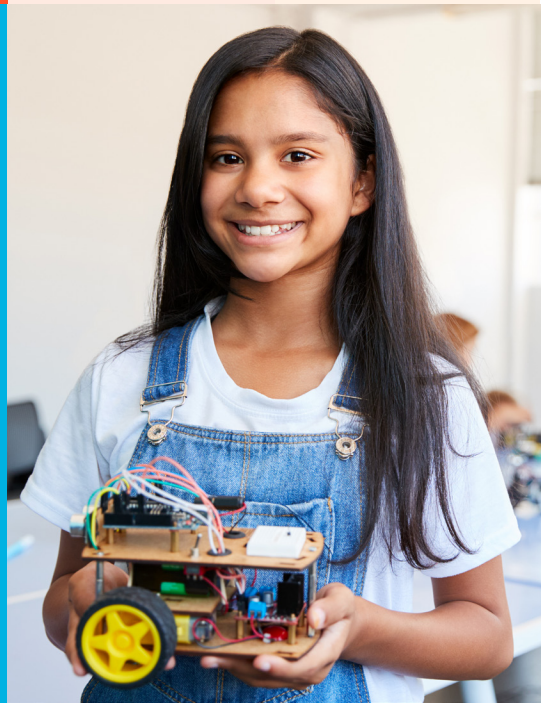
CEM
Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT

3 steps to supporting your EAL learners



Getting started

You know your school

- What proportion of your students speak English as an additional language?
- Do the majority of your students speak a language other than English outside the classroom?
- Does the balance of your curriculum prepare them adequately for exams taken in English?

Teacher tip: *Look at the data in the context of your school. I worked in one school where the majority of students were Arabic mother tongue and most of their social interactions were in Arabic; in another school there were over 60 different nationalities and English was the common language both in the classroom and in the social context outside their immediate home environment. EAL students made more rapid progress in the second scenario because they were more intensely immersed. They were also more exhausted – remember, it takes a lot of effort to focus in a different language for long periods of time.*

