



# Impact Report 2021–22

January 2023  
A decade of experience

**ACTION  
TUTORING**  
infinite potential

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# Introduction from the Chair and CEO



2021–22 was another milestone year for Action Tutoring. We supported the highest number of pupils in our history, 6,159, with nearly 600 receiving tutoring support in both subjects, and we celebrated ten years of being officially registered as a charity. Over this decade the charity has helped over 26,000 disadvantaged pupils thanks to the generosity of over 9,000 volunteer tutors. Our ten year celebrations included an event in parliament, kindly hosted by Alex Norris, MP, attended by headteachers, volunteers, funders, staff, sector partners and policy makers.

Although the biggest disruptions of school closures thankfully didn't reoccur during 2021–22, Covid still caused widespread challenges through high levels of pupil and teacher absences. This impact was seen in attendance of our tutoring sessions as well. Despite this disruption, we are pleased that our results continue to show strong evidence of the impact our programme has, whether online or face to face tutoring.



We continued to advocate for the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) to be extended beyond 2024, implementing recommendations to improve its impact, and become a lasting feature of the education system. We believe this powerful intervention can have a meaningful impact on closing the attainment gap and improving the life chances of hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged young people across the country. In particular, we were delighted to partner with the Centre for Education and Youth on their report, '[Levelling Up Tutoring](#).'

Finally, in May 2022, we were thrilled to have been shortlisted to the final three for the Civil Society Charity Awards (education and training category). We were recognised for our response to the Covid pandemic and our impact on the education of young people facing disadvantage.

As we enter another turbulent year for our pupils, schools and society we remain focused and determined to deliver our mission to tackle the attainment gap and enable pupils facing disadvantage to make meaningful academic progress, opening doors to future opportunities.

**Peter Baines, Chair of Trustees, January 2023**

**Susannah Hardyman, CEO, January 2023**

# Our mission, vision and values

**Mission:** Action Tutoring unlocks the potential of children and young people who are facing disadvantage. We are tackling the attainment gap head-on by forging partnerships with schools nationwide. Our trained volunteer tutors are empowered to enable pupils to make meaningful academic progress, opening doors to future opportunities.

**Our vision** as a charity is a world in which no child's life chances are limited by their socio-economic background.



## Collaborative

Partnerships with schools are at the heart of our model. We also regularly engage with our peer charities and organisations such as Teach First, Impetus and the Fair Education Alliance, to maintain a united force on tackling education inequality.



## Reflective

In addition to our impact analysis, we regularly survey pupils, teachers and tutors to help inform improvements to the programme. We are hugely proud of our impact and the programme we offer but are always looking to make it even better.



## Evidence-based

We track the progress of our pupils through data collection from schools and our own baseline tests and interim assessments, to ensure our support is having an impact. Where appropriate we work with external evaluators to regularly assess our evidence.



## High standards

We maintain professional standards through all of our interactions with partner schools and volunteer tutors and strive to achieve excellence in all we do.



## Integrity

We share all pupil progress data with partner schools, even if the outcomes aren't as hoped, and make our evaluation reports widely available.



## Aspirational

We develop our training and resources to support our pupils, tutors and staff to be the best they can be.

# Why we matter

Education in this country isn't fair. Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds aren't less able, but they have less access to the tools that support them to progress in school. This means they are not able to reach their full academic potential.



27% of pupils in state education are classified as disadvantaged.<sup>1</sup>

There is an attainment gap between pupils facing disadvantage and their peers. It is currently at its widest for **ten years**.<sup>2</sup>

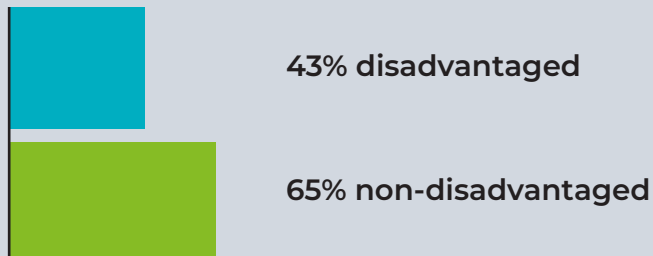


Disadvantaged pupils are, on average, **18 months behind** their non-disadvantaged peers by the end of secondary school.<sup>5</sup>

This increases to **22 months for those who are persistently disadvantaged** (eligible for free school meals for at least 80% of their time at school).<sup>6</sup>

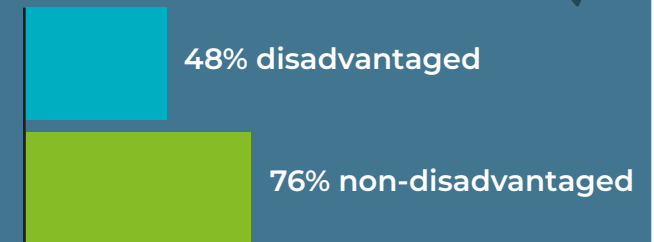
Disadvantaged pupils are **less likely to achieve a grade 4** in English or maths GCSEs:<sup>7</sup>

Disadvantaged pupils are **less likely to meet expected standards** in reading, writing and maths at primary school.<sup>3</sup>



Only **28%** of pupils with low attainment at Key Stage 2 go on to achieve a pass in English and maths at GCSE.<sup>4</sup>

In 2022, just **48% of disadvantaged pupils passed both English and maths GCSE**, compared to **76%** of non-disadvantaged pupils.



Pupils who do not achieve GCSEs are more likely to become NEET (Not in education, employment or training) at 16+.<sup>8</sup>

Currently there are **711,000** young people who are NEET.<sup>9</sup>

NEET individuals are estimated to cost the economy **£120,000** over the course of their lifetime.<sup>10</sup>

# The impact of tutoring

Tutoring works to improve grades. This powerful academic tool can help level the playing field and ensure every pupil is able to catch up and succeed academically.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has calculated that an intense programme of one-to-one tuition could add as much as **five months' progress** to a young person's schooling.<sup>12</sup> Small-group tuition provides a safe space for pupils with low confidence to speak up and learn from their mistakes.<sup>13</sup>

In 2014, an independent evaluator analysed the impact of Action Tutoring on the young people supported. It found a positive association between the number of Action Tutoring sessions attended and the estimated impact; suggesting that pupils who attended **at least seven sessions** could make half a grade extra progress compared to their peers.<sup>14</sup>

More recent analysis from an independent evaluation of the National Tutoring Programme for 2020–21 **shows a correlation between sessions attended and overall progress**, indicating that pupils who attended a higher number of tutoring sessions were associated with better scores in English in primary schools, and better grades for Year 11s in maths and English.<sup>15</sup>

Our impact analysis of pupils tutored by Action Tutoring within that same period showed **progress in both English and maths** at the primary and secondary levels.



**Small-group tuition works** because it is tailored to individual needs and can address misconceptions at the source. Unfortunately, due to its high cost, **tutoring is often out of reach to pupils facing disadvantage**. The private tutoring industry is also unregulated and can be variable in quality.

