

now
press
play

Product Impact Report 2021 - 2022

Independent Evaluation by
Chrysalis Research



Our approach to learning

Who we are

now>press>play is an award-winning, immersive audio resource for primary schools that inspires children to love learning by engaging them in the curriculum through sound, story, and movement. There are over 80 Experiences and 400 follow-on resources for the classroom. In each Experience, every child is given a pair of wireless headphones. Immersed in sound, they become the main character in a story, meeting people, discovering places, and solving problems on an educational adventure they'll never forget.



Why & how it works

From climbing through the rainforest canopy in the Amazon to fighting a woolly mammoth in the Stone Age, our inclusive audio adventures are uniquely designed to stimulate children's imagination. This child-centred approach to learning increases engagement, extends life experiences, and inspires children to produce quality writing.

With a **now>press>play** subscription, your school will get:

- Access to over 80 immersive audio Experiences for EYFS, KS1 and KS2.
- Catered curriculum mapping — topics include Maths, Science, History, Geography, PSHE, RE, MFL, and Literacy.
- Class set of wireless headphones, transmitter, and access to our Experiences app and our remote At Home offer.
- Over 400 follow-on learning resources including Reading Comprehensions, Grammar & Punctuation, and Writing Opportunities.
- Teacher support — whole-staff training and access to our easy-to-use Experiences app to support quick lesson planning.

To try us out, we're offering you a FREE Trial to access over 80 Experiences, our learning resources, teacher training, and unlimited use of the **now>press>play** hardware for a full two weeks.



Immersive
sound



Curriculum
based



Experiential
learning



Storytelling



Child-centred

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

99% rated now>press>play positively

90% would recommend now>press>play

FOR CHILDREN...

INCREASES ENGAGEMENT

91% said it helped to develop pupils' **enjoyment of the topic**

82% said there was a **greater willingness to participate** and get **involved with lessons**



FOR TEACHERS...

DELIVERS THE CURRICULUM

92% said it **enriches the curriculum** by offering something different



85% said it **brings the topic to life**



EXTENDS LIFE EXPERIENCES

For around **2/3** of educators, now>press>play enables children to **experience life events** that they would not normally be exposed to

DEVELOPS SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Over **1/2** said it develops pupils' ability to **empathise with another person or character**

INCLUSIVE & ACCESSIBLE

70% said it particularly benefits pupils of **lower abilities**



PROVIDES TEACHER SUPPORT

now>press>play is overwhelmingly used as a **whole class activity** across **Key Stages 1 and 2**, as well as **EYFS**

72% said it was easy to **set up and deliver**

IMPROVES DISCUSSION SKILLS

For around **2/3** of educators, now>press>play helped pupils to **retain key facts** and **vocabulary** and developed their ability to articulate what they have experienced

INSPIRES QUALITY WRITING

69% of teachers who have had the product for three years or more are using now>press>play as a **basis for writing tasks**

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1. Methodology

Research Aims & Methodology

This impact report pulls together evidence of how now>press>play audio Experiences and follow-on resources have a positive impact on children’s learning and teachers’ ability to deliver engaging lessons.

Research Approach

A mixed-methods approach was used to evaluate the impact of now>press>play in the classroom:

- Four qualitative telephone interviews were carried out with educators who had used now>press>play in their schools. The purpose of these interviews was to gain insights from users on their experience of now>press>play and what impact they felt had been achieved by using the product.
- These insights, together with those emerging from case studies supplied by now>press>play, were then used as a basis for developing a quantitative impact survey. The survey was sent out to all schools who currently have a now>press>play subscription. Multiple respondents from the same school were allowed. The survey ran from 15th November to 3rd December 2021.
- Based on their survey responses, seven educators were then selected to take part in case study interviews in early 2022. These explored particular themes that emerged from the survey to provide detailed illustrations of how now>press>play has been applied in practice.



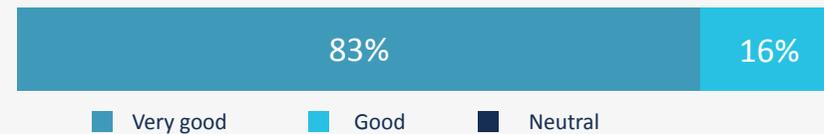
2. Rating and likelihood to recommend now>press>play

Educators are overwhelmingly positive about now>press>play, with the vast majority judging it to be “very good” (Figure 1, below).

Spontaneously, educators commented most often on its ability to engage pupils (102 mentions). They explained that using now>press>play was a great way to “hook” children into a new topic, and really brought it to life for them — though it could also be used just as effectively as a “fab finisher” at the end. Several teachers remarked that now>press>play even engaged children in topics they wouldn’t normally be interested in, or that might seem very abstract, such as evolution.

Educators described what an immersive experience it was for children (40 mentions) and emphasised how much pupils of all abilities enjoyed now>press>play: they were excited to take part and showed a lot of enthusiasm for the lesson (24 mentions). They referenced the fact that quieter children and older pupils felt comfortable performing the movements when they would ordinarily have been self-conscious about any drama activity.

Figure 1: Rating of now>press>play
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



“The children enjoyed now>press>play because it was different. It helped them to engage. The children were clearly excited and wanted to learn because of now>press>play and it was great to see that just a short lesson showed progress.”