Step 1

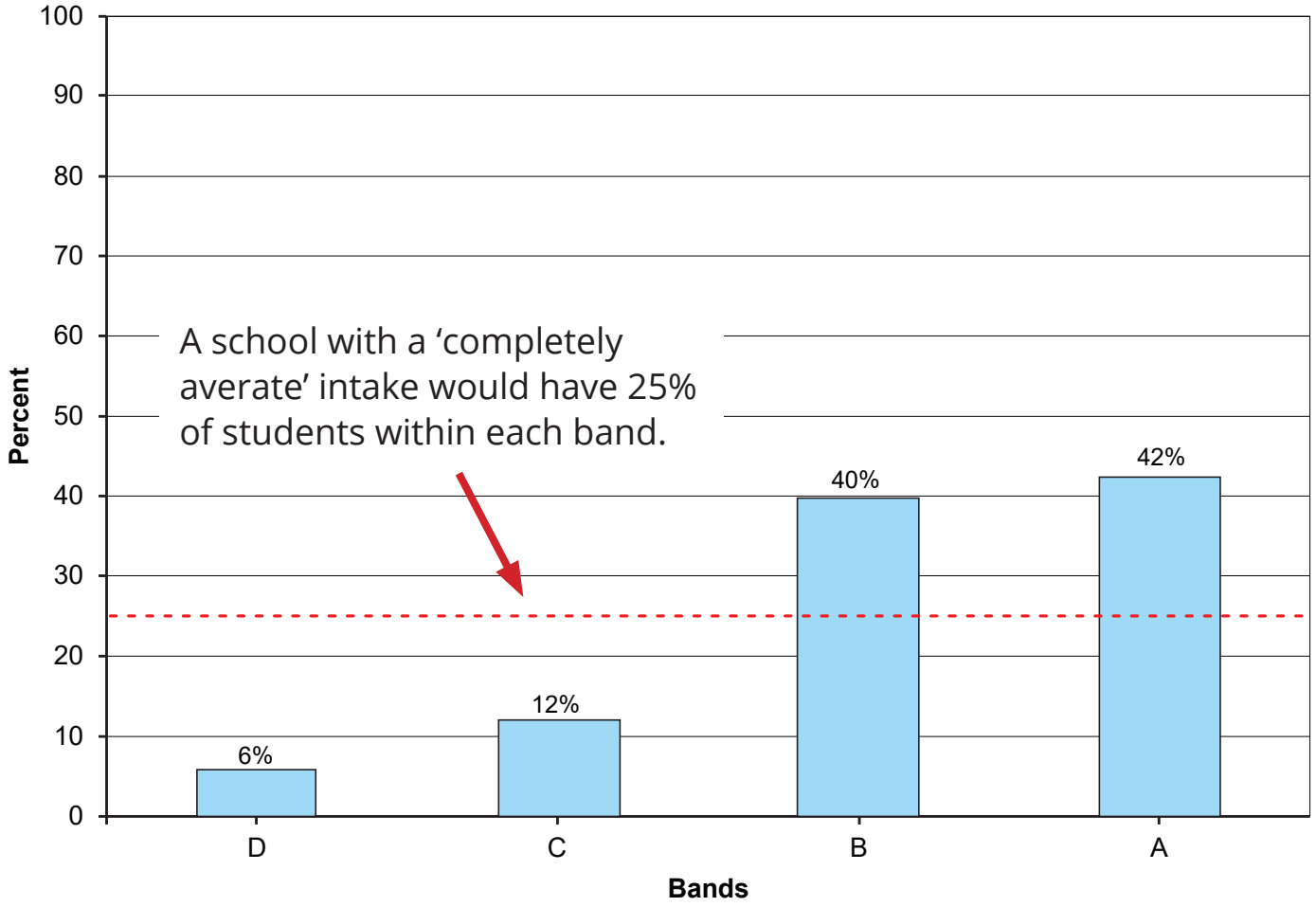
Understanding your year group

- CEM's School Band graphs of year groups give you a quick picture of the overall range of abilities in a particular group of students.
- In schools with a high proportion of EAL students, vocabulary scores and proofreading scores are often lower than in other areas.
- Use the vocabulary and proofreading scores to identify overall priorities for focus and development.

Teacher tip: *It's worth comparing different year groups, because year groups can vary considerably within the same school. In some international schools this can be linked to the recruitment policies of multi-national companies.*

School Band Graph showing the overall MidYIS score - A is the highest band

The school band graph of overall MidYIS score gives an indication of future exam performance of the year group. In this case over 80% are in the top 50% of the ability range, so you would expect good results.



What can I expect?