Action Tutoring uses the power of volunteer tutors to bridge the gap and **ensure tuition can be accessed by every pupil who needs it**, not just those who can afford it. We put in place structures and resources to ensure pupils engage and excel on the programme.

Over our ten years of operation we have developed an excellent track record of helping pupils make additional progress alongside classroom learning through targeted tuition. **Tutoring is the perfect solution to help schools make up for lost time** in the classroom for their disadvantaged pupils.

Early analysis of online tutoring commissioned by the EEF found it to be an **effective way to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils**. It reported learners benefitted from tailored support and saw improvements in their confidence, engagement with education and preparedness for the new school year.<sup>16</sup>



*“We have used Action Tutoring for two years now and we are really pleased with it. **Pupils gain confidence and expertise in core subjects** and it has made the difference between them achieving grades that get them onto their chosen college course or not.”*

**Assistant Head at a school in Sussex**

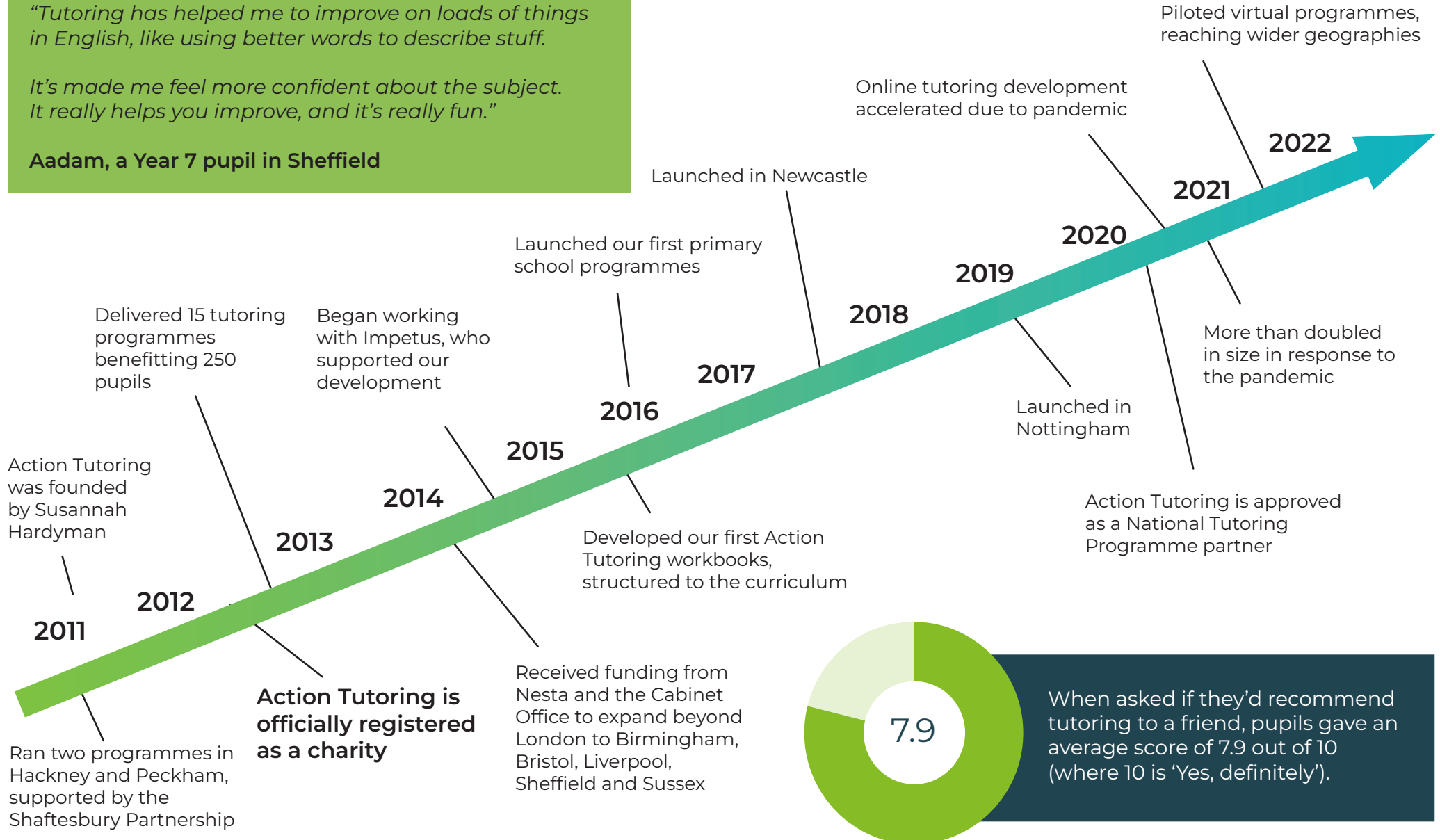


# Our journey so far

*"Tutoring has helped me to improve on loads of things in English, like using better words to describe stuff.*

*It's made me feel more confident about the subject. It really helps you improve, and it's really fun."*

**Aadam, a Year 7 pupil in Sheffield**





# A closer look at 2021–22

Partnered with the Centre for Education and Youth on their report, 'Levelling Up Tutoring.'<sup>11</sup>

Celebrated 10 year anniversary as a charity, helping over **26,000** disadvantaged pupils in that time.

Supported the highest number of pupils in the charity's history. **6,159** pupils received **67,800** hours of tutoring, with **586** pupils receiving support in both subjects.

Formal examinations returned, both SATs and GCSEs.

Action Tutoring was shortlisted to the final three for the Civil Society Charity Awards (education and training category).



Advocated for the embedding of the NTP, making recommendations to improve its impact and sustainability.

**2,345** volunteer tutors delivered a staggering **30,855** hours of tutoring to pupils in **147** schools.

Piloted a 'virtual' programme model in Portsmouth, Corby, Chester, Luton, Middlesex and Rotherham.

# Our reach in 2021–22

Pupils received over **67,800** hours of tutoring

Delivered by **2,345** volunteers

We worked in partnership with **147** schools

**3,026** primary school pupils received tutoring to support them with their **reading or maths**

**3,133** secondary school pupils received tutoring to help them with their **English or maths**

A total of **6,159** disadvantaged pupils benefitted from tutoring courses, with **586** receiving support in both subjects

**69%** of pupils supported were eligible for Pupil Premium funding\*

\*A grant given by the Government to schools in England to decrease the attainment gap for the most disadvantaged children.



## Key



### Action Tutoring regions

Tutoring delivered in-person or via online platform, with Action Tutoring staff member in the classroom.

We also run some virtual programmes in these regions.



### Virtual programmes

Tutoring delivered via online platform, with an Action Tutoring staff member also connecting remotely ('virtual programmes').

