

Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES)


Data evaluation

October 2020




Government of South Australia
Department for Education

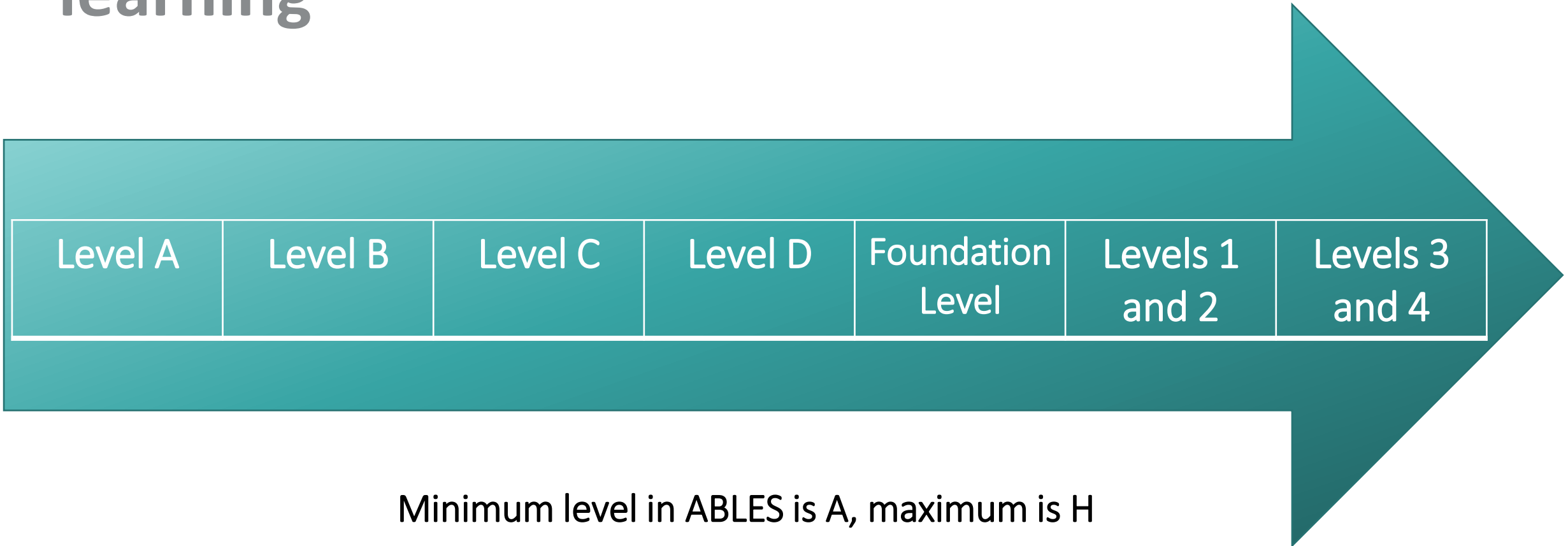
Background

- ABLES assessment is expected to close the current gap in the measurement of educational progress for individual students with disabilities
 - Currently mandatory for students with significant intellectual disabilities
 - Could potentially benefit a broader group of students who are not otherwise assessed
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Learning areas and capabilities

- Critical and Creative Thinking
 - Digital Literacy
 - Emotional Management
 - English, Reading and Writing
 - English, Speaking and Listening
 - Interpersonal Development
 - Mathematics
 - Movement and Physical Activity
 - Personal Learning (ASD and non-ASD)
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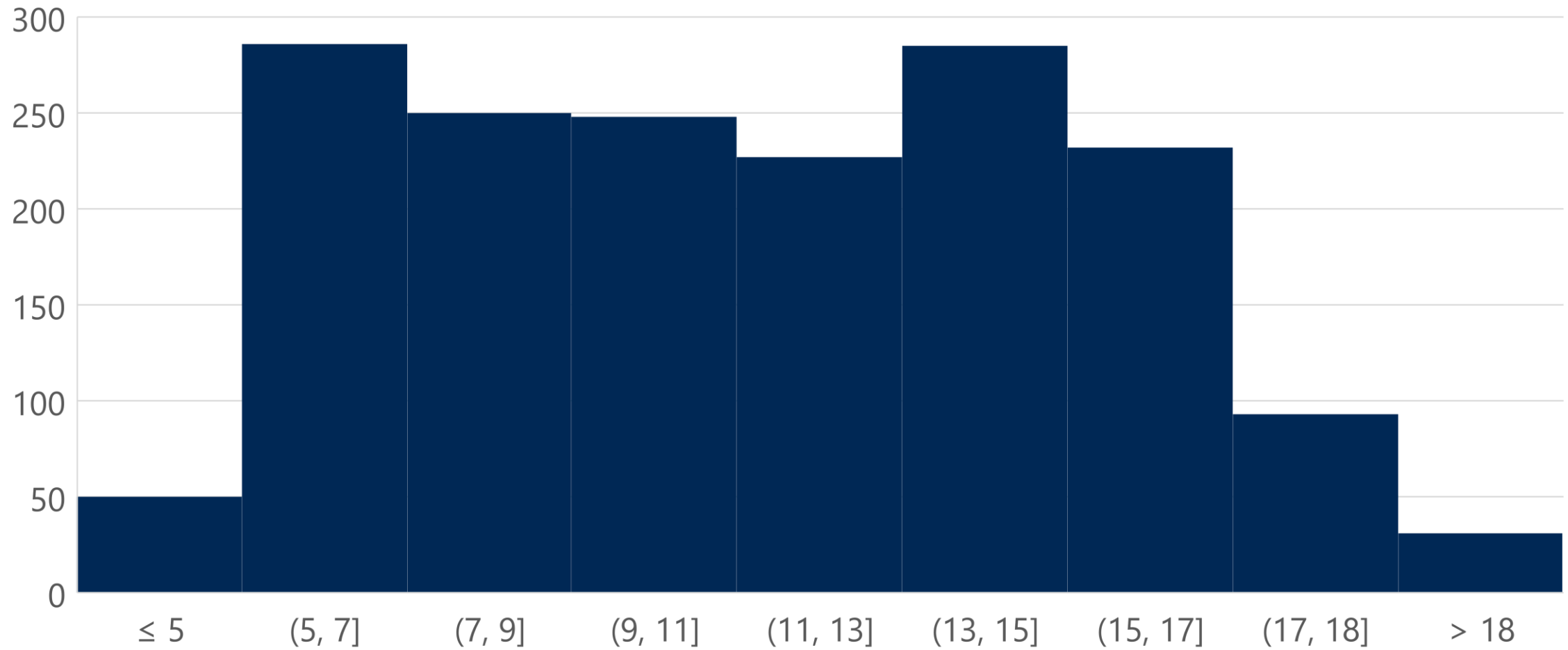
ABLES covers pre- and post- foundational learning



