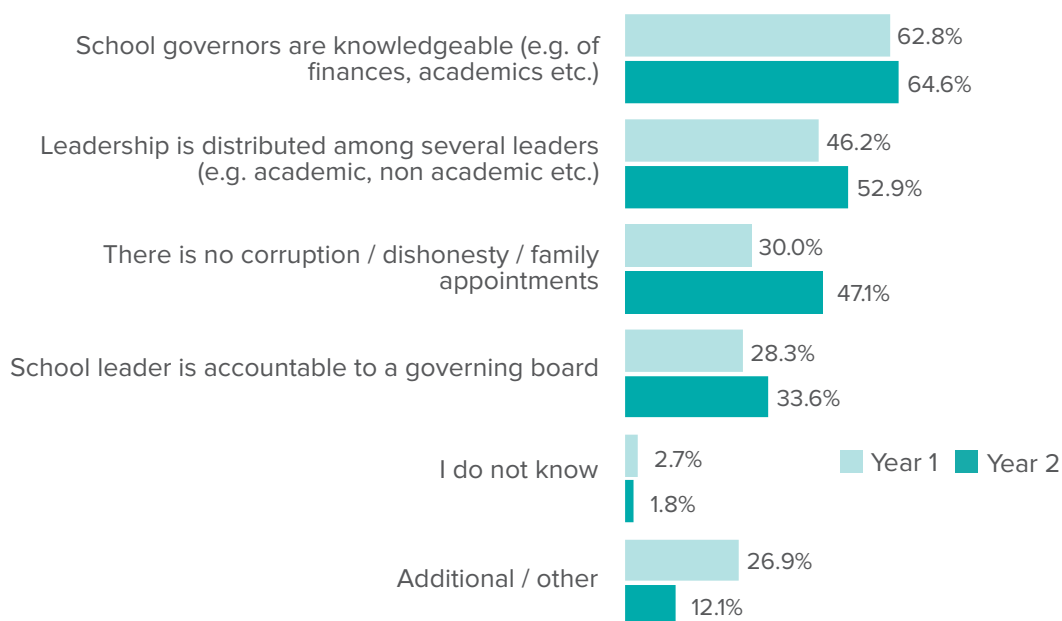
63% of schools report having a Board of Governors, and school leadership teams in 46% of schools report to the governing board or school management committee. In 47% of schools, the leadership team reports to the school owner, whereas in 26% the leadership team reports to parents. Only 21% of schools report to the Ministry of Education – indicating a high level of autonomy that is separate from

strict government regulation. While this is a positive finding – many studies find that increased school-level autonomy can have positive impacts on student learning[47] [48] – it also demonstrates the importance of creating internal accountability mechanisms and feedback loops within school communities, so that schools are held accountability to clear outcomes.[49]

Does your school have a Board of Governors / Management?

- Yes: 63.1%
- No: 31.6%
- Unknown: 0.4%

Does the school leadership report on its work or results to anyone? If so, who?

Response	%
Yes – school leadership reports to governing board / school management committee	45.5%
Yes – school leadership reports to the owner (person or entity)	46.6%
No	9.9%
Yes – school leadership reports to staff	24.6%
Yes – school leadership reports to parents	25.9%
Yes – school leadership reports to another designated committee	9.2%
Yes – school leadership reports to an external body (e.g. Ministry of Education, district council etc.	21.3%
I do not know	0.8%
Additional / Other	3.2%

Domain 2.4 Marketing and Branding

Successful marketing and branding is important to ensuring schools attract and maintain new learners. Marketing can improve a school's reputation as well. This is often done by first identifying the school's strengths, how the school is unique, and the creation of a marketing strategy. Sharing the school's mission, vision and values with the community, their learner profiles and branding also helps the school to be seen as an integral part of the community.

Schools are continuing to improve their marketing and branding strategies, and continue to recognize the factors that increase their attraction to parents and the

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[47] Allcott and Ortega, 2009.
[48] Barrera- Osorio, 2007.
[49] Crawfurd and Hares, 2021.

number of new enrolments they receive each year. Marketing and Branding average school self-assessment scores have increased by 0.5 points, from 2.1/4 in Year 1 to 2.6/4 in Year 2. 51% of schools improved their scores overall.

Attracting Parents

Schools are significantly more sensitive to the affordability of their school for families in Year 2. In Year 1, only 36% of schools ranked the 'affordability of school fees' as a top factor to how parents select a school. In Year 2, 58% of schools now report this as key to parent decision making, indicating schools are increasingly aware that offering affordable fees plays a significant role in their ability to maintain and grow enrollment.

Schools also continue to recognize the importance of academic performance as necessary to attract parents. Consistent with Year 1, 86% of schools believe academic excellence is most important factor attracting parents to schools. Only 33.6% of schools believe that positive relationships with school leadership is an important factor in attracting parents, representing a 9-point decrease from Year 1.

Key Findings

Schools have improved in their ability to recognize the factors that attract parents to their school, and their ability to communicate with parents. However, there are still gaps in schools' ability to understand their clients and customer base.

What attracts parents in your area to choose or stay at a particular school for their child? Please name upto 3 things.

Factor	Year 1	Year 2
Academic excellence / learners test scores	88.3%	85.7%
Positive experience with school leadership or staff	42.2%	33.6%
Affordability of school fees	35.9%	58.3%
School's facilities (buildings, grounds etc)	27.8%	26.0%
School's proximity to their home / workplace	19.3%	21.1%
Word of mouth / other parents' positive experience	17.5%	17.9%
School's marketing / public reputation	16.6%	13.0%
Extra-curricular programmes	9.0%	4.9%
Personal contacts at the school	8.5%	15.2%
Additional / other	18.4%	12.6%

Schools are also finding ways to communicate with parents. 61% of schools are now communicating to parents, staff, and learners through digital platforms, while 75% of schools are arranging more meetings with parents. Furthermore, 46% of schools communicate with parents during school events.

Do you have a way of communicating to parents, staff and learners that your school is special or unique?

Category	Percentage
No, we do not communicate this	2.0%
By publishing / announcing exam scores or learners' achievements	12.4%
Additional / other	14.5%
Through posters / displays / slogans	18.7%
In newsletters	27.5%
During school events / assemblies	46.2%
In digital platforms / emails / text messages	60.7%
During school events / assemblies	74.7%
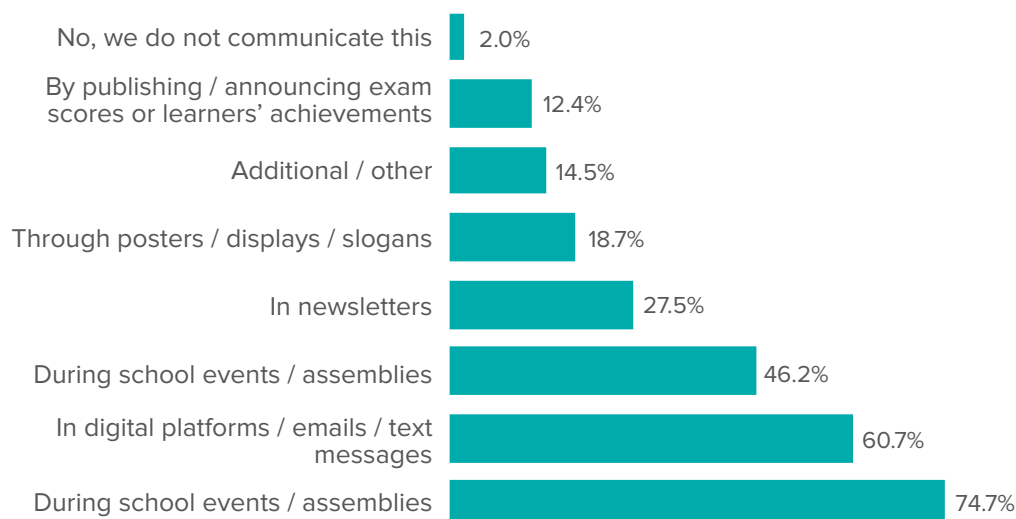
Despite this, many schools still struggle to understand their clients, with 48% of school leaders unable to describe the type of customers they target as a school. Only 38% could describe their parents' income level, while only 31% knew where their students lived. Given the importance of these factors in being able to attract new students, this represents an area for improvement among school leaders. Improved communication with parents represents an area of opportunity for school leaders to learn about the families their school is serving. Further, tailored engagement with parents is consistently found to have positive impacts on student learning.[50] [51]

Could you describe the type of customers you target as a school?

Category	Percentage
No / don't know	47.7%
Describes parents' income level / job type	37.5%
Describes proximity to the school	31.1%
Describes family / parent characteristics	10.8%
Describes children's characteristics	6.5%
Additional / other	6.2%
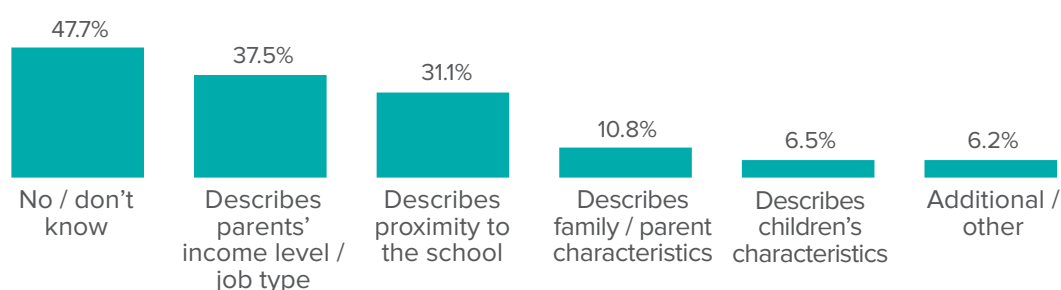
[50] Acholla, 2021.
[51] Read and Atinc, 2016.

Improved Marketing Channels

All the schools are performing various activities as a part of school marketing and reaching out to the community. 47% of schools are using brochures as a part of school marketing, and 36% of schools are using visible displays outside the school. Moreover 36% of schools engage parents as school ambassadors, and 35% of schools are now using teachers as school ambassadors. In addition, 27% of schools are now conducting open school events such as sports, performances. Other forms of engagement include radio ads (20%), website and social media (12%), and TV ads (6%). In addition to increasing the school's enrollments and reputation, this wide range of community engagement and events likely has many positive impacts on fostering a strong school culture and positive learning outcomes in students.

Key Findings

Schools use a wide variety of activities to market their school to potential customers, including engaging parents and teachers as school ambassadors, holding events, and using visible displays such as posters, flyers, and brochures.

Could you give some examples of activities or items that you have done as part of school marketing and reaching out to the community, if any?

Activity	Percentage
Brochures / flyers	47.1%
Posters / billboard ads	36.4%
Using parents as school ambassadors	31.0%
Using teachers / staff as school ambassadors	35.3%
Visible displays outside school / on school walls	35.7%
Participation in or holding community events / meetings	21.4%
Radio ads	20.4%
Website / social media	12.3%
Offering community service	11.4%
Sharing learners' exam scores or other achievements	13.4%
Open school events / celebrations (sports performance etc.)	26.8%
None	4.1%
TV ads	5.8%
Additional / other	16.0%

Domain 2.5 School Leadership and Governance

Improvements to school leadership and governance has been shown to lead to significant positive impact on student learning outcomes.[52] Effective leadership and governance are vital for a school to maintain its high standards. School leadership roles should be clearly defined – with a clear senior leadership team, curriculum subject leaders and departments to support school operations. A governing body should be involved in school development planning (SDP) along with other members of the community. SDPs should focus on tangible improvements in particular target areas of the school.

School leaders continue to improve their school leadership and governance school self-assessment scores, with average scores increasing from 2.0/4 in Year 1 to 2.4/4 in Year 2 out of 4. Overall, 49% of schools improved their score.

School Leadership Team

In Year 2, 20% of schools reported that school directors were on the leadership team, and 20% of schools reported a headteacher on their leadership team. Moreover, in 14% schools the academic leaders are chosen of the staff members to form a leadership team. In Year 2, teachers are involved in the leadership team in 7% of schools, an increase from only 3% of schools in Year 1.

Key Findings

Headteachers, school directors, and academic leaders were most often cited as being a member of the leadership team. More schools are involving teachers in their leadership team, but teachers are still less likely to be actively involved.

Could you specify everyone who forms your leadership team?

Role	Year 2	Year 1
Additional / other	2.9%	3.7%
HR / staff welfare manager	0.0%	0.4%
Other finance / business leader	3.3%	1.9%
Special committees	3.7%	2.5%
Teacher/s	6.8%	2.9%
Parent / community member	2.9%	3.2%
Operations staff (e.g. accounting...)	3.0%	4.3%
Deputy headteacher/s	0.0%	6.0%
Heads of department	8.3%	10.7%
Other instructional / academic leader	14.8%	12.7%
Other instructional / academic leader	14.8%	12.7%
School director	20.4%	18.2%
Headteacher	19.2%	20.8%

[52] Mbiti et al., 2019.