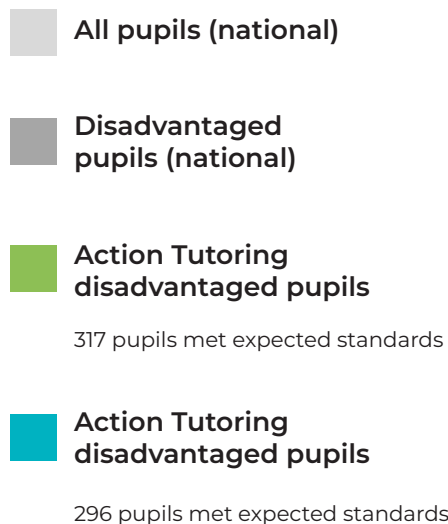
See more on p16.

# Our headline impact in 2021–22: primary schools

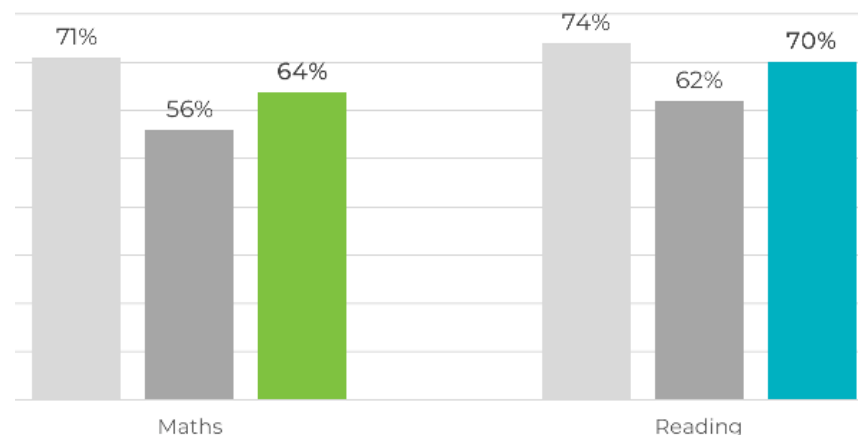
Our analysis shows that **pupils supported by Action Tutoring were more likely to achieve the expected standards than other disadvantaged pupils** across the country — by 8 percentage points in maths and 8 in reading.

Key Stage 2 SATs took place in May 2022 for Year 6 pupils for the first time since 2019, following two years of disruption caused by the pandemic.

While the pandemic has negatively affected all children, disadvantaged children have had their learning hit the hardest. The percentage of Year 6 children achieving expected standards in all of reading, writing and maths in 2022 was 59% — a drop of 6% compared to 2019. The difference in overall attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils increased by 23 percentage points. It's now at its widest for a decade.



Children meeting expected standards in Year 6 SATs



*“Our children have gained so much confidence and enjoyment of maths thanks to Action Tutoring. Children talk so positively about their sessions and we have had very positive feedback from parents. We can see the children making progress in their sessions and the impact it has on their work in the classroom.”*

**Deputy Headteacher, London primary school**



When asked if they'd recommend tutoring to another school, teachers gave an average score of **9.7 out of 10** (where 10 is 'Yes, definitely').

# Our headline impact in 2021–22: secondary schools

In summer 2022, Year 11 pupils sat formal GCSE exams for the first time since 2019.

Recent figures show the GCSE disadvantage gap index has widened and is now **the largest it has been in ten years**.

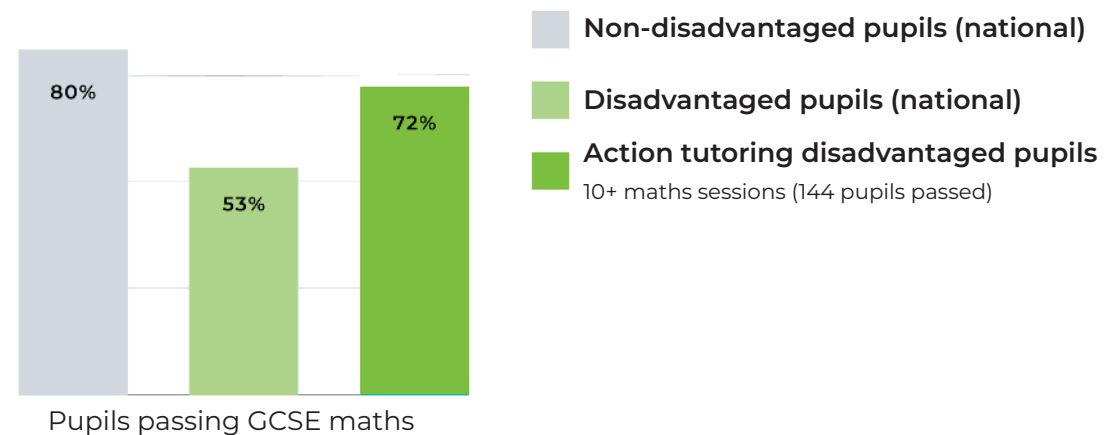
When they began their journey with Action Tutoring, these pupils had been through two challenging years of pandemic disruption and were at risk of not achieving a passing grade.

Despite this, **72% of disadvantaged pupils passed their maths GCSE** after attending at least 10 tutoring sessions with us.

**Pupils who also attended sessions in Year 10 were 27% more likely to pass their maths GCSE** at the end of Year 11, when compared to other Action Tutoring pupils.

*"I liked tutoring, it helped me a lot. You get more time to focus on what you don't understand, compared to in a classroom. Tutoring gave me hope and a better chance of passing. I feel so happy. I want to study sociology or psychology at A Level."*

**Sienna, a Year 11 pupil in London**



As only a minority of our English pupils attended 10 sessions or more last year, and GCSE results are not available for every pupil, the sample for analysis is too small and unlikely to represent the impact achieved for our English pupils in general. For this reason, we don't believe it would be meaningful to draw conclusions from such a small dataset or to publish analysis of our 2021–22 GCSE English programmes.

Looking ahead, Action Tutoring will continue to measure the progress made by pupils through its own robust assessments, and aims to gather enough English GCSE outcomes in summer 2023 to report on the impact of programmes. It is also investing in further evaluation projects to develop evidence of what drives the best results for disadvantaged pupils in tutoring sessions.



# How Covid continues to impact education

Although the biggest disruptions of school closures didn't reoccur during 2021–22, Covid still caused widespread challenges through high levels of pupil and teacher absences. We have seen how the pandemic has impacted pupils' learning on our programmes and several reports were also published in 2021–22 which evidenced the depth and scale of this, particularly for pupils facing disadvantage. As we enter the next academic year, schools are still feeling the effects of Covid, whilst facing new battles financially and with the cost of living crisis impacting them and their pupils.

## Lost learning

Recent research shows that **four in five pupils say their education suffered during school closures** and about half say they have been unable to catch up with learning lost amid the lockdowns. These worrying findings are contained in the COVID Social Mobility and Opportunities (COSMO) study. The study found that **pupils from disadvantaged households were most affected by lost learning during the pandemic**: they missed more school time, were less likely to attend schools that offered live lessons and less likely to be able to access online teaching.<sup>17</sup> These pupils were also likely facing challenges at home such as financial instability, lack of access to basic home-working equipment and parents or guardians who may not be in a position to support them academically.