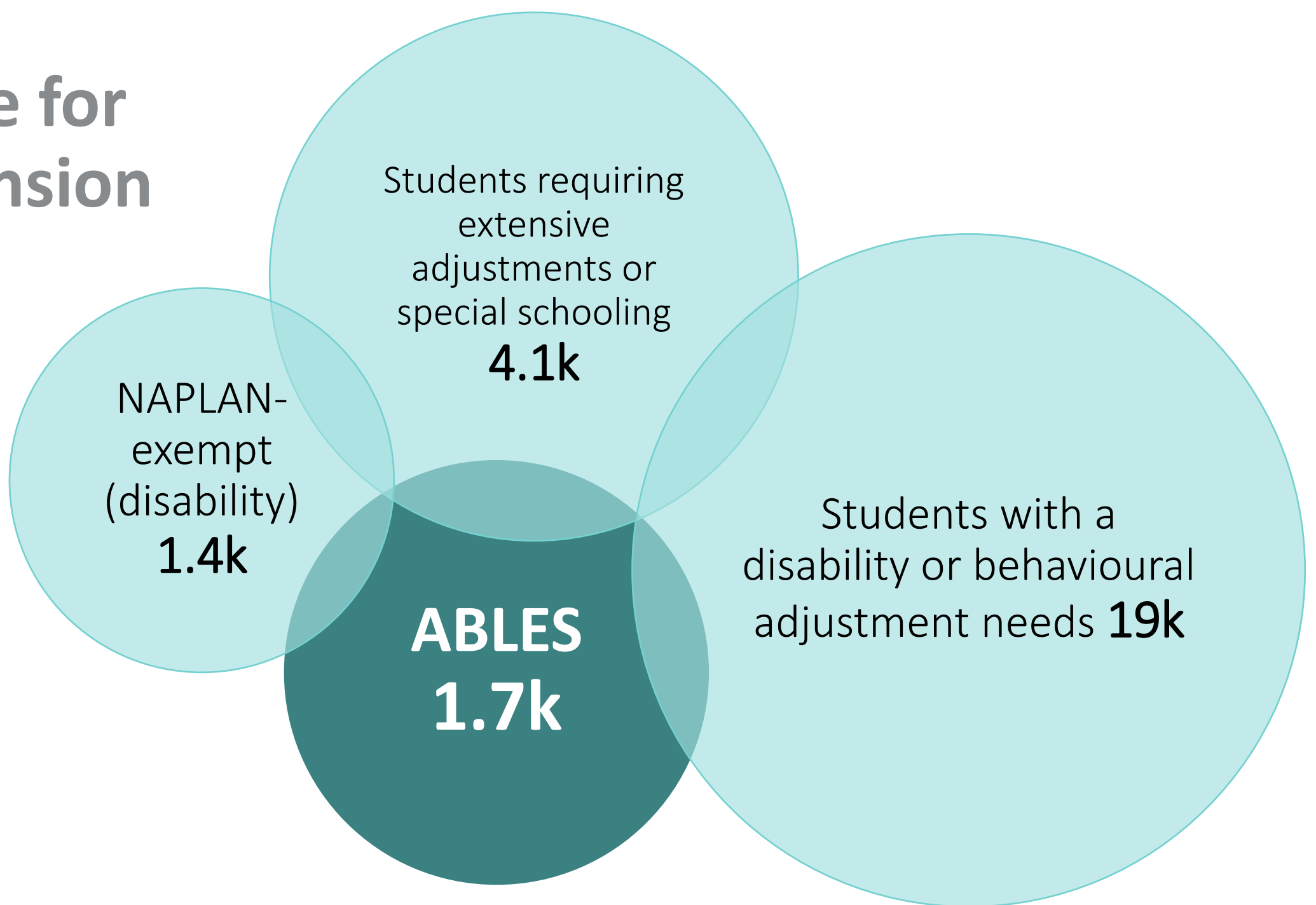
ABLES students (2019)

- Approx. 1,700 students
 - Median age 12, range from school entry to young adults
 - 73% male
 - 11% Aboriginal
 - 50% autism spectrum
 - 52% at schools with index of disadvantage ≤ 3
 - 95% in special school, unit or class; with 47% in a special school
 - Attending schools across metro and regional SA
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ABLES age at 2019 assessment
NB: Raw data used



Scope for expansion





Assessments used in SA education

ABLES

Phonics

NAPLAN

SACE

Running
Records

PAT

Additional student
indicators are available
e.g. wellbeing

NB: assessments reflect the curriculum level, not necessarily the student’s age

Students with disabilities and/or extensive levels of support

Is the student exempt from other assessments?

Yes

No

Is the student accessing foundation English and Maths?