99% of teachers
rated now>press>play positively



“It allows all children to participate and helps children to learn in a new and exciting way. I love how engaged the children become and how it sparks their imagination.”

2. Rating and likelihood to recommend now>press>play

We asked our qualitative respondents on what basis they would recommend now>press>play. They highlighted the fact that it is highly engaging, enriches the curriculum in a cost-effective way, and enables pupils to become immersed in a topic and take pride in the knowledge they have acquired about it.



Figure 2: Propensity to recommend now>press>play to others
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



"I would absolutely recommend it, yes. I think it's really good value for money. It enriches the curriculum, and I think it's really fun and engaging."

"Enhancing, engaging, impacts on children's sense of enjoyment and also being able to explore something that most of our children won't ever see."

3.1. Learning outcomes for children – Increases engagement

As we have already noted, educators spontaneously mentioned how well now>press>play engages pupils in their learning, and they indeed gave this as one of the key reasons for rating now>press>play so highly. It is therefore not surprising to see that the vast majority of our sample (91 percent) rated “enjoyment of the topic” as one of the key outcomes for their learners when prompted with a list of statements (Figure 3, below).

Over half of our respondents (54 percent) felt that this was a particular strength of now>press>play, compared to other resources they were using. Similarly, a great many teachers (82 percent) agreed that now>press>play **encouraged children to join in and get involved with the lesson.**

Figure 3: Key outcomes that now>press>play has helped to develop in learners
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



Over half (54%) thought now>press>play delivered these two outcomes particularly well, compared to other resources

Our sample also made spontaneous comments about the fact that now>press>play offers an immersive experience for children, and that it develops children’s **ability to use their imagination** (17 mentions). Qualitatively, one teacher we spoke to found this particularly appealing, as their younger pupils often started school engaging in much less role-play than one would normally expect.

3.1. Increases engagement

When prompted, this attribute became particularly salient, with nearly nine out of ten educators (87 percent) agreeing that now>press>play helped to develop their students' imagination. Along with "enjoyment of the topic", over half the sample (54 percent) saw this as another area of strength relative to other teaching resources they were using.

Three quarters of our sample also considered "enhanced listening skills" as a positive outcome of using now>press>play, and this was slightly higher amongst Key Stage 1 and EYFS compared to Key Stage 2. Spontaneous comments also mentioned that SEND and EAL children also developed their listening skills by following the actions of others, even if they themselves were not fully able to follow the story.

"You could see that the children were really imagining themselves in it and really listening intently."

Case study extract: Using now>press>play to deliver lessons that cater for pupils of all abilities, including SEND children

This teacher considers pupil engagement to be a particular strength of now>press>play, commenting that pupils of all abilities seem to especially enjoy using this resource. The school prides itself on its inclusive curriculum, where each lesson is carefully differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, including SEND children.

I would say hooking the children into getting excited about a new topic through an Experience has been great...the children absolutely love when we use it! They find it so engaging, interactive, and it really brings topics and experiences to life.

Using now>press>play also helps children to retain key topic knowledge; for instance, doing an Experience on a day in the life of a Stone Age child helped her pupils to remember that Stone Age people were hunter-gatherers. She feels children would be less likely to remember facts from the previous topic if it did not include a now>press>play Experience.

3.2. Extends life experiences

The majority of educators (63 percent) agreed that now>press>play enabled children to **experience life events they would not normally be exposed to**, and this was also commented upon spontaneously (18 mentions). Qualitatively, teachers explained that some of their disadvantaged learners arrived at school having had very few experiences outside of their immediate environment. Consequently, they often lacked key concepts and vocabulary to describe the wider world. Addressing the issue of cultural capital was an area of focus in these schools.

Aligned with this, over half of our sample agreed that one of the benefits of now>press>play was that it provided a cost-effective way of increasing their pupils' cultural capital, and this was particularly the case for those who had been using the product for over 3 years.

“They don't really play out or experience things. If they go to the Trafford Centre, that is like a holiday. They might go to the airport to pick somebody up, that's huge...they're not exposed to that high-level vocabulary because they haven't got those experiences. We have a boy who was a higher-than-average attainer and he didn't know what a hedge was.”

“If I compare it to these theatre experiences we had, which I've used for years, these drama workshops, now>press>play is better than that and also cheaper per child.”



Case study: Using now>press>play to enhance the life experiences of disadvantaged children

Gemma Williams is an assistant headteacher at Star Primary School in Newham. The school is located in a deprived area of East London and has a very high proportion of children from ethnic minorities.

Some of our disadvantaged children might not have the luxury of being taken to museums to look at wonderful artefacts; they don't get to go to the cinema to watch movies; they might not even have a TV, or a computer, or any kind of device at home. Giving them the opportunity to access a resource like this is great. We can give them these experiences in school that they can't get at home... [For instance] our children love listening to stories, but they might not necessarily get that in their home.

now>press>play is used every half term with each year group in this school. Experiences are typically used at the beginning of the topic as a hook to engage pupils and introduce topic-based tier 3 vocabulary that the children will need to use subsequently.

It's just a great opportunity for them to hear [the vocabulary] in action and then be able to use it in their own learning after the Experience.

For Ms Williams, now>press>play is very successful in engaging disadvantaged pupils in their learning:

They love it. I normally deliver the box to the classroom, and as soon as you open the door, you can see their faces, and they're going, "Yes, now>press>play!". That's the response you want, with anything that you're learning, it's that immediate connection, "I know I'm going to be doing something really great," and that's reflected across the school.