## Attendance rates

Since schools fully reopened **attendance has not yet returned to the pre-pandemic average**, in the first term of the 2021–22 academic year, 50% of disadvantaged pupils in Years 10 and 11 had missed at least 10% of in-person sessions, compared to 35% of non-disadvantaged pupils.<sup>18</sup> Government data on absences has shown an **increase in the attendance gap**, with the absence rate rising for free school meal (FSM) pupils from 7.6% pre-pandemic, up to 9.7% in the 2021–22 autumn term.<sup>19</sup>



## Attainment gap

The academic attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their better-off peers is now at its **widest in ten years** at both primary and secondary levels.<sup>20</sup>

The Department for Education's (DfE) findings are based on performance in exams at key stage 2 (SATs) and key stage 4 (GCSEs) in 2022, following two years of education disruption caused by Covid. The attainment gap was broadening prior to the pandemic; however, **learning loss during lockdowns and growing inequalities have worsened the situation.**

## Wellbeing

In 2020, young people living in the most deprived areas of the UK experienced **higher increases in psychological distress** than those living in the least deprived areas.<sup>21</sup>

It was also found that children with a probable mental disorder were **more likely to live in a household that had fallen behind with payments** such as bills and rent.<sup>22</sup>

Large-scale sustained support is needed to help pupils facing disadvantage to catch up and reduce the gap. Catch-up provision, including targeted support like tutoring, is essential to enabling this. However schools are struggling to afford additional support, due to rising costs and limited budgets.



# How our programme works

We specifically help pupils facing socio-economic disadvantage who are at risk of leaving primary or secondary school without reaching national standards in their exams, limiting their future opportunities.

- Up to **20 pupils** are supported on a programme by high-quality volunteer tutors who meet our assessment criteria. Including retired professionals, corporate employees and university students.
- An **Action Tutoring staff member oversees the delivery** on the programme and enables the development of our tutors. Removing any need for the school to organise the tutoring provision and significantly reducing any administrative requirements.
- We aim to deliver up to **30 tutoring sessions**, for each year group, with the school over the academic year.
- Each tutoring session lasts for **1 to 1.5 hours**, where pupils receive support for either **maths or English**, or both.
- All of our pupils sit an initial **baseline assessment** before they begin their tutoring with us.
- After 15 hours of tutoring pupils will sit a **progress check**, to identify the progress they have made and the knowledge gaps where tutoring should be focused ahead of their exams.
- Our tutoring **resources** are designed by curriculum experts and structured to suit small-group tutoring. Ofsted's recent report indicated tutoring cannot work without this in place.<sup>23</sup>

*"Action Tutoring has been by far the best tutoring organisation we have worked with. The programmes are well organised and align with the school without adding additional pressures or constraints. We have seen direct impact for both our Year 7 and 11 cohorts, with significant progress in both maths and English. We look forward to working with them again next year!"*

**Deputy Principal at a school in Nottingham**



## Face-to-face



## Online



## Virtual



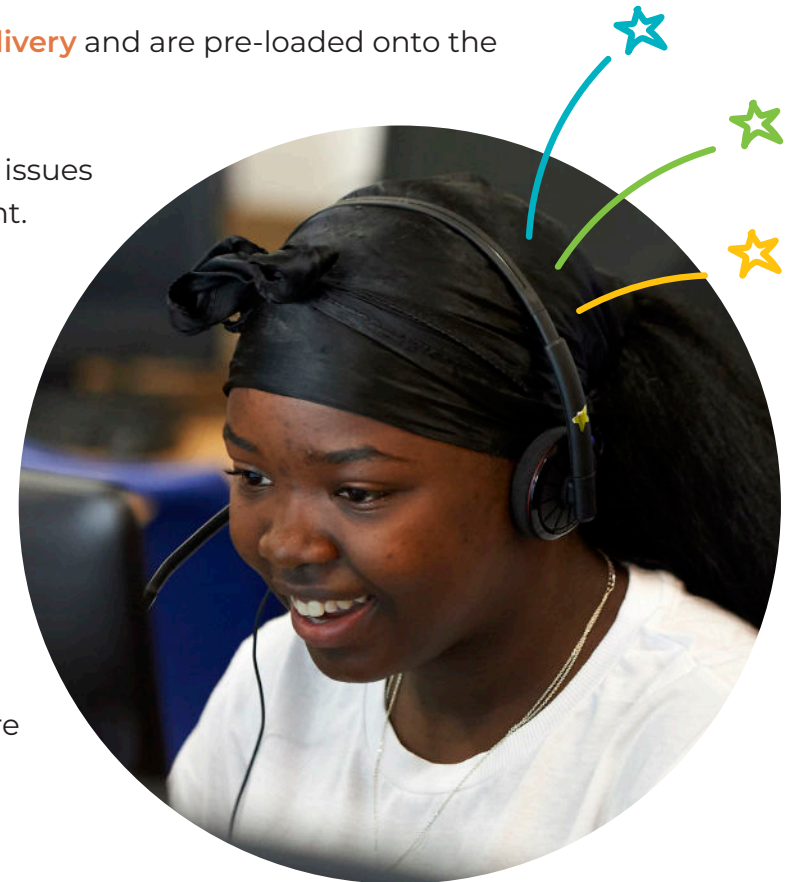
Our **online programmes** follow the same approach and:

- Pupils are set up on **computers in their schools** and receive tutoring from volunteers who are located across the country.
- Action Tutoring's suite of **tutoring workbooks have been adapted for online delivery** and are pre-loaded onto the platform for the tutors and pupils to use.
- Teachers and an Action Tutoring staff member are **on hand to support** with any issues and monitor the quality of the tutoring being delivered in a learning environment.

In 2021–22 we also piloted our '**virtual programmes**' where pupils log in to the session from school and volunteers and Action Tutoring staff both support them remotely. This has **made tutoring even more accessible**, allowing us to reach schools in more rural locations outside of our main urban centres.

We have produced a **portfolio of 12 carefully structured workbooks**, designed by curriculum specialists, that include activities intended to be effective in a tutoring environment. Tutor workbooks which mirror the pupil workbooks contain guidance on how to explain topics and common misconceptions.

Every year, **we gather the SATs and GCSE results of pupils** we've supported, to measure our impact and review our programme.





# Our pupils

In 2021–22 we supported 6,159 pupils (3,133 secondary pupils and 3,026 primary pupils) as they prepared for their exams, which were sat as formal assessments for the first time since 2019.