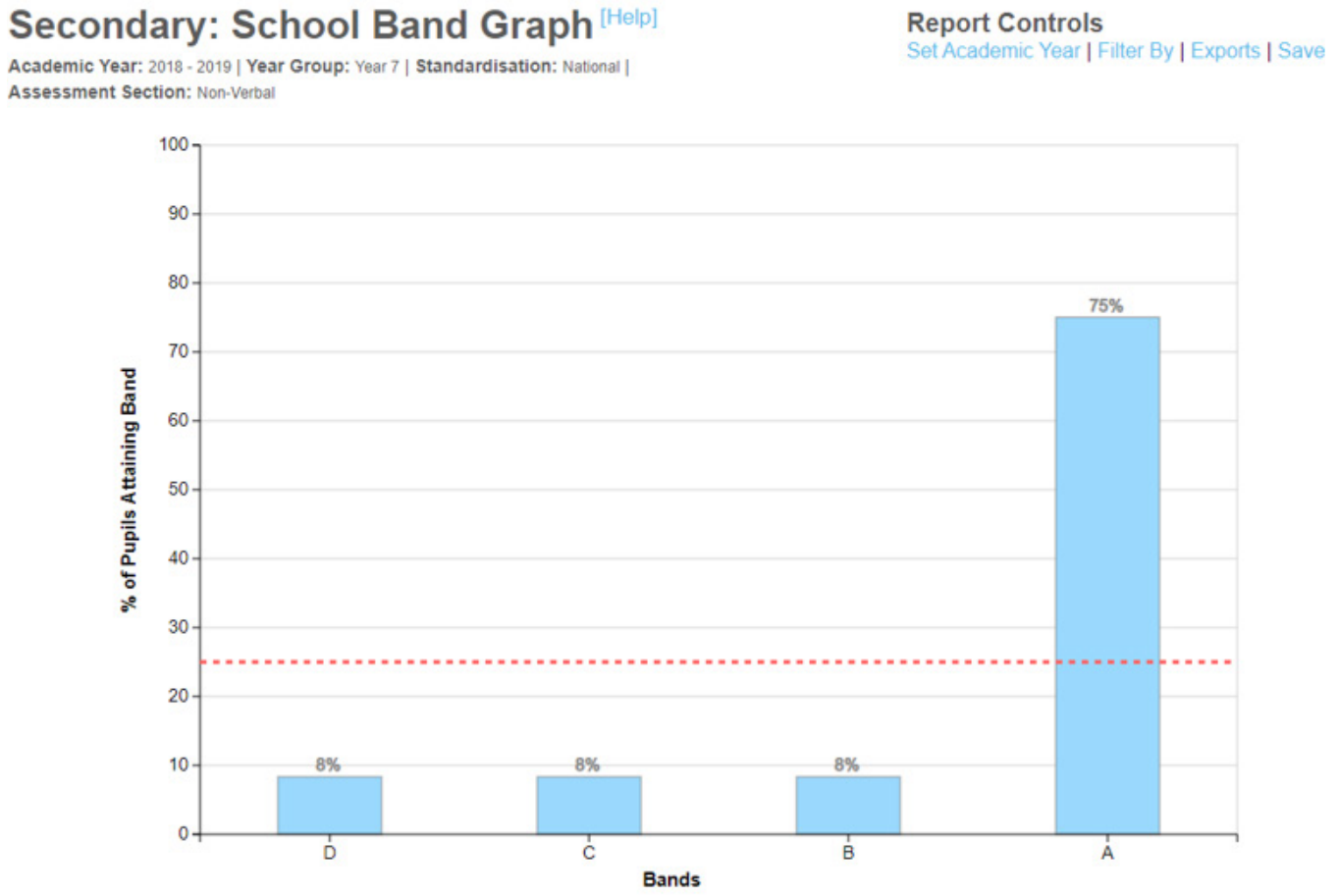
As this school has a high proportion of students in the top 50%, it would expect students to achieve well in external exams.

But...Could they do better?