Case study: Using now>press>play to enhance the life experiences of disadvantaged children

Daniel Bowman is a Year 1 teacher at Grangetown Primary School in Middlesbrough, which serves one of the most disadvantaged communities in the country; it ranks in the top three percent of English schools in terms of the number of pupils requiring free school meals.

A lot of our children don't have a bank of knowledge about the wider world. Their life opportunities can be quite limited, and we use now>press>play in order to be able to give them something that in the past they might not have had experience of.

As a result of limited opportunities, vocabulary can be restricted. In addition, Mr Bowman feels it is especially important for his cohort to have lessons that are exciting and bring learning to life.

now>press>play has made a noticeable difference to children's vocabulary when new topics are introduced, as well as their subsequent retention of these terms.

I think now>press>play really introduces the vocabulary in a fun and engaging way so that the children are taking that vocabulary in and they're finding a context for it, but they're not doing it in a way where they would just be sitting down at desks. They're up and they're moving around, so it's an exciting way, and I do find that the vocabulary does seem to sink in more than if they were just learning it in rote learning inside the classroom.

"[now>press>play] hooks them in and it makes them more likely to engage in future lessons. Once you've given them that hook, the children are really stimulated to go and find out more about the topic."

3.3. Develops social and emotional skills

More than half the sample (52 percent) believed that pupils' ability to **empathise with characters and other people** had been developed through their use of now>press>play, particularly at Key Stage 2. It is worth noting that the more Experiences they used, the more likely educators were to endorse all of the above. This may be because these respondents were also more likely to use the supporting resources, such as the discussion questions, quizzes, and storyboards.

52% of teachers believed now>press>play increased their pupils' ability to empathise with characters and other people potentially

Being in-role helps Miss Preston's children with character development, especially the ability to convey a character's emotion.

"If we're using now>press>play for diary entries, the children – because they've been part of the Experience – are able to convey a character's emotion much more clearly through their written piece of work."

- Miss Preston, Class Teacher, Poverest Primary School, Kent



3.4. Improves discussion skills

Whilst educators were more likely to emphasise now>press>play's ability to develop their learners' listening skills, over half of our sample also believed it played a useful role in helping children with their oracy skills, both in terms of their ability to articulate what they had experienced (62 percent) and their willingness to take part in discussions (57 percent). This was particularly true for lower ability, SEND, and disadvantaged pupils.

A small number of educators concurred in their spontaneous remarks, noting that even their quietest pupils enjoyed talking about their experience afterwards, and the Experiences generated a lot of good discussion points.



"I'm thinking of this particular child. She doesn't even answer her name at register, and she was happily, merrily talking away to two other people. And I just stood back and thought, 'Oh, goodness!'"

"As well as enriching life experiences, now>press>play also helps children to expand their tier 3 topic vocabulary and their willingness to take part in class discussions. It's also oracy outcomes for pupils because they're talking about the Experience before and after; it's enriching their vocabulary as well."

- Gemma Williams , Assistant Headteacher, Star Primary School, Newham

Case study: Using now>press>play follow-on resources to introduce vocabulary and retain knowledge

Sam Ashman is a Year 3 teacher at Front Lawn Primary School in Havant, and co-ordinates the use of now>press>play from EYFS all the way to Year 6. Experiences are mapped to a range of subjects such as History, Geography, Languages, PSHE and Maths.

Miss Ashman also uses the now>press>play Glossary before an Experience to introduce the topic's vocabulary.

I do put the vocab list up first if I can, to go through all of that and then I can see who struggled with that language before I do it, that's my pre-assessment.

Using resources has been even easier for teachers since now>press>play developed the app for use on personal devices.

Now, with the new app that I've got on my own personal device and our class iPad, it's even better, because you can email them to yourself and print them [...] or have them up on the screen within minutes.

Qualitatively, educators have highlighted how the follow-on resources are very helpful to teachers who are less experienced in planning, or in situations where a lesson needs to be put together very quickly.

"We give them the now>press>play box set because the planning in it is minimal. So, you give the children the 20-30 minute Experience, and then you've got the supporting resources here. They provide reading comprehensions, questions, storyboard, quizzes, everything that you could need last minute if you were in that situation and had to put a plan together really quickly."

3.5. Inspires quality writing

One fifth of our sample also found that now>press>play helped to **develop their learners' writing skills**, and this was something that a number of educators also mentioned qualitatively and spontaneously on the survey (17 mentions); they felt that the use of imagination during the Experience led to improved quality of writing, for instance, improved writing in the role of a character.

Several teachers commented that it had inspired some powerful writing outcomes, with one educator noting it had helped reluctant boys to translate their physical experiences into writing and another remarking that it helped able girls to take more risks with their writing. More evidence of improved writing outcomes can be found in the case studies on meeting curriculum objectives, below.

"I would say that it's helped support our focus on vocabulary, and also impacted on writing because they're feeling it and experiencing it... And you can just see it in how they're writing, the output of work and the words they're using."

Case study extract: Using now>press>play to meet curriculum objectives

Emma Courtney, an assistant headteacher and wider curriculum lead at Luton Primary School in Chatham, explains how now>press>play supports the delivery of a wide range of topics across many subject areas of the Key Stage 2 curriculum in Luton Primary school.