*"[My tutor] is nice, he always explains things in the easiest way possible. [He] is easy-going, very polite and very kind. I feel more confident in maths and [the tutoring] is fun and it helps me quite a lot."*

**King, a Year 6 pupil in Bristol**



*"The tutors working with our pupils always dedicate their time to not only support our pupils academically, but also build meaningful relationships - which is exactly what our children need! This has meant that the children are always highly engaged in their sessions and the impact the programme has had on their progress has been really positive."*

**A Year 6 teacher in Newcastle**

*"Before we started, I felt really nervous because I didn't know how my tutor was going to be. I feel much more confident now. [My tutor] is kind, patient and smart. If you don't know something, he helps you, and then you know lots of maths! My level has gone up and I think it's cause of my tutor. He's helped me a lot, especially with my decimals and fractions. It's really fun and I appreciate his sessions a lot."*

**Rania, a Year 5 pupil in London**



*"At first I was nervous about tutoring but as I did more sessions I liked it. It made me improve and feel more confident with maths."*

*It boosted my ego and now I feel really proud of what I've achieved. Before, I wasn't good at maths, but tutoring made me believe I could pass maths and I did.*

*Tutoring helped me feel more confident about going and doing A Levels. I want to do criminology and health and social care."*

**Mary, a Year 11 pupil in London**



*"Tutoring definitely helped because it helped me see where I was going wrong and which topics I needed to work on."*

**Gil, a Year 11 pupil in Sheffield**



When asked if their tutors were able to explain the subject clearly, pupils gave an average score of **8 out of 10** (where 10 is 'Yes, definitely').

# Our schools

Action Tutoring has been supporting Stroud Green Primary School in north London since autumn 2020. We have delivered both maths and English tutoring sessions to their Year 5 and 6 pupils, helping them to prepare for their SATs.

*“We have really full and busy timetables whilst also trying to catch children up following two years of school closures. Making sure we cover the curriculum is really challenging. Our school is very mixed in terms of socio-economic background, so **it’s really helpful to have an intervention that is specifically for our disadvantaged pupils**; the charity status and clarity around this makes it very easy to manage.*

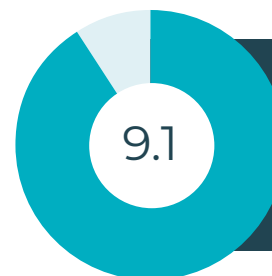
***Our pupils love tutoring** and really look forward to their Tuesday mornings! A different adult (the volunteer tutors) giving them extra focus means they have really positive and supportive relationships with them.*

*We really love to see the impact reports from Action Tutoring and to see the accelerated progress. However, the real impact is in the children’s **confidence and attitudes**. When they realise the link between the tutoring and their in-class learning they love that they’ve had a heads up and hit the ground running. This makes them more likely to put their hand up and ask for help, and more confident to take risks and challenge themselves.*

*Having worked with Action Tutoring across two schools for a number of years I am highly impressed with the **on-the-ground logistics, delivery and management**. Communication with the team is always good and the **volunteers are highly trained and professional**. Also at a strategic level their ethos and vision are clear and they stay true to their values.”*

**Lucy Walker-Collins, Headteacher at Stroud Green Primary School**

We are grateful to Lucy for sharing further insight into working with Action Tutoring at our anniversary event in May 2022. See page 27 for more details.



When asked if Action Tutoring had an overall positive impact on pupils, teachers gave an average score of 9.1 out of 10 (where 10 is ‘Yes, definitely’).

*“We have been working with Action Tutoring for many years to ensure our pupils have the best chance of securing the GCSE grade they deserve in maths. We have a mixture of face to face and online sessions in Year 7 and 11; the tutors work very hard to deliver engaging lessons that pupils enjoy and the outcomes have always been excellent — just yesterday I overheard two pupils saying **“that was a really good session-it really cleared things up for me!”**”*

**Jamie Johnson, Assistant Principal, Saint Gabriel’s College**

*“Action Tutoring has helped provide some of our key vulnerable pupils with the **confidence and fluency** needed in maths. Being one of the highest Pupil Premium schools in the borough, we know how important it is to continue **striving to close the gap within educational inequality**. Action Tutoring has been an opportunity for our young people to make this happen, they have not only benefited from extra small group interventions, but also have **developed their social skills and built purposeful relationships** with their tutors. Pupils taking part in this programme have gone on to achieve a GCSE maths grade which is life changing for them. The programme is well organised and run and tutors are hand picked given their experience.”*

**Kyra Uberai, Head of Faculty: Maths, Oasis Academy Southbank**

# Our volunteers

**2,345 volunteers delivered 30,855 sessions in 2021–22**



**45%** were employed either part time or full time.



**30%** were undergrad or postgrad university students.



**12%** were retired professionals.



**13%** were currently unemployed or chose not to disclose.

In 2021–22 our volunteers ranged in age from **18 to 81** years.

*“The tutors were fantastic and helped the pupils feel relaxed enough to ask questions without them feeling awkward.”*

**Deputy Headteacher at a school in London**

This year we held our first ever Volunteer Awards to celebrate our volunteers and recognise their invaluable contributions to our charity. We awarded seven volunteers and partners in total, recognising them for achievements such as most number of sessions (Dedication Award), most corporate volunteers (Corporate Award) and for contributions made to the charity outside of tutoring (Above and Beyond Award).

Action Tutoring is committed to ensuring that our volunteer tutors provide high-impact, effective tutoring sessions. Our evidence shows that they have a positive impact on pupils’ academic progress. We have put in place quality assurance processes at every stage of the tutor journey.

**Application assessment:** all tutors must meet a set of academic qualification criteria and quality indicators.

**Initial tutor training:** all tutors attend the training delivered by staff with a background in teaching or training. Online tutors complete compulsory e-learning training to ensure they tutor effectively in the virtual classroom.

**Continued development:** 24-hour access to our e-learning platform, providing ongoing training, to grow tutors’ skills and expertise.

**Quality tutoring resources:** our resources are created by specialist curriculum consultants, and are aligned with national curriculum age-related expectations.

**Programme Coordinators:** pass feedback on pupil progress to teachers and tutors to ensure quality of learning outcomes. They may make suggestions of strategies that individual tutors can use to improve their impact and embed pupil learning.

**Formal observations:** formal QA observations are carried out by the quality team in order to improve a tutor’s quality or impact. A competencies guidance checklist is used to evaluate how impactful the session was and how the tutor could develop.

**Spot-check observations:** for randomly selected new tutors, to monitor quality and identify trends to inform the development of our training resources.

"I have **developed invaluable skills in communication**. As someone in an engineering career who has benefited from opportunities that helped me get here, I am passionate about **supporting initiatives that strive to support all children to achieve their potential**. If children don't have the opportunities or the awareness that engineering is a career path they can pursue, that could limit their future outcomes. Tutoring gives me personal and job satisfaction, impacting me positively due to the personal gratification I get from the sessions."

**Emily, Materials Engineer and Manager at Arup and volunteer maths tutor**

"The least we can do as older adults is to **give back to today's generation** because it's a lot harder for them. In my day, we had a free university education and living grants so our generation is extremely lucky but unfortunately children today don't have those same opportunities and benefits. I get a great deal of satisfaction when pupils understand the learning right and what we are doing... Volunteer tutoring matters because **all pupils deserve the best chance**. It is the duty of adults to do whatever we can to improve the life chances of young people. Tutoring is a perfect opportunity to do that."