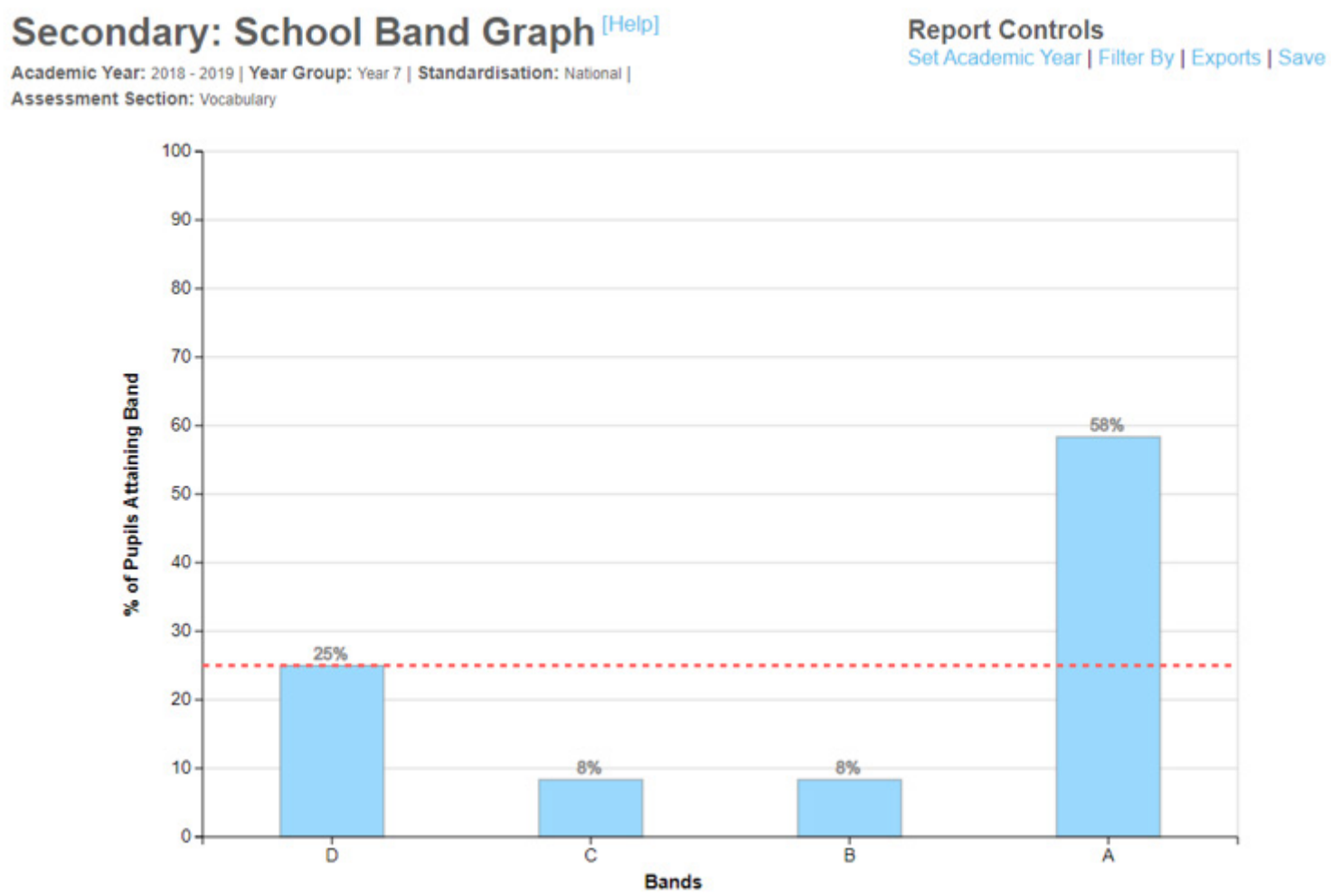
It's important to note that 70% of students are in the top 25% in terms of non-verbal ability, which is often a better indicator of cognitive ability for EAL students.