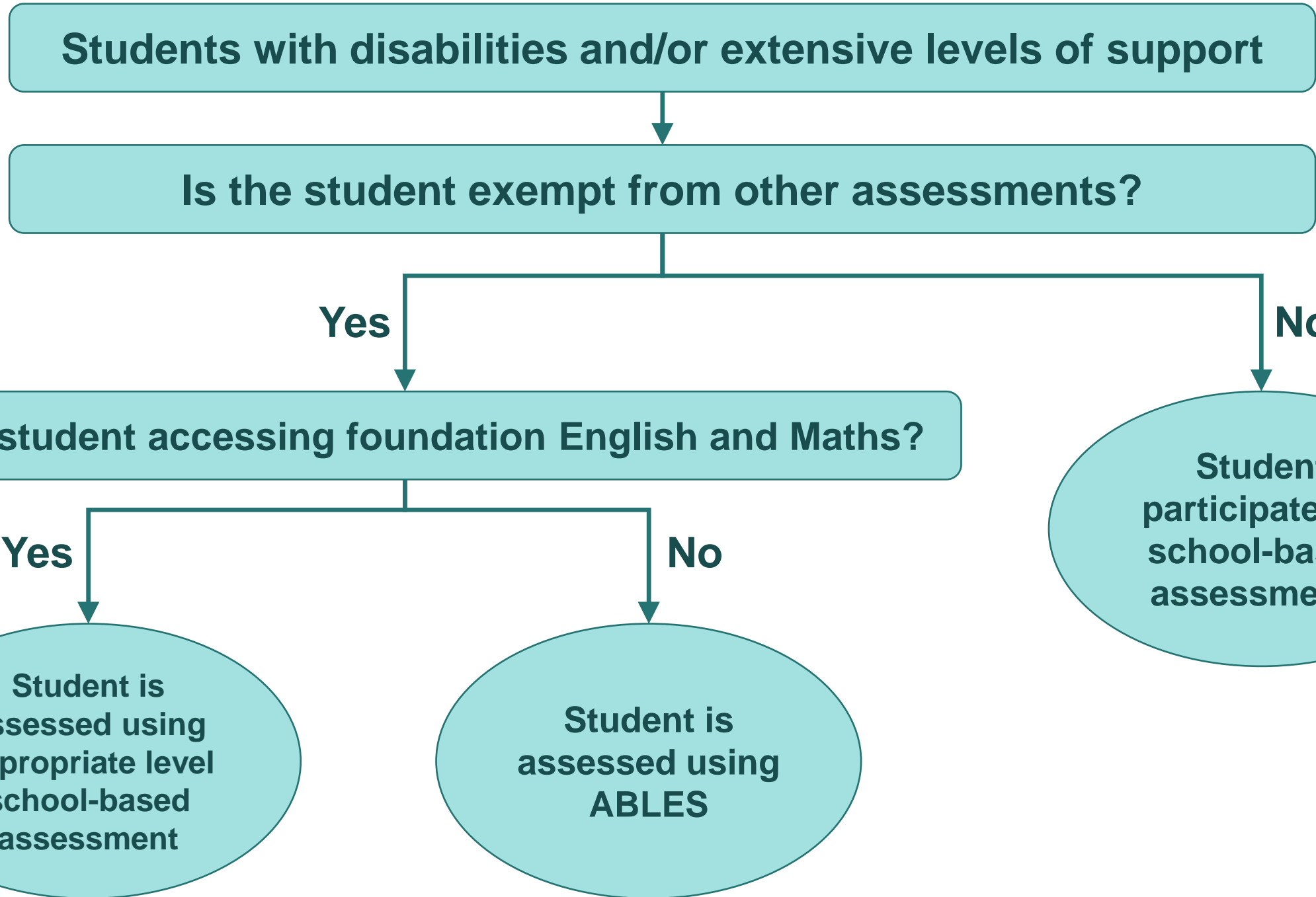
Yes

No


**Student is
assessed using
appropriate level
school-based
assessment**

**Student is
assessed using
ABLES**

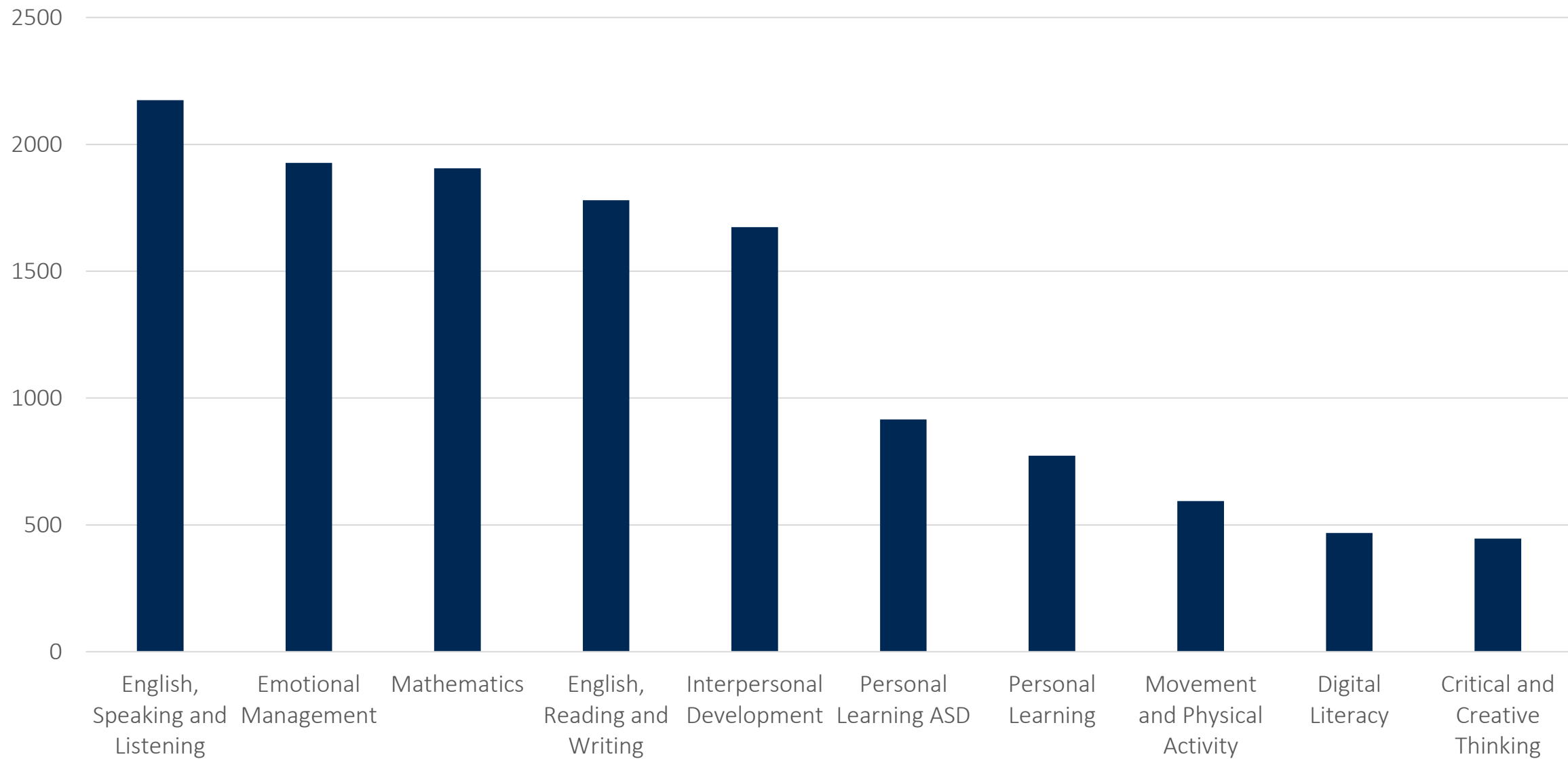
**Student
participates in
school-based
assessments**