Miss Courtney sees now>press>play as integral to teaching the curriculum at her school, as it helps make learning accessible for a wide range of children. The school has a high proportion of EAL (one in two), SEN (around 30 percent) and pupil premium (more than half) students, and now>press>play is used to ensure that all students are engaged in the topic and have the right vocabulary to draw on. This is difficult to achieve otherwise due to gaps in language and learning experiences.

"If they've done an Experience, I often see elements of what they've heard and listened to being reflected in their writing."

As children enjoy the now>press>play Experience, and as learning is active, they retain information better than if they'd have learned information in the classroom from a PowerPoint. Often the children will say, "Oh we did this today," ... they're excited to see the now>press>play box come out, and they remember it because they're excited by it and engaged with it; they're going to remember the content much more easily and hopefully retain the key vocabulary.

So they're not just hearing these words in isolation, they're getting the opportunity to hear a story about it, and that way I think it really embeds the words into the child's vocabulary and into their understanding of what it is.

After the "Blitz" now>press>play Experience, children drew on this to write poems. They knew what bombs and sirens sounded like so knew how to create onomatopoeia and alliterative effects. It was so much easier to get that from them because they had that Experience, so they knew what the bombs sounded like and the siren sounded like. And it just came much, much more naturally to them.

Case study: Using now>press>play to meet curriculum objectives

Poverest Primary School in Kent serves a mixed catchment area, including a high level of pupil premium children from pockets of high deprivation around the school. Year 6 children take part in now>press>play Experiences across the curriculum for Maths, English, History, and Geography, within the school's active approach to learning.

Year 6 teacher Nicola Preston uses now>press>play across the curriculum to make learning more engaging for her children. For example, in SATs Maths she recently used a "Murder Mystery" activity which involved cracking codes to solve a SATS problem within a murder mystery context. Her class were so keen to solve the mystery that they forgot to worry about solving the SATS Maths problem.

They didn't really think too much about the Maths and actually just sat down and did it rather than panicking over it like they sometimes do with SATs-based questions.

Miss Preston explains how the immersive nature of the Experiences not only engages the children in the new topic but also help them to retain knowledge about the topic for weeks afterwards.

When we start to talk about elements in the topic we often refer back to, "Oh, do you remember what happened during now>press>play?" And they can make that link back to the now>press>play Experience and move their knowledge forward.

now>press>play Experiences have been used most often in the English curriculum to support the development of children's writing. Experiences provide powerful stimuli for children's writing, as children are transported somewhere else — such as Ancient Greece or the countryside in WW2 — through the narration, the sound effects, and their character role. The Experience also provides the knowledge children need to include in their writing, along with plenty of ideas to write about.

Following the Experience, Miss Preston discusses what happened with the children and encourages them to remain in-role.

Using now>press>play in this way has resulted in improved writing outcomes. For example, she has noticed how her children produce better descriptive writing as they apply the rich vocabulary acquired during the Experience. Being in role also helps her children with character development, especially the ability to convey a character's emotion.

If we're using now>press>play for diary entries, children, because they've been part of the Experience, are able to convey a character's emotion much more clearly through their written piece of work.

To have an immersive Experience that then produces great written outcomes from the children really does go a long way in helping us to make sure that the children are in a good place to get to the level they need to be at the end of the year and, ultimately, start secondary school where they need to be.

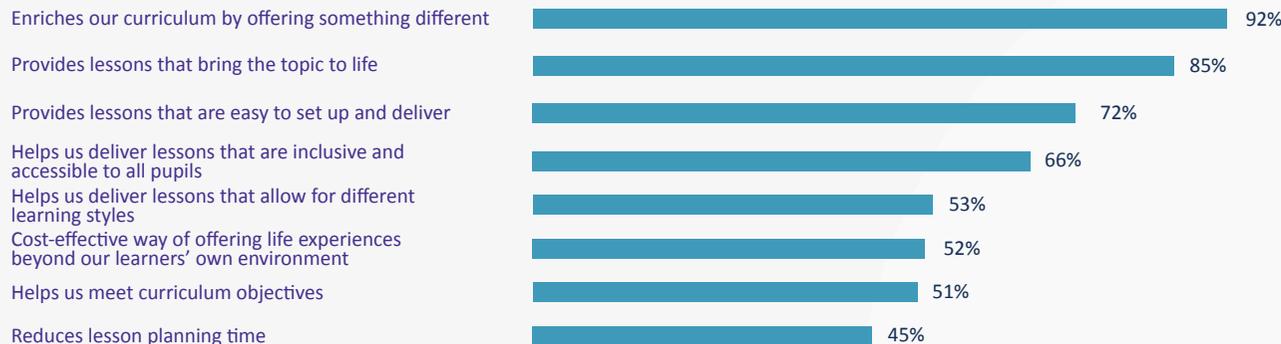
4.1. Teacher benefits – Delivers the curriculum

As can be seen from Figure 4 below, almost all of our sample (92 percent) believed that a key benefit of now>press>play for teachers is that it **enriches their curriculum by offering something different**. In fact, three quarters of teachers rated this as one of their top three benefits.