Decision-making Processes and Feedback Loops

In 80% of schools, the school leader plays a key role in making decisions, a 6% increase from Year 1. Further, in 65% of schools, the school leadership team also plays an important role in decision-making, consistent with Year 1. School leaders also report seeking advice from other parties when making school-level decisions, including the leadership team (72%), staff and teachers (56%), parents (37%), the school governance board (26%), and Education Specialists that lead the EduQuality program (17%). The involvement of teachers in 56% of schools is important given the large amount of research that finds that involving teachers in decisions can have positive impacts on teacher motivation and performance.[53] The involvement of parents in 37% of schools is a positive finding but represents room for improvement, given the evidence from existing research demonstrates that involving parents in school-level decisions can lead to improved learning outcomes for students.[54] [55]

Key Findings

Across all schools, school leaders continue to lead the decision-making processes. However, school leaders are making strong improvements in soliciting feedback from other parties and involving teachers and parents in the decisions of the school. More than 87% of school leaders also hold one-on-one annual performance reviews with teachers to provide individualized feedback.

Who makes important decisions at your school or, if more than one person, how are they made?

	Year 1	Year 2
By school owner / proprietor or leader	74.4%	80.3%
By school leadership team	63.2%	64.6%
In consultation with staff	29.1%	26.0%
By board of governors / school management committee	28.7%	21.5%
By PTA committee or in consultation with parents	18.8%	13.9%
In consultation with learner	4.5%	3.1%
By other designated school committees	3.6%	2.2%
Additional / other	3.1%	2.2%

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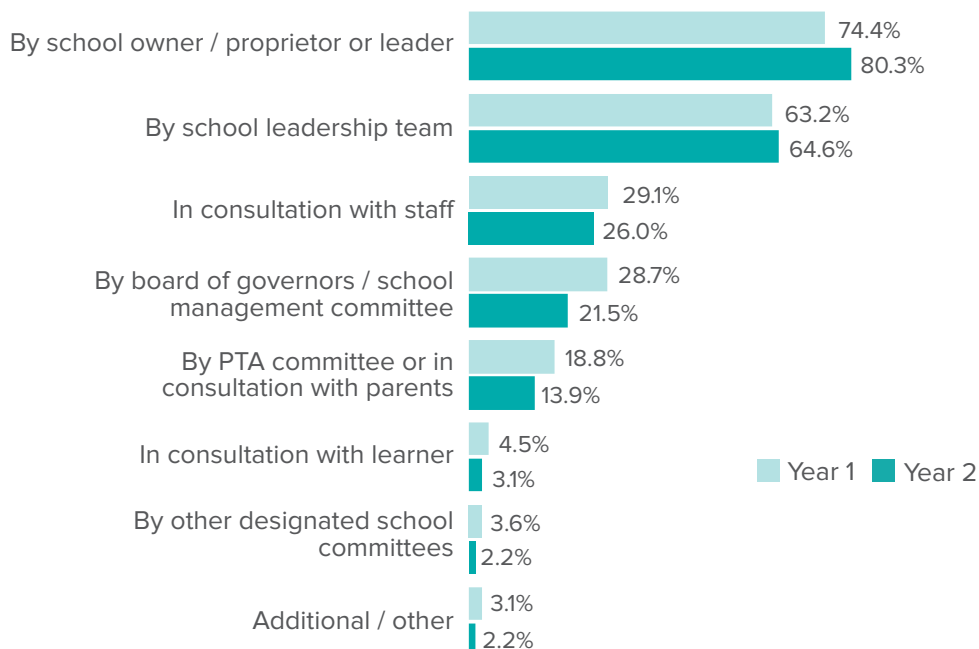
[53] World Bank, 2011.
[54] Barr et al., 2012.
[55] Read & Atinc, 2016.

Whose opinions, if any, do you seek when you develop school processes or operations?

Leadership team	71.5%
Staff/teachers	55.7%
Parents /PTA	37.3%
Governance board	25.8%
Coaches /mentors /outside specialists	8.6%
Learner /learner reps	7.6%
Edu-Specialist	17.2%
No-one	1.0%
Additional /other	5.7%
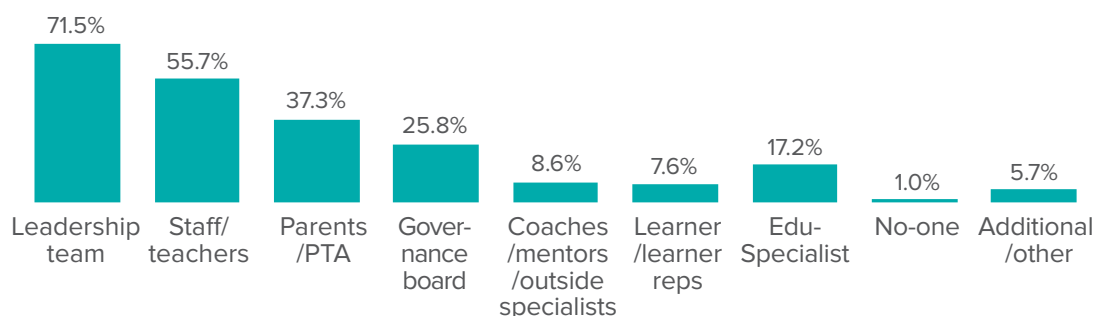
How often do you typically seek opinions of your staff when developing school processes or operations?
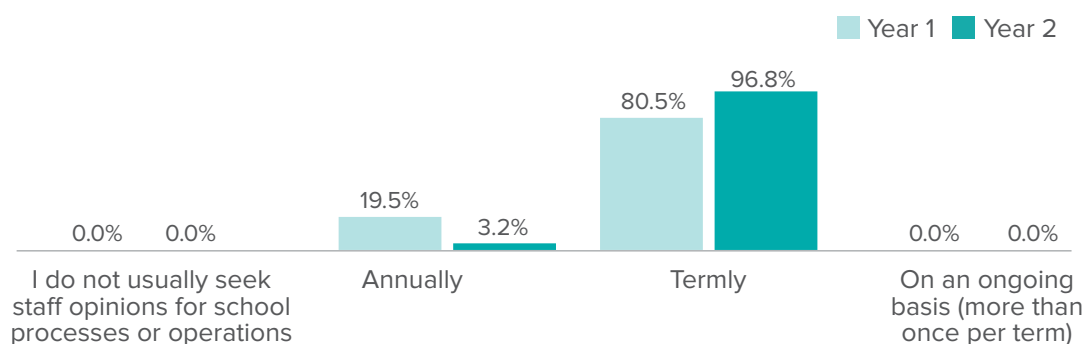
Legend: Year 1 | Year 2

	Year 1	Year 2
I do not usually seek staff opinions for school processes or operations	0.0%	0.0%
Annually	19.5%	3.2%
Termly	80.5%	96.8%
On an ongoing basis (more than once per term)	0.0%	0.0%

In Year 2, 97% of schools seek opinions of the staff every term when developing school processes or operations, a 16% increase from Year 1. This improvement is important given the positive impacts of involving teachers in school decisions, as cited across research.[56] Further, 87% of school leadership teams are holding formal one-on-one performance reviews with each teacher annually, and research finds this is critical to improving teacher performance.[57] [58]

Does a member of the leadership team hold a formal one-to-one performance review or appraisal meeting with each teacher annually?

Yes	No
87.4%	12.3%
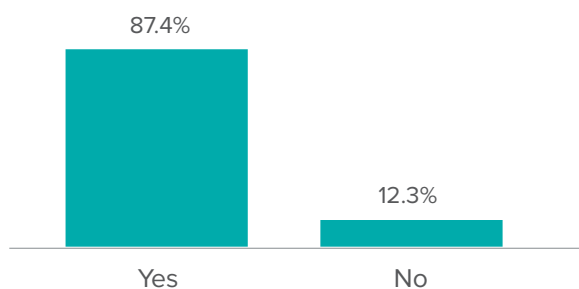
[56] Carr-Hill et al., 2015.
[57] Sampat et al., 2020.
[58] Allier-Gagner et al, 2020.

Domain 2.6 Teacher Development and Oversight

Many studies have highlighted the importance of teachers providing regular, tailored feedback to students, and this has been shown to be result in improved student learning outcomes.[59] EduFinance teachers' ability and willingness to provide tailored student feedback is thus a critical component of P2E, and schools saw numerous improvements between Year 1 and Year 2.

Further, existing research indicates that one of the most effective ways school leaders can improve learning outcomes is by developing teachers through coaching and regular feedback.[60] Rather than focusing on general oversight, audits, or administration, the most effective school leaders training programs include topics such as how to give effective feedback to teachers, utilizing classroom observation to improve teacher performance, and methods for teacher coaching and mentorship, all of which emphasize the teacher-student relationship.[61] [62] School leaders have improved their capacity in this area, by giving regular, one-on-one feedback to teachers to improve their teaching methods, alongside additional professional development. In the past year, average school self-assessment scores increased by 0.5, from 2.4/4 in Year 1 to 2.9/4 in Year 2, and 50% of schools improved their overall score.

Feedback to Learners

Almost all schools report their teachers have been instructed to provide feedback to learners, with only 2% of schools reporting they do not give any such instructions to teachers. The types of learner feedback schools have been instructed to provide include weaknesses and areas for improvement (91%), steps to take for improvement (89%), learner strengths (60%), and avoiding negative comments (24%). All of these categories have seen strong improvements from Year 1. Further follow-up is needed to ensure teachers are implementing these instructions in their classrooms, but initial findings from classroom observations (see *Section VI*) highlight teachers' initial steps towards providing learner feedback and areas for improvement.

> **Key Findings**
>
> More than 90% of schools instruct teachers to give feedback to learners, which is — according to rigorous research — one of the most important elements of teaching that can lead to improved learning outcomes.

[59] Angrist et al, 2020.
[60] World Development Report, 2018.
[61] Nannyonjo, 2017.
[62] Grissom et al., 2013.

Have the teachers at your school been instructed to give feedback to learners? If so, what?

Category	Year 1	Year 2
Feedback should include weaknesses / areas for improvement	83.0%	91.0%
Feedback should include steps to take for improvement	78.8%	89.2%
Feedback should include learner's strengths	55.2%	60.4%
Feedback should not include negative or rude comments	12.7%	24.1%
We did not / do not give any guidance	2.4%	1.9%
Additional / other	10.8%	2.8%

Year 1 **Year 2**
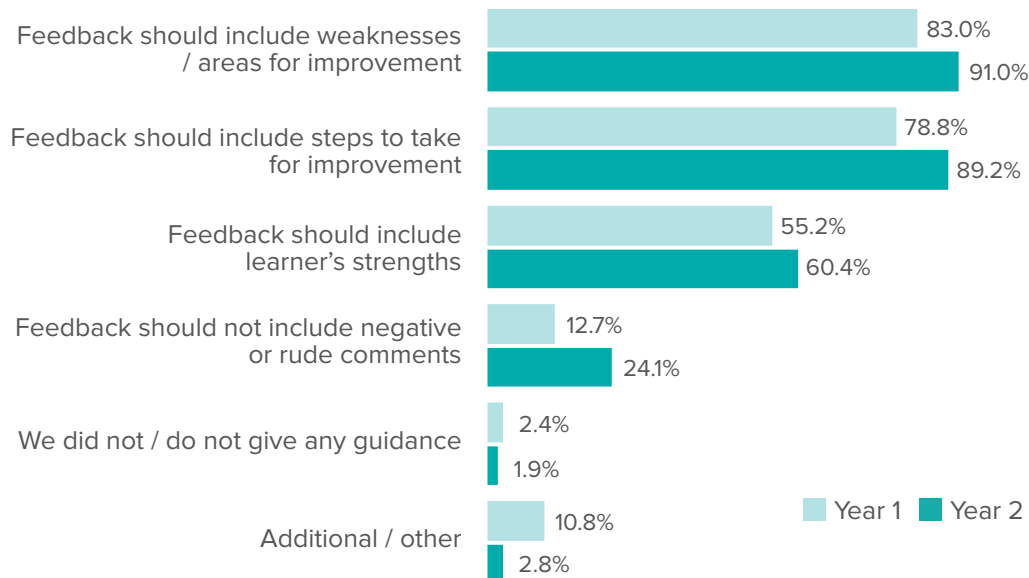
Providing Professional Development and Tailored Feedback for Teachers

School leaders are becoming more responsible in providing teacher development, which studies find results in a positive learning environment and improved student outcomes.[63] In Year 2, 95% of schools provide professional development support to the staff, an increase of 9 percentage points from Year 1. Out of these schools, 54% of school leaders provide in-school training, which is a 12 percentage-point increase from Year 1.

