



AVOCAT PRIMARY AND INFANT SCHOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

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National Education Inspectorate
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Introduction

The National Education Inspectorate (NEI) is responsible for assessing the standards attained by the students in our primary and secondary schools at key points during their education. The NEI aims to report on how well students perform or improve as they progress through their schooling and learning life. The NEI is also charged with the responsibility to make recommendations to support improvement in the quality of the provision and outcomes for all learners.

During school inspections, our trained inspectors observe classroom lessons and interview members of the school's staff and students individually and in small groups. Inspectors also look at samples of student work and study various school documents provided before and during the inspection. Additionally, School Inspectors hold meetings with the Principal and senior staff members to clarify their roles and responsibilities at the school.

Key Questions

The inspection indicators are structured as a set of eight key questions that inspectors ask about every school's educational provision and performance. These are:

1. How effectively is the school led and managed by the Board, the Principal, senior management team, and middle leadership?
2. How effectively does the teaching support the students' learning?
3. How well do students perform in national and/or regional tests and assessments? (For infants: in relation to age-related expectations)
4. How much progress do students make in relation to their starting points?
5. How good is the students' personal and social development?
6. How effectively does the school use the human and material resources at its disposal to help the students achieve as well as they can?
7. How well do the curriculum and any enhancement programmes meet the needs of the students?
8. How well does the school ensure everyone's security, health, safety and well-being?

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Value Added Assessment of Students' Progress

In this round of inspections, the Value Added Model for Assessing Schools (VAMAS) is a component of this inspection report. The fundamental feature of the VAMAS is to analyse individual student performance in both English and mathematics at key points in their learning.

Under the VAMAS, students are assigned designations based on their performance. Students who attain satisfactory performance in mathematics and English are designated as Alphas. In contrast, those who achieve satisfactory performance in either English or mathematics are designated as **Betas**. Those with unsatisfactory performance in both subjects are designated as **Gammas**.

VAMAS designations at the primary level are determined based on students' proficiency in the Primary Exit Profile (PEP) language arts and mathematics at grades five (PEP 5) and six (PEP 6).

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The Five-point Scale

Inspectors make judgements according to a five-point scale. The five levels on the scale are defined as follows:

Level 5 – Exceptionally high: the quality of performance or provision is beyond the expected level for every school.

Level 4 – Good: the expected level for every school. Achieving this level in all aspects of its performance and provision should be a realistic goal for every school.

Level 3 – Satisfactory: the minimum level of acceptability required. All key aspects of performance and provision in every school should reach or exceed this level.

Level 2 – Unsatisfactory: quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools. Schools are expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or provision that is judged at this level. Action on the inspectors' recommendations for improvement is mandatory.

Level 1 – Needs Immediate Support: quality is very low. Schools are expected to take immediate action to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or provision that is judged at this level. Action on the inspectors' recommendations for improvement is mandatory. These schools are also at risk of direct interventions for improvement by the HME.

Consistency in Terminology

The following terms are used consistently throughout the indicators with the following definitions:

All	100%
Almost all	90% to 99%
Most	75% to 89%
Many	50% to 74%
Some	21% to 49%
Few	1% to 20%
None	0

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Profile

School's Demographics

School Code:	04001
School Name:	Avocat Primary and Infant
Parish:	2. Port Antonio
Region:	Portland
Locale:	Remote Rural
Day Structure:	Whole Day
Population Composition:	Co-educational
Size:	Class I
Capacity:	320
Enrolment:	65
Number of Teachers:	8
Pupil-Teacher Ratio:	8:1
Multi-grade:	No
Owned By:	Roman Catholic

Socio-economic Context

Avocat Primary, a remote, rural school, is situated in Silver Hill along the Portland side of the Blue Mountain Range, Jamaica, about 16km from Buff Bay. The school caters primarily to students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, many of whom are from nearby areas like Balcarres, Mullet Hall, and Labour Hill, and engage in small-scale farming, particularly coffee cultivation. Approximately 70 per cent of the school population are beneficiaries of the Programme for Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)

Executive Summary

Overall effectiveness of the school

The overall effectiveness of Avocat Primary and Infant School is satisfactory

Overall, leadership and management is satisfactory

A committed Principal drives school-based leadership focused on curriculum and team-building, but governance structures have gaps regarding formal meetings. Self-evaluation involves key stakeholders, but parent engagement is limited, and plans lack detailed timelines. Relationships with parents are open, although community linkages are limited.

Overall, teaching in support of learning is satisfactory

Teachers have secure content knowledge and use engaging strategies, but reflection on instruction and differentiation are inadequate. Lesson planning aligns with standards, yet time management and overreliance on teacher-driven activities are concerns. Assessment data guides some planning, but implementing varied methods remains inconsistent.

Overall, students' performance in English and mathematics is satisfactory

Performance meets or exceeds national rates at the Primary Exit Profile Grade 4 level over three years. At the Grade 6 level, English rose markedly to exceed standards, while mathematics exceeded for two of three years.

Overall, students' progress in English and mathematics is satisfactory

Value-added assessment shows students generally made expected progress. Lesson observations reveal age-appropriate literacy for lower grades, while numeracy displays some variability in concept mastery.

Overall, students' personal and social development is satisfactory

Students display positive behaviours and relationships, are reasonably punctual and understand basic civic concepts. Environmental awareness is a strength, but economic roles need more clarity.

Overall, the use of human and material resources is satisfactory

The staff is adequately qualified and offered professional development, but attendance issues exist. Premises suit the educational needs that exist, although technology faces challenges. Strategic resource usage occurs, but library utilisation is lacking.

Overall, provisions for the curriculum and enhancement programmes are satisfactory

The curriculum is collaboratively delivered, focusing on literacy and numeracy, but lacks a structured intervention approach. Enhancement programmes offer diverse extracurricular opportunities, contributing to cultural awareness and physical education. However, cross-

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curricular linkages are inadequate.

Overall, the provisions for student safety, security, health and well-being are satisfactory

Safety policies are thorough, but emergency preparedness is inadequate. Student welfare gets high priority through guidance, counselling and nutritional support.

Inspectors identified the following key strengths in the work of the school:

- Committed and focused leadership from the Principal on curriculum, team-building, and student outcomes.
- Performance in English and Mathematics meets or exceeds national standards.
- Students display positive behaviours and relationships and understand basic civic concepts and environmental issues.
- Students demonstrate positive behaviors and relationships overall.

How effective is the school overall?

The overall effectiveness of the school is **satisfactory**

Findings of School Inspection

1) School Leadership and Management

How effectively is the school led and managed by the Board, Principal, senior management team and middle leadership?

Overall, leadership and management is satisfactory

School-based leadership and management is good

The school's leadership and management practices are dedicated to continuous improvement and student success. Under the Principal's guidance since October 2022, the school's leadership exhibits a strong commitment to curriculum understanding, team building, and student success. The Principal, described as a servant leader, ensures staff involvement in decision-making and actively keeps up with current educational issues. The school's vision, emphasising inclusivity and societal functionality for all students, is consistently communicated across various platforms, including staff meetings and church involvement, receiving substantial parental support. In terms of teaching, learning, and student outcomes, the Principal plays a pivotal role in overseeing lesson planning and providing feedback for improvement. Intervention programs are in place to support students, particularly in literacy, although there is room for more structured and data-informed approaches. The staff's commitment to the school's goals is evident in their punctuality, relationships with students and parents, and adherence to lesson planning requirements. School management involves regular documentation and analysis of internal and external examination data to inform intervention programs. However, maintaining cumulative student records for effective performance analysis is inadequate.

Self-evaluation and school improvement planning is satisfactory

The school's self-evaluation process, involving the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and School Self-Evaluation (SSE), is collaborative and comprehensive. The SIP aligns with the strategic objectives of the Ministry of Education and Youth (MoEY) and focuses on parental involvement and ICT in instruction. The SSE effectively identifies strengths and areas for improvement, including the need for a data-driven culture and enhanced literacy and numeracy teaching. Stakeholder involvement is key, with teachers, the Principal, and board members actively contributing, although parent engagement appears limited. Identified priorities for improvement emphasise literacy and numeracy, but the action plans lack detailed timelines and resources. Implementation and monitoring of these plans are collective efforts, indicating a committed approach to school improvement.

Governance is good

The Board is fully constituted and actively engaged in leadership and management, playing a vital role in addressing key issues such as infrastructure upgrades and crisis management, while also demonstrating appreciation for staff through various supportive initiatives. The Board maintains a visible presence on campus, showing strong support for the principal and engaging in constructive dialogue, reflecting a shared commitment to the school's goals. However, the last official recorded meeting was in October 2022. Additionally, while financial oversight is present, no external audit has been conducted since the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the Board remains engaged in

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critical school matters and decision-making. Board members bring valuable experience from fields such as education, law, and special education.

Relationship with parents and the local community is satisfactory

The school maintains satisfactory communication with parents and the community, characterised by openness and regular interactions. Parents report good communication with teachers, appreciating the open-door policy that allows them to discuss concerns directly with teachers and the Principal. PTA meetings, held every other month, provide a platform for discussing school events and student performance, although there is a gap in the availability of PTA meeting minutes for the last school year. The school communicates through various channels, including telephone calls, WhatsApp groups, circulars, flyers, and annual parent-teacher consultations. Grade and cluster meetings are also conducted to enhance parental participation in their children’s education. Parents receive student reports twice a year, ensuring they are updated on their children's progress. Parental involvement in activities like painting the school and supporting work days is generally good. However, attendance at PTA meetings varies, with some parents less involved, particularly during busy periods like the coffee-picking season. The school collaborates with local organisations and agencies, although parents seem less aware of these linkages. Overall, the school's efforts in communication and reporting to parents are effective, but there is room for improvement in parental engagement and awareness of community collaborations.

How effectively is the school led and managed by the Board, the Principal and the senior management team?	
School-based leadership and management	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Satisfactory
Governance	Good
Relationship with parents and the local community	Satisfactory

2) Teaching Support for Learning

How effectively does the teaching support the students' learning?

Overall, teaching in support of learning is satisfactory

Teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach and how best to teach them is satisfactory

All teachers demonstrate sufficient content knowledge as evidenced by the accurate information shared in lessons. For instance, in a Grade 6 religious education lesson, the teacher gave detailed information on practices after birth in Hinduism. Similarly, teachers, in many instances, know how best to impart the curriculum so that most students grasp the concepts by reviewing previous lessons or utilising suitable approaches such as games and singing. There is, however, limited reflection on teaching and how well students learn. Lesson plan evaluations are mostly descriptive and do not indicate how well teaching impacts learning or how teaching will be adjusted to suit learning needs.