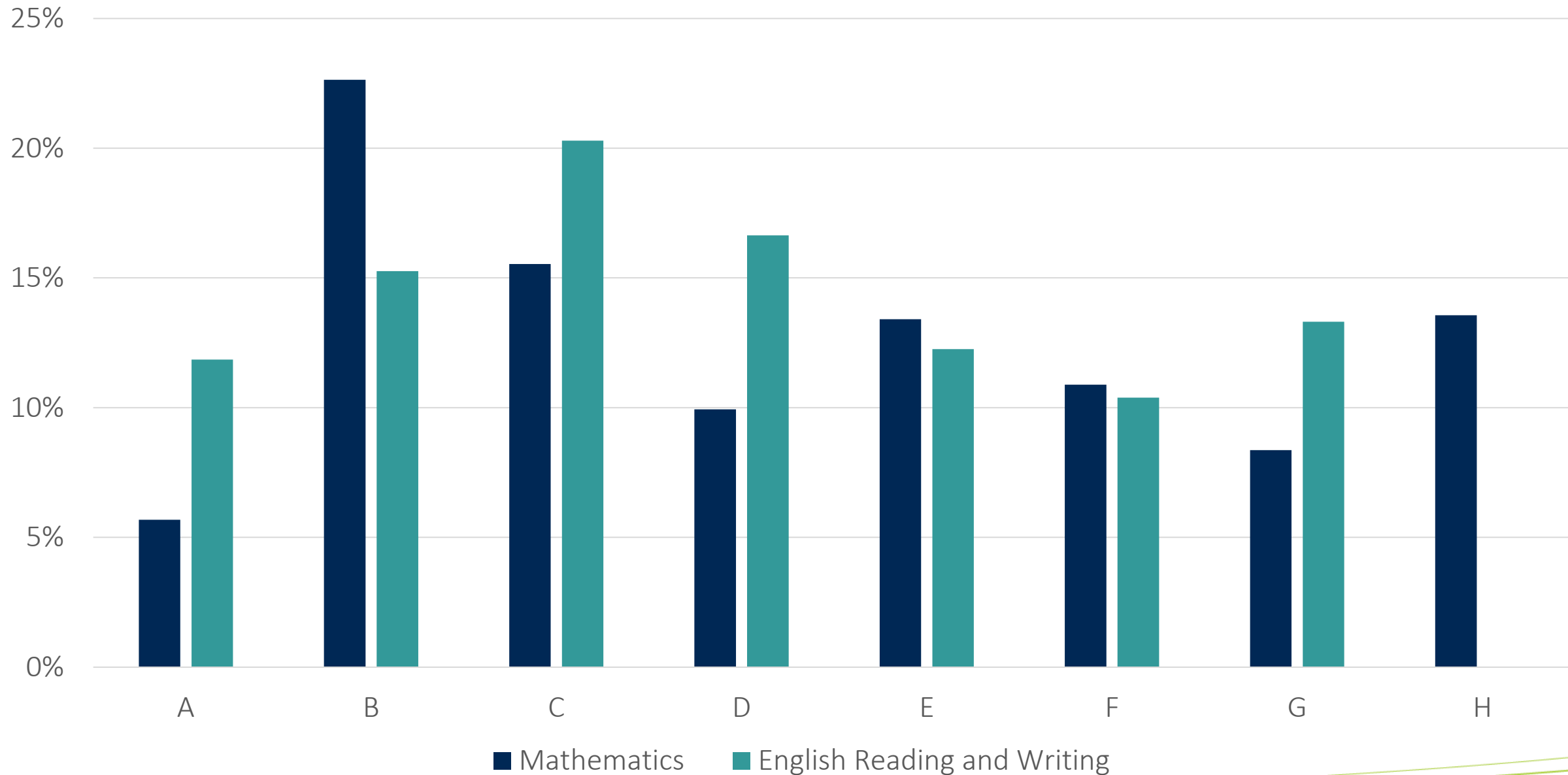
ABLES data overview

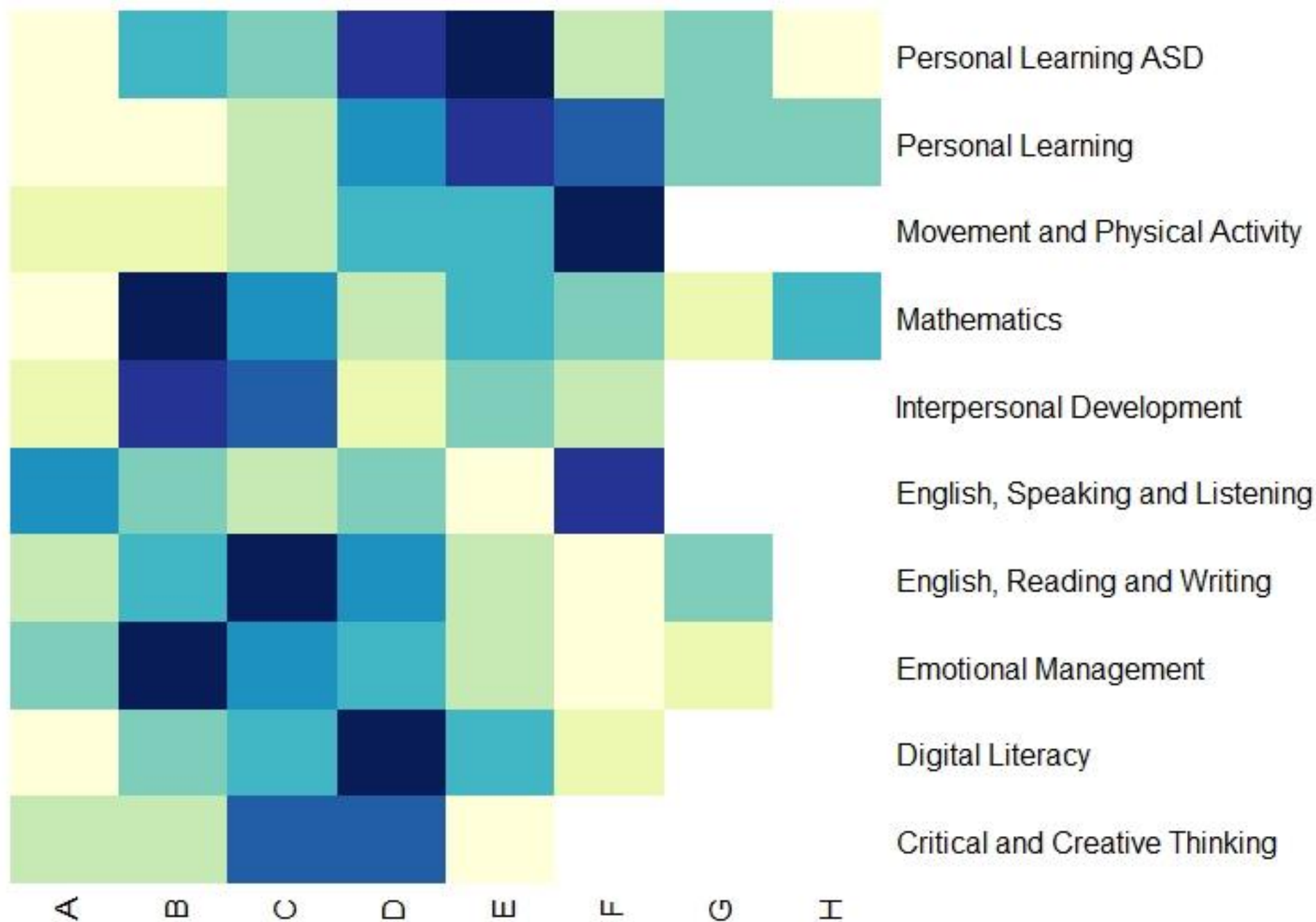
- 2019 extracts provided to DRA:
 - 89 sites
 - ~1,700 students
 - ~12,000 assessments
 - Data extracts supplied twice yearly at the end of semester
 - Good data coverage, quality and consistency
 - Can be connected to other DfE datasets at the student, class and school level
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Total ABLES assessments 2019