Please explain the kind or format of professional development opportunities that are provided

Category	Year 1	Year 2
In-school training / workshops by school leaders / teacher mentors	42.6%	53.8%
Lesson observation and feedback	17.5%	33.2%

Year 1 **Year 2**
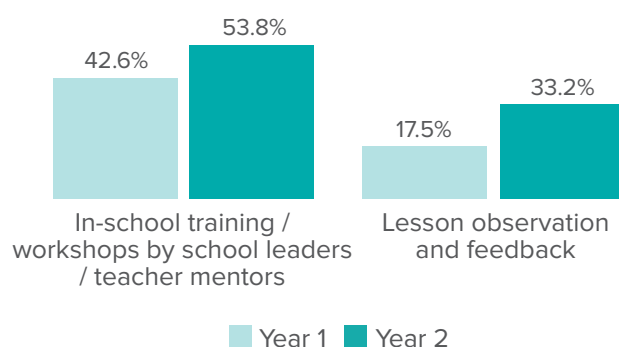
Key Findings

More than 9 out of 10 schools provide professional development support to the teachers across a variety of topics, including teaching strategies, lesson planning and classroom behaviour. School leaders also provide frequent, tailored feedback to teachers on their performance, and strategies for improvement.

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[63] Westbrook et al., 2013..

The format of professional development provided in schools is a positive finding, as research emphasizes the importance of providing teacher training in an environment that allows teachers to see, test, and apply new teaching practices in the context of their own classroom.[64] As such, in-school training programs have been found to be more effective than training workshops at an external venue, as teachers can more easily understand training content in the context of their own schools.[65] Further, providing professional development alongside classroom or lesson observations is critical, as it allows school leaders to provide feedback specific to teachers' classroom experience, which helps teachers apply their learnings to a real-world classroom scenario.[66]

Various professional development topics are being covered, including teaching strategies and pedagogy, lesson planning, national curriculum standards, and leadership and soft skills. Research shows that professional development for teachers is most effective when it focuses on improving teaching strategies, pedagogy, and lesson planning.[67] In schools, teaching strategies, lesson planning and classroom behaviour were the most recently covered topics for professional development. Teaching strategies were covered in 66% of schools in Year 2 which is an increase of 5% from Year 1. Along with that, leadership and soft skills were covered in 19% of schools in Year 2 with a 10% increase from Year 1. However, lesson planning was covered in only 36% of schools in Year 2 which is slightly lower by 6 percentage points from Year 1. Given the importance of professional development in lesson planning for improving learning outcomes for students, this represents an area for school leaders to prioritize in the coming years.

Lastly, in Year 2 nearly 30% of school leaders covered national curriculum standards in teacher professional development, representing a 21.5 percentage-point increase from Year 1. This large increase is a positive improvement, as it is critical private schools cover the same curriculum as public schools in order for students to continue their academic progression and eligibility for national exams.[68] [69]

In addition to providing professional development, school leaders are showing increased awareness of the characteristics of a successful teacher. 61% of respondents now believe knowing how to work with children is the most important characteristic, an increase of 5 percentage points from Year 1. Moreover, 55% of respondents believe being trustworthy is also important, an increase of 20 percentage points from Year 1. 49% believe knowing his/her subject is also important, an increase of 17 percentage points from Year 1.

Lastly, school leaders are improving in their capacity to provide consistent, tailored feedback to teachers on their performance. Numerous studies have found that the ability of a school leader to provide constructive, individualized feedback to teachers is one of the most effective ways for school leaders to

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[64] Popova et al., 2016.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Wilichowski and Popova, 2021.
[67] Westbrook et al., 2013.
[68] Baum et al., 2018.
[69] Abdul-Hamid et al., 2015.

directly impact student learning outcomes.[70][71] School leaders continue to show enthusiasm in giving frequent feedback to teachers. Around 72% of schools provide individual feedback to teachers at least twice per term, while 25% provide feedback once per term. 65% of headteachers are actively engaged in providing individual feedback to teachers. Moreover, 41% of school directors are also involved in providing feedback to teachers.

Please name upto 3 of the most recent professional development topics covered at your school.

Topic	Year 1	Year 2
Teacher strategies / pedagogy	61.0%	66.4%
Lesson planning	41.7%	36.3%
Classroom behaviour management	35.4%	32.3%
Child protection / health & safety	19.3%	13.5%
Leadership skills / soft skills (e.g. communication)	9.0%	19.3%
Financial management	8.5%	15.2%
Curriculum / national standards	7.6%	29.1%
Classroom environment	6.7%	13.9%
Additional / other	15.2%	9.0%
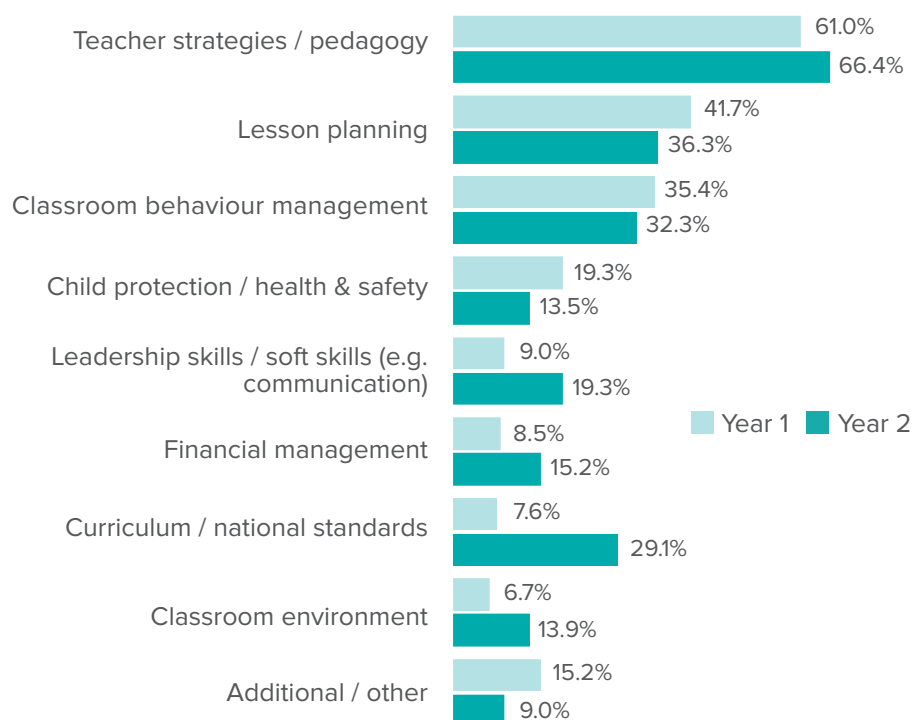
In your view, what are the most important characteristics of a successful teacher that you want to see at your school? Top 5

Characteristic	Year 1	Year 2
Knows how to work with children	56.5%	61.4%
Professional and trustworthy	35.4%	55.2%
Knows their subject	32.3%	48.9%
Able to collaborate	18.4%	25.1%
Strong classroom management skills	17.0%	22.4%
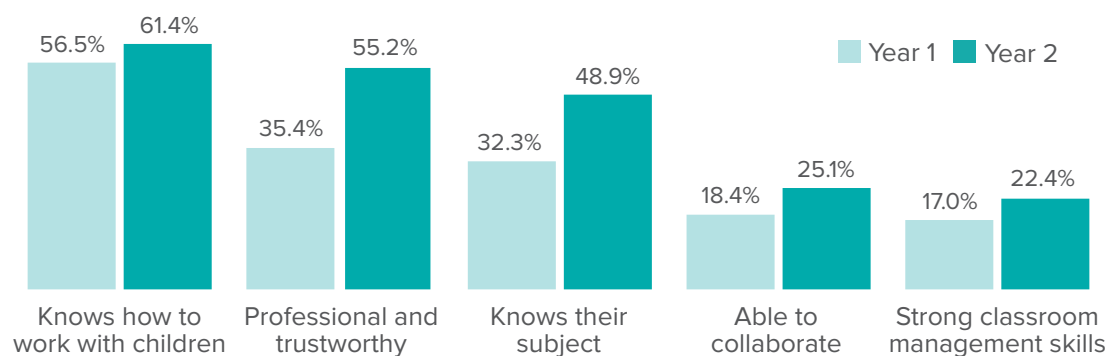
[70] Fryer, 2017.
[71] World Development Report, 2018.

Who on the school leadership team gives ongoing feedback to teachers? Top 4

Headteacher	64.4%
Administrative leader	40.6%
Other instructional /academic leader	27.9%
Head of department	11.5%

How often do teachers at your school receive individual performance feedback?

Never	0.3%
Occasionally (once per year)	3.1%
Regularly (once per term)	25.1%
Head of department	71.5%
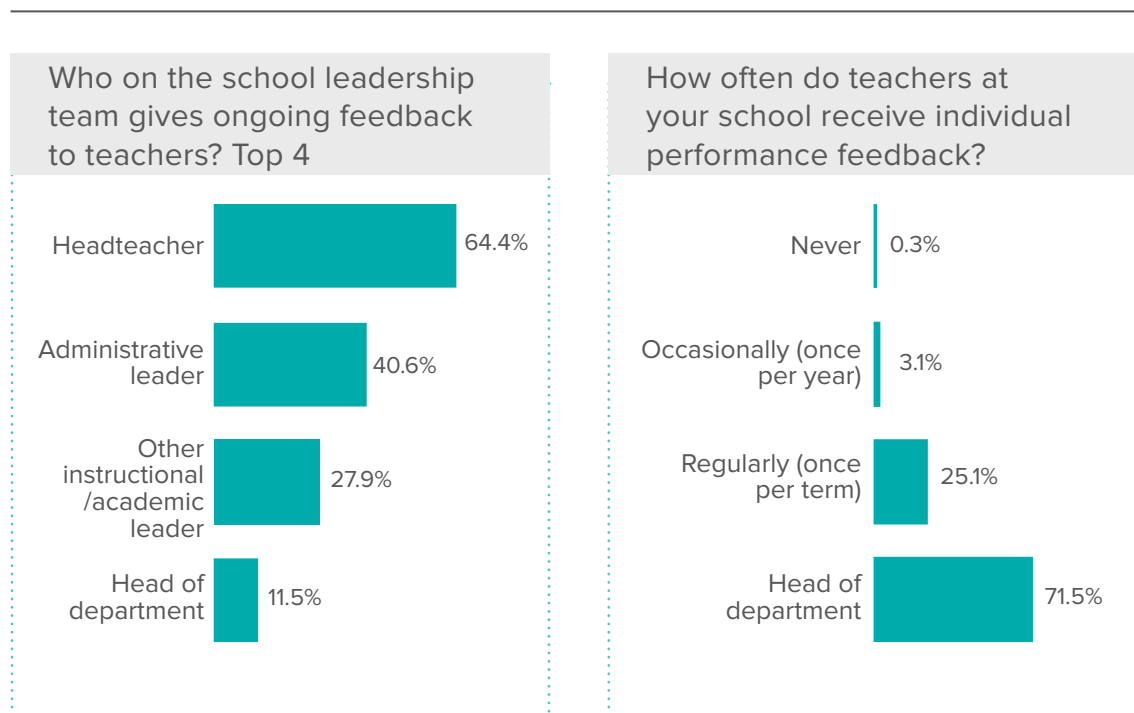
The type of feedback teachers receive varies across schools, with most school leaders (60%) providing feedback on teachers' individual weaknesses and areas for improvement, and 51% providing feedback on their teaching methods. Further 48% provide concrete next steps for improvement, 47% provide encouragement and highlight areas of strength, and 45% provide feedback on teachers' lesson plans. Only 27% provide feedback on classroom management and 26% provide feedback on classroom materials used, representing some areas for improvement.

What type of on the quality of teaching do your teachers receive after observations, if any?