Teaching methods are satisfactory

Lesson planning at the school exhibits a commendable alignment with the National Standards Curriculum and the 5 E's framework, ensuring clear objectives and relevant assessment tasks. However, the absence of specific plans for intervention sessions in literacy and numeracy suggests a missed opportunity for targeted student support. Time management emerges as a critical area for improvement; many lessons begin late or get prolonged in introductory activities, compromising the achievement of learning objectives. Despite these challenges, teacher-student interactions are generally positive, with teachers employing engaging strategies that foster student understanding. For instance, in a Grade 1 language arts lesson, a noun-identification game effectively aided student learning. Similarly, in a Grade 6 mathematics class, hands-on activities with geometric solids enhanced comprehension of mathematical concepts. The use of teaching resources varies, with some lessons effectively incorporating materials like geometric solids and charts, while others rely heavily on traditional methods such as lecturing and board work.

Students' assessment is satisfactory

While the school's assessment policy is comprehensive, encompassing a variety of assessment tools and clear guidelines for record-keeping, its implementation in practice reveals inconsistencies. Teachers predominantly rely on questioning and individual written tasks for assessment, with some notable exceptions where group tasks effectively measure student understanding, such as in a Grade 6 mathematics lesson. However, this variety in assessment methods is not uniformly applied across all lessons. Mark books, a crucial component of assessment record-keeping, often do not align with the policy guidelines. Many lack proper labelling and dating of scores, hindering effective tracking of student progress. Furthermore, the school has not yet administered key diagnostic tests essential for informed planning in teaching and learning. On a positive note, most teachers provide constructive feedback during lessons, aiding students in self-correction and improvement. This practice is exemplified in a Grade 1 language arts lesson, where feedback on nouns was notably effective. However, the overall use of assessment information to cater to students' varied learning needs is lacking, indicating a gap between policy and practice in assessment strategies.

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Student learning is satisfactory

The students at this school are generally willing to learn and engage positively with their teachers, as observed in various classes, including the multi-grade Grades 2 and 3 class. Their cooperative nature is evident, with many participating actively in class discussions and completing assignments independently. However, instances of independent inquiry and research skills among students are not widespread. In most lessons, teachers provide information directly, with limited opportunities for students to explore and discover new information independently. For example, in a Grade 6 mathematics lesson, while some students independently researched terms from their textbooks, such instances of self-directed learning are rare. Application of learning to new situations is limited. While there are occasions, such as in a Grade 1 language arts lesson and a Grade 3 science lesson, where students apply learning in practical contexts, these opportunities are not consistently provided across all lessons. Student collaboration varies, with effective teamwork observed in some lessons, like a Grade 6 mathematics lesson on solid figures, but overall, structured collaborative opportunities are limited. Higher-order and critical thinking skills are similarly underdeveloped, with few lessons challenging students to intellectually engage with the content beyond basic information recall. The Grade 1 language arts lesson on nouns, where students distinguished between singular and plural forms, offers a rare example of such engagement.

How effectively does the teaching support the students' learning?	
Teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach and how best to teach them	Satisfactory
Teaching methods	Satisfactory
Assessment	Satisfactory
Students' learning	Satisfactory

3) Students' Academic Performance

How well do the students perform in national and/or regional tests and assessments?

Overall, students' performance in national tests is satisfactory

Students' performance in English is satisfactory

The school's English performance has been relatively high compared to the national proficiencies over the review period. Performance in the PEP 4 to PEP 6 language arts met expectations.

At the Grade 4 level, students' performance in the PEP 4 language arts assessment exceeded national proficiency in 2019 by 15 percentage points, three percentage points in 2022 and 33 percentage points in 2023. The school's functional literacy rates were also above the national average rates over the period of review, 2019 to 2023.

At the Grade 6 level, the school's language arts results exceeded the national results in 2022 and 2023. However, performance was below national proficiency in 2019 and 2020. Gender-specific analysis of this data indicated a higher achievement among girls than boys over the period of review, except in 2022 when the boys were well above the girls by 40 percentage points. No data were available for 2021.

Students' performance in mathematics is satisfactory

The school's mathematics performance has been higher than the national proficiencies, except for PEP 6 in 2022.

In Grade 4, students' performance in the PEP 4 mathematics assessment above the national proficiency level throughout the period of review-2019 to 2023. The functional literacy rate for the school also steadily improved over the period. The school's functional numeracy rates were above the national level over the 2019 to 2023 review period by six, 37 and 39 percentage points respectively.

At the Grade 6 level, the school's PEP 6 mathematics proficiency was above the national proficiency in 2020 and 2023. It was below in the other years, especially in 2019 (33 percentage points). An examination of the performance by gender revealed that the boys outperformed the girls in 2020 and 2022, while the girls were ahead in 2023. **No data were available for 2021.**

How well do the students perform in national and/or regional tests and assessments?	
How well do the students perform in National or regional tests and examinations in English?	Satisfactory
How well do the students perform in National or regional tests and examinations in mathematics?	Satisfactory

4) Students' Academic Progress

How much progress do the students make in relation to their starting points?

Overall, students' progress in relation to their starting points is satisfactory

Value-added assessment of students' progress

Overall, evaluating the 2023 PEP 6 Cohort using the VAMAS model reveals that many of the students made adequate progress against expected proficiency standards in mathematics and English. The value-added comparison in the table below shows that in 2022, six of the ten traceable students performed at the Alpha level (attaining proficiency in English and mathematics) in PEP 6, and five of these students were previously designated Alphas in their PEP 5 assessments. Additionally, one (1) student performing at the Alpha level in PEP 6 was previously at the Beta level in PEP 5 assessment.

Table 1: Tracking of individual traceable students from 2023 PEP 6 Cohort using the VAMAS

		2022 PEP 5 VAMAS Designation			
		Alpha	Beta	Gamma	Total
2023 PEP 6 VAMAS Designation	Alpha	5	1	0	6
	Beta	3	0	0	3
	Gamma	0	0	1	1
	Total	8	1	1	10

Students' progress in English is satisfactory

Almost all students make adequate progress in English compared to their starting points at the school. For example, in 2017, no student was proficient in the literacy component of the GOILP. In 2022, 80 per cent of students in the PEP 5 language arts were proficient. By 2023, 90 per cent of the students sitting the PEP 6 language arts were proficient.

In assessing individual student progress in English, nine of the ten traceable students were proficient in the 2023 PEP 6 language arts. A comparison of their performance in the 2022 PEP 5 revealed that eight of these students were previously proficient in the PEP 5 language arts in 2022, and one was previously not proficient.

The progress in English lessons across different grades displays mixed effectiveness. In Grade 1, there is a notable success, with almost all students adeptly using the correct forms of nouns to complete sentences, as evidenced by examples like 'I have six books'. This indicates a strong grasp of fundamental literacy skills at this level. Some students understood comma usage in the Grades 2 and 3 multi-grade class. At the Grade 4 level, while penmanship presents a significant challenge, with only two out of seven students writing legibly, there is a positive note in their understanding of grammar. Most students in this grade demonstrate a commendable ability to use capital letters correctly.

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Students' progress in mathematics is satisfactory

Most students make adequate progress in mathematics compared to their starting points at the school. For example, in 2017, no student was proficient in the numeracy component of the GOILP. In 2022, ten per cent of the students in PEP 5 mathematics were proficient, and by 2023, 60 per cent were proficient in PEP 6 mathematics.

In assessing individual student progress in mathematics, six of the ten traceable students were proficient in the 2023 PEP 6 mathematics. A comparison of their previous performance in the 2022 PEP 5 revealed that six of these students were previously proficient in the PEP 5 mathematics in 2022.

The mathematics lessons observed indicate uneven skills and progress among students. Most students could readily name faces and edges in the Grade 6 geometry lesson on identifying solid shapes, displaying appropriate understanding. However, only some initially identified vertices, showing this as an area of difficulty. Pleasingly, by the end of the lesson, most could identify vertices, indicating learning through differentiated instruction. Comparatively, in Grade 5, numeral identification appears well developed, with all students able to differentiate accurately between odd and even numbers. This shows age-appropriate attainment of foundational math concepts.

How much progress do the students make in relation to their starting points?	
How much progress do the students make in relation to their starting points in English?	Satisfactory
How much progress do the students make in relation to their starting points in mathematics?	Satisfactory

5) Students' Personal and Social Development

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Overall, students' personal and social development is satisfactory

The students' behaviours and attitudes are good

Almost all students display socially appropriate behaviours around the school and in lessons. The students moved orderly to their classes, and most participated well in their lessons. Also, most students display friendly relationships with each other around the school. Many students play vigorously around the school during break and lunch, while others sit in groups along the perimeter on seats established for that purpose. Likewise, most students are sufficiently prepared for their lessons, each having the requisite tools to participate, such as pencils and notebooks.

Punctuality and attendance are satisfactory

Most students demonstrate reasonable punctuality and attendance at school and lessons. The documents show that students' attendance falls within the stipulated minimum attendance rate of 85 per cent as the education ministry requires. Moreover, almost all students attend school punctually as most students were available for the start of lessons. Similarly, the transition time between lessons was smooth. Almost all students respond promptly to the Principal and teacher assistant at the sound of the bell to return to lessons after the break and lunch periods.

The civic understanding and spiritual awareness of the students is satisfactory

Students show a basic understanding of Jamaican identity, recognising cultural elements like local cuisine and language and the contributions of notable Jamaicans like Nanny, Marcus Garvey, and Bob Marley. Yet, only a few acknowledge formal evidence of citizenship, such as birth certificates and passports. Their grasp of civic responsibility is evident in their willingness to mentor younger students and assist the elderly, reflecting a practical application of these values. Additionally, many students take on leadership roles within the school, such as class monitors, contributing to discipline and a positive learning environment. Spiritually, while students learn values like kindness and respect, their responses to ethical scenarios show varied levels of moral reasoning. Some express selfless actions, while others display self-interest.

Students' economic awareness and understanding is satisfactory

Students demonstrate a basic knowledge of Jamaica's economy, understanding taxes like land and property taxes and recognising their parents' contributions to national development. They also show awareness of practical financial strategies within their families, including saving and spending wisely. Their knowledge extends to global trade, notably identifying China as a key source for various imported goods. Their understanding of their role in Jamaica's economic development is more abstract. Some students see future professions, such as lawyers or doctors, as avenues for contribution, while many others equate being good citizens and sharing with economic participation.

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Students' environmental awareness and understanding is good

Students understand environmental issues well, recognise the impacts of air and water pollution on health, and are aware of similar challenges globally, including in countries like Cuba and Haiti. Their environmental stewardship is evident in their active role within the school, where they use waste bins responsibly, serve as litter wardens, and engage in activities like garbage collection and planting. Beyond school, they believe in influencing community behaviours, advocating for reduced littering and proper waste management. This reflects their comprehension of the importance of individual actions in contributing to broader environmental well-being.

How good is the students' personal and social development?	
Students' behaviours and attitudes	Good
Punctuality and attendance	Satisfactory
Civic understanding and spiritual awareness	Satisfactory
Economic awareness and understanding	Satisfactory
Environmental awareness and understanding	Good

6) Use of Human and Material Resources

How effectively does the school use the human and material resources at its disposal to help the students achieve as well as they can?