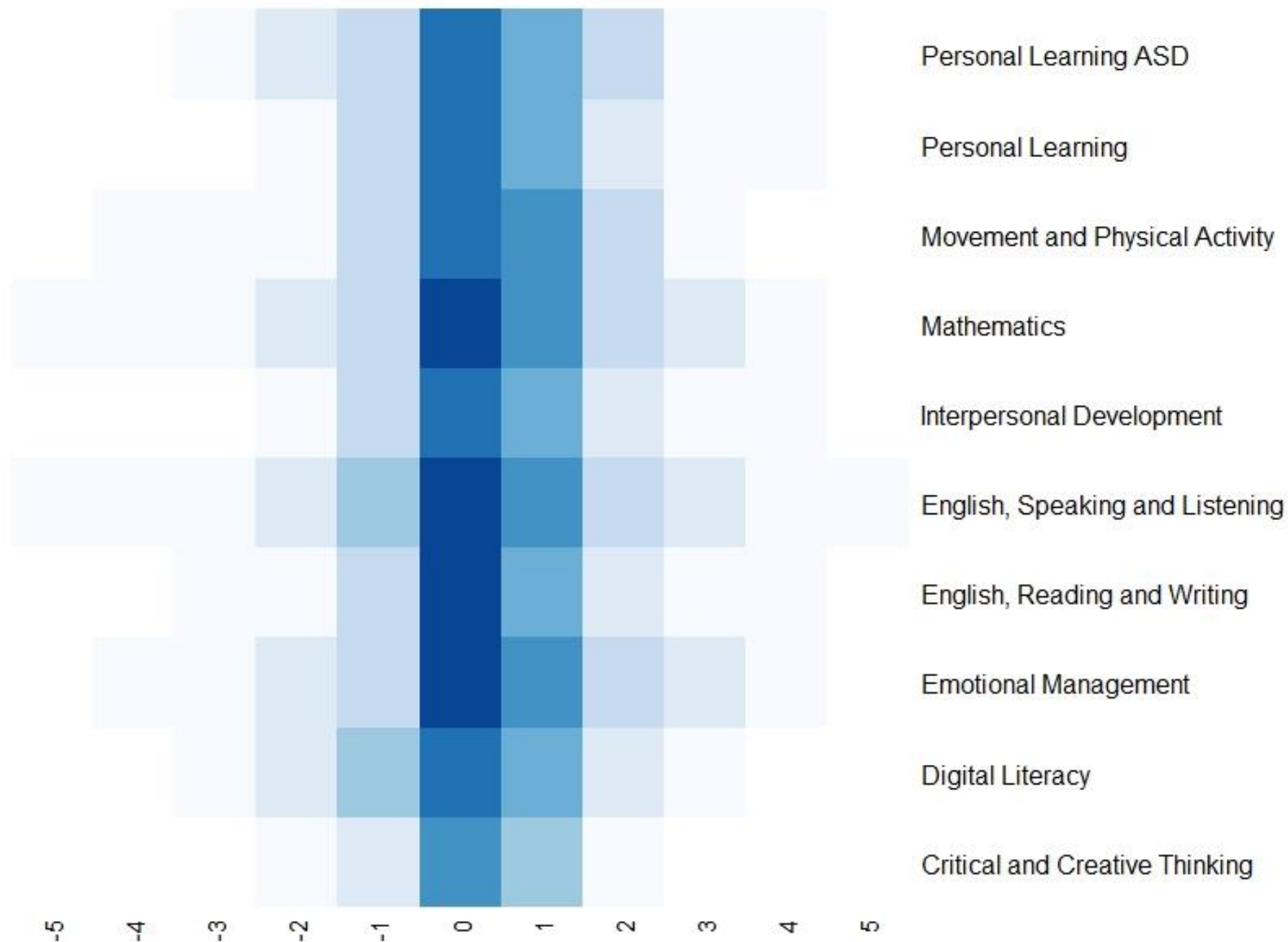


Percent of students by level, ABLES 2019 earliest assessment





Change in level from R1 2019 to R1 2020

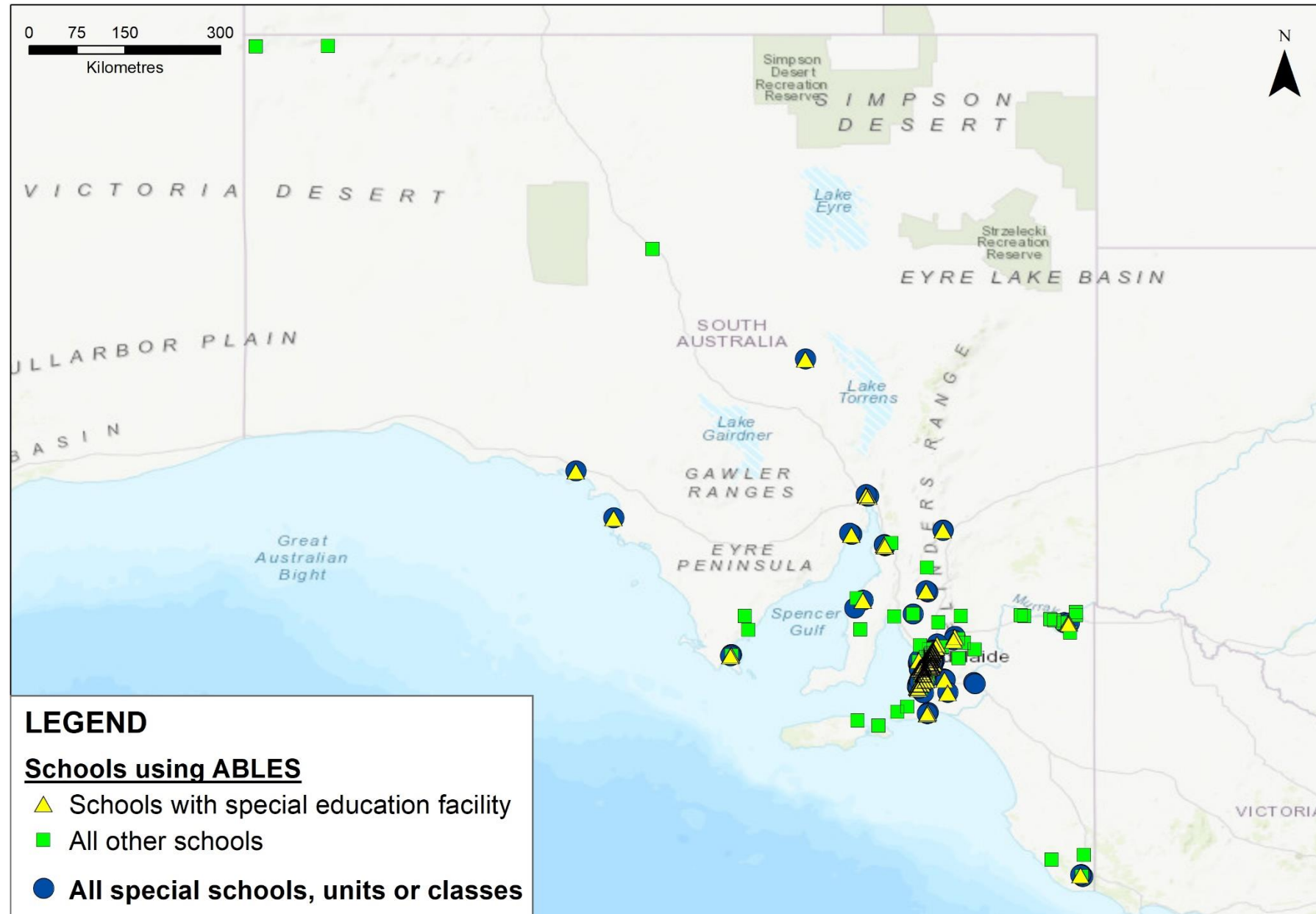


Student count by 2019 and 2020 Round 1 scores in Mathematics – most students maintained or progressed one level

Mathematics	2020 assessment								
2019 assessment		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	A	7	18	2	0	1	0	0	0
	B	3	47	12	6	5	0	0	0
	C	0	10	18	10	13	2	0	0
	D	0	2	6	9	22	6	2	1
	E	0	3	1	7	10	14	6	0
	F	0	0	0	0	6	12	10	4
	G	0	0	3	1	1	8	11	12
	H	0	0	1	1	0	5	2	20