Their strength / encouragement is given	47.2%
Their weakness	60.2%
Feedback on their teaching methods	51.2%
Feedback on their lesson plan / lesson notes	44.8%
Next steps for improvement	48.1%
Feedback on their materials	25.7%
Feedback on their classroom / behaviour management	26.5%
None	0.1%
Additional / other	2.6%
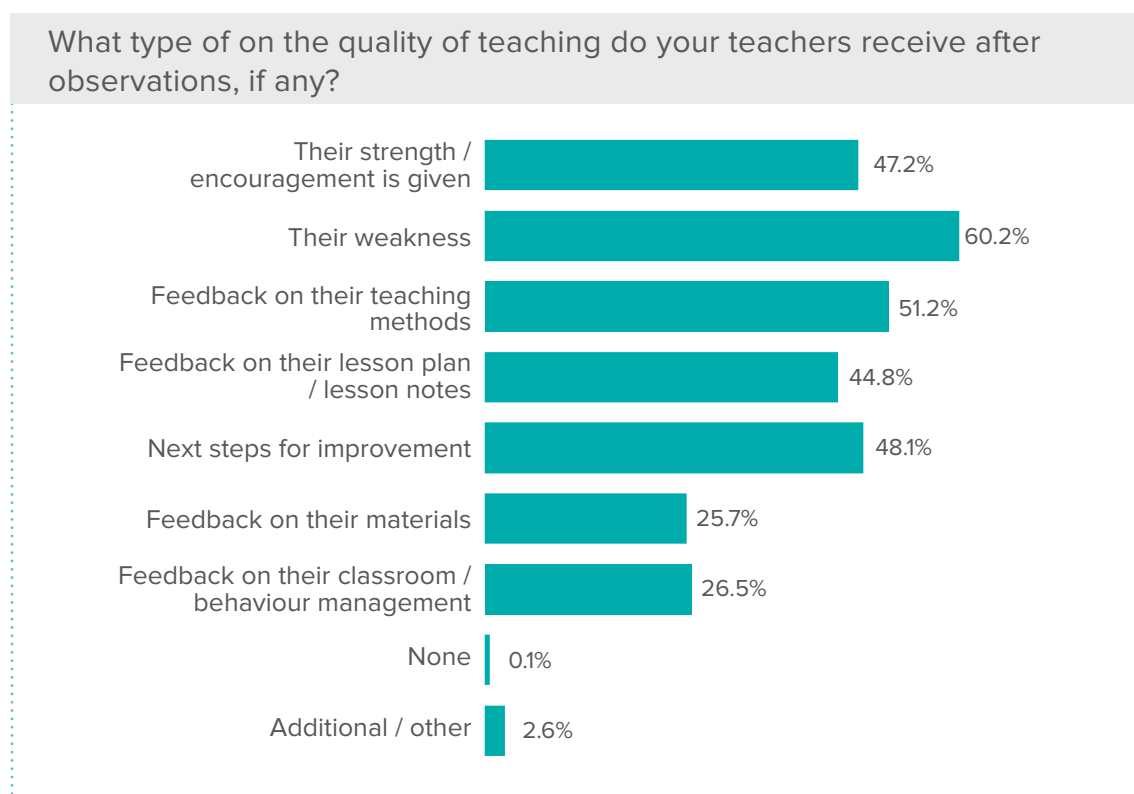
Cross-cutting Findings, Lessons Learned, and Areas for Future Research

▶ **School leaders demonstrate autonomy over decision-making:** Across all 6 domains, school leaders demonstrate a high level of autonomy when it comes to making decisions around teacher recruitment, financial management, and other matters of school governance. 80% of schools report that it is the school leader who makes important decisions at the school, and only 21% of schools report their results to the Ministry of Education or another government entity. This is a common occurrence in many low-cost private schools, with research highlighting how low-cost private schools tend to have more autonomy than public schools that must adhere to top-down forms of school management led by the government.[72] Research shows that having more autonomy over decisions may be one factor that leads to low-cost private schools successfully improving learning outcomes.[73] However, to see successful results, it is critical that this school-level autonomy is paired with internal accountability mechanisms as discussed below.

▶ **The use of feedback and accountability mechanisms is increasing, but not fully integrated by a majority of schools:** As noted in *Section IV: School Culture*, schools employ a variety of accountability mechanisms and engage multiple stakeholders in reporting and feedback streams. Along with engaging parents and teachers as highlighted in the School Culture results, School Management domain results revealed several other feedback mechanisms including: inviting external accountants to review the schools finances (38%), evenly distributing leadership tasks between multiple members of the leadership team (53%), involving a governing board to which the school leader is held accountable (46%), seeking feedback from teachers (56%) and parents (37%) when developing school processes, and reporting school results to outside entities such as parents (26%) or another external committee (9%). These accountability channels are critical to success – however, despite the wide range of accountability mechanisms being employed by schools, there are still significant gaps as in most cases, less than half of all schools are using these methods.

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[72] Scur et al. 2018.
[73] Barrera- Osorio, 2007.

▶ **Schools are increasingly investing in teachers, but can still improve by offering more career progression and standardized salary scales:** Schools are seeing positive results in their ability to recruit qualified teachers and provide training and professional development, with 91% of schools in Year 2 reporting their teachers have official teaching qualifications, 95% of schools providing teacher professional development opportunities, and 87% of schools providing annual one-on-one performance reviews with teachers. Professional development for teachers covers several important topics, including teaching strategies and pedagogy, lesson planning, national curriculum standards, and leadership and soft skills. These are all topics that existing research has highlighted as being the most effective professional development topics for teachers that contribute to improving student learning.[74] However, despite these positive findings, there are still gaps in schools' ability to motivate and empower teachers through career progression and by involving them in school decision-making, as less than half of schools have a standard salary scale or career progression, and only 56% involve teachers in school-level decision-making. Further, as noted in *Section VI* below, teachers are still facing challenges in translating their training and professional development into tangible improvements in the classroom.

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[74] Westbrook et al. 2013.

VI. Area 3:
Teaching and Learning

The third and final area of P2E supports school leaders and teachers in strengthening **teaching and learning practices**, such as improving lesson planning and delivery, assessing learner levels, providing learner-centred teaching, and accessing teaching materials and resources.

Overall, changes in teaching practice have been positive, especially with regard to teachers placing lessons within the curriculum, and being more proactive about utilising the results from assessments to adjust teaching strategies. Between Year 1 and 2, schools increased their Teaching & Learning domain scores an average of 0.5 points year-on-year (out of a 4-point scale). These results are consistent with average improvements in the other two domains. *Learner-Centred Teaching* had the highest point increase (0.6/4), while *Teaching & Learning Resources* and *Early Childhood* had the smallest point increase at 0.47/4 out of 4.

Area 3: Teaching & Learning – Changes in School Self-Assessment Scores

3.1 Teaching and Learning Resources
- Year 1: 2.4
- Year 2: **2.8**

3.2 Lesson Planning and Delivery
- Year 1: 2.5
- Year 2: **3.0**

3.3 Assessment of Learning
- Year 1: 2.4
- Year 2: **2.9**

3.4 Learner-Centred Teaching and Learning
- Year 1: 2.5
- Year 2: **3.1**

3.5 School Curriculum
- Year 1: 2.3
- Year 2: **2.9**

3.6 Early Childhood
- Year 1: 2.3
- Year 2: **2.8**

Year 1   Year 2
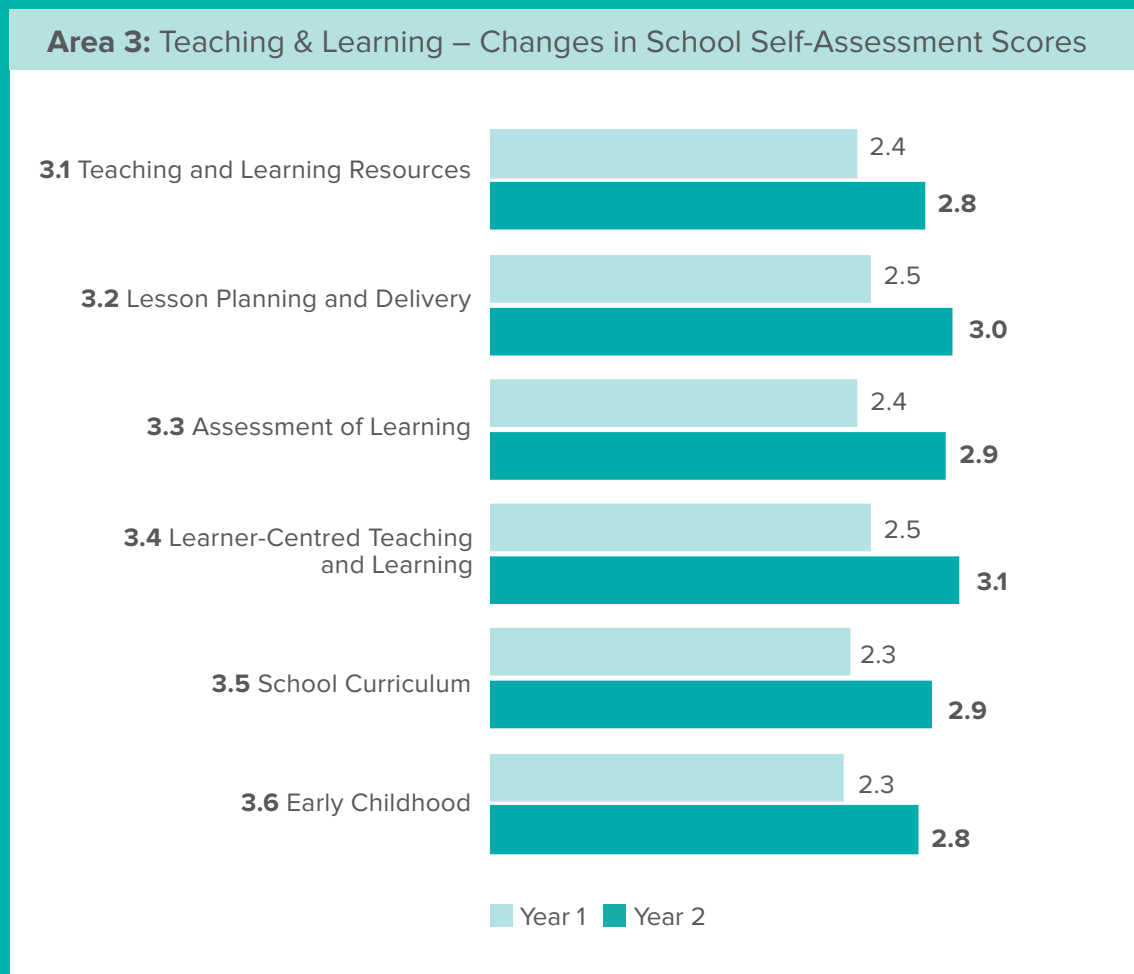
Domain 3.1 Teaching and Learning Resources

Resources are critical to quality education. Learners need access to basic resources such as exercise books, pens, and pencils. School leaders can set quality standards for displays in classrooms that are conducted by teachers and they can allocate budgets for more advanced resources – such as science and ICT equipment/ extra-curriculars.

Available Materials

When faced with a limited budget, school leaders will most often source materials that are cheapest and most convenient. 25% of schools said they would source materials that are easiest to acquire, while 23% said they would get the cheapest materials available. Moreover, only 20% said they would source materials based on the resources that were most effective for learner performance, while 19% would source materials based on identified needs.

Key Findings

When faced with a limited budget, school leaders will most often source materials that are cheapest and most convenient. ICT is becoming more available, but is still primarily accessed only by staff, and very few schools have ICT available for student use.

If you had a limited budget, how would your school decide which teaching and learning materials to invest into?

Resources that are easiest to get	25.0%
Resources that are cheapest	23.0%
Resources most effective for learner performance	19.6%
Based on needs identified	18.9%
Based on opinions of school community	7.4%
Based on opinions of external stakeholders	5.4%
Based on other information	0.7%

This finding presents an area for further research to better understand how teachers are using these newly acquired materials in their classroom. While many studies show that provision of resources and materials are important for student learning,[75] others highlight that it is not the materials on their own that contribute to learning outcomes – rather, it is the teacher's ability to effectively utilize these materials.[76] As such, it may be the case that cheap and convenient resources can still be highly effective so long as teachers understand how best to integrate these resources in their teaching. Additional classroom observations may help build greater understanding of how well teachers are utilizing materials to improve learning.

With regard to ICT equipment, the percentage of schools with office computers for staff in offices and teachers in classrooms has increased, from 54% in Year 1 to 61% in Year 2. Further, the availability of ICT for teachers for in-classroom use increased slightly, from 9% to 14%, and the percentage of schools reporting no ICT available has also fallen slightly, from 30% to 27%. However, despite these positive findings, the ICT equipment that is available for *student* use has fallen overall. The percentage of schools with a computer lab for student use fell from 33% in Year 1 to 30% in Year 2, while the percent of schools reporting individual ICT for learners for in-classroom use fell from 11% to 5%. There are also slight gender differences, with 34% of female school owners reporting their school has no access to ICT equipment, compared to only 21% of male school owners.

Further, rates of ICT availability being reported by school leaders appear to be slightly higher than what was revealed by classroom observations conducted by the EduFinance M&E team. According to classroom observations, ICT equipment was not available for individual learners for in-classroom use in any classrooms in Year 2, and was only available in classrooms for whole-class use in 3% of the classrooms surveyed.

Cheap and convenient resources can still be **highly effective** so long as teachers understand how best to integrate these resources in their teaching.