Band graph of non-verbal ability scores - 75% of students are in the top band

Tip: *use the 'Filter By' option in report controls to view school bands for the different sections of the assessment*



Band graph of vocabulary scores of the same year group – 25 % of students are in the lowest band



Comparing the overall, non-verbal ability and vocabulary scores

For EAL students, the non-verbal ability scores are often better indicators of potential ability than the overall score.

But without intervention, the overall score is a better indicator of future performance.

How can I support this year group?

In my experience, the following works best in terms of curriculum design, and teaching and learning in secondary schools:

- Increase the teaching time available for English for 11-14 year olds.
- Provide intensive English induction for new students for at least two months and reduce gradually over a two year period.
- Train all staff to support English development for EAL students within their own subjects.
- Actively teach and practice proofreading skills.
- Replace at least one option at (I)GCSE with extra English support.

Step 2

A closer look at individual students

Individual Pupil Records (IPRs)

- The IPRs give standardised scores, stanines , percentile ranks and band data for vocabulary, mathematics, non-verbal-ability and skills, and overall ability.
- The overall MidYIS score is good indicator of future exam performance (unless you put in place targeted interventions).
- A closer look can reveal very different needs.
- IPRs can give an early indication of what support and/or further testing by a specialist might be needed.

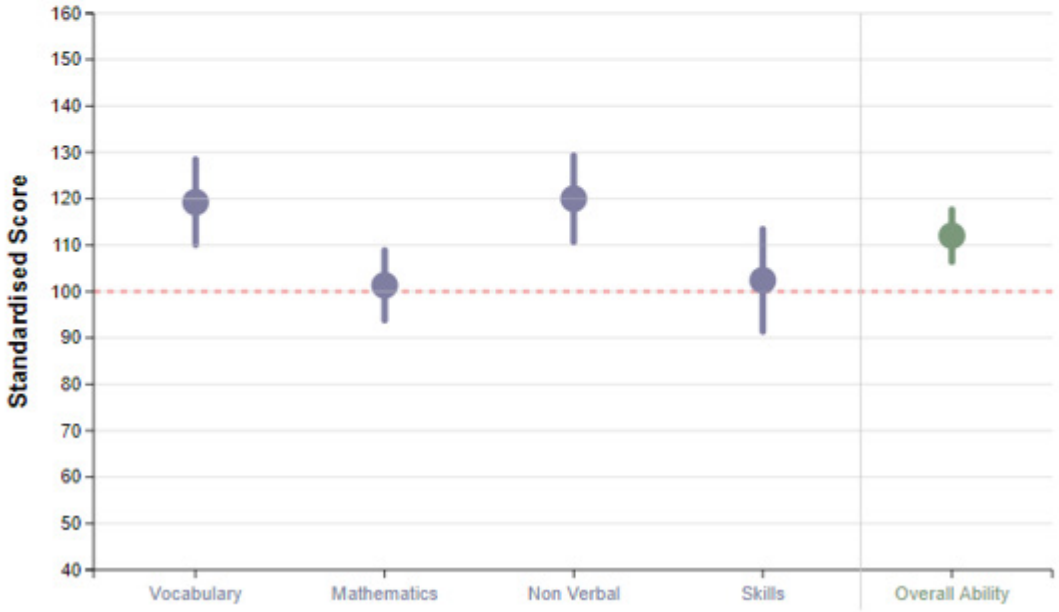
The MidYIS Individual Pupil Record (IPR)