Overall, the use of human and material resources is satisfactory

The quality of human resources is good

The school staff's composition indicates a reasonable qualification level and number for the small school population. There are five teachers, four with bachelor's degrees in primary education and one with a BSc and diploma in primary education. Support staff, including administrative and maintenance roles, are adequately filled, contributing to the school's operational needs. Professional development is a strength, with teachers regularly engaging in diverse training sessions to enhance teaching quality and collaborative skills among staff. These sessions, target areas like e-portfolios, teacher appraisal, and teaching strategies, are conducted internally and in collaboration with external organisations.

The use of human resources is satisfactory

The school employs a strategic approach to deploying teaching staff, assigning roles based on qualifications and suitability, and focusing on using specialist teachers in upper grades. However, attendance records reveal concerns. While teachers are generally present and punctual, a detailed analysis from the previous academic year shows a pattern of significant absences and lateness. Notably, one teacher was absent for 27 days and late for 72 days; overall, several

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teachers had over 20 days of absence. Support staff are reported to aid the teaching staff effectively, ensuring smooth operational support within the school. This indicates the school's strengths in strategic staff deployment and support, counterbalanced by challenges in maintaining consistent attendance and punctuality among teachers.

The quality and quantity of material is satisfactory

Avocat Primary's premises are expansive, with adequate buildings, including tiled upper-floor classrooms. The kitchen was recently refurbished, featuring a new stove and updated appliances and the bathrooms are clean and functional. The classrooms suit the small student population, though some safety and storage concerns exist. The resource room provides 14 Chrome books and RuralNet internet. However, unreliable connectivity hampers use. The moderately stocked library holds outdated books and is underutilised. Teachers lack key mathematics manipulatives and note technology challenges.

The use of material resources is satisfactory

Leadership makes adequate use of its premises to support learning, including decorative plants and educational murals that promote student-friendly spaces. However, the library is underutilised and lacks an up-to-date lending system or effective structure for impacting learning. This highlights an area needing improved resource management. Teachers personally provide laptops and supplements for classroom instruction, underscoring gaps in institutional teaching resources. But the bursar facilitates weekend book access for students, pointing to attempts at maximising usage.

How effectively does the school use the human and material resources at its disposal to help the students achieve as well as they can?	
Human resources	Good
Use of human resources	Satisfactory
Material resources – quality and quantity	Satisfactory
Use of material resources	Satisfactory

7) Curriculum and Enhancement Programmes

How well do the curriculum and any enhancement programmes meet the needs of the students?

Overall, provisions for the curriculum and enhancement programmes are satisfactory

Provisions for curriculum are satisfactory

In delivering the curriculum, Avocat Primary adopts a collaborative approach, with teachers engaging in weekly common planning sessions to share methodologies and integrate insights from workshops. This strategy is evident in lessons, such as a Grade 4 language arts class where Jamaican culture was highlighted through an engaging exploration of Louise Bennett's work and traditional attire. The school's timetable reflects a commitment to literacy and numeracy, dedicating 50 minutes most days to these subjects, supplemented by daily literacy and numeracy interventions. These interventions, however, lack a structured framework and are based on teachers' perceptions of student needs rather than systematic data analysis. While the curriculum offers subject teaching in upper grades and activities like Jamaica Day, Maths Day, and Literacy Day, there is a notable gap in cross-curricular linkages, with limited instances of integration observed. Efforts to support struggling readers through a pull-out program led by the literacy coordinator and stronger teachers demonstrate the school's initiative in addressing specific learning needs.

Enhancement programmes are satisfactory

The school's uptake of enhancement programs is robust, with various clubs, including Environment, Brownies, 4H, and Healthy Lifestyle. These clubs, meeting weekly, provide diverse extracurricular opportunities, further enriched by participation in track and field at parish and national levels, demonstrating the school's commitment to physical education and student involvement in broader sports activities. Connections with the local community are fostered through field trips and external educational visits, such as a public health inspector's session on hygiene practices. These initiatives, part of the school's broader goal to enhance cultural awareness, are complemented by cultural presentations and concerts.

How well do the curriculum and any enhancement programmes meet the needs of the students?	
How well does the curriculum meet the needs of the students?	Satisfactory
How well do the enhancement programmes meet the needs of the students?	Satisfactory

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8) Student Safety, Security, Health and Well-being

How well does the school ensure everyone's safety, security, health and well-being?

Overall, the provisions for student safety, security, health and well-being are satisfactory

Provisions for safety and security are satisfactory

The school has a thorough Safety and Security Policy for 2023, which clearly defines roles for watchmen, staff, and students in maintaining security and reporting incidents. Parents are satisfied with the security measures, including a monitored gate and 24-hour watchmen service. The Principal actively oversees student behaviour, and all community members share responsibility for the school's upkeep. However, there are gaps in emergency preparedness, with no recent drills and a lack of training for watchmen. The school's commitment to safety is further evidenced by well-maintained fire extinguishers and motivational signage promoting positive values.

Provisions for students' health and well-being are good

The school's comprehensive approach to students' health and well-being ensures a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all students. Leadership promotes student health and well-being through initiatives like 'Health Conscious Day' and compliance with health standards in the canteen. Sessions with health inspectors reinforce health education, and balanced meals are provided despite the absence of a printed menu. Positive relationships between staff and students enhance the learning environment, and teachers offer academic support. The guidance program, led by a new counsellor, addresses various student concerns, including conflict management and nutrition. Discipline is managed through structured approaches, including restorative justice, with parental involvement in serious cases. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored, with proactive outreach to parents for frequent absences. The 39 students registered on PATH receive support through subsidised lunch programmes, ensuring access to nutritious food.

How well does the school ensure everyone's safety, security, health and well-being?	
Provisions for safety and security	Satisfactory
Provision for health and well-being	Good

Recommendations

Recommendations from the previous inspection report

Previous recommendations	Progress* (Limited, In Progress, Completed)
1. The Ministry of Education should settle the question of the school's future.	In progress
2. The Board should lobby the MoE to garner support in securing the needed ICT resources for teaching and learning.	In progress
3. The school's leadership should: a. implement a robust maintenance programme that factors in the upkeep of the water supply infrastructure; and b. activate the Curriculum Implementation Team to broaden the scope of the school's curriculum review activities.	In progress
4. The teachers should ensure that lessons are sufficiently differentiated so that all students can learn optimally.	Limited

**Limited: Little to no action taken to implement the recommendation; In Progress: Efforts to execute the recommendation are ongoing; Completed: Recommendation has been fully implemented.*

Recommendations based on the findings of this inspection

We recommend that the following actions be taken to make further improvements:

1. The leadership should improve the system of maintaining comprehensive student records, including academic performance and attendance, to effectively track student progress and outcomes.
2. The Board should establish a consistent schedule for formal Board meetings, ensuring structured and regular oversight, and include training sessions for board members to stay updated on educational governance.
3. Teachers should integrate cross-curricular linkages in lesson plans and practice differentiated instruction to cater to the diverse learning needs of students.

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Further Action

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the recommendations of this report. The action plan will be sent to the National Education Inspectorate (NEI) and the regional offices within two months of the school's receipt of the written report. The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.



Maureen Dwyer, Ed.D., BH(M), J.P.
Chief Executive Officer/Chief Inspector
National Education Inspectorate

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASTEP	Alternative Secondary Transition Education Programme
APSE	Alternative Pathways to Secondary Education
CAP	Career Advancement Programme
CAPE	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination
CCSLC	Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence
CIT	Curriculum Implementation Team
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
GAIN	General Achievement in Numeracy
GFLT	Grade Four Literacy Test
GNAT	Grade Nine Achievement Test
GOILP	Grade One Individual Learning Profile
GSAT	Grade Six Achievement Test
HEART	Human Employment and Resource Training
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
ISSA	Inter-Secondary Schools' Association
JSAS	Jamaica Schools Administration System
JTA	Jamaica Teachers' Association
JTC	Jamaica Teaching Council
MoEYI	Ministry of Education, Youth and Information
NCEL	National College for Educational Leadership
NEI	National Education Inspectorate
NSC	National Standards Curriculum
PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
PEP	Primary Exit Profile
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SJE	Standard Jamaican English
SMT	School Management Team
SSE	School Self-Evaluation

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Record of Inspection Activities

Appendix 2 – National Test Data

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Appendix 1 - Record of Inspection Activities

Evidence for this report was based on the following:

Total number of lessons or part lessons observed	9
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	English	Math	Other
Number of lessons or part lessons observed	3	3	3

Number of scheduled interviews completed with members of staff, governing body and parents	6
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Number of scheduled interviews completed with students	1
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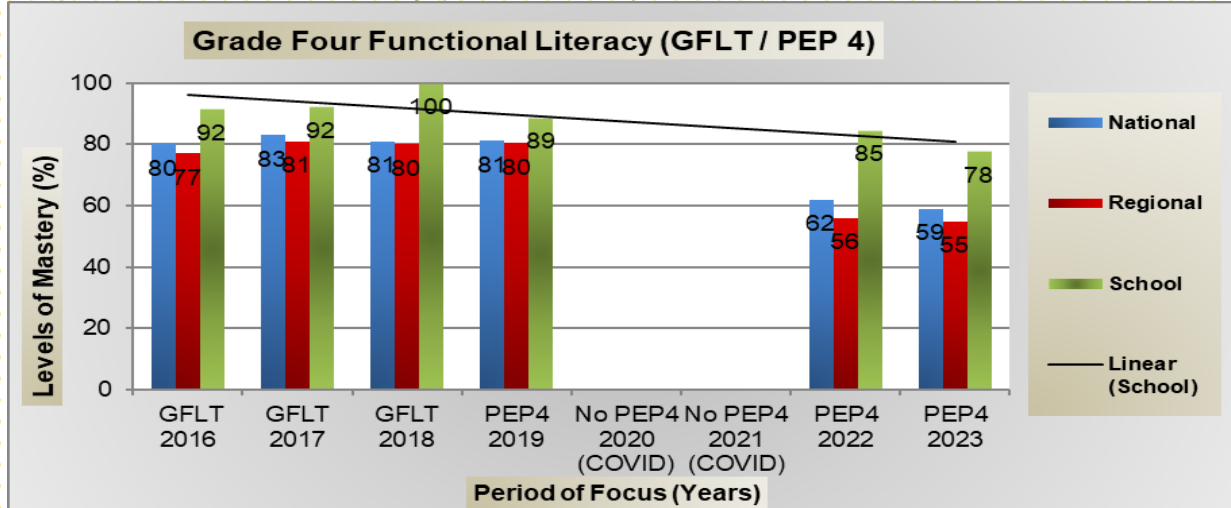
	Parents	Students	Teachers
Number of questionnaires returned and analysed	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Appendix 2 - National Test Data

STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 1a: Functional Literacy (GFLT / PEP 4) 2016-2023



*PEP 4 was not administered in 2020 or 2021

Table 1a: Functional Literacy (GFLT / PEP 4) 2016-2023

Avocat Primary & Junior High					
Grade Four Functional Literacy (GFLT / PEP 4)					
Assessment Year	Candidates		Percentage Mastery/Proficiency*		
	Grade Four Cohort	Sitting	National	Regional	School
2023	9	9	59	55	78
2022	13	13	62	56	85
2019	11	9	81	80	89
2018	11	19	81	80	100
2017 (Cohort)	14	13	83	81	92
2016	15	12	80	77	92

*As at Census Day (2nd Monday in October).

