

MARLBOROUGH MULTI-FAMILY GROUP

PRELIMINARY ATTAINMENT RESULTS

Background

So What Research Ltd (So What...?) was asked by the School and Family Works (SFW) to independently assess the impact of Marlborough Multi-Family Group therapy (MMFG) on the attainment of the children at school.

Three participating schools in Greater London, Victoria Junior School, Feltham Community College and Forge Lane Primary School have provided SFW with attainment progress data of the specific children who are participating in the MMFG therapy groups, and 2 of the schools provided attainment data of their schools in general (normative data). The SFW have provided So What with information regarding the children's individual participation dates, so that an assessment could be made of progress made since the start of participation.

Caveat

At the time of this analysis, progress data was received for 19 children who have participated in MMFG groups across the three schools. Two students were dropped out of the analysis because their data appeared unreliable or incomplete. One Forge Lane student in particular, made significant progress, but because this was based on 2 subjects and one term reporting only, So What deemed it would skew the overall average disproportionately, and therefore elected conservatively to leave this pupil out. While the remaining sample of 17 children in and of itself may not seem very robust, each child is measured on 3 separate subjects, (Maths, English, Science or Maths, Writing, Reading) as (largely) independent events. The resulting 51 relevant data-points are all based on at least 2, and in some cases 3 or 4 measurements throughout the year and therefore in excess of 150 data-points form the basis of this analysis, adding weight to its conclusions. Naturally, the longer pupils participate, the more data will accumulate, and the more firm we can be in our conclusions. At this first reporting stage our conclusions are 'directional' only.

Method

Attainment at schools is measured in National Curriculum Levels (1, 2, 3 etc) and sub-levels (A, B and C), which necessitates a conversion algorithm to arrive at a metric called Average Point Score (APS).

The conversions normally used, and also used in this analysis, are as follows:

1C=7	2C=13	3C=19	4C=25	5C=31	6C=37
1B=9	2B=15	3B=21	4B=27	5B=33	6B=39
1A=11	2C=17	3A=23	4A=29	5A=35	6A=41

We understand from the Department of Education that nationally, pupils are expected to make progress of about 3 APS points, or 1.5 sub-levels, in a year. With that norm in mind, we have annualized the MMFG children's progress, so a benchmark comparison with the normative 3 APS per year can be made. (http://www.education.gov.uk/performance/tables/primary_10/p4.shtml)

While attainment progress within each school can be measured for each specific subject, because different schools have conducted attainment measurements in different subjects, we have for purposes of this analysis, taken the mathematical average across all 3 subjects, allocating equal weights to Maths, Science, Writing and Reading.

Lastly, to obtain a 'clean' read on attainment level before entering the MMFG groups and progress made since, for 2 of the 3 schools So What was given exact dates when pupils started participating in the MMFG group by the SFW. The last attainment level **prior** to starting the MMFG groups was taken as 'base level' read, against which progress is calculated, and compared to the above mentioned norm of 3 APS points per year. All progress was annualized by dividing the total APS progressed by the number of years participated, using the standard 3 terms per school year – Spring, Autumn, Summer.

Results

These early results suggest that pupils who take part in MMFG groups are so far making more progress than the expected 3 APS per year. The Feltham results, which take into account the MMFG starting date at the individual pupil level, have measured a progress of 3.9 APS per year, but it should be noted that this is on basis of an average of only about 1.5 reporting periods, i.e. about half a school year. On the same basis, pupils at Forge Lane Primary School who participated in MMFG groups also progressed above the norm, at 3.6 APS per year on average on the basis of approximately 1 school year, i.e. 3 reporting periods.

The data from Victoria school was provided to us in annualized form, which one would expect to deflate any positive impact participation in MMFG may have had, due to the fact that it includes time periods during which the pupils did not participate in MMFG. On the basis of 5 participating students in year 4, these results show progress just above the norm, at 3.1 APS per year.

The weighted average of the 3 schools, on the basis of all 17 pupils, measured on 3 subjects, suggests pupils who participate in MMFG groups make 3.6 APS progress per year.

For the 8 Feltham students, in addition to progress data, we were also provided with data on their absolute level of attainment, relative to the rest of the school in the same year. This analysis shows that pupils joining the MMFG groups start at a somewhat lower level than the rest of the Year group – this early data suggest about 3 APS points behind their peers.

Feltham	APS/year	sub levels/year
Student 3	6.1	3.1
Student 4	6	3.0
Student 5	5	2.5
Student 6	9.1	4.6
Student 7	0	0.0
Student 8	1.5	0.8
Student 9	6.1	3.1
Student 10	n/a	n/a
Student 11	-3	-1.5
Average	3.9	1.9

Victoria	APS/year	sub levels/year
Student A	3.3	1.7
Student B	4.0	2.0
Student C	3.3	1.7
Student D	2.7	1.3
Student E	2.0	1.0
Average	3.1	1.5

Forge Lane	APS/year	sub levels/year
Student a	5	2.5
Student b	5	2.5
Student c	2.3	1.2
Student d	n/a	n/a
Student e	2	1
Average	5.3	2.7

Overall	3.6	1.8
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Conclusions and recommendations

SFW are recommended to continue collecting attainment data for future periods, so that statistical robustness will increase. So What...? proposes to co-ordinate and manage data collection methods and definitions, to ensure consistent and reliable attainment progress measures are in place for the years to come.

These early results are directional at this stage. They are based on only 17 students, and participation in MMFG groups has only been of limited duration so far. However, pupils have been measured in 3 different subjects, and at various different points in time, and thus the number of data-points that fed into this analysis is in excess of 150.

Firstly, the data clearly suggests, and we believe it will provide firm evidence in the months to come, that despite missing actual lessons during the therapy meetings, participating in MMFG therapy *does not harm* the progress children make at school.

On the contrary, the data suggests that pupils who participate in MMFG are 'catching up' with the rest of the school, by making somewhat faster progress than their peers. While the national 'expectation' is for pupils to progress 3APS points per year, children who benefit from the MMFG groups across the three schools are making progress at 3.6APS points per year, thus closing the gap between themselves and the rest of the school.