**Ian, former vice president in charge of logistics and strategic development in a STEM organisation, now retired and volunteer maths tutor**

"When I first joined Action Tutoring as a volunteer tutor, I assumed it may be difficult to motivate my pupils to want to learn given the challenges they had already faced at school – how wrong I was! They consistently showed **enthusiasm, drive and intellectual curiosity**... I have also developed valuable skills in leadership, organisation and communication through my role as a tutor, which will be **useful for my future employment**. Whilst I joined Action Tutoring to make a difference in society and to gain experience beyond my university studies, everyone's circumstances and reasons for volunteering are unique – so whether you are employed and hoping to bring some variety into the working day, or retired and looking for a new challenge, there are so many benefits to becoming a volunteer tutor with Action Tutoring."

**Georgia, university student and volunteer English tutor**



When asked if they would recommend volunteering with Action Tutoring to a friend or colleague, tutors gave an average score of 9.1 out of 10 (where 10 is 'Yes, definitely').

In January 2022, we held our first **volunteer tutor advocate meeting**, and have held them every quarter since.

Our advocates participate in our termly virtual meet ups to connect with other tutors, give feedback on how we can engage more committed volunteers and we share opportunities for them to get involved with other charity activities such as participating in a case studies, or featuring in our blog, being in a public video or post. They also reach out to their local networks to inform them of our work. We currently have 60 active advocates.





# Our team

Following our rapid growth in 2020–21, we continued to grow in 2021–22, with our work delivered by a team of 73. This was comprised of our frontline programme staff, crucial for our delivery; a Marketing and Communications team, to raise our profile and recruit a sufficient number of high-quality volunteer tutors; our Operations team who ensure our team are fully equipped and supported and our Impact and Quality team who are rigorous about the quality of our training and tutoring and their impact. They were all overseen by a management team of five members.

In 2021–22 our staff diversity and inclusion working group continued to expand its work and implementation of ‘everyday actions’:

- We created a diversity and inclusion code of conduct for our tutors.
- We adjusted our staff biographies on our website, removing academic backgrounds and focusing more on the team culture and individuals’ passion for our work.
- We ran nine ‘Broaden your Horizon’ and ‘Lunch and Learn’ sessions for the staff team.
- We became a registered ‘Disability Confident’ employer.

An **employee assistance programme** is available to all staff as well as free access to ‘Headspace for work’. We have seven trained **mental health first aiders**. We also offer regular **training and information sessions** at team days focused on wellbeing. We have a **staff wellbeing guide**, summarising our internal offers of support as well as some great external services available, and our guide to remote working. In April 2022 we won the Rising Leader award in the 2022 “Headspace for Work” **Mindful Workplace Awards** and in 2022, we were proud to make the list of **100 Best Small Companies** to work for.



*“Having experienced first-hand the difference education can make in increasing a child’s life chances, working with Action Tutoring is worth every hour and effort. Our collective fight to give every child access to quality education and a better future, irrespective of their socio-economic background, feeds into my life’s purpose. As PR, Media and Policy Manager, I strive to highlight the inspiring stories and life-changing impact of our tutors and partners on pupils and schools, to extend our reach and win more hearts and minds to support our mission. The feeling of being exposed to the best of humanity – volunteers serving disadvantaged young people with all their might to create an enabling, nurturing, and supportive learning journey through tutoring – makes it even more fulfilling to be a part of the team.”*

**Henry joined Action Tutoring in February 2022 as our PR and Media Manager**



*“Having previously taught English in secondary schools, I’ve seen first hand the inequality that exists in our system. I have always believed that we should do all we can to maximise the life chances of every child, regardless of their socio-economic background... I have been overwhelmed by the contribution our wonderful volunteer tutors make every day to the lives of young people. I am proud to coordinate such a fantastic team. I am also proud to watch our pupils go from strength to strength; not only in their academic achievements but in terms of their resilience and confidence too.”*

**Rachael joined Action Tutoring in August 2020 as our Programme Coordinator for Sheffield, becoming Northern Programme Manager in 2023**



*“I thoroughly enjoy my role working for Action Tutoring. As the Online Programmes Manager, I ensure that our online systems are reliable and effective in providing a positive learning experience for our volunteer tutors and the pupils we support. When technical challenges arise, it inspires me to see the collaboration between our staff, schools and volunteers who always have the pupil experience at the forefront of their minds. My team also offers training and support to our online tutors, upskilling them to use the Virtual Classroom. I am regularly impressed by the attention to detail and effort our volunteers put into preparing for their lessons.”*

**Mark joined Action Tutoring in August 2021 as Online Programmes and Systems Administrator, later becoming our Online Programmes Manager**





# Our funders

In 2021–22 the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) grant income covered the cost of tutoring programmes for up to 15 sessions per pupil in one subject. Where possible we wanted to offer more sessions to pupils to increase the potential for impact. For pupils who exceed 15 sessions or received support in both maths and English, additional fundraising was required to cover these costs.

We are incredibly grateful to the following funders for the generous support they gave in 2021–22:



Thank you to the **Monday Charitable Trust** who were our champion for The Big Give Christmas Challenge in 2021 and matched the donations we received during the campaign.

We're also grateful to the following organisations for their additional regional grants:

**AllianceBernstein | DAC Beachcroft | Worshipful Company of Insurers | Westminster Foundation**

And for the donations generously given by these organisations:

**The Orp Foundation | KPMG | Silver Lake | Drag Con Ser Ltd**

*"The Livingbridge Foundation is proud to support Action Tutoring; a well-run, growing charity which makes a real difference to the lives of disadvantaged young people. Action Tutoring is distinct as an organisation that focuses on quantifiable outcomes, with high-quality and curriculum-based tutoring tailored to each individual pupil's learning requirements. It is a pleasure to partner with such a fantastic team."*

# Our advocacy work



In 2021–22 we continued to advocate for the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) to be extended beyond 2024, supporting recommendations to improve its impact and become a lasting feature of the education system.

Action Tutoring is a member of the FEA (Fair Education Alliance), a coalition of 250 organisations, which aims to tackle inequality in the education system. We also co-chair the FEA's tuition advocacy sub-group and through this participated in collective action campaigns which centred around ensuring the NTP kept its core focus on supporting disadvantaged pupils. Part of this activity included positively engaging with the Department for Education (DfE) to help shape the future of the NTP. We attended two meetings with the Number 10 Delivery Unit, following a collective action letter sent to Nadhim Zahawi in May 2022 (Secretary of State for Education at the time). We continue to advocate strongly for the NTP to retain a focus on disadvantaged pupils.



**Susannah and Nick Bent, Co-Founder and former CEO of the Tutor Trust, at Number 10**

We were delighted to partner with the Centre for Education and Youth, together with Third Space Learning and White Rose Maths, on their report, '[Levelling Up Tutoring](#)'. This independent research drew on the results of a survey of 185 school and trust leaders and teachers (carried out from April to May 2022), as well as 27 interviews with school and trust leaders, senior figures at the Department for Education, and others with research and policy expertise. It called for improvements to be made to the NTP, ensuring it becomes embedded into the education system, with a vision for its future up to 2030. It also identified principles that are key to its success.