From 2016 to 2018, the school's functional literacy rates demonstrated an overall increase of eight percentage points, starting at 92 per cent in both 2016 and 2017. By 2018, the mastery rate rose to 100 per cent, with the number of candidates increasing to 19, although the cohort was 11 students. Throughout this period, the school's performance consistently exceeded the national mastery rates, with the lowest participation rate observed in 2016 at 80 per cent.

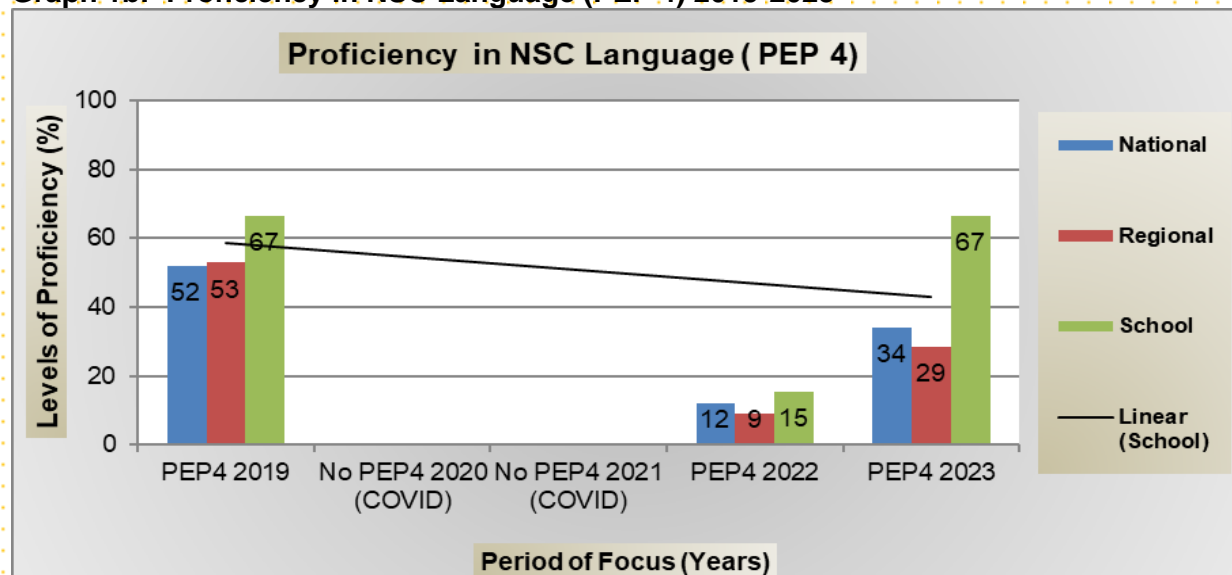
In 2019, the literacy rate slightly decreased to 89 per cent, with eight of nine students achieving proficiency. By 2023, this rate further declined to 78 per cent, with seven of the nine students gaining proficiency. Despite the overall decline, the school's proficiency rates continued to surpass the national averages during these years. The lowest participation rate was recorded in 2019.

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The Grade Four Literacy target set by the Ministry of Education is 100 per cent of the educable cohort (approximately 85 per cent of the grade four enrolment).

STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 1b: Proficiency in NSC Language (PEP 4) 2019-2023



*PEP 4 was not administered in 2020 or 2021

Table 1b: Proficiency in NSC Language (PEP 4) 2019-2023

Avocat Primary & Junior High					
Proficiency in NSC Language (PEP 4)					
Assessment Year	Candidates		Percentage Mastery/Proficiency*		
	Grade Four Cohort	Sitting	National	Regional	School
2023	9	9	34	29	67
2022	13	13	12	9	15
2019	11	9	52	53	67

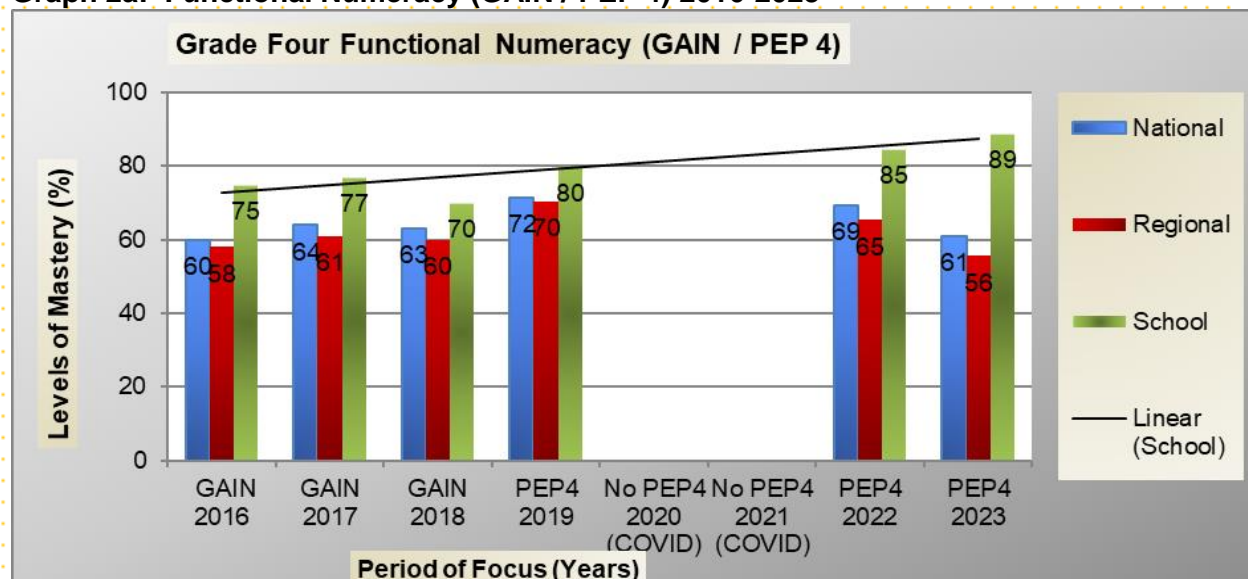
*As at Census Day (2nd Monday in October).

The school's proficiency levels in NSC language art showed a significant decline from 2019 to 2022, decreasing by 52 percentage points. Specifically, the proficiency rate dropped sharply from 67 per cent in 2019 to 15 per cent in 2022. However, there was a substantial improvement in 2023, with the proficiency rate returning to 67 per cent. Notably, the school consistently performed above the national proficiency levels in all three years evaluated.

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STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 2a: Functional Numeracy (GAIN / PEP 4) 2016-2023



*PEP 4 was not administered in 2020 or 2021

Table 2a: Functional Numeracy (GAIN / PEP 4) 2016-2023

Avocat Primary & Junior High					
Grade Four Functional Numeracy (GAIN / PEP 4)					
Assessment Year	Candidates		Percentage Mastery		
	Grade Four Cohort*	Sitting	National	Regional	School
2023	9	9	61	56	89
2022	13	13	69	65	85
2019	11	10	72	70	80
2018	11	20	63	60	70
2017 (Cohort)	14	13	64	61	77
2016	15	12	60	58	75

*As at Census Day (2nd Monday in October).

The school's functional numeracy levels exhibited an overall decrease from 2016 to 2018, falling by five percentage points, from 75 per cent (nine of 12 students) to 70 per cent (14 of 20 students from an original cohort of 11 students). Throughout this period, the school's performance consistently surpassed national mastery benchmarks. Participation rates were lowest at 80 per cent in 2016.

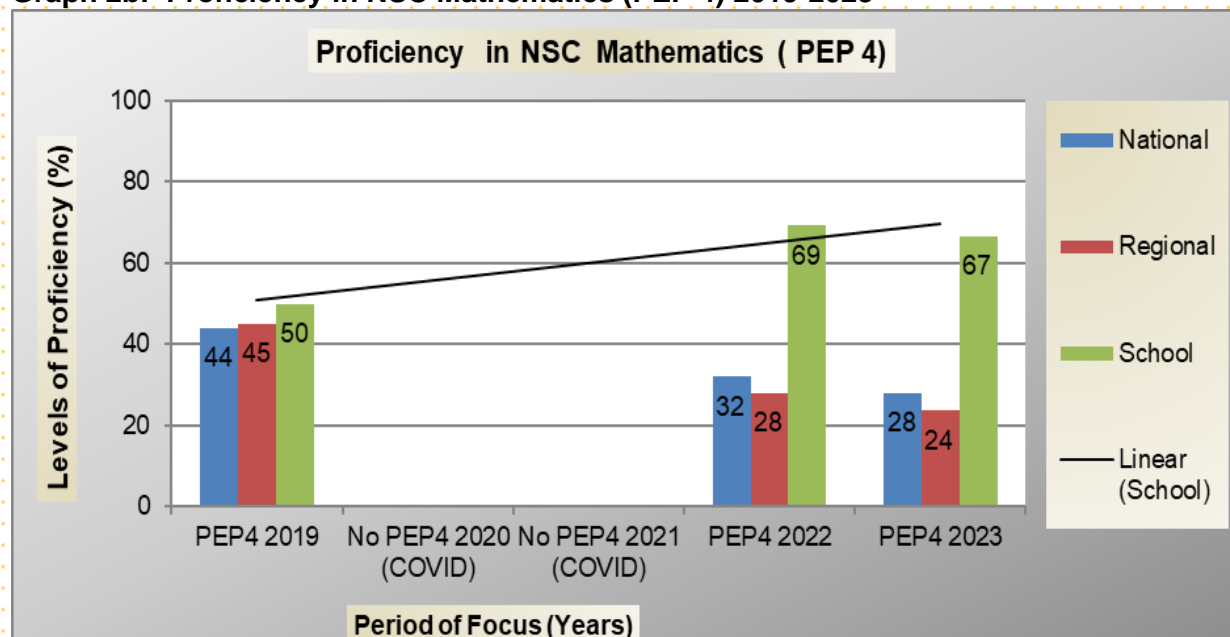
In 2019, the functional numeracy level increased to 80 per cent (eight of ten students) and continued on this trajectory to 89 per cent by 2023 (eight of nine students). Once again, the school consistently outperformed national standards. Participation rate was lowest for this period in 2019 (91 per cent).

The Grade Four Numeracy target set for each primary level school by the Ministry of Education is 85 per cent mastery, which is to be achieved by 2018.