But what does “offering something different” mean to teachers? If we look at their spontaneous responses, there were many references to “experiential learning,” “interactive learning,” “multisensory learning,” and “active learning” (35 mentions in total) when they were asked why they rated now>press>play so highly. Qualitatively, teachers also mentioned that topics were approached in novel ways, for instance introducing a “Murder Mystery” problem into a Maths lesson. Over half of our sample (53 percent) also agreed that now>press>play allowed teachers to cater to different learning styles. Central to this is the idea that children are learning by doing, rather than simply watching or listening to a story unfold; now>press>play gives pupils the opportunity to learn in a different way from the way lessons are normally delivered (18 mentions).

Closely aligned to this is the perception that now>press>play **helps to bring the topic to life**, which again was considered a benefit by a great many within our sample (85 percent), and again was voted a top three benefit by three quarters of respondents.

Figure 4: Key benefits of using now>press>play from educators' perspective
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



Three quarters of educators rated these two as the main benefits of now>press>play for educators

4.1. Delivers the curriculum

Half of our sample of teachers (51 percent) agreed now>press>play helped them to meet their curriculum objectives, though this figure rises to 69 percent amongst teachers who have used the product for 3 years or more or are using now>press>play as a basis for writing tasks.

now>press>play has over 80 Experiences that cover Maths, Science, History, Geography, PSHE, RE, English, and MFL. Each KS1 and KS2 Experience has follow-on resources to meet curriculum objectives and increase retention: Recap, Discuss & Quiz, Reading Comprehension, Glossary and Writing Opportunities. KS2 Experiences also have an additional Grammar & Punctuation resource each to help with SATs revision. EYFS Experiences come with a visual vocabulary-focused Word Mat and a Song Sheet.

Recap, Discuss & Quiz

Glossary

Reading Comprehension

Writing Opportunities

KS2 Grammar & Punctuation

EYFS Word Mats



4.1. Delivers the curriculum

One area that emerged as important in both qualitative interviews and spontaneous comments on the survey was the fact that using now>press>play increased pupils' understanding and retention of the topic they were covering (42 mentions), which is no doubt linked to their high levels of engagement. Qualitatively, teachers highlighted the introduction of movement as a factor in helping learners to retain information. This is an area many children normally struggle with, and something that Ofsted have chosen to focus on recently.

Although nearly two thirds of our sample (62 percent) agreed that now>press>play helped their learners to retain key facts and vocabulary, the element that is missing from this statement is the understanding aspect, which includes being able to grasp key concepts relating to the topic. The fact that children have to physically act out the story helps to internalise concepts that would otherwise be difficult for some children to assimilate.

Case study extract: Using now>press>play follow-on resources to introduce vocabulary and retain knowledge

At Front Lawn Primary School in Havant, Miss Ashman reports that a number of teachers across the school use the now>press>play follow-on resources after an Experience, with storyboards and quizzes proving to be the most popular. She explains that doing a storyboard after an Experience helps children to understand the story, retain what they have learned, and remember how they felt during the Experience.

I'll say, "Here's a storyboard, tell your partner everything you did in that story from the day before." It's just retention and that idea of comprehension – "Actually, I was following a storyline, and I was following the actions, and I was following emotions of the characters, and I know that there was a big problem in the middle and that's how I solved it, and there were facts that I learnt as I went along."

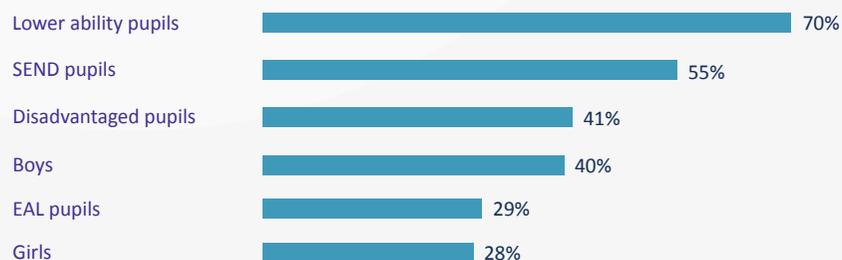
"Doing and living through that helps our children retain something, because it's physical, they're actually getting up and walking around the room pretending to role-play."

4.2. Inclusive and accessible

Another benefit of now>press>play for teachers was that it enabled them to deliver lessons that were inclusive and accessible to all children. This was a statement endorsed by two thirds of our sample, even if only one third chose it as a main benefit (top 3). Figure 5 below shows that lower-ability pupils in particular appear to benefit from now>press>play, while half of our sample also felt that it could be used very effectively with SEND children.

One qualitative respondent explained they had successfully used now>press>play in their Special Needs Unit with Reception and Year 1 children.

Figure 5: Learners that have particularly benefited from using now>press>play
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



“Quite a few of them are non-verbal and not writing, so the fact that they’re able to express themselves somehow through now>press>play is really nice actually.”

Educators spontaneously mentioned that using now>press>play helped to “hook in” reluctant learners and made more abstract concepts accessible to lower-ability or SEND pupils. One teacher noted that it engaged boys who were normally easily distracted, as the headphones made it more like a one-to-one experience.



Case study: Using now>press>play to deliver lessons that cater for pupils of all abilities, including SEND children

Stoke Hill is a Junior school in Exeter with a higher-than-average intake of SEND pupils. The school employs a child-centred approach to teaching, and Robyn Chard-Maple, an NQT teaching Year 4, explains how now>press>play fits in with this approach:

now>press>play feeds on [a child-centred approach] because it allows the children to access their interests in a different way. When you take them outside, or wherever you put those headsets on them, you can see it in their faces, that way they suddenly light up and you see sparks flying.