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[75] McEwan, 2013.
[76] Ganimian and Murnane, 2016.

What kind of ICT is available at your school (either in the classroom or shared outside the classroom), if any?

Category	Year 1	Year 2
Office computers for leaders or staff	53.8%	60.5%
Computer lab	32.7%	30.0%
None	29.6%	27.4%
Teachers use their personal ICT	13.5%	13.0%
Individual ICT for learners for in-classroom use	10.8%	5.4%
Overhead projectors / TVs for class	10.8%	10.8%
ICT for teachers for in-classroom use	8.5%	13.5%
Learners use their personal ICT	0.4%	0.4%
Additional / other	4.0%	5.8%
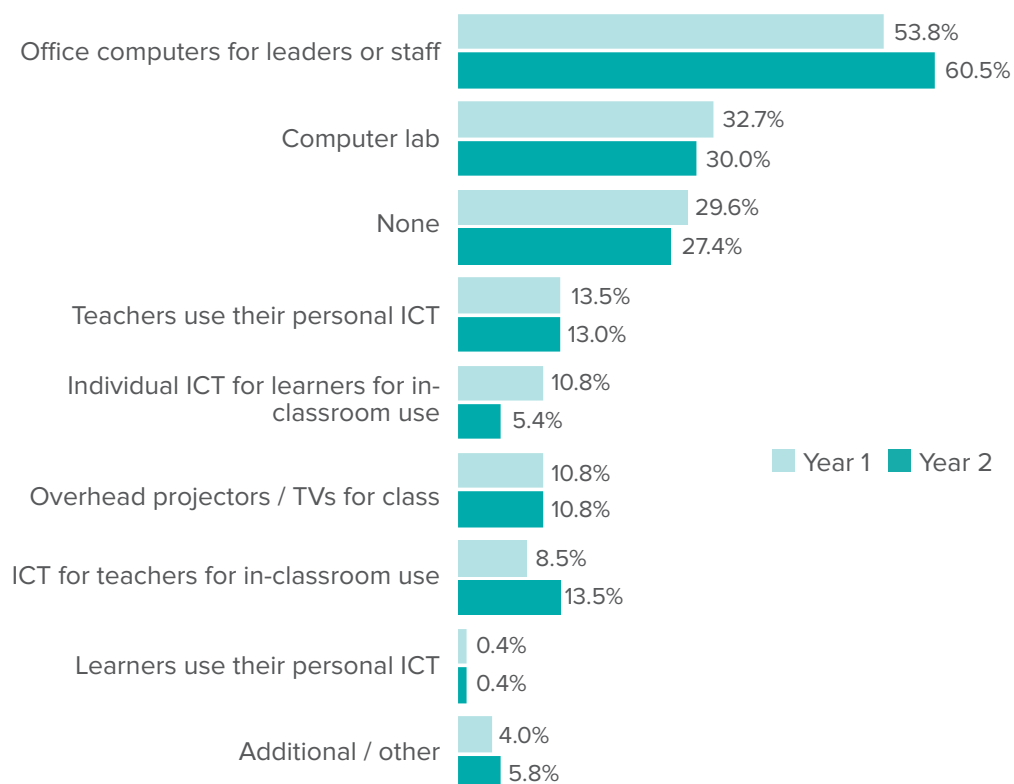
OBSERVATIONS ON ICT USE

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
ICT available for individual learner use	1%	0%
ICT available for individual learner use – was used	1%	0%
ICT available for whole class use	2%	3%
ICT available for whole class use – was used	1%	2%

Domain 3.2 Lesson Planning and Delivery

Lesson planning and delivery is one of the most critical components of teaching that impacts student academic performance. When teachers prepare lessons in advance and follow structured lessons plans during teaching, this has been found to produce large gains in student learning.[77] [78] Studies also highlight the importance of classroom observation as an important element of teacher professional development that contributes to improved learning.[79] For example, one study on teacher professional development in Kenya found that training was more effective in improving student learning when it was paired with in-classroom feedback received by trainers who observed lessons in the classroom.[80]

Schools have made strong improvements in lesson planning and in incorporating classroom observation, but some gaps remain.

Lesson Planning and Observation

More than 95% of school leaders conduct regular classroom observations and 83% of schools observe teachers at least once a month. 42% of schools report that they observe their teachers every 1-2 weeks, 27% conduct observations once per month, and 14% conduct observations more than once a week. Only 16% only carry out classroom observations once per term. This consistent commitment to classroom observation is a strong indicator of improved teacher quality and student learning.

88% of school leaders report that their teachers always use lesson plans. This is up from 84% in Year 1 and is a strong indicator of improved learning in classrooms. Only 0.4% of school leaders say their teachers never use lesson plans.

Despite this finding, the percentage of school leaders *reporting* lesson plan use is **higher than what is witnessed in classroom observations carried out by the EduFinance M&E team. In these classroom observations, only 43% of teachers** were observed to have a lesson plan, an increase of 21 percentage points from Year 1. This indicates that school leaders may either be unaware of features that determine an adequate lesson plan, or simply not observing their classrooms enough to correctly

Key Findings

School leaders conduct regular classroom observations, with 83% of schools observing teachers at least once a month. Between Years 1 and 2, teachers made progress in their use of lesson planning, but lesson planning should continue to be a focus in teacher development and mentorship so teachers can strengthen skills in this area.

[77] Allier-Gagner et al, 2020.
[78] Haßler et al, 2020.
[79] Bruns et al., 2018.
[80] Ochanji et al., 2017.

estimate what teachers are doing in practice. Further follow-up is needed, as most school leaders do reportedly conduct monthly classroom observations.

How often is each teacher observed delivering their lessons in a classroom

Year 1   Year 2

	Once per term	Once per month	Every 1–2 weeks	More than once a week
Year 1	8.2%	18.5%	43.8%	27.0%
Year 2	16.3%	26.9%	41.9%	13.7%

How often do teachers prepare and use lesson plans?

Year 1   Year 2

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Year 1	0.0%	3.5%	12.6%	83.9%
Year 2	0.4%	0.9%	10.6%	88.1%
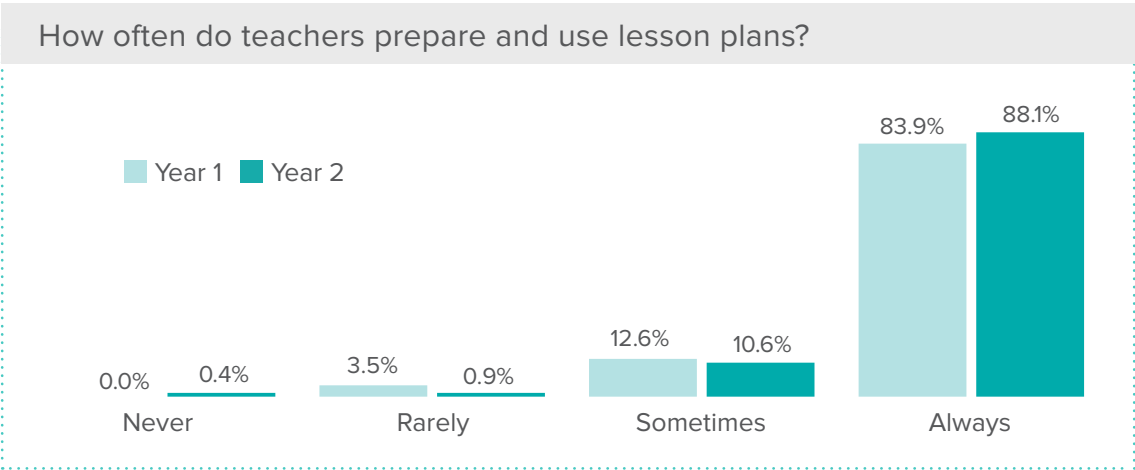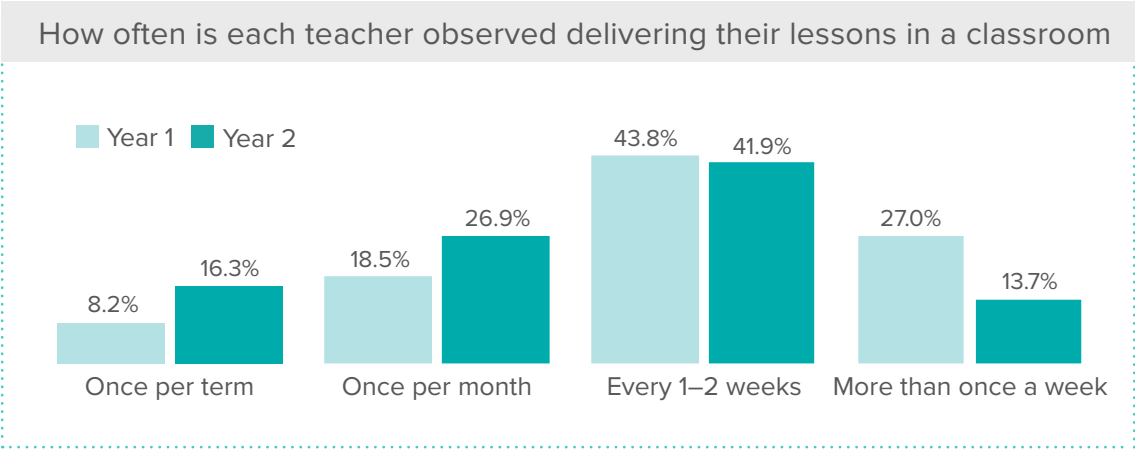
While classroom observations reveal teachers have greatly improved in their use of lesson planning (the percentage of teachers observed to be using lesson plans nearly doubled in Year 2), there is still room for improvement, as more than half of teachers are still not using lesson plans at all. Slight gender differences were also revealed, as classroom observations showed that female teachers more likely have a lesson plan than male teachers, with 47% of female teachers using lesson plans compared to 38% of male teachers.

Teacher had a lesson plan

Year 1	Year 2
22%	43%
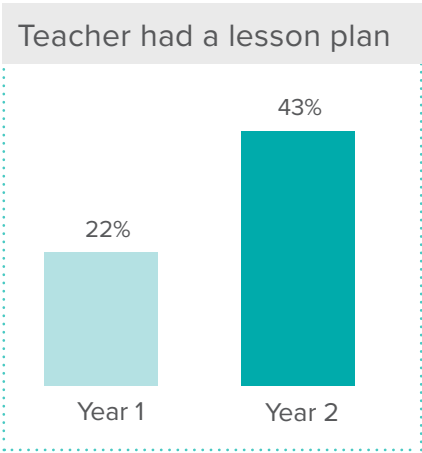
Lastly, 86% of school leaders consider *engaged learners* to be the most important characteristic of a successful lesson, while 78% consider a successful lesson to be one where learners are gaining knowledge/skills. The perceived importance of a lesson achieving its set objectives also increased from 34% in Year 1 to 61% in Year 2.

In your view, what are the most important characteristics of a successful lesson that you want to see at your school? Could you name upto 3?

Characteristic	Year 1	Year 2
Learners are engaged / participate	88.8%	85.7%
Learners are learning (gaining knowledge / skills)	74.4%	77.6%
Lesson achieves its set objectives	33.6%	61.4%
Includes particular teaching strategies or lesson portions	26.0%	7.2%
Good classroom management	24.2%	19.7%
Good learner behaviour	12.6%	19.7%
Clean & safe classroom environment	5.4%	9.0%
Additional / other	8.5%	3.1%

Domain 3.3 Assessment of Learning

Research shows when teachers continually assess student learning and progress, they are more easily able to adapt their teaching to student levels and improve student learning.[81] As such, ongoing tasks such as class exercises, homework and quizzes are essential tools that enable teachers to assess their student learning levels on a frequent and ongoing basis.[82] Termly tests – while also important indicators of student learning – are more effective when accompanied by more frequent assessments that can help teachers better target instruction and identify students at risk of falling behind.[83] In schools, formative assessments are still not frequently used, but teachers use other tools to assess learning on a continuous basis such as class exercises, quizzes, and homework.

In addition to assessing student progress, it is important that the results of these ongoing assessments are factored in to teaching. A teacher's ability to adapt

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[81] Ulla et al, 2017.
[82] Piper and Korda, 2011.
[83] Angrist et al, 2020.

teaching and tailor content to student levels has been found to be one of the most effective methods of improving learning.[84] Using student assessments to re-teach content that was not well understood, identify which students are progressing more slowly, and change teaching strategies to accommodate learnings are all examples of ways to successfully adapt to student learning levels – all of which are used frequently by teachers.