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STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 2b: Proficiency in NSC Mathematics (PEP 4) 2019-2023



*PEP 4 was not administered in 2020 or 2021

Table 2b: Proficiency in NSC Mathematics (PEP 4) 2019-2023

Avocat Primary & Junior High					
Proficiency in NSC Mathematics (PEP 4)					
Assessment Year	Candidates		Percentage Mastery		
	Grade Four Cohort*	Sitting	National	Regional	School
2023	9	9	28	24	67
2022	13	13	32	28	69
2019	11	10	44	45	50

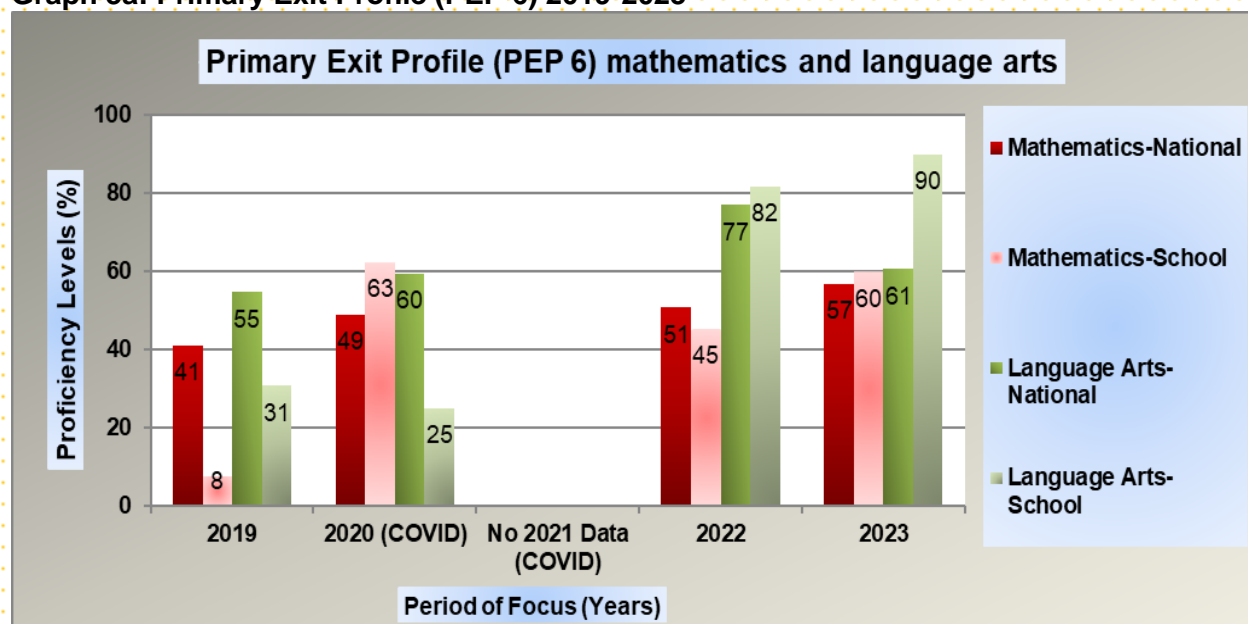
*As at Census Day (2nd Monday in October).

The school's proficiency levels in NSC mathematics increased over the 2019 to 2023 period by 17 percentage points overall. It moved from 50 per cent (five of ten students) in 2019 to 67 per cent (six of nine students) in 2023. The school's performance was above the national proficiency in all years, more so in 2022 and 2023.

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STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 3a: Primary Exit Profile (PEP 6) 2019-2023



This graph compares the proficiency levels of the students at Avocat Primary and Infant with national proficiencies in the mathematics and language arts components of the PEP 6 (2019 – 2023). There was no assessment of mathematics or language arts components in the 2021 PEP 6.

School's performance against the national average

The school consistently demonstrated proficiency levels exceeding the national benchmarks in both language arts and mathematics components of PEP 6 from 2020 to 2023, with the exception of language arts in 2020 and mathematics in 2022. Notably, in 2019, the school's performance in both subjects fell below the national average.

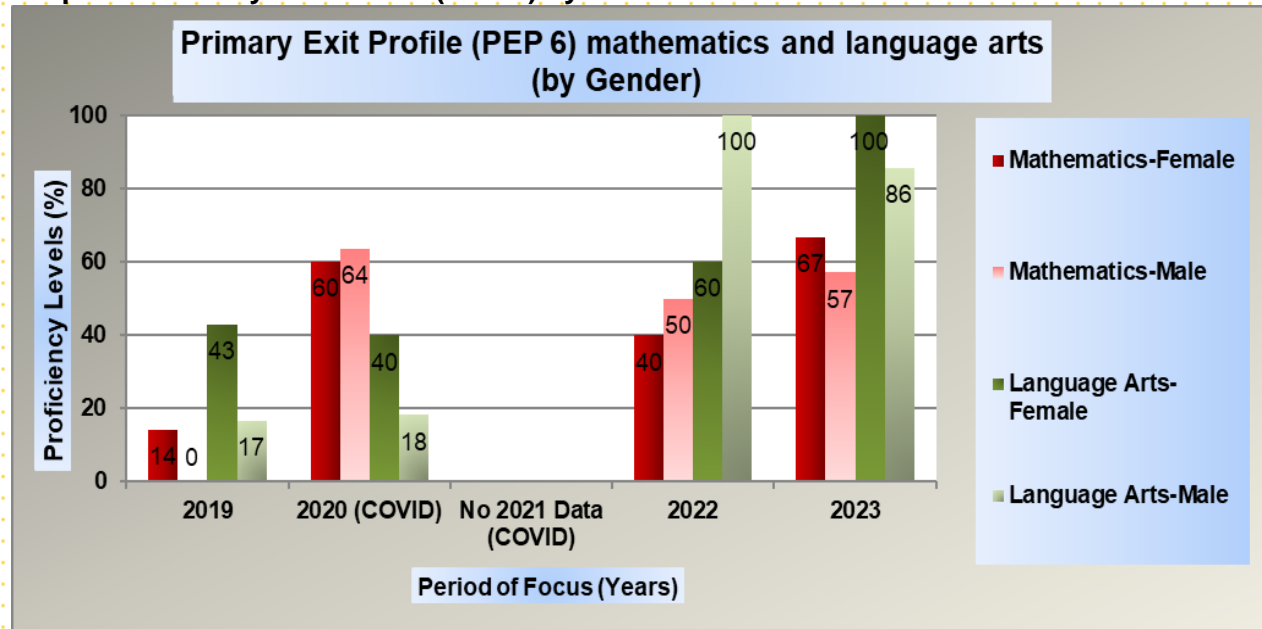
School's performance by subjects

Over the specified timeframe, the school consistently exhibited higher proficiency levels in language arts compared to mathematics, with the exception of 2020 when mathematics performance notably surpassed that of language arts by a substantial margin of 38 percentage points.

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STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 3c: Primary Exit Profile (PEP 6) by Gender 2019 - 2023



This graph presents a gender comparison of the proficiency levels of the students at Avocat Primary and Infant in the mathematics and language arts components of the PEP 6 (2019 – 2023). There was no assessment of mathematics or language arts components in the 2021 PEP 6.

Gender Disparity Analysis:

The gender gap is assessed through the disparity in proficiency percentages between boys and girls in PEP 6 for the years 2019 and 2020.

Analysis of the data revealed that in 2019, girls outperformed boys significantly in language arts by 26 percentage points, while no boys participated in the mathematics examination. In 2020, the girls maintained their lead in language arts by 22 percentage points, but boys were slightly ahead in mathematics. In 2022, the boys took the lead in language arts, surging ahead by 40 percentage points, and also maintained their higher proficiency in mathematics by 10 percentage points. By 2023, however, the girls were ahead in both mathematics and language arts.

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STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Students' Starting Point