The IPRs give a very good visual display of the student's abilities.

The circle shows the actual score on the day of the assessment and the bars either side are the confidence limits - meaning that if the student takes the test again, we are reasonably sure that the score would lie within that range.

If the possible range of scores overlap across the different assessment sections then there is no obvious area for further investigation.

	Standardised Score	Band	Stanine	Percentile
Vocabulary	119	A	8	90
Mathematics	101	B	5	54
Non Verbal	120	A	8	91
Skills	102	B	5	56
Overall Ability	112	A	7	79

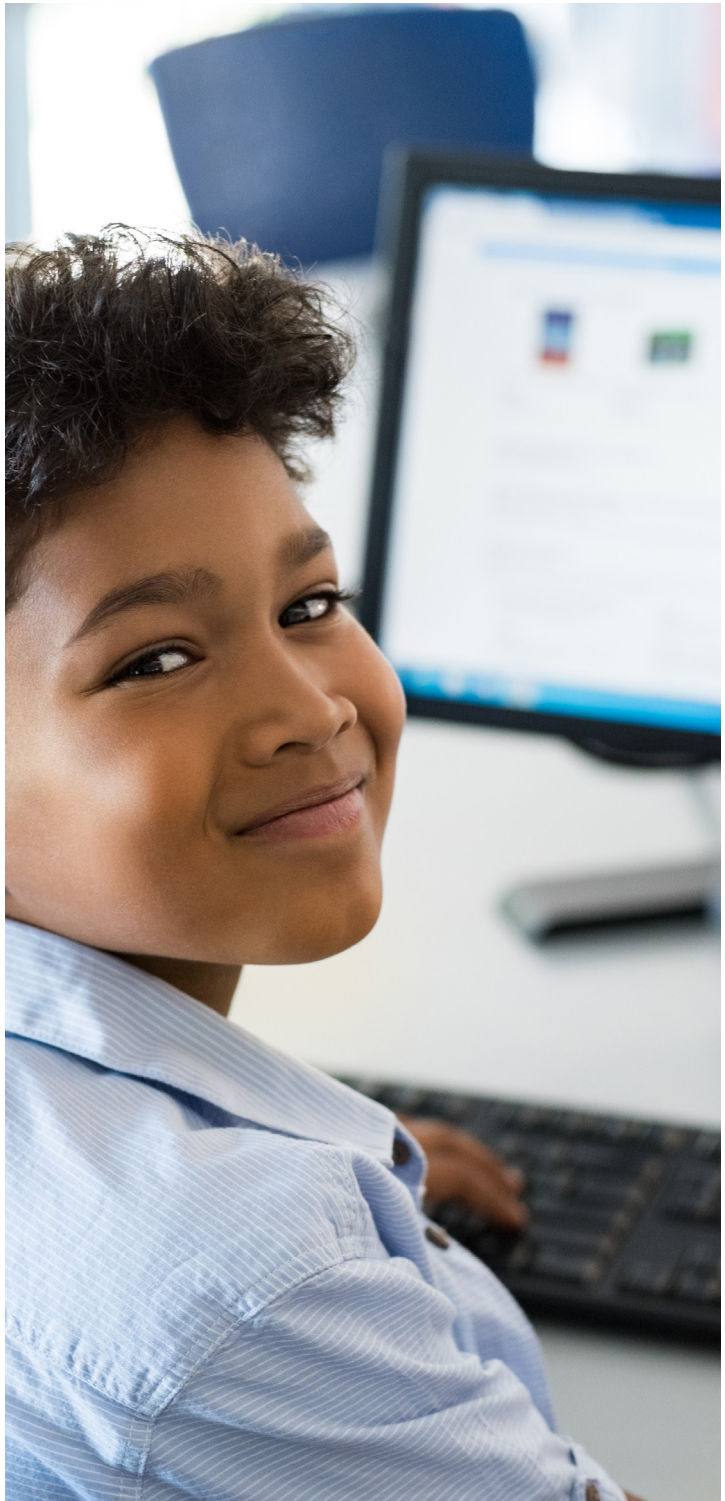


Look even closer at the sub-section scores

A closer look at sub-section scores can:

- Reveal very different needs
- Give an early indication of what support and/or further testing by a specialist might be needed

By precisely targeting support, students' outcomes are improved and resources are deployed more effectively.

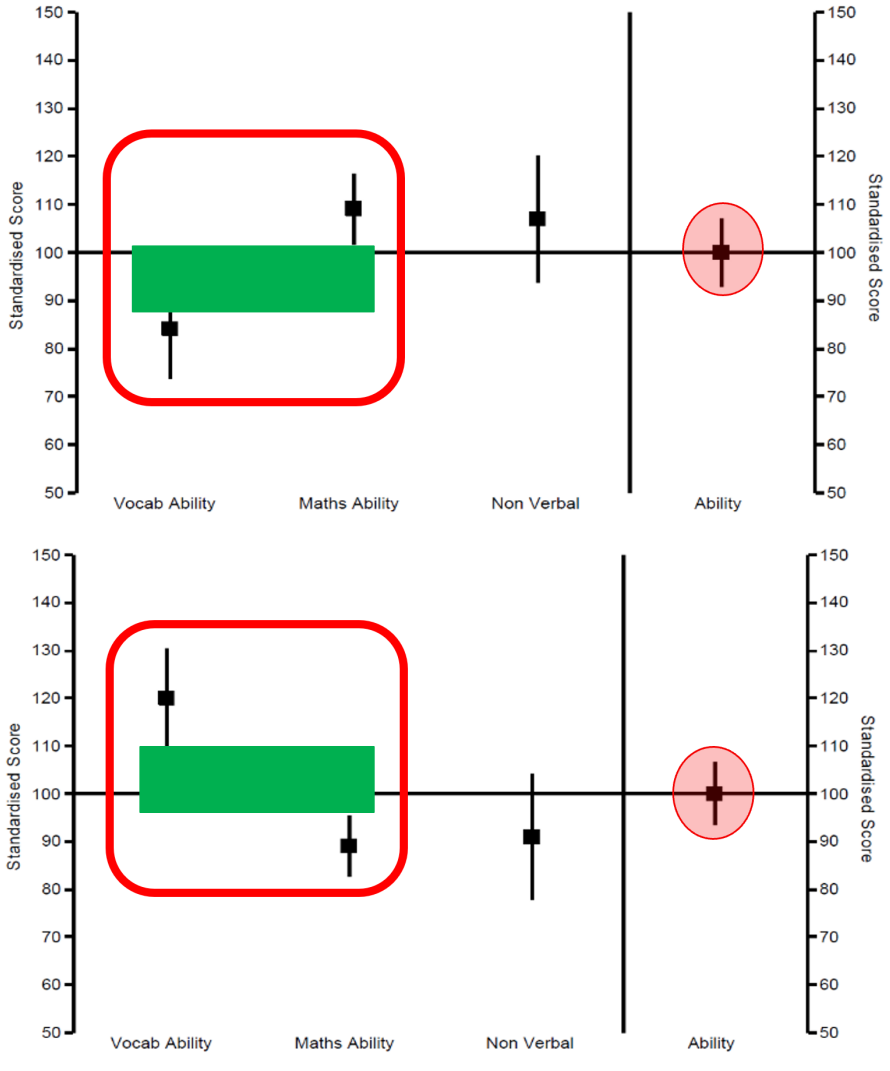


Two students: Same overall ability, different profiles

Although these two students have the same overall scores their profiles are very different.