Learner Assessments

With regard to what school leaders believe to be the ideal ways students should be assessed, 81% believe classwork and ongoing tasks is an ideal form of learner assessment, while 70% believe termly exams should be used. Only 35% of school leaders believe formative assessments (i.e., assessments that are used only to inform learning and that do not count towards class marks) should be used, while only 31% of school leaders believe observations of student learning should be used to assess learners. While 35% of school leader see the value of formative assessments, only 15% actually use this tool, indicating a gap between beliefs and practice. Further training may also be needed to ensure school leaders understand the value of student observations and formative assessments for teachers to assess and adapt to student learning.

Key Findings

Classwork/ongoing tasks and termly tests are the most common forms of learner assessment, while use of formative assessments and observations is much less frequent.

How is learner performance or learning outcomes assessed in your school?

Assessment type	Percentage
Termly tests / in-school exams	89.7%
Classwork / ongoing marks (e.g. class exercises, homework, projects, in-class quizzes	89.2%
Standardised assessments (e.g. Private schools', District, County or State)	25.1%
Daily observations	20.0%
Formative assessment / assessment for learning	14.7%
Parent feedback on children's learning	10.2%
Attendance	9.1%
Cumulative end-of-term marks	8.9%
Additional / Other	3.1%

Year 1   Year 2

[84] GEEAP, 2020.

Ideally, how do you think learners SHOULD be assessed at your school?

Assessment method	Percentage
Classwork / ongoing tasks (e.g. class exercises, homework, projects, in-class quizzes)	81.4%
Termly tests / exams	70.1%
Ongoing assessment to inform teaching (Formative assessment / assessment for learning	35.4%
Observations	30.9%
Assessment against set targets	13.9%
Individual learner profiles	7.2%
Additional / other	2.2%
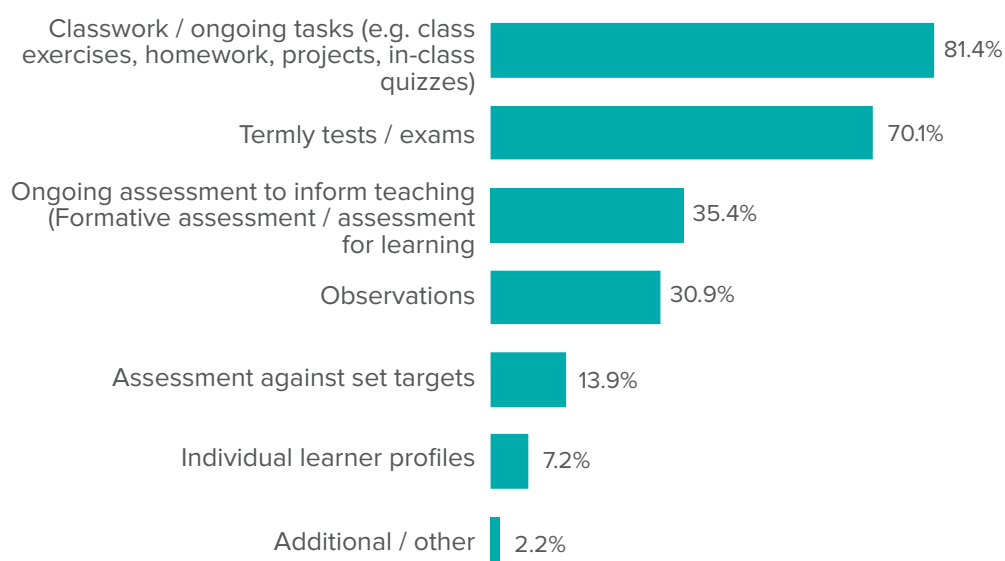
Use of Assessments to Adapt Teaching

68% of school leaders report that teachers use assessment results to re-teach areas that were not well understood, an increase of 13 percentage points from Year 1. Further, 71% of school leaders report teachers use assessments to identify learners in need of support, an increase of 29 percentage points from Year 1. Lastly, 52% of schools report teachers change strategies to accommodate learners, an increase of 14 percentage points from Year 1. All these improvements represent methods of adaptive teaching that have been shown to improve student learning.[85] Schools that do not consider assessment results also fell from 28% to 13%, a positive result.

> **Key Findings**
>
> School leaders report that teachers have greatly increased their use of assessment results to adapt teaching, a strong indicator of student learning.

Among these findings, there were some gender differences. In Year 1, 35% of female school leaders said assessments do not affect teaching approaches, which fell to 10% in Year 2. For male school leaders in Year 1, 23% did not consider assessments to adapt teaching, which fell to 12% in Year 2. This indicates that female school leaders may have been more responsive to School Leader Professional Development (SLPD) training where they are encouraged to adapt teaching practices based on learner assessments.

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[85] Ibid.

Does learner assessment affect teaching at your school? If so, how?

Response	Year 1	Year 2
Teachers re-teach areas that were not well understood	55.2%	67.7%
Teachers identify learners who did not master the content	41.7%	70.9%
Teachers change their teaching strategies to accommodate learners	37.7%	51.6%
NO – learners' assessment does not affect teacher approaches	28.3%	12.6%
Teachers teach 'to the test'	14.3%	13.0%
Other	2.2%	2.2%
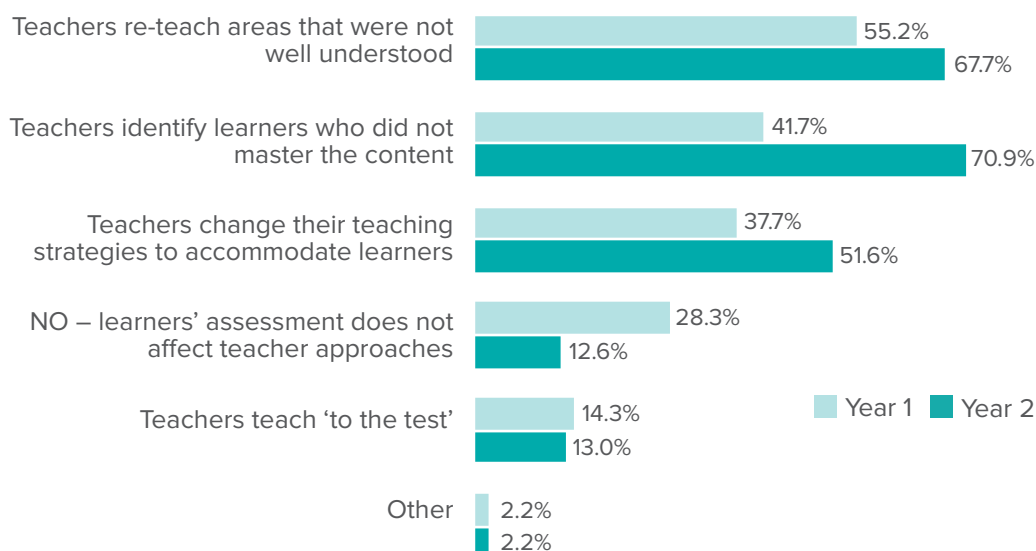
Domain 3.4 Learner-Centred Teaching and Learning

As noted above, adapting teaching to student learning levels is essential to improving student performance. In addition to using student assessment results to inform teaching, research highlights several other examples of what are often called *learner-centred* methods, all of which can have a positive impact on student learning.[86] This includes, for example, creating more inclusive environments in classrooms, working in small groups in which students are encouraged to participate without fear of making mistakes, and using questions and discussion to encourage learners to think through and share ideas. These methods can ultimately ensure lower-level students are engaged, and that teaching remains effective across multiple different learning styles.[87] While teachers continue to learn and apply these learner-centred teaching strategies, there is room for improvement, as more than half of schools are not consistently employing these methods.

Learner-Centred Lesson Planning

Out of the classes observed with a lesson plan (44% of classes observed), 41% now include a learner-centred activity (up from 22% in Year 1), 39% include one learner-centred learning objective (up from 22% in Year 1) and 32% had at least one planned assessment (up from 21% in Year 1). Only 13% of teachers have a marking record in Year 2, up from 4% in Year 1. These findings indicate that while teachers are making positive improvements, more than half of all teachers with

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[86] Sharma et al., 2013.
[87] Ibid.

lesson plans are still not integrating any form of learner-centred teaching into their lesson plans. Further training and mentorship may be necessary to improve this result and ensure learning-centred strategies are incorporated into lesson plans.

Lesson Plan has learner-centred activity

22%	40%
Year 1	Year 2

Lesson Plan has one learner-centred learner objective

21%	40%
Year 1	Year 2

Lesson Plan has at least one planned assessment

20%	32%
Year 1	Year 2

Teacher has a marking record

4%	13%
Year 1	Year 2
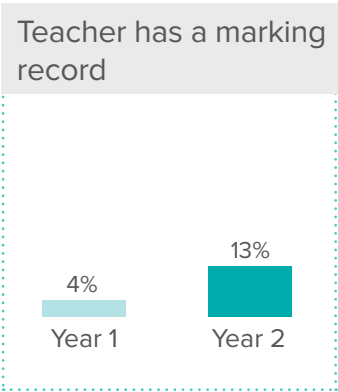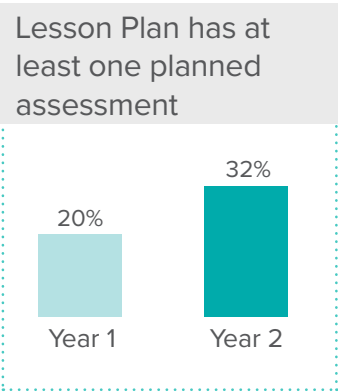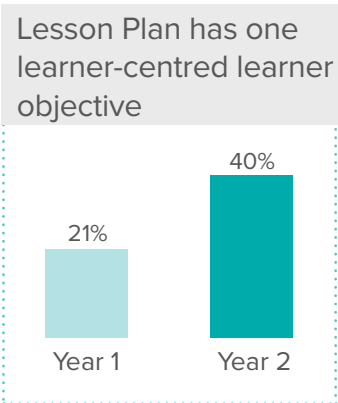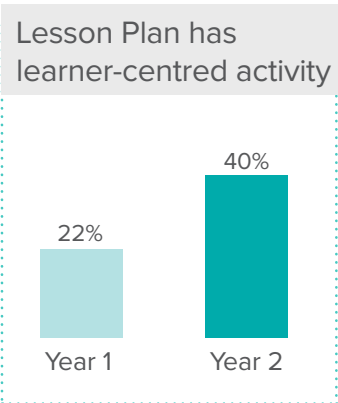
Key Findings

Teachers are making improvements in incorporating learner-centred teaching in their lesson plans, but rates of learner-centred lesson planning are still low. Only 13% of teachers have a marking record in Year 2. Finally, 56% of teachers scored high on whether they check for learner understanding before proceeding with their lesson, an improvement from Year 1.

Lastly, 87% of classes observed obtained a high or medium Checks for Understanding score, compared to 74% in Year 1. This is an important element of learner-centred teaching, as it shows teachers are attuned to the level of learning in their classrooms and are inclined to adapt their teaching pace as necessary – for example, by slowing down the lesson or re-teaching areas that were not well understood.

Checks for understanding

■ Year 1 ■ Year 2

	High	Medium	Low	None
Year 1	41%	33%	21%	5%
Year 2	56%	31%	11%	1%
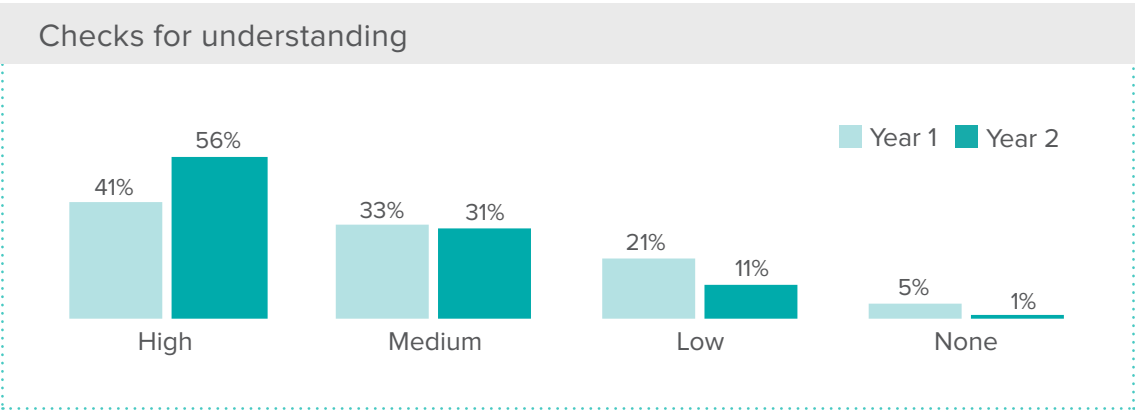
Discussion and Group Work

More than 70% of classrooms have their desks arranged in rows facing the front, while only 24% of classrooms have desks arranged in small groups. Rows of desks facing the front usually adheres to teacher-centred learning, rather than learner-centred learning, as it discourages group work and small-group discussion, while promoting 'chalk and talk' methods. Arranging desks in small groups is a best practice as this encourages collaboration between students and their peers – a practice that has been found to improve student performance, particularly for lower-achieving students.[88] However, classrooms may have challenges to incorporate this best practice, such as long benches rather than individual desks, and limited space.