Graph 4: Grade One Individual Learning Profile (GOILP) - 2017

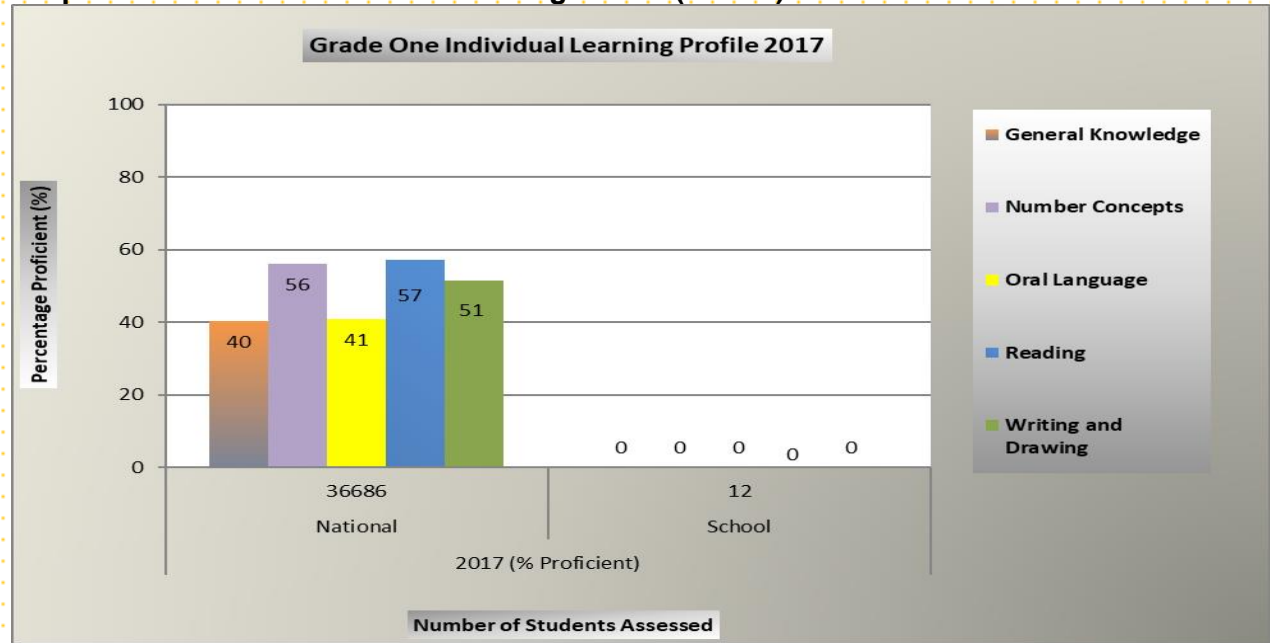


Table 4: Grade One Individual Learning Profile (GOILP) - 2017

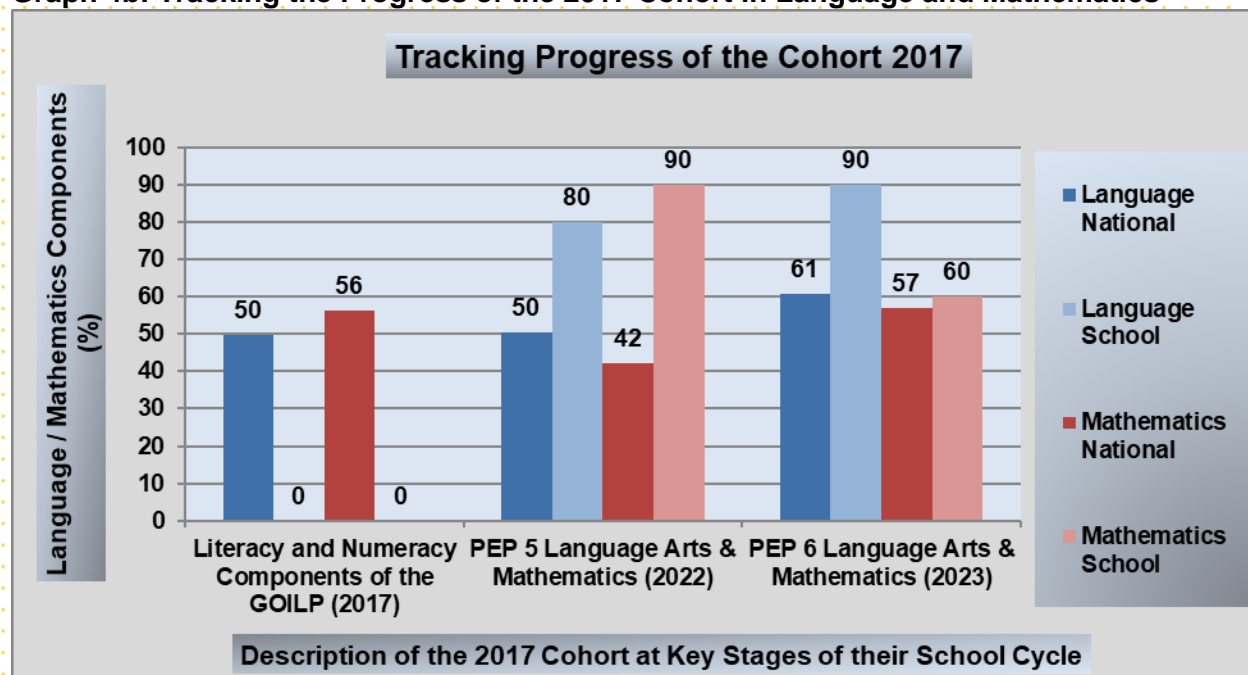
Grade One Individual Learning Profile		Number of Students Assessed	Percentage of students proficient in each sub-test				
			General Knowledge	Number Concepts	Oral Language	Reading	Writing and Drawing
2017 (Cohort)	National	36686	40	56	41	57	51
	School	12	0	0	0	0	0

In 2017, twelve students were assessed at Avocat Primary and Infant through the Grade One Individual Learning Profile (GOILP). However, the results showed a stark contrast to national proficiency levels. None of the twelve students demonstrated proficiency in any of the assessed components.

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STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Graph 4b: Tracking the Progress of the 2017 Cohort in Language and Mathematics



This graph tracks the performance of the **2017 Cohort** of students in Avocat Primary and Infant. It shows their **proficiencies** in the literacy and numeracy components of the 2017 GOILP, their respective PEP 5 language arts and mathematics **proficiencies** for 2022, and their respective PEP 6 language arts and mathematics **proficiencies** for 2023. While the national averages are also used as a reference point for the amount of progress made, the progress of some students in this Cohort may have been retarded by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021.

The 2017 cohort showed signs of progress in language between 2017 and 2023.

In terms of language proficiency, the 2017 cohort displayed notable improvement over the six-year period. None of the students demonstrated proficiency in literacy components in 2017, yet by 2022, 80 per cent achieved proficiency in PEP 5 language arts. This progress continued into 2023, with 90 per cent exhibiting proficiency in PEP 6 language arts.

In mathematics, there was a similar pattern of growth. In 2017, none of the students exhibited proficiency in numeracy components, yet by 2022, 90 percent demonstrated proficiency in PEP 5 mathematics. In 2023, with 60 per cent demonstrated proficiency in PEP 6 mathematics.

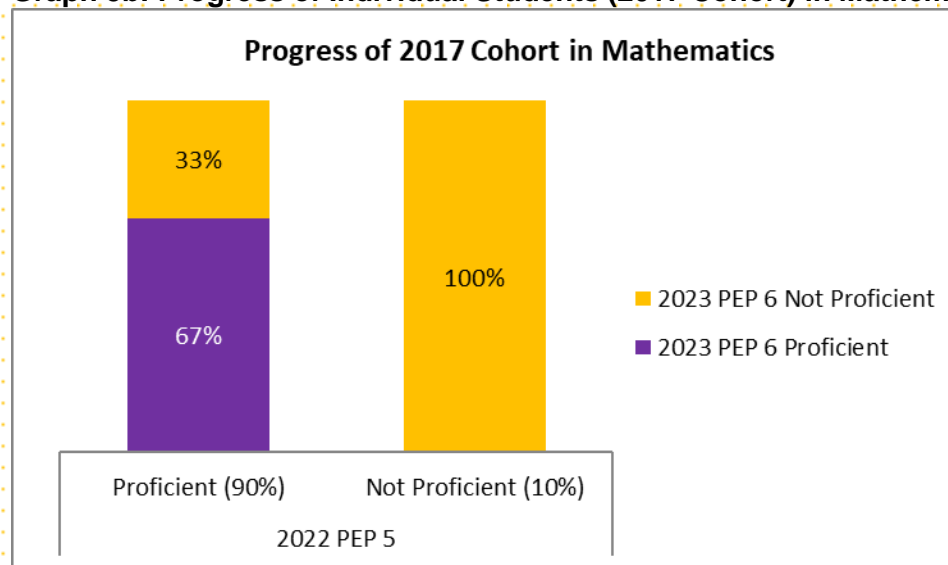
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STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Progress in mathematics and language arts:

Analysis of the progression of the 2017 Cohort, who underwent the PEP 5 examination in 2022 and PEP 6 examination in 2023, reveals a disparity in advancement between language arts and mathematics. The data (for which both examinations results were available) revealed that more students progressed in language arts than in mathematics.

Graph 5b: Progress of Individual Students (2017 Cohort) in Mathematics



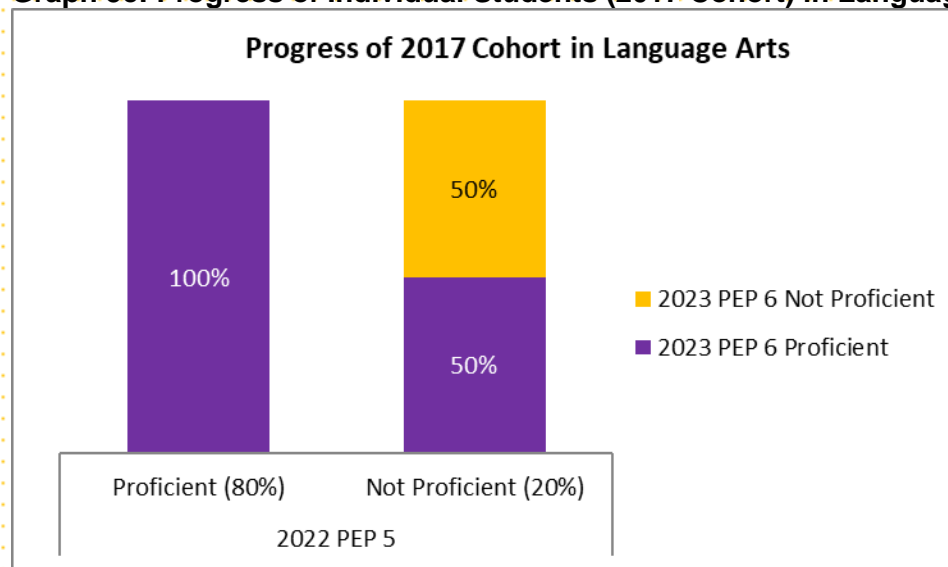
		2022 PEP 5			2022 PEP 5		
		Proficient (%)	Not Proficient (%)	Total	Proficient (%)	Not Proficient (%)	Proficient (%)
2023 PEP 6	Proficient	6	0	6	67%	0%	
	Not Proficient	3	1	4	33%	100%	
	Total	9	1	10			

Out of the ten students assessed, six demonstrated proficiency in PEP 6 mathematics, representing 60% of the cohort. Further examination of the data indicates that among the nine students proficient in PEP 5 mathematics in 2022, 67% maintained proficiency in PEP 6 mathematics in 2023.

Conversely, 33% of the students proficient in PEP 5 mathematics failed to maintain proficiency in PEP 6, representing a notable decline. Additionally, one student who was not proficient in PEP 5 mathematics also remained non-proficient in PEP 6 mathematics.

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Graph 5c: Progress of Individual Students (2017 Cohort) in Language Arts



		2022 PEP 5		Total	2022 PEP 5	
		Proficient (%)	Not Proficient (%)		Proficient (%)	Not Proficient (%)
2023 PEP 6	Proficient	8	1	9	100%	50%
	Not Proficient	0	1	1	0%	50%
	Total	8	2	10		

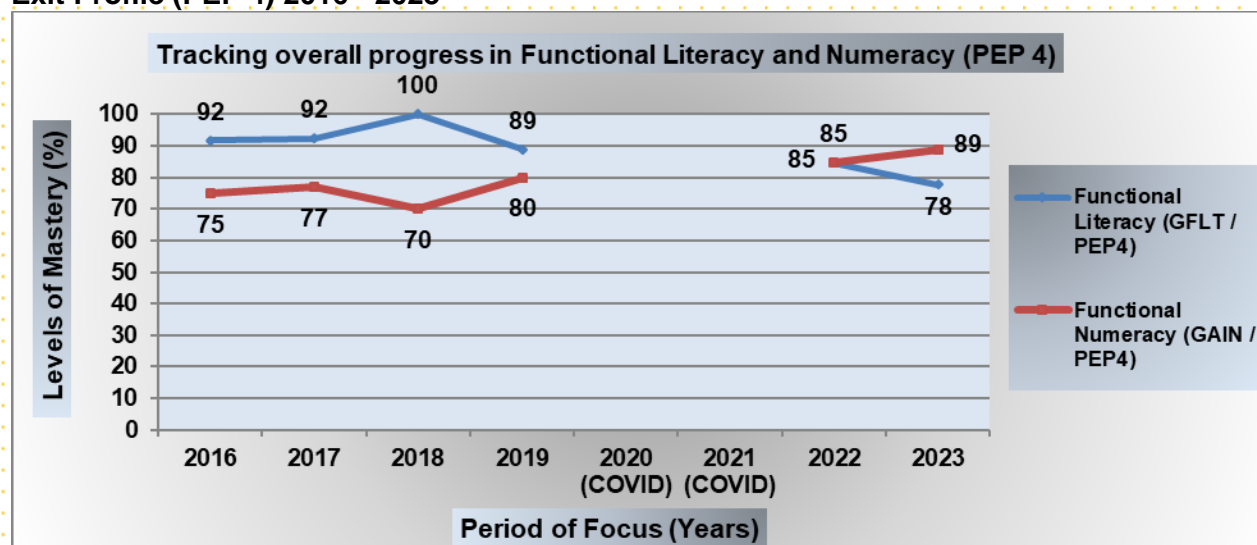
Graph 5c delineates the individual progress of the 2017 Cohort in language arts from the PEP 5 examination in 2022 to the PEP 6 examination in 2023. Among the ten students assessed, 90 per cent demonstrated proficiency in PEP 6 language arts. Upon comparing their performance in PEP 5, it is observed that all eight students who were proficient in PEP 5 maintained proficiency in PEP 6, indicating a high retention rate of 100%.