Listening skills and understanding are two areas where Miss Chard-Maple has noticed improvements as a result of using now>press>play, particularly amongst lower-ability and SEND pupils. One of the contributory factors is the simple language used in now>press>play Experiences, which makes them very accessible:

A lot of the stories are quite simple in the language that they use, the way they speak to the children and talk to them through the story. I think that's what really supports them with the understanding. They are not using lots of words to explain something.

Secondly, the requirement to imagine themselves as a character within the story further facilitates understanding of concepts and assimilation.

They feel like they're a character in a story and I think that allows them to open their imagination to living through what they're learning... that's different to seeing it on a page, they're actually becoming a part of it. And I think that's what allows them to learn in that subject.

Miss Chard-Maple gives the example of an autistic pupil who was having difficulty understanding the concept of "trading":

When they put on those headphones, they realised, "I'm a child in Ancient Greece, I'm now learning how to trade." You could see them suddenly pretending they were picking up a basket of olives, passing it to their friend, pretending to exchange coins. I thought, "They understand that trading means buying and selling," which I know they weren't grasping in the classroom.

Miss Chard-Maple noticed how now>press>play gives less academic children the chance to fully engage in the lesson, when they often found it challenging to participate in other contexts. She also observed that they were more likely to take part in class discussions as a result:

I'll ask them a question, and the responses I get are much more confident from those lower-ability children in particular, and the SEND children. They're more confident and I sense and see that they're happier to have a go... they've been able to access their learning in a different way, so they've been much more engaged in that subject.

Case study: Using now>press>play to deliver lessons that cater for pupils of all abilities, including SEND children

This school prides itself on its inclusive curriculum, where each lesson is carefully differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, including SEND children. now>press>play has proven to be very useful in that it allows pupils of all abilities to join in the lesson, through its easy-to-follow instructions and reliance on pupils' physical, rather than spoken or written, response.

SEND children in my class respond really well to using now>press>play...They can listen to instructions through the headphones that are very simple to follow. So, for example, if it's one of the History hooks and they are told to pretend to make a fire, they can all go down on the floor and pretend to make a fire.

Whilst now>press>play offers audio Experiences that are shared by the whole class simultaneously, the headphones provide an individual environment that can be adjusted to the needs of each child:

It is nice for them to use the headphones because it's quite sensory for those children who like to listen to sounds. And the volume can be adjusted for those who don't like things as loud in their ears. So I use it for all children, even children who are autistic.

The headphones are also used by one SEND child to assist with memory issues; the pupil can replay instructions or record their ideas on an iPad and play them back.

This educator considers pupil engagement to be a particular strength of now>press>play, commenting that pupils of all abilities seem to especially enjoy using this resource.

I think it's because of how fun it makes the lesson. Whenever the children see the headphone box at the front of the classroom, they get really excited.

4.3. Easy-to-use and set up

Nearly three quarters of educators (72 percent) also appreciated the fact that now>press>play lessons were generally very easy to set up and deliver “at the touch of a button”, with only two teachers mentioning they had experienced technical issues, which were later resolved. A small number of respondents spontaneously mentioned that they found the support resources were good (9 mentions), and this was also backed up in our case study responses. Just under half of our sample base agreed that using now>press>play helped to reduce lesson planning time, and this was backed up qualitatively.



72% of
teachers
said it was
easy to set up
and deliver



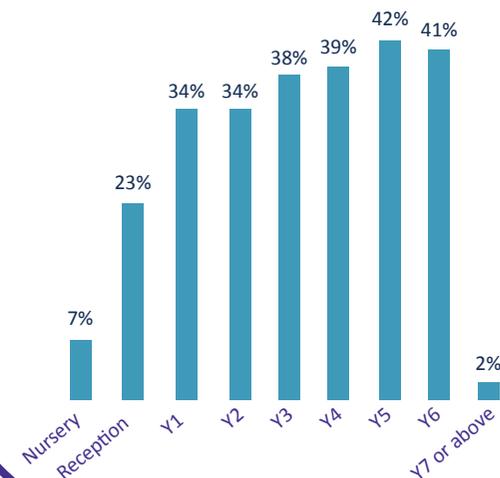
5. Additional benefits

Distribution of year groups using now>press>play

Our sample indicates that now>press>play is widely used across primary schools (Figure 4, below). The two establishments using now>press>play at Year 7 were both Special Schools.