The first is likely to be a bright EAL student, with low vocabulary scores, but good mathematical ability.

The second seems to have some difficulty with mathematics compared with their vocabulary score. They may also have some spatial awareness difficulties, or more general difficulty, as shown by the relatively lower non-verbal score.



Interpreting the EAL student profile

- Your EAL students are more likely to have lower vocabulary scores than their other scores.
- The non-verbal score is often a better measure of ability for EAL students than the overall MidYIS score.
- If the non-verbal score is also low, then further assessment by a specialist might identify a generalised learning difficulty which will affect progress in all areas.

Teacher tip: *Particularly for EAL students (but possibly also for dyslexic students) it is worth looking at the breakdown of their skills scores: perceptual speed and accuracy (PSA), and proofreading.*

Step 3
A closer look at skills scores

Secondary: Standardised Scores [Help]

Academic Year: 2018 - 2019 | **Score Shown:** Standardised Score | **Year Group:** Year 7 |
Standardisation: National | **Display:** Skills Subsections Only

Report Controls
Set Academic Year | Score Type | Filter By | Exports | Save

Forename	Surname	CEM Id	Student Number	Year Group	Form	Gender	Proof Reading		PSA	
							Standardised Score	Band	Standardised Score	Band
MIKE	HOLLAND	3180012T	H036000011157	Year 7	11L	Male	104	B	111	A
CELIA	HONDURAS	3180012U	D318607815086	Year 7	11CH	Female	110	A	111	A
IGGY	ICELAND	3180012M	T318607816088	Year 7	11S	Male	114	A	111	A
BRODY	JAPAN	3180012N	N003000012052	Year 7	11S	Male	141	A	129	A
CAT	CAYMAN	3180012P	C318607816121	Year 7	11CH	Female	104	B	102	B
PHIL	EGYPT	3180012Q	T003000012045	Year 7	11CH	Male	115	A	114	A
LENA	FIJI	3180012R	U036000008225	Year 7	11CH	Female	112	A	114	A
VEDA	VANATU	905001LA		Year 7	lowV	Female	93	C	107	B
LEMUEL	LATVIA	9970002P		Year 7	lowPR	Male	68	D	99	C
ARAN	ARMENIA	841000M1		Year 7	lowS	Male	61	D	71	D
LEI	LAPLAND	202000U6		Year 7	midS	Female	88	D	102	B
DEJA	DOMINICA	710001X3		Year 7	highS	Female	150	A	146	A
						School's Year Group Average:	105.0		109.6	
						Number of Pupils in Year Group:	12		12	
						Standard Error:	4.3		4.3	

Tip: *use the 'Filter By' option in report controls to view standardised scores for the skills subsection only*

What does the skills score tell me?

- The perceptual speed and accuracy score (PSA) is not reliant on English, so for EAL students it is likely to be higher than the proofreading score.
- If the PSA score is low, this might suggest that the student's processing abilities are slow and might adversely affect future exam performance. Further specific testing might be needed.
- Until the students have real academic fluency in English, all will need more processing time to assimilate new information and respond to questions (which is another reason why some (I)GCSE students might need to take fewer subjects!)

Teacher tip: *High PSA and low proofreading scores are typical for an EAL student. Lots of practice in proofreading can really make a difference and can be done in almost all subjects.*

Case study

Using the data in real life

Fatima joined the school in year 7 with very little English. Assessments revealed very high non-verbal and maths scores. Students were placed in sets in some subjects according to prior attainment data. However, I placed Fatima in the top set for Science, despite her low attainment in a Science test, with in-class English support. The pace of the work suited her; she benefitted from hearing the answers given by other students and made rapid progress in English and in Science.

The key to this success was the increase in her confidence and self-esteem. We had recognised her ability and precisely targeted the support needed.

In summary

- Looking at the CEM data in detail is a far better indicator of 'potential' than prior attainment data.
- Looking at the breakdown of scores is more helpful than just the overall score.
- In primary schools, grouping by reading ability rather than cognitive ability can actually hold back very bright children with little English as they could easily become frustrated by the slow pace and lack of challenge when grouped with children who find reading difficult. This also applies to secondary schools whether in a set, streamed or mixed ability context.

See how Beijing International Bilingual Academy accelerated student achievement with CEM data

Read the case study here:

https://www.cem.org/biba