Conversely, among the two students who were not proficient in PEP 5 language arts, one student showed improvement, achieving proficiency in PEP 6. However, the other student remained non-proficient.

This data highlights a notable contrast in progression rates between proficient and non-proficient students, with a higher likelihood of maintaining proficiency observed among initially proficient students.

STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Graph 5a: Tracking School's Progress in Functional Literacy and Numeracy in the Primary Exit Profile (PEP 4) 2016 - 2023



*Students' progress may have been affected/retarded by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021.

The rates of functional literacy remained higher than those of functional numeracy prior to 2022.

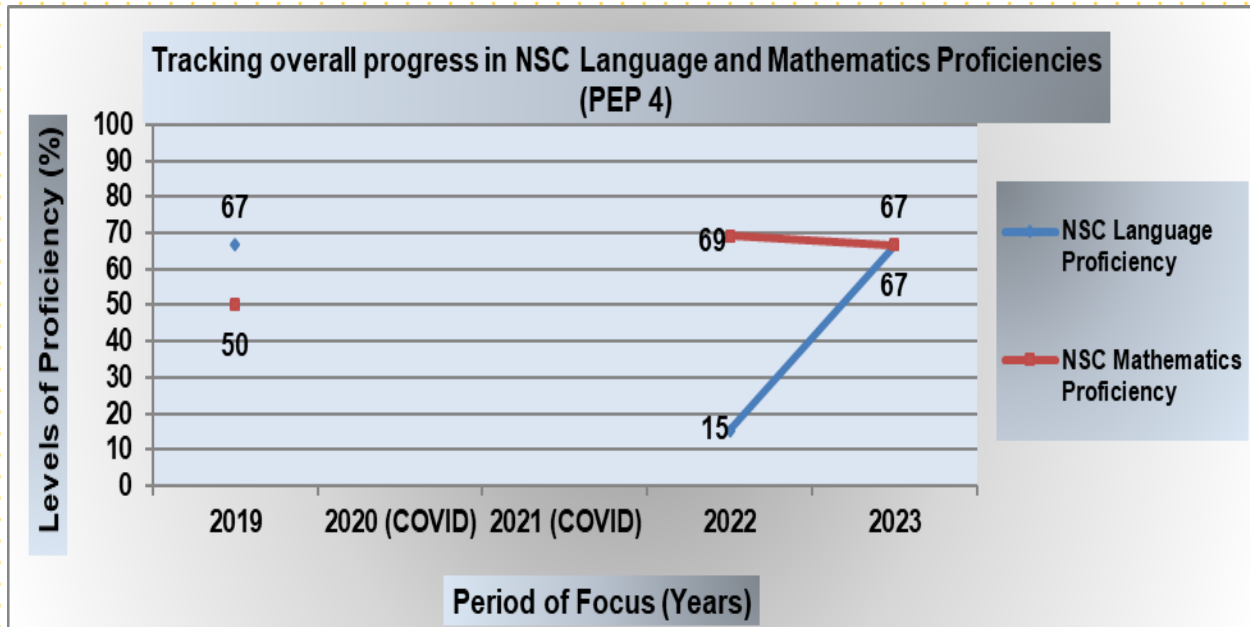
However, functional literacy exhibited an overall decline from 2016 to 2023. Starting at 92% in 2016 and 2017, functional literacy improved to 100 per cent by 2018 during the administration of the Grade Four Literacy Test (GFLT). With the introduction of the PEP in 2019, literacy proficiency dropped to 89% and further decreased to 78 per cent by 2023.

Conversely, functional numeracy showed an overall increase from 2016 to 2023. Beginning at 75% in 2016, numeracy proficiency fell to 70 per cent by 2018 during the administration of the Grade Four Numeracy Test (GAIN). However, when the PEP was first administered in 2019, numeracy proficiency increased to 80 per cent, and again to 89 per cent by 2023.

It is important to note that no data were available for 2020 and 2021 due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Graph 5b: Tracking School's Progress in NSC Language and Mathematics in the Primary Exit Profile (PEP4) 2019-2023



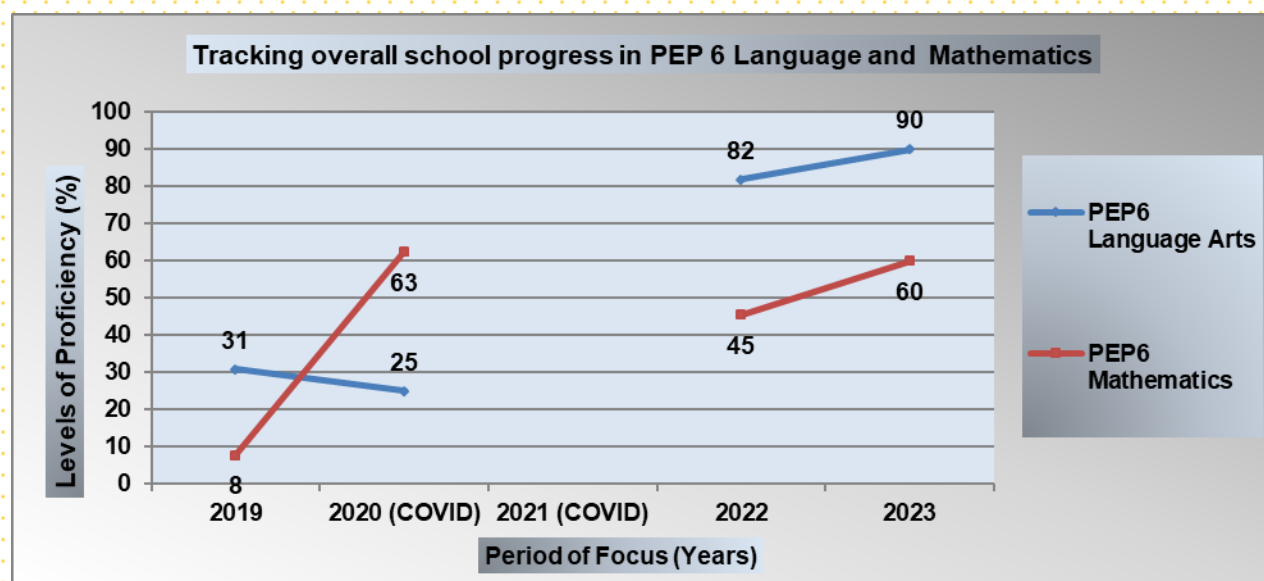
Proficiency in mathematics surpassed language proficiency in 2022.

Language arts proficiency declined sharply in 2022, falling from 67 per cent to 15 per cent. However, it rebounded in 2023 to 67 per cent.

Mathematics proficiency improved overall moving from 50 per cent in 2019, to 67 per cent in 2023.

STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Graph 5c: Tracking School's Progress in the Primary Exit Profile (PEP 6) 2019 - 2023



In the first sitting of PEP 6 in 2019, 31 per cent of the students were proficient in language arts, while eight per cent were proficient in mathematics. By 2023, the performance in language arts increased to 90 per cent while the performance in mathematics increased to 60 per cent. No data were available for 2021.

STUDENTS' PROGRESS – VALUE ADDED MODEL FOR ASSESSING SCHOOLS (VAMAS)

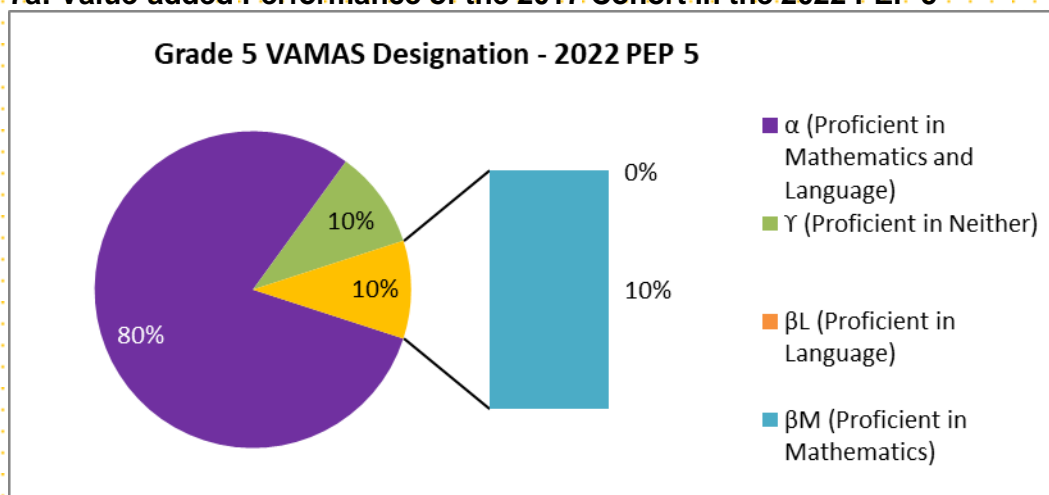
A fundamental feature of the Value Added Model for Assessing Schools (VAMAS) is to analyse individual student performance in both English and mathematics at key points in their education.

Under the VAMAS, students are assigned designations based on their traceable performances. Students attaining satisfactory performance in both mathematics and English are designated as **Alphas (α)** while those attaining satisfactory performance in either English or mathematics are designated as **Betas (β)** and those with unsatisfactory performance in both subjects are designated as **Gammas (γ)**. Additionally, satisfactory performance in English only is designated **β_L** while satisfactory performance in mathematics only is designated **β_M**

At the primary level, VAMAS designation is determined by comparing students' proficiency levels in the Primary Exit Profile (PEP 5 and PEP 6).