The chart shows less presence at Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), but this may be due to settings and teachers being under-represented in the sample. Within those surveyed in EYFS settings, now>press>play receives positive testimonials:

Figure 6: Year groups with which educators have used now>press>play
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



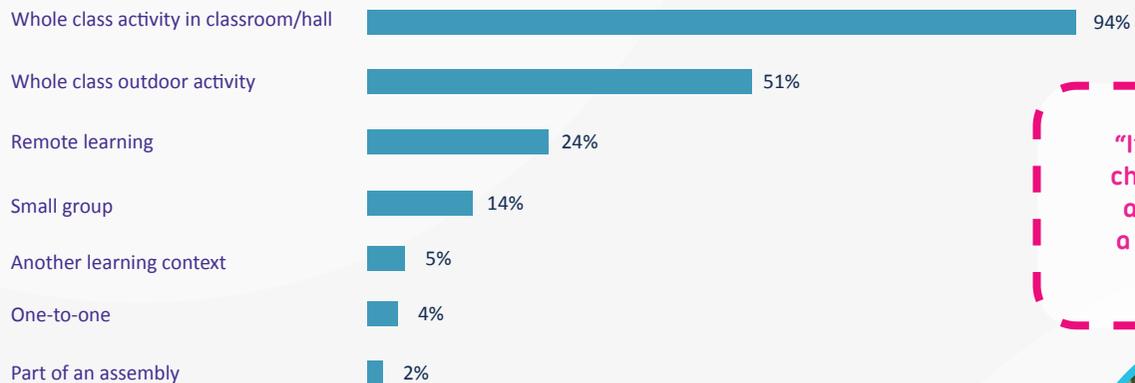
5.1. EYFS – Case study extract: Using now>press>play for EYFS at Star Primary School, Newham

now>press>play is used across all year groups in this school, including Reception and Nursery. Whilst Reception children are old enough to be able to access the Experience as a whole class, it is used slightly differently in Nursery: the Experience is broken down into shorter chunks and small groups of children will access it as part of their free-flow play experience, supported by an adult. Gemma Williams, the school's assistant headteacher, feels now>press>play fits well with the early learning outcomes for Reception, as it requires children to follow instructions, listen to a story, talk about what they've heard afterwards, and also encourages cooperation.

5.2. Whole classroom and outdoor activity

Figure 7 below shows that now>press>play is overwhelmingly used as a whole class activity, with almost all users (94 percent) reporting that they had employed it in this context.

Figure 7: Learning contexts in which now>press>play has been used
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



"It is a great way to introduce or immerse children into a subject: a great way to end a topic or start it with a bang. They gain a lot of knowledge from it and are able to imagine what it was like to do so."

In addition, around half of our sample also delivered it as an outdoor activity. Qualitatively, several educators mentioned taking the Experiences outside, as this helped to stimulate the imagination even further, and also served to extend limited learning experiences for disadvantaged children.



Case study: Using now>press>play outdoors

Robyn Chard-Maple, a Year 4 teacher at Stoke Hill Junior School in Exeter, describes how using now>press>play outdoors can add an extra dimension to the learning experience:

Taking them outside of those four walls creates a whole different experience, it makes it more realistic for them. We're very lucky where we are, we have a massive field and playground, and we give them free rein. You see them going out and using the things in the environment, like the trees and the mud piles that we have, with their stories.

Sam Ashman, a Year 3 teacher at Front Lawn Primary School in Havant, has used now>press>play outdoors when their topic particularly lends itself to this context:

If a topic is naturally an outdoors one, it feels right to be outdoors if we can. I'll say, "Let's get outside to do this one because that's what a geographer would do," it's just putting them into a different perspective. And they do very much treat it differently when they are outside, I think their imaginations are even better.

A quarter of educators had used now>press>play in a remote learning situation, which tallies with the fact that some respondents only discovered the product during lockdown. In terms of the timing of delivering Experiences within the topic, now>press>play shows itself to be versatile, accommodating teachers' preferences and pupils' learning needs. Many teachers report using now>press>play to kickstart the topic, engaging pupils from the very beginning and introducing them to topic vocabulary. Others prefer to use it towards the end of the topic, to help pupils consolidate their learning. Some use it interchangeably depending on where pupils need it most.

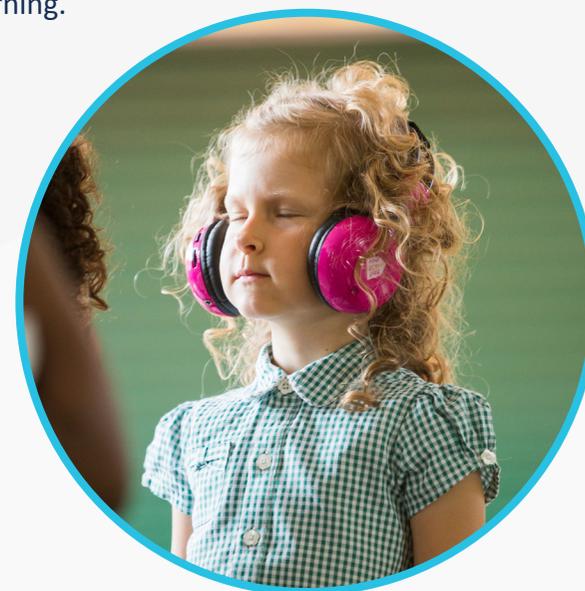
"Sometimes we use it as a launch, sometimes we do it half-way through, sometimes we do it at the end, we'll do it as a fab finisher as well. It's nice to end on a now>press>play, because they know all that language from before. We're very much still playing around with it, but I think it lends itself nicely to all three really."

5.3. Alternative uses for the headphones

Other than the Experiences, educators also used now>press>play in many other contexts, often playing other audio content through now>press>play headphones:

- Playing music/sound effects during Big Writing lessons.
- Listening to an audiobook while doing art.
- Enabling SEND children to play back instructions.
- Playing soothing music to calm anxious or agitated pupils, to get them ready for learning.
- As a means of hearing a backing track whilst recording singing.
- For key workers' children in school during lockdown.
- After-school SATs booster group.
- After-school clubs in general.
- Listening to podcasts created by the teacher using the headphones.