On average, minutes of discussion in each observed class increased by 2.29 minutes, with teachers facilitating an average of 4.68 minutes of class discussion compared to 2.37 minutes of class discussion in Year 1. Despite this strong improvement of nearly double the number of minutes of discussion, the average achieved in Year 2 is still fairly low.

The number of schools achieving a medium or high *Active Learning* score has remained relatively consistent between Years 1 and 2. In Year 2, 18% of schools obtained a high *Active Learning* score, compared with 17% in Year 1, while 78% of schools obtained a medium score in Year 2 compared to 76% in Year 1.

Key Findings

Across all schools, teachers face challenges in facilitating small group work and active learning in theirclassrooms, with classroom observation scores in these areas remaining relatively low and increasing only a small percentage between Years 1 and 2. Class discussion time has increased substantially, but remains low overall.

Desk arrangement in small groups

	Small groups	Rows facing front	Circle	Horseshoe	Other
Year 1	25%	67%	4%	4%	0%
Year 2	24%	72%	0%	2%	1%

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[88] Ibid.

Average minutes of discussion time

2.37 — Year 1
4.68 — Year 2

Active learning score

Year 1 | Year 2

High: 17% (Year 1), 18% (Year 2)
Medium: 76% (Year 1), 78% (Year 2)
Low: 7% (Year 1), 4% (Year 2)
None: 0% (Year 1), 0% (Year 2)
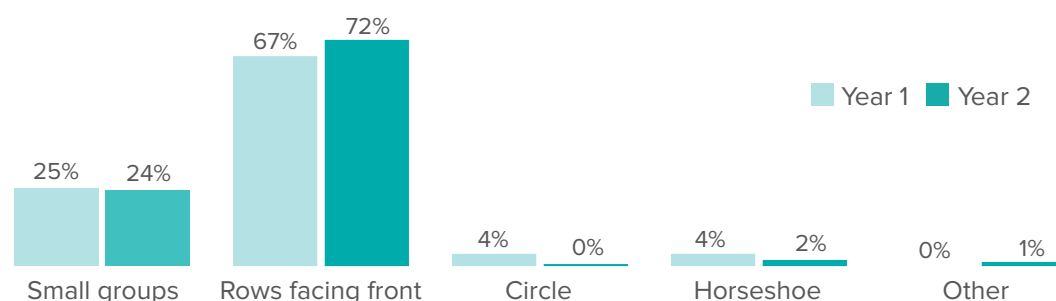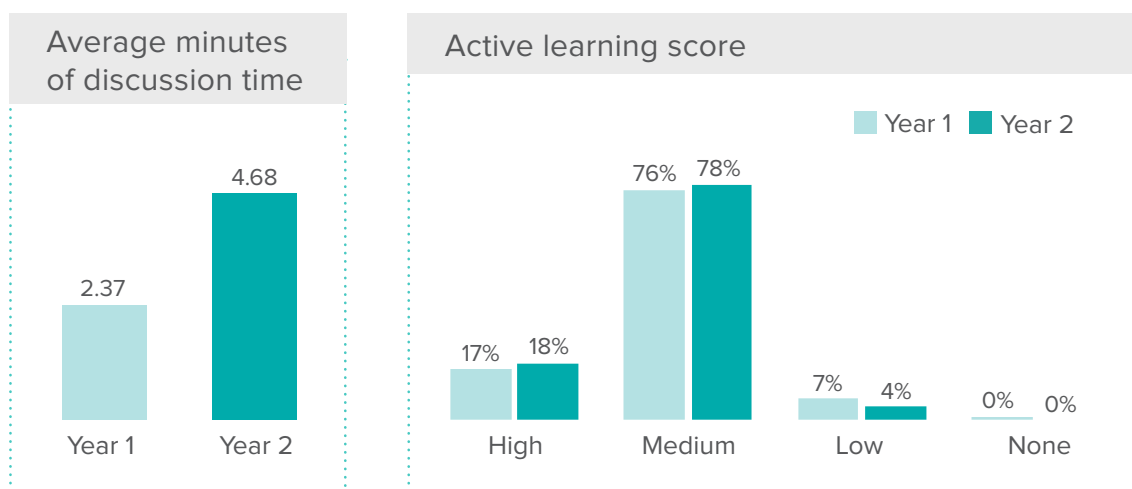
Domain 3.5 School Curriculum

In addition to creating learner-centred teaching and learning environments, it is essential that the school curriculum is situated within learners' experiences and real-life contexts. EduQuality training encourages teachers to incorporate both life skills along with subject-matter knowledge into the curriculum, and to ensure all content relates to the lived experiences of learners. To do this, teachers should explicitly connect the lesson content to the real world. For example, by saying to learners *"Let's count how many buses will be needed to transport our class."*

Further, teachers should ensure all lessons are situated within the context of the wider curriculum, so that learners are aware of what new content is planned and what their larger learning goals are. To do this, a teacher may refer to past or future lessons. For example, by saying to learners *"This is the last lesson on multiplication. Tomorrow, we will begin practicing division."*

Situating Lessons in Wider Context

In Year 2, 83% of teachers are now situating the lesson in the context of the curriculum, an increase from 66% in Year 2. This large increase of 17 percentage points demonstrates a strong improvement by teachers in this area. Slight gender differences were noted as well: In Year 2, 87% of male teachers successfully placed lessons within the curriculum, compared to only 79% of female teachers. However, female teachers also saw a more significant improvement in this area, with only 58% of female teachers placing lessons within the curriculum in Year 1, which increased by 21 percentage points in Year 2.

Key Findings

Schools have greatly improved in their abilities to situate lessons within the wider curriculum. Teachers are also making improvements in their ability to draw real-life connections in lessons, but there are still gaps in this area.

Lesson in curriculum	Real life connections
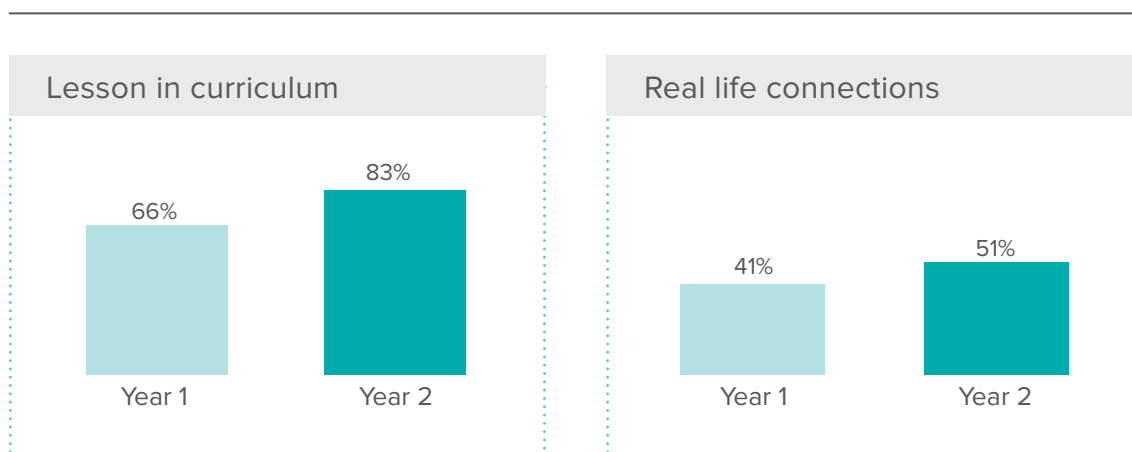
Further, in Year 2, 51% of teachers now make real life connections in lessons, up from 41% in Year 1. This demonstrates a sizeable improvement; however, gaps remain as nearly half of all teachers still do not make real-life connections in lessons.

Domain 3.6 Early Childhood Education

A large percentage of schools offer pre-primary education. As such, it is critical that these schools are aware of how pre-primary approaches may differ from primary and secondary education. Schools also need to be equipped with the necessary tools to provide high-quality pre-primary learning environments. To provide an effective early childhood learning experience, early childhood should have its own unique focus. The curriculum should be broad and include physical and social learning with significant time allocated to learning through play.[89] Classrooms and outdoor spaces that facilitate play are essential. Finally, parent engagement is critical, and parents should be closely involved with their child's learning and continually supported with parent empowerment programs.[90]

Rates of Pre-Primary Provision and Training

Consistent with Year 1, 91% of schools in EduQuality offer pre-primary education in Year 2, including 86% of male-owned schools and 96% of female-owned schools. This illustrates a need for focused training, as the knowledge and skills required to successfully implement a high-quality pre-primary education curriculum often differs from primary or secondary education, and additional training is needed for teachers and school leaders to incorporate these adaptations.

Key Findings

91% of schools in EduQuality offer pre-primary, demonstrating the critical need to ensure training and support is provided specifically for early childhood education pedagogy.

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[89] Jain et al., 2018.
[90] Irfan et al., 2017.

Consistent with Year 1, 91% of schools in EduQuality offer pre-primary education in Year 2, including 86% of male-owned schools and 96% of female-owned schools. This illustrates a need for focused training, as the knowledge and skills required to successfully implement a high-quality pre-primary education curriculum often differs from primary or secondary education, and additional training is needed for teachers and school leaders to incorporate these adaptations.

% of schools providing pre-primary education
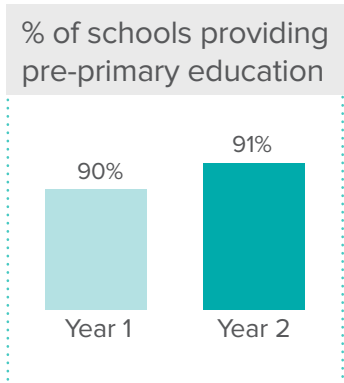
Opportunities for Play-Based Learning

Out of the schools that offer pre-primary education, 88% offer some form of outdoor play facility, including swings (41%), slides (27%), climbing frames (28%) and sand pits (7%). Only 12% do not offer any form of outdoor play facility, a decrease from 21% from Year 1, demonstrating that school leaders are making positive investments in their school infrastructure that support the learning of pre-primary aged children.

Schools are also taking out more School Improvement Loans (SILs) to fund playground construction. While playground construction is not often the reason schools take out a first SIL, it is much more likely to be a reason for taking out a second or subsequent SIL. While only 5% of schools used their first SIL for playground construction, 20% of schools used their subsequent SILs for playground construction, up from 6% in Year 1. This may indicate that schools have other more immediate priorities for using their first loan, but that financing playgrounds and play-based learning is still a high priority for schools. Further follow up is needed to understand the more nuanced reasons behind why schools opt to allocate SILs towards playgrounds despite other competing priorities.

Key Findings

Schools offering pre-primary successfully provide outdoor play facilities for children, a positive finding. Teachers have also made substantial improvements in the use of hands-on objects for learning in pre-primary classrooms, but most classrooms still do not teach using hands-on objects or provide toys.

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Schools that used their first SIL for playground construction	4%	5%
Schools that used subsequent SILs for playground construction	6%	20%

What outdoor play facilities are there? (Sample: pre-primary schools)
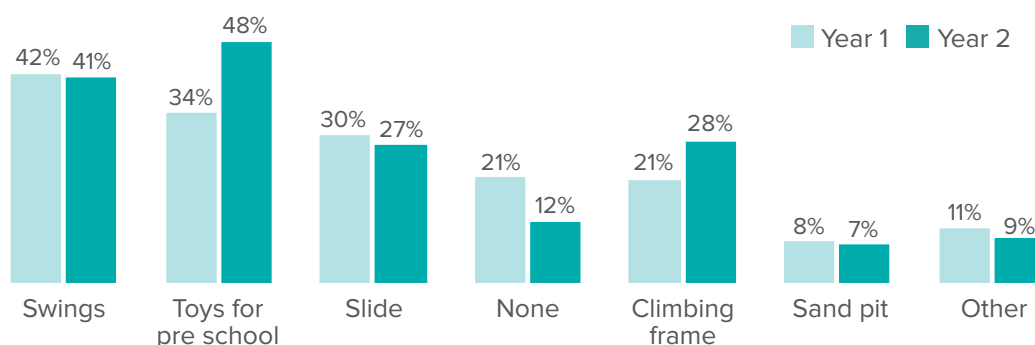
Lastly, schools saw a substantial increase in the number of pre-primary schools in which hands-on objects were used by learners, reaching 44% in Year 2 compared to 12% in Year 1. Alongside this 32 percentage-point increase, schools also improved their ability to provide toys for preschool, reaching 48% in Year 2 compared to 34% in Year 1. There were slight gender differences in this finding as well, with 54% of female-led schools providing toys for preschool, compared to 43% of male-led schools. Both these findings are positive and demonstrate how teachers are beginning to prioritize play-based approaches in classrooms. However, given the critical importance of play-based approaches particularly for pre-primary-aged learners, gaps remain in these areas in more than half of pre-primary schools.