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Graph 7a: Value-added Performance of the 2017 Cohort in the 2022 PEP 5



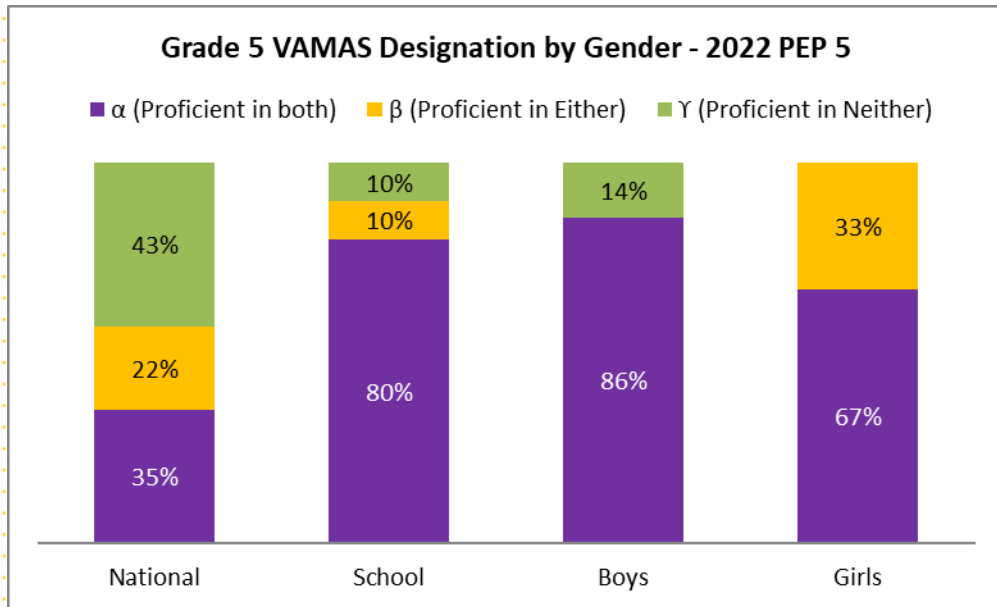
Grade 5 VAMAS Designation	Total	Percent
α (Proficient in Mathematics and Language)	8	80%
β (Proficient in Either)	1	10%
γ (Proficient in Neither)	1	10%
Total	10	100%

An application of the VAMAS revealed that more than two thirds of the students in the 2017 cohort were at the requisite level of performance in 2022.

Some 80 per cent or eight students were designated as **Alphas** having been certified proficient in the 2022 PEP 5 language arts. This was 45 percentage points above the national designation of school students in 2022. There were more male **Alphas** in this cohort than females.

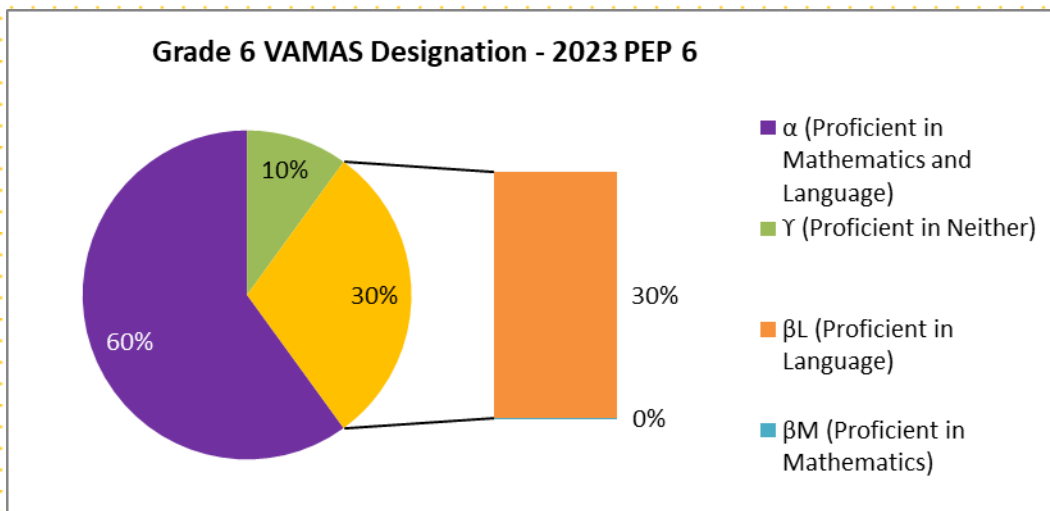
STUDENTS’ PROGRESS – VALUE ADDED MODEL FOR ASSESSING SCHOOLS (VAMAS)

Another ten per cent, or one student, were designated as **Betas** having been proficient in language arts or mathematics, but not both. Further analysis of this **Beta** revealed that they were proficient in language arts. This implies a general weakness of the cohort in mathematics. A gender comparison further revealed that the **Beta** was a girl.



Of concern, were the 10 per cent or one **Gamma** who was not proficient in either language arts or mathematics. This was 33 percentage points less than the national designation of students in 2022. This **Gamma** was a boy as evidenced by the gender comparison.

Graph 7b: Value-added Performance of the 2014 Cohort in Language Arts and Mathematics in 2020



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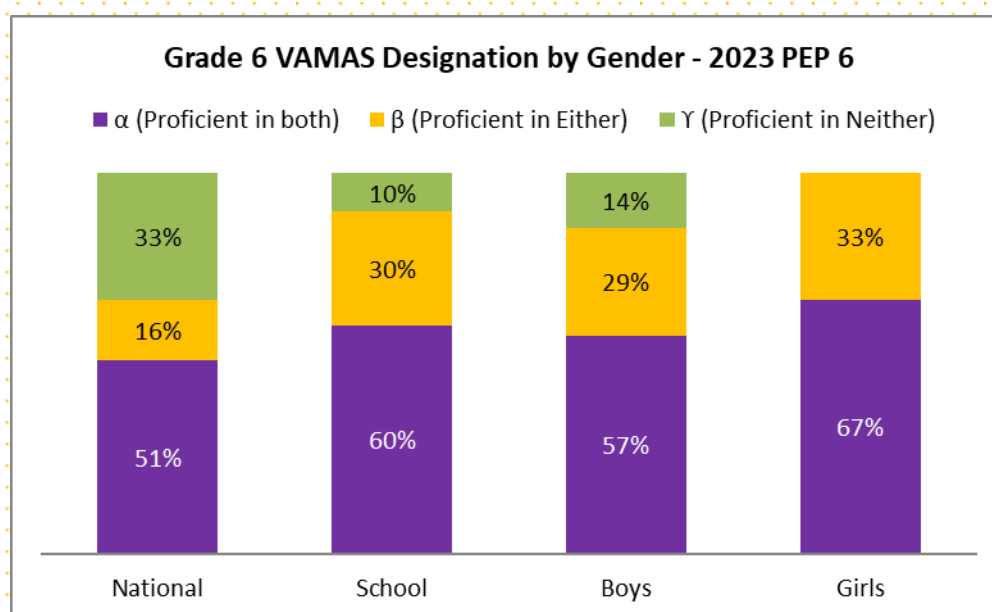
STUDENTS' PROGRESS – VALUE ADDED MODEL FOR ASSESSING SCHOOLS (VAMAS)

Grade 6 VAMAS Designation	Total	Percent
α (Proficient in Mathematics and Language)	6	60%
β (Proficient in Either)	3	30%
γ (Proficient in Neither)	1	10%
Total	10	100%

An application of the VAMAS revealed that more than half of the students in the 2017 cohort were at the requisite level of performance in 2023.

Some 60 per cent or six students were designated **Alphas** having been deemed proficient in both language arts and mathematics in the 2023 PEP 6. This was nine percentage points above the national designation of **Alphas** in 2023. However, a gender comparison revealed that there were more female **Alphas** than males.

Another 30 per cent or three of the students were proficient in either language arts or mathematics and were designated as **Betas**. Within this category, it was found that all of these **Betas** were proficient in language arts.

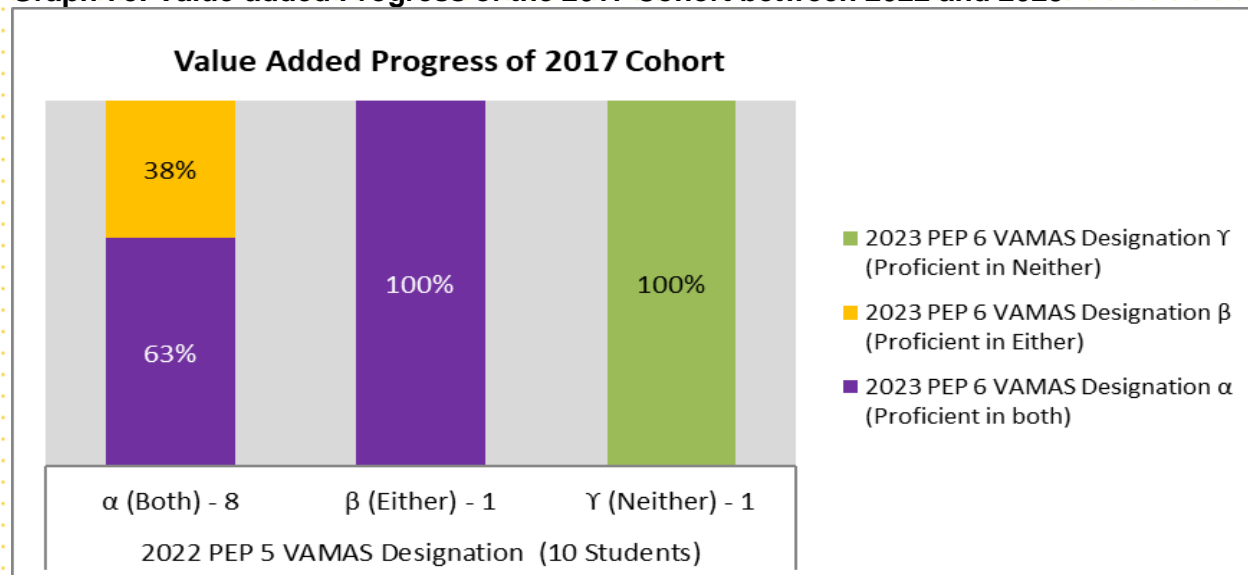


The remaining student, or ten per cent, was a **Gamma** and was neither proficient in mathematics nor language arts. This proportion was less than the national concentration of **Gammas** and was a boy.

STUDENTS' PROGRESS – VALUE ADDED MODEL FOR ASSESSING SCHOOLS (VAMAS)

The school has added sufficient value to the 2017 cohort of students. Some of the students met the requisite levels of progress by 2023.

Graph 7c: Value-added Progress of the 2017 Cohort between 2022 and 2023



A value-added analysis of the performance of the 2017 cohort revealed that some of the students retained or improved their value-added designation between 2022 and 2023. More specifically, 63 per cent or five of the eight students designated as **Alphas** in 2022 retained their **Alpha** status in 2023. Three students fell to a **Beta** and no student fell to a **Gamma**.

		2022 PEP 5 VAMAS Designation				2022 PEP 5 VAMAS Designation (10 Students)		
		α	β	γ	Total	α (Both) - 8	β (Either) - 1	γ (Neither) - 1
2023 PEP 6 VAMAS Designation	α (Proficient in both)	5	1	0	6	63%	100%	0%
	β (Proficient in Either)	3	0	0	3	38%	0%	0%
	γ (Proficient in Neither)	0	0	1	1	0%	0%	100%
Total		8	1	1	10	100%	100%	100%

The student who was designated as a **Beta** in 2022, improved to **Alpha** in 2023.

One student from the 2017 cohort was designated a **Gamma** based on their 2022 PEP performance. This **Gamma** retained their status.

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END OF REPORT.

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