In July 2022, CEO Susannah Hardyman, appeared on three panels at the Festival of Education. One discussed the evidence behind tutoring, the focus placed on it by the Government, and the future of the NTP beyond Covid recovery. It was led by Nick Brook, the Deputy General Secretary of school leaders' union NAHT. The second panel discussed how tutoring could be bolstered through the NTP to live up to its objectives of narrowing the attainment gap, asking if tutors were the solution to closing it. This was coordinated by The Centre for Education and Youth. The third panel was hosted by the Fair Education Alliance and discussed practical and impactful initiatives to close the disadvantage gap.

In addition to our external work, our staff policy working group is committed to staying up-to-date with the latest education policies and making sure we play our part in raising awareness amongst the rest of our staff team and our tutors. We also send regular policy updates to our network.

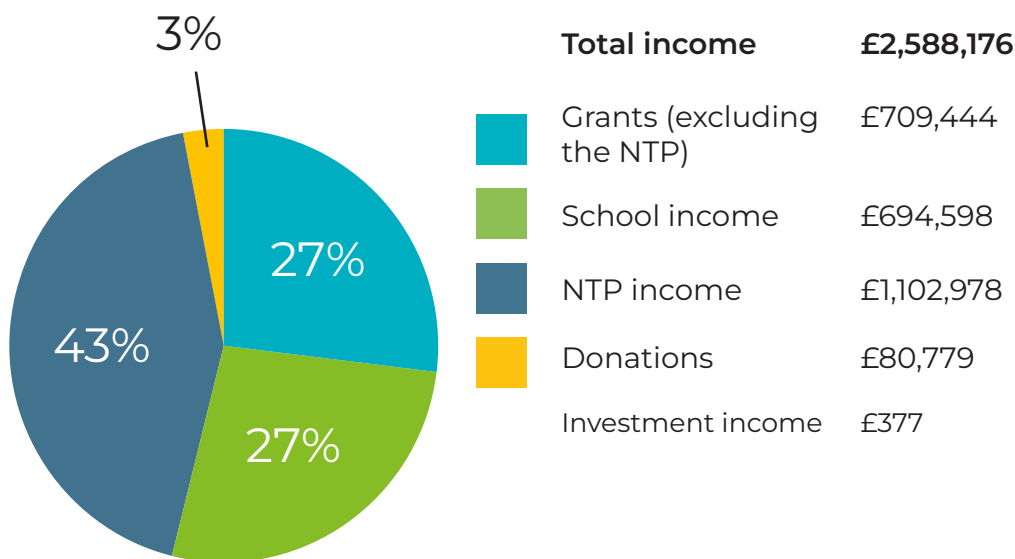


# Our finances

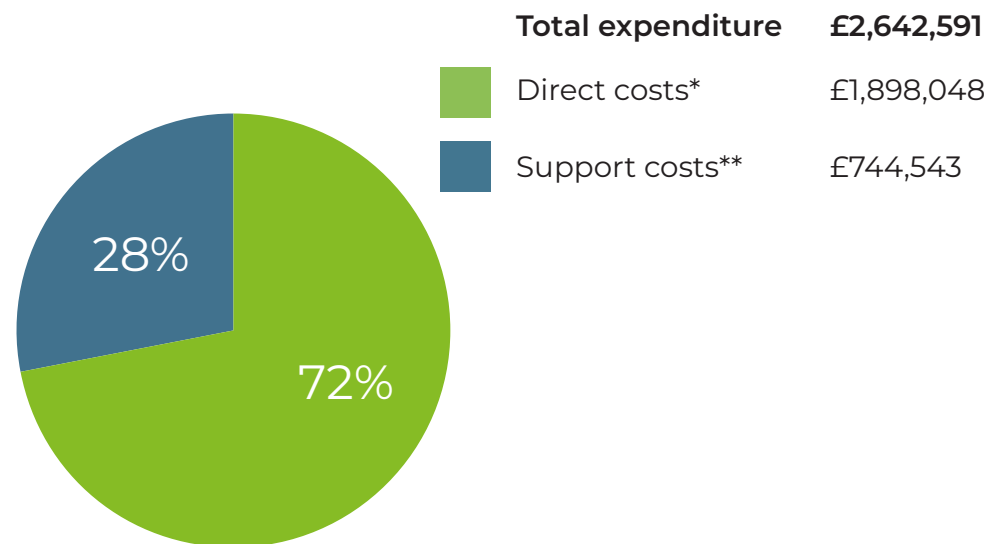
We have allocated the core costs of delivering our tutoring through the running of our programmes to **'direct costs'**\*, which include: programme staff; marketing and recruitment of volunteers; tutor resources; curriculum and tutor training development. **'Support costs'**\*\* include: staff training and recruitment; premises costs; staff welfare; travel and accommodation; IT costs; legal and professional fees; insurance; audit and accountancy fees; non-programme staff and depreciation. A full list is available in our Financial Statements for the year ended 31st August 2022.

It is the policy of the charity to maintain three months of full costs or nine months of net costs (minus delivery income which currently includes school income and the National Tutoring Programme funding), whichever is the larger. The reserves policy was met in 2021–22 and is reviewed annually.

## Breakdown of income (2021–22)



## Breakdown of expenditure (2021–22)



There was a 4.8% increase in income on 2020–21. The income from schools covered 28% of the charity's outgoings. The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) grant income covered 70% of the cost of NTP funded programmes.

# Our value

The **attainment gap** grows wider at each progressive stage of education. The Education Policy Institute's research has shown it almost **doubles between the end of primary and the end of secondary school**, to 18.1 months. This shows the importance of intervening early and then of continuing to attend to the needs of disadvantaged pupils.<sup>24</sup>

Research by Impetus has shown that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are **50% more likely to be NEET** than their peers and that three quarters of NEET young people have been NEET for at least 12 months.<sup>25</sup>

If a pupil is not in education, employment or training on leaving school, they could have **reduced earnings of £225,000 over a lifetime**.<sup>26</sup>

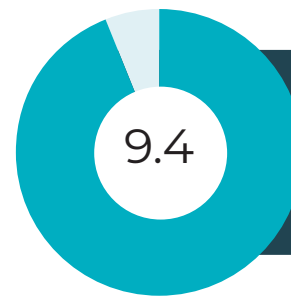
Improving the attainment of pupils facing disadvantage **benefits not only the individual but also society as a whole**. A small investment to support a young person to achieve can have a significant long-term saving for wider society.

Each tutoring workbook for our pupils costs just **£5.99**, and ensures the highest quality tutoring.

It costs just **£3.10** to train a tutor for face to face and online tutoring.

It costs **£2.50** to run our online tutoring platform for a tutoring session.