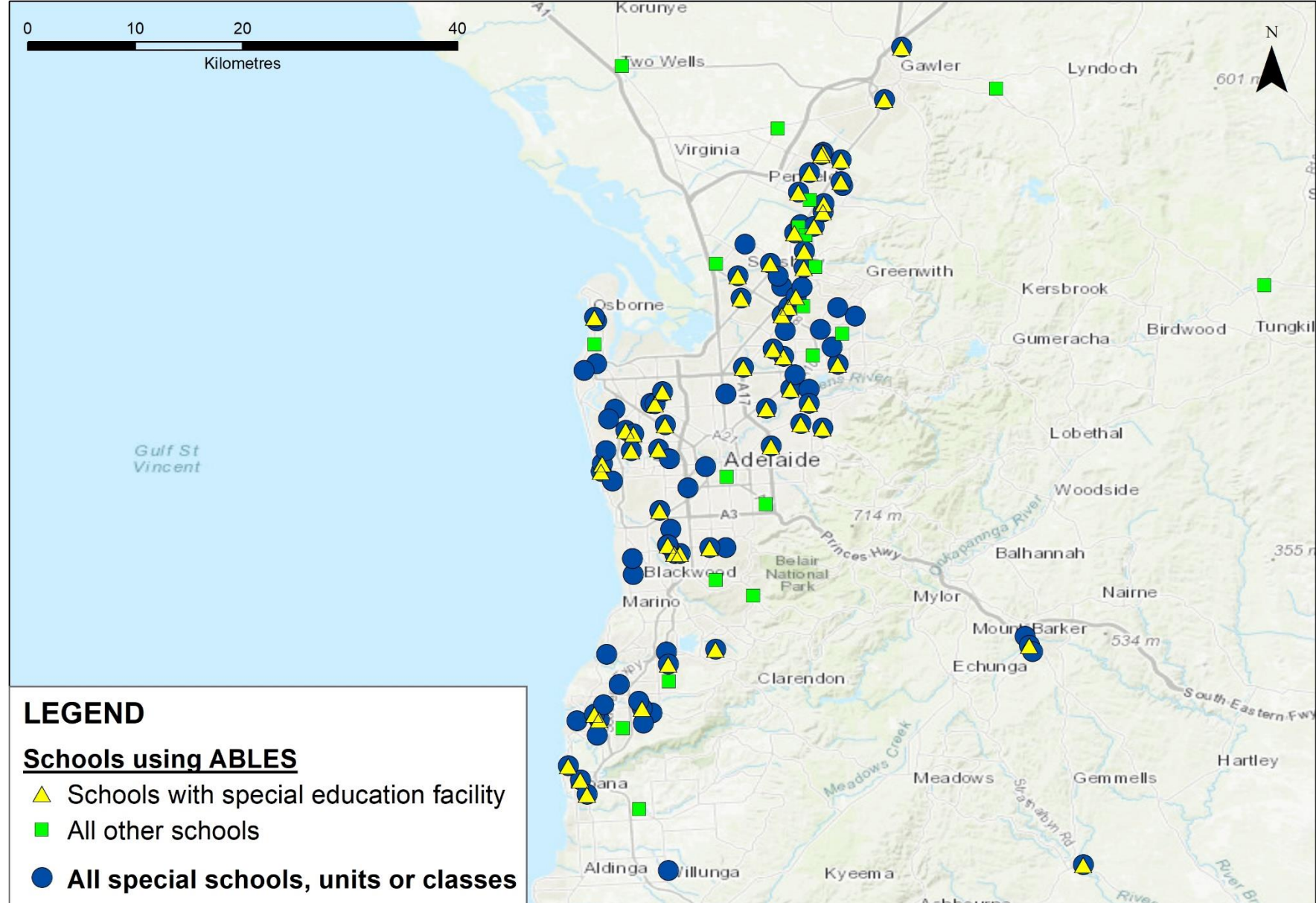
Student count by 2019 and 2020 Round 1 scores in Interpersonal Development – most students maintained or progressed one or two levels

Interpersonal Development	2020 assessment						
2019 assessment		A	B	C	D	E	F
	A	18	22	5	2	2	0
	B	7	64	37	10	4	0
	C	0	16	48	14	13	0
	D	0	2	7	8	13	3
	E	0	0	4	5	21	13
	F	0	0	0	0	6	11




ABLES rollout across metropolitan schools


18



Analysis

- Potential for longitudinal individual and cohort analysis
 - Intersectional effects can be examined: Aboriginal, SES, gender
 - NB: progress may not be linear for some students
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Measuring success might look like:

- Increasing ABLES coverage: are all schools with special education needs using ABLES?
 - All students are assessed: are all students with significant disability or behavioural support needs assessed using ABLES?
 - Do all students have an agreed goal? How many students achieved this goal each year?
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Appendix: Reference slides

ABLES implementation

- ABLES is not currently audited, however all teachers are trained in the use of ABLES through Special Education Resource Unit and are encouraged to moderate collectively
- ABLES is targeted at students with significant intellectual disability working towards foundation levels (mandated by SEG for English and Maths from 2020)
- Anecdotally ABLES is well-received by teachers, with some grassroots implementation for behavioural management for students without disability
- Strands are selected by teachers/sites on case by case basis
- Benefits of ABLES include ability to track pre-foundational capabilities in a consistent manner, practical strategies for the teacher and automated reporting at the student and class level

Example of ABLES Learning Readiness Report, including practical strategies for the teacher to use with the student based on demonstrated level