One teacher uses the headphones for her children to listen to podcasts she's created; she had not thought of this until she started using now>press>play.



6. Appendix – Survey sample, reporting notes, acknowledgements

Qualitative profile of participants

- 4 user insight interviews were conducted with: a headteacher, an assistant headteacher/curriculum lead for ICT, a senior leader, and a Year 5/6 teacher
- 7 case study interviews were conducted with: a Year 1 teacher, a Year 3 teacher, two Year 4 teachers (one of whom an NQT), a Year 6 teacher and two assistant headteachers.

Survey sample

The survey was completed by 183 educators. This is a reasonably robust sample size and given the relatively small number of schools using now>press>play, is a good response rate. Participants in this survey are therefore likely to be representative of now>press>play users as a whole.

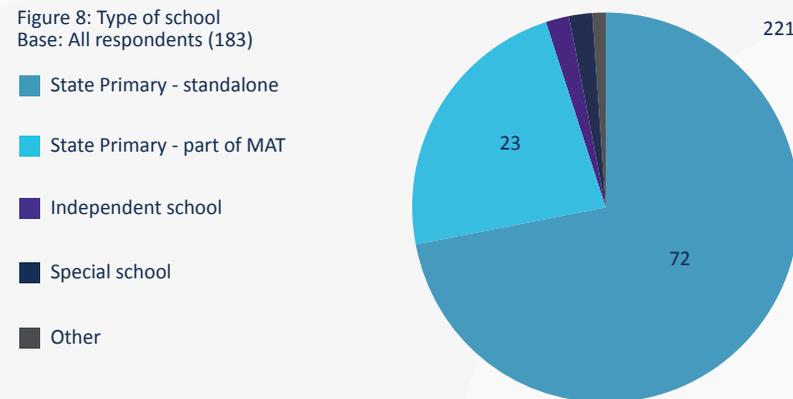


Figure 8 above shows that the vast majority of our survey sample worked in the state sector, usually within primary schools operating on a standalone basis.

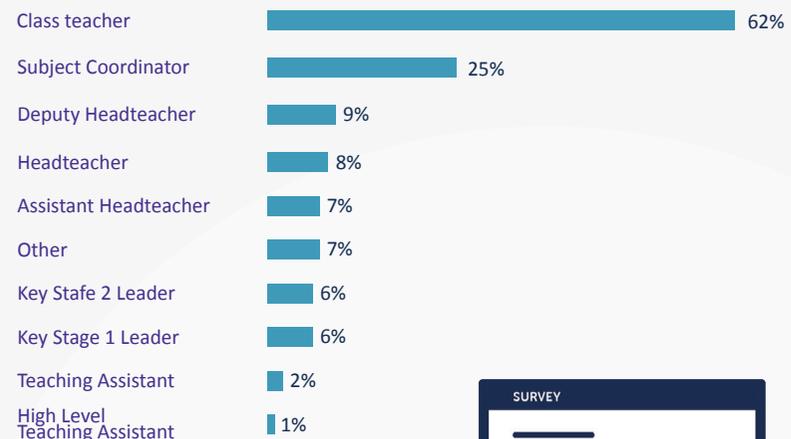
6.1. Survey sample

Almost all respondents were based in England (98 percent), with just 2 percent saying they worked outside of the UK. Of the 183 respondents taking part in the survey, 90 percent (164) stated that they had personally delivered lessons using now>press>play. The remaining 19 respondents, who had not personally used now>press>play, exited the survey to ensure that only those who had direct experience answered questions relating to rating and impact of the product. Those exiting the survey were principally headteachers and deputy or assistant heads.

Figure 9 to the right shows that over half of our sample consisted of class teachers, with around a half of those also acting as subject coordinators. These were mainly ICT/Computing coordinators, but English, History, and Science coordinators were also represented. There is a higher proportion of headteachers and deputy headteachers within our sample than we would perhaps expect, however all of these had personally delivered now>press>play lessons, otherwise they would have been screened out of the survey, as described above.

Given the level of seniority within our sample, it is perhaps not surprising that many respondents were experienced educators, with a third having worked in the teaching profession for 16 years or more; only 2 percent were new entrants.

Figure 9: Role within school
Base: All users of now>press>play (164)



6.2. Reporting notes

- Throughout this report, we present percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. This means that totals can appear to be one or two points out. In charts, the text for small percentages (less than 3 percent) may not be shown so that the chart can be read more easily.
- For consistency's sake, year groups from all four nations are referred to using the classification employed in English schools: Nursery, Reception, and Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

6.3. Acknowledgements

Our thanks go to all survey and interview participants for taking the time to participate in our research and in particular to the educators whose contributions formed the basis of the case studies included in this report:

- Nicola Preston, Year 6 teacher at Poverest Primary School, Kent;
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- Daniel Bowman, Year 1 teacher at Grangetown Primary School, Middlesbrough;
- Emma Courtney, Assistant Headteacher at Luton Primary School, Chatham, Kent;
- Sam Ashman, Year 3 teacher at Front Lawn Primary School, Havant;
- Robyn Chard-Maple, Year 4 teacher at Stoke Hill Junior School, Exeter.