As EduQuality continues to expand its pre-primary programming, particularly through a newly launched ECCE-focused activity, it will be important to factor these findings in to training content so that schools are supported in their ability to meet the needs of pre-primary learners.

Were hands-on objects used by learners?
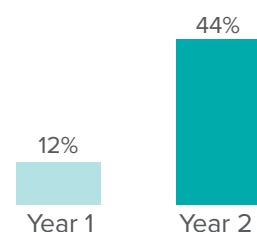
Cross-cutting Findings, Lessons Learned, and Areas for Future Research

▶ **Teachers are making positive improvements in their teaching practices, but gaps remain:** According to classroom observations, teachers are making improvements in their capacity across several areas including lesson planning, learner assessment, and learner-centred teaching. However, there is still significant room for improvement in these areas. The percentage of teachers observed to be using lesson plans nearly doubled in Year 2, but lesson planning was still only used in 43% of the classrooms observed. Likewise, teachers are making improvements in incorporating learner-centred teaching in their lesson plans, but rates of learner-centred lesson planning are still reaching less than half of the classrooms observed. Out of the classes that had a lesson plan (44% of classes observed), 41% now include a learner-centred activity (up from 22% in Year 1), 39% include one learner-centred learning objective (up from 22% in Year 1) and 32% had at least one planned assessment (up from 21% in Year 1). Similar findings were found in other areas, for example, with 83% of teachers successfully situating lessons in the wider curriculum, but only 51% able to connect the lesson to real-life experiences. These findings represent solid improvements across teachers, but with gaps remaining.

▶ **The vast majority of schools do not have access to ICT for student use:** ICT is not widely available for student use. According to classroom observations, ICT equipment was not available for individual learners for in-classroom use in any classrooms in Year 2, and was only available in classrooms for whole-class use in 3% of the classrooms surveyed. Likewise, according the school leaders, the percentage of school leaders who reported individual ICT for learners for in-classroom use fell from 11% to 5%. Further research is needed to understand the reasons why ICT equipment is not available. For example, it may be the case that school leaders do intend to purchase the equipment, but have prioritized other uses for their financing first – for example, as noted above, many school leaders used subsequent SILs for playground construction, and it is possible they will move on to ICT purchases once playgrounds are constructed. However, it also may be the case that school leaders do not see the value in purchasing ICT equipment for student use, either due to a lack of understanding of the benefits of ICT for students, or – more likely – a lack of connectivity for ICT software in their specific contexts.

▶ **There may be gaps in school leaders' understanding of their teachers:** In some cases, classroom observations revealed different data than what was reported to be the case by school leaders. For example, 88% of school leaders report that their teachers always use lesson plans, while classroom observations revealed only 43% of teachers had a lesson plan. This indicates that school leaders may not have a complete understanding of what their teachers are doing in practice, which may mean they are not carrying out enough classroom observations or teacher performance reviews to correctly estimate teacher behaviour. Further follow-up is needed, however, as most school leaders do reportedly conduct frequent classroom observations. According to school leaders, 42% report that they observe their teachers every 1-2 weeks, 27% reportedly conduct observations once per month, and 14% report conducting observations more than once a week.

VII. Conclusion

Overall, this analysis across 18 domains revealed areas of clear, positive improvements in both school leader knowledge, understanding and attitudes — a critical first step — as well as actual changes in practices and behaviours. Across all 3 areas of quality, school leaders are reporting quality improvements between Year 1 and Year 2. With an average 0.5 point improvement on a 4-point scale, this moderate improvement is both positive and likely indicative that school leaders are using the tool to accurately rate their quality against the objective criteria provided. As schools progress through the EduQuality program, school leaders not only make school improvements, but they also gain a better understanding of what each domain means, and are thus able to more accurately self-assess their school at the end of Year 2.

Across the 18 domains, data clearly demonstrates improvement across a range of areas. Table 1 outlines the key areas of strength and growth that schools have achieved in Year 2 compared to Year 1, and the data points that support these findings:

Tables on next page...

TABLE 1 Learning from Data: Areas of Strength and Growth

TOPIC	DATA
Behaviour management	▶ School leaders are playing a more active role in behaviour management, a positive shift from Year 1. In Year 2, 85% of schools reported that leadership makes decisions about consequences for misbehaviour, up from 67% in Year 1.
Child protection and wellbeing	▶ School leaders outline several active child protection members their schools are taking, many of which have increased from Year 1. More than 80% of schools now have physical protection structures in place, including fences and boundary walls around the school. This has increased by more than 15 percentage points from Year 1. ▶ In Year 2, 98% of schools now mention non-academic benefits when asked about the benefits children gain from school, an increase of 6 percentage points from Year 1. Additionally, school leaders are now also able to name a more diverse range of non-academic benefits. ▶ School leaders highlight a wide range of non-academic support their schools currently provide to learners, with large increases from Year 1. In Year 2, *extra-curricular activities* saw the largest percentage point increase, and was cited by 82% of schools compared to 37% in Year 1. ▶ Only 2% of school leaders said their school provided no non-academic support, down from 14% in Year 1.
Inter-school collaboration	▶ 95% of school leaders reported actively collaborating with other schools in the community, up from 92% in Year 1. Further, 79% of these schools collaborate via EduQuality cluster meetings, representing a 33 percentage-point increase from Year 1.

TABLE 1 Learning from Data: Areas of Strength and Growth

TOPIC	DATA
Parental engagement	▶ Parental engagement in schools is strong, with 95% reporting that parents are actively involved in the school. School leaders also note that parents participate in wider school life, such as extra-curricular activities and special events (71%, up from 59% in Year 1. ▶ In Year 1, only 36% of schools ranked the 'affordability of school fees' as a top factor to how parents select a school. In Year 2, 58% of schools now report this as key to parent decision making, indicating schools are increasingly aware that offering affordable fees plays a significant role.
Teaching quality and professional development	▶ 91% of schools in Year 2 report their teachers have official teaching qualifications or certifications, consistent with Year 1. ▶ The percent of time teachers dedicate to working with learners, rather than administrative duties, has remained consistently high at 84%. ▶ In Year 2, 95% of schools provide professional development support to the staff, an increase of 9 percentage points from Year 1. ▶ More than 87% of school leaders also hold one-on-one annual performance reviews with teachers to provide individualized feedback. Around 72% of schools provide individual feedback to teachers at least twice per term. ▶ More than 95% of school leaders conduct regular classroom observations and 83% of schools observe teachers at least once a month.
Staff engagement	▶ Whole staff meetings have become more frequent, with 58% of schools now holding meetings at least every 2 weeks, while 93% of schools hold meetings at least every month. ▶ In Year 2, 97% of schools seek opinions of the staff every term when developing school processes or operations, a 16% increase from Year 1.

TABLE 1 Learning from Data: Areas of Strength and Growth

TOPIC	DATA
Financial management	▶ Schools are meeting expectations in their financial management and tracking practices, with more than 90% of schools now creating annual budgets. ▶ 77% of schools use school fee ledgers to monitor payments and parents' debt, and in 75% of school's financial records are checked regularly
Learner assessment and learner-centred teaching	▶ Schools that do not consider assessment results in their teaching fell from 28% to 13%, a positive result. ▶ 87% of classes observed obtained a high or medium *Checks for Understanding* score, compared to 74% in Year 1. ▶ In Year 2, 83% of teachers are now situating the lesson in the context of the curriculum, an increase from 66% in Year 2. This large increase of 17 percentage points demonstrates a strong improvement by teachers in this area.

Alongside these areas of strength, this analysis also illuminated areas that remain challenging for leaders and teachers. Table 2 below outlines the key challenge areas and data points showing room for improvement in Year 2:

TABLE 2 Learning from Data: Ongoing Challenges

TOPIC	DATA
Behaviour management	▶ Rewards for good behaviour were only covered in 35% of BMPs, compared to 41% in the previous year. In Year 2 only 21% of school leaders noted that teachers use rewards for positive behaviours, down from 32% in Year 1. ▶ The percentage of learners who are inappropriately behaved also remained consistent and relatively high, at 28% in both Year 1 and Year 2

TABLE 2 Learning from Data: Ongoing Challenges

TOPIC	DATA
Child protection	▶ In Year 2, only 53% of schools had a written child protection policy in place, a slight decrease from Year 1. ▶ Corporal punishment is still being used in 7.5% of schools.
SEND inclusion	▶ In Year 1, 43% of schools were doing 'nothing' to support SEND learners, which has since fallen to 37% in Year 2. ▶ Only 18% of schools had a written SEND policy in place, which is consistent with Year 1 (17%).
Parental engagement	▶ School leaders note a decrease in PTA participation, with 41% reporting parents are involved in PTAs, down from 52% in Year 1. ▶ Many schools still struggle to understand their clients, with 48% of school leaders unable to describe the type of customers they target as a school. Only 38% could describe their parents' income level, while only 31% knew where their students lived. ▶ Only 37% of schools involve parents in school decision-making.
Teacher Recruitment and Professional Development	▶ Only 11% of schools reported they provide teachers with leadership opportunities. ▶ 1 in 5 schools (19.7%) are still not conducting any background checks or reference checks on teachers prior to hiring. ▶ Only 43% of schools have a standard salary scale for teachers, and only 46% offer a clear trajectory for career progression. ▶ Only 46% of school leaders use formal methods such as surveys or questionnaires to evaluate teacher satisfaction. 92% only evaluate staff satisfaction through informal ways.

TABLE 2 Learning from Data: Ongoing Challenges

TOPIC	DATA
Financial Management	▶ In 39% of schools, a dedicated school bursar maintains the accounting or financial records. However, in 44% of schools, financial records are still being maintained by the school leader, indicating a gap where schools may resources to dedicate more staff to administrative roles. ▶ Only 38% of schools invite an external party to review the school's accounts.
Learner assessments	▶ While 35% of school leader see the value of formative assessments, only 15% actually use this tool, indicating a gap between beliefs and practice.
Teaching practices	▶ Only 43% of teachers were observed to have a lesson plan, an increase of 21 percentage points from Year 1. ▶ More than half of all teachers with lesson plans are still not integrating any form of learner-centred teaching into their lesson plans: Out of the classes observed with a lesson plan, 41% now include a learner-centred activity, 39% include one learner-centred learning objective, and 32% had at least one planned assessment. ▶ Only 13% of teachers have a marking record in Year 2, up from 4% in Year 1. ▶ More than 70% of classrooms have their desks arranged in rows facing the front. ▶ On average, minutes of discussion in each observed class increased by 2.29 minutes, with teachers facilitating an average of 4.68 minutes of class discussion compared to 2.37 minutes in Year 1. Despite this strong improvement, the average achieved in Year 2 is still low.

Opportunity EduFinance aims to use these insights – including gaps in quality and key opportunities for further improvement – to inform the how the EduQuality program can adapt, emphasize, and support leaders and teachers. In the coming years, the findings from this analysis will benefit the current cohort of schools which were surveyed, as they end the third year and final year of the program, and also be leveraged to iterate the program with current cohorts that have recently joined the program, and future cohorts of schools.

Looking Ahead: The Path to Improved Learning

With more than 361 million children globally who are not learning while in school, addressing the challenge of learning poverty is an urgent need.[91] However, improving basic literacy rates and ensuring children achieve minimum proficiency levels is not something that can be achieved overnight. Sustainably improving learning outcomes in under-resourced schools is often a multi-step process that begins with changing practices and behaviours of school leaders and teachers before any evidence of impact can be seen in students. While EduFinance's long-term goal is to see tangible improvements in student learning outcomes and literacy levels, and ultimately contribute to lowering global rates of learning poverty, there are important intermediate outcomes that must be measured first. Monitoring and evaluation of the Pathways to Excellence program focuses measuring achievement of these medium-term outcomes, with the intention of using these intermediate steps to inform progress towards the goal of long-term learning outcomes improvements. These medium-term outcomes include quality school management practices, access to learning materials, safe and inclusive classroom environments, and student-centred teaching – all of which contribute to whether a child learns once in school. This report highlights the early signs of improvement across these areas, as well as identifying areas where challenges persist. Looking forward, the findings from this report will be used to strengthen the P2E program as it strives to empower schools at every level: from their leaders to their learners.

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[91] UNESCO, 2022.

VIII. Endnotes

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