Teaching and Learning Strategies for student AWW0001

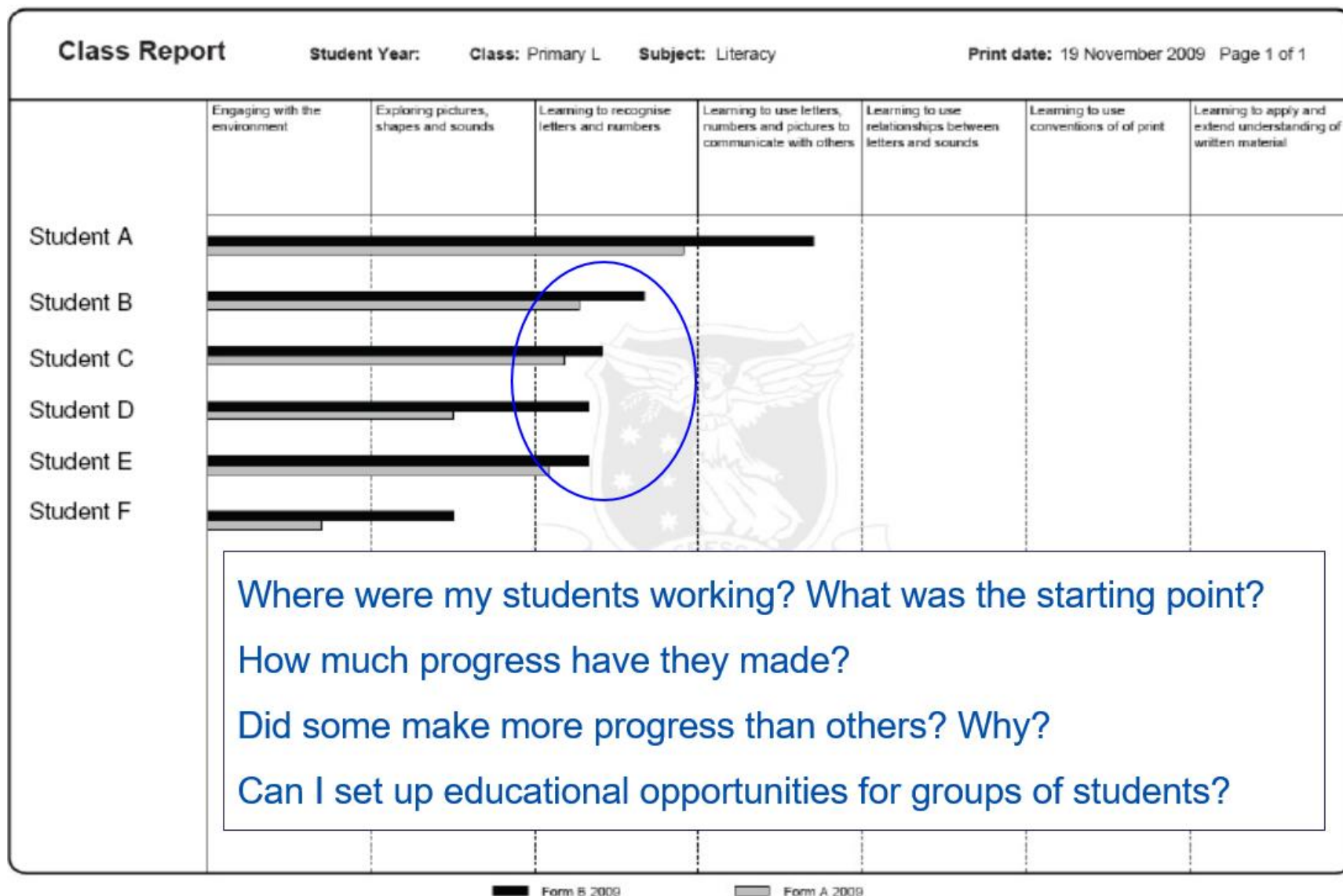
English, Reading and Writing

Towards Foundation Level AusVELS

Level A

- Maintain a communication diary/visual diary/chat book to share information with the student's family/carers. Encourage family members to record information about the student's likes, dislikes, and activities at home to build a strong link between the student's experiences at home and school.
- Start with direct, explicit teaching of new skills or behaviours. Clearly model the required skill or behaviour, and/or provide opportunities for your student to observe other students perform the skill or behaviour. Work co-actively with the student and provide repeated opportunities for practice and repetition.
- Immerse students in language. Provide a language-rich environment.
- Use specific, consistent language or other forms of communication. Establish a shared and common set of key words, signs, and/or symbols across all curriculum areas and specialist programs to reduce possible confusion and frustration for the student. Share this information with the student's family/carers to build a clear link between home and school.