**£391** provides up to a year of tutoring for a pupil.



When asked if Action Tutoring's programme offers good **value for money**, teachers gave an average score of **9.4 out of 10** (where 10 is 'Yes, definitely').



# Our ten year anniversary celebrations

In 2022 we celebrated **10 years since Action Tutoring registered as a charity**. We organised several events to mark the occasion.

In early May we held a **celebration event in parliament, kindly hosted by Alex Norris MP** and with a guest keynote message from the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza. At the event we also heard from Andy Ratcliffe, Action Tutoring Trustee and Executive Director at Impact on Urban Health, volunteer tutor Ranjit Matharu, Lucy Walker Collins, headteacher at Stroud Green Primary School, Susannah Hardyman, CEO and Founder of Action Tutoring and Peter Baines, Action Tutoring Chair of Trustees. The event gave us an opportunity to celebrate our decade of achievements and to look ahead and encourage support for the next ten years.

*"Action Tutoring has achieved significant progress in closing the attainment gap for pupils by believing that no child's chances should be limited by their socio-economic background and are working tirelessly to provide real solutions to disadvantaged children. It is encouraging to see an organisation of committed individuals who, despite the obstacles of the pandemic, have been able to adapt and provide support to children who have experienced learning loss and deterioration of their mental health."*

**UK's Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, speaking at Action Tutoring's anniversary event**

In June we held a **funder breakfast event** which engaged existing, former and new funders of Action Tutoring. We'd like to thank our funder and volunteer partner, DAC Beachcroft, for generously hosting it.

Towards the end of the summer term we organised **social events for our volunteer tutors and staff** across our Action Tutoring regions, to celebrate and thank them for their commitment over the year.

Finally in August we were able to **celebrate as a staff team**, together in person for the first time since December 2019. Old staff, new staff and former staff came together and enjoyed reflecting over some cake!



# Our future

Following a period of significant growth and change for Action Tutoring, accelerated by Covid and the arrival of the National Tutoring Programme, we are continuing to consolidate our work and ensure a strong platform for future growth. As we marked our ten year anniversary in 2022, we took the opportunity to reflect, reviewing our impact and the external environment, and refined our strategy for the next few years.

As a highly aspirational and adaptable education charity, our four main priorities over the next few years are:



**Reach:** Increasing the locations we charity work in, especially to reach more rural and coastal areas – ‘cold spots’ where finding tutors is more difficult and the attainment gap is wider. This means significantly expanding the number of schools we partner with, outside of our current eight regions, to ensure we are reaching young people that really need our help and in areas where there is much less availability of tutoring programmes.



**Growth:** The attainment gap remains stubbornly wide as pupils continue to be impacted by lost learning from the pandemic. Adapting to a model that can deliver much more widely geographically gives Action Tutoring a springboard for further growth. Since the pandemic began, we have demonstrated that through online delivery, it should be possible to deliver tutoring in almost any school in the country.

Action Tutoring aims to support at least 10,000 pupils a year in three years’ time, rising to at least 12,000 a year in five years’ time. We want to step up to the challenge of the attainment gap, which new data from the DfE indicates is at its widest since 2012.

*“It is enormously satisfying to help pupils achieve their true potential. I feel that this is also a way of contributing to the country as a whole, because these youngsters will stand a better chance of getting jobs when they leave school.”*

**A volunteer online maths tutor in Scotland**

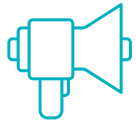






**Impact:** We are proud of the record impact we have already demonstrated over the last few years but there is further to go.

We want to drive efficiencies in our model to strengthen its impact and understand more about what elements make it especially effective, all building towards a large external evaluation in five years' time.



**Advocacy:** Action Tutoring's advocacy work has grown steadily since the pandemic. We want to build on this inroad, using our experience and voice to ensure that there is a long-term legacy of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) and also to ensure tutoring for disadvantaged pupils is permanently embedded in the education system to narrow the attainment gap.

We will continue to grow our influence and contribution to policy-making with partners in the sector to positively shape young people's futures.



To achieve all the outlined medium to long-term strategies, collaboration, one of Action Tutoring's core values, will be critical to our success. Internally, the team will work together to optimise our unique talents to improve the operational and managerial performance of programme delivery. Beyond our workforce, we will work hand in hand with sector partners, funders, schools and volunteer tutors and the wider network for the collective growth of the education sector.

## How you can help us achieve our future goals:

- Introduce us to schools you know where we can support their disadvantaged pupils.
- Get people interested in our volunteering opportunities, no previous experience required and we welcome adults of all ages.
- Donate or fundraise for us or get your company involved with our work.
- Spread the word about Action Tutoring to your networks and engage with our advocacy work.

[www.actiontutoring.org.uk](http://www.actiontutoring.org.uk) | @actiontutoring | hello@actiontutoring.org.uk | 0203 872 5894

# Thank you

We are so grateful to all of our volunteers and partner schools for the support they gave in 2021–22, as Covid continued to disrupt education and the cost of living crisis started to take hold. Every volunteer helped us to achieve our overall impact. A special thank you must go to our tutors who supported on the greatest number of sessions:

Name	Sessions delivered in 2021–22	Tutor region
Selina Whiteley	120	Cornwall
Quintus Benziger	117	Essex
Frank Plater	112	Bristol
Mark Parsons	103	London
Janet Cheney	91	London
Jonathan Trippett	83	London
Michael O'Connor	82	London
Alastair Gill	78	Bristol
Ranjit Matharu	77	London
Bonny Chu Kwan Ho	77	London
Sharon Webster	72	Gloucestershire
Richard Dunne	71	Liverpool
Sandra Fisher	67	London
David Barker	66	Sussex
Kanwar Chohan	66	London

A big thank you to all of our volunteering partners, particularly the following who sourced the most volunteers for us in 2021–22:

- Civil Service
- DAC Beachcroft
- Arup
- KPMG
- Deloitte
- UBS
- University of Bristol
- Newcastle University
- University of Nottingham
- University of Sheffield
- Nottingham Trent University



We were extremely saddened to learn of the sudden passing of one of our volunteers last year, Richard Dunne. Richard had carried out over 100 tutoring sessions, on 13 regular tutoring programmes, plus was a committed cover tutor.

We have shared some of his words below to sum up the wonderful person he was:

*“What a lovely treat for me to have sessions booked. I am full of delight that my career is replete with the professional quality of staff of Action Tutoring. Here is where I want to be, tutoring each day for Action Tutoring, the workbooks, the templates, Vedamo, programme coordinators, happy pupils glowing with health and happiness, polite greetings every time I enter class, it is like having a massive family of children eager to learn, so lucky am I.”*

# Endnotes

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2021-to-2022> ('Pupil premium allocations 2021 to 2022: national, local authority, parliamentary constituency level')
2. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-2-attainment/2021-22> and <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance-revised#explore-data-and-files>
3. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-2-attainment/2021-22>
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7. Provisional Key Stage 4 performance data for academic year 2021/22, shared by the Department for Education in November 2022 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.
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