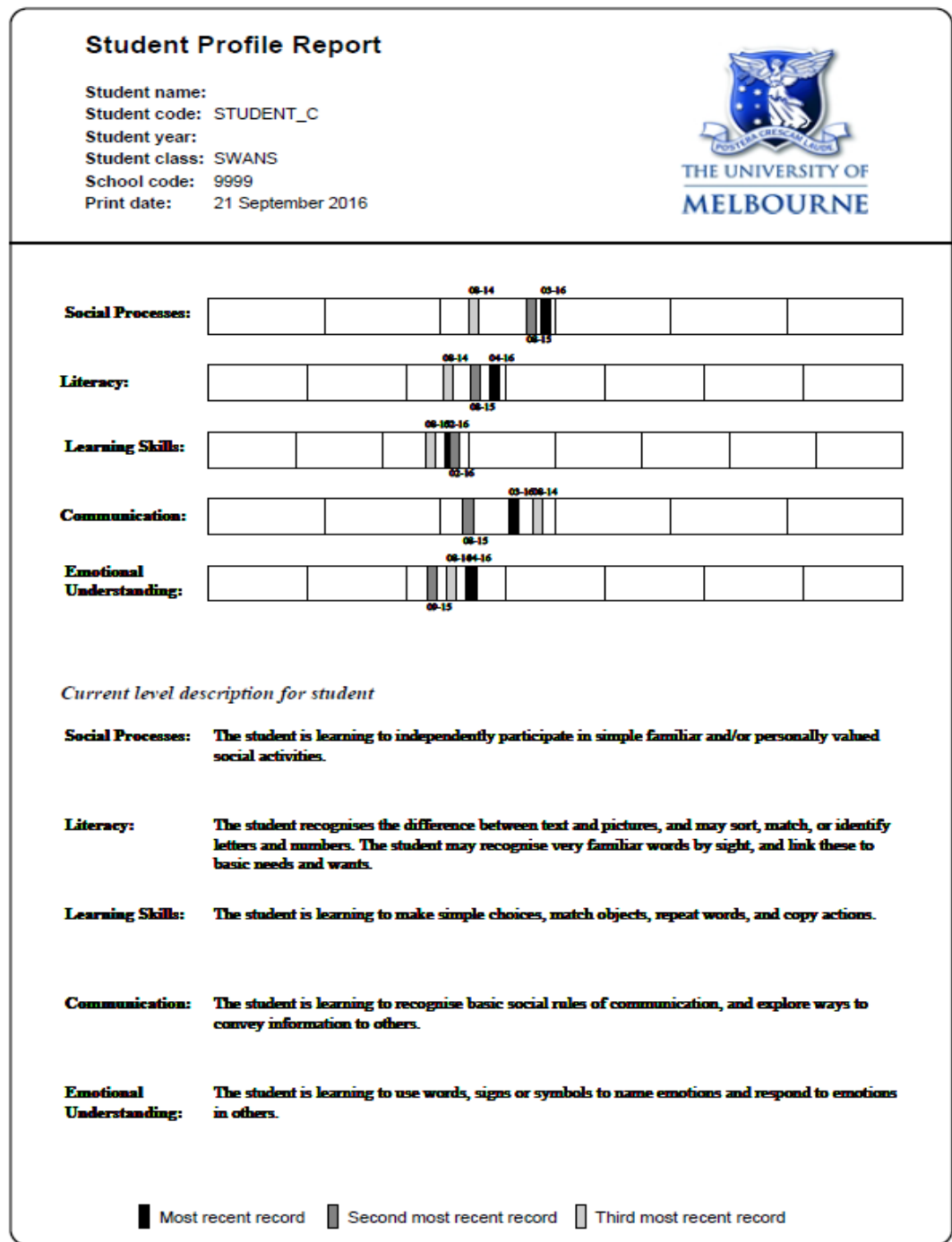
Reviewing student progress within a class



The profile report is a convenient summary of a student's overall learning across skill areas.

The report enables ready review of progress overtime across learning areas.

Can be used when devising and reviewing a student's individual learning plan.



Digital Literacy example

Level	Description
A	The student attends and/or reacts to digital technology being used by another person, and to the content on digital technology devices, such as images or sounds. S/he is starting to interact with features of digital technology with support.
.....	
F	The student is learning to control and manage his/her own use of digital technology, including device use, file management, and sharing and editing content. S/he is starting to explain the purpose and personal importance of strategies and reasons for using different features of digital technology.

Profile Report

Student name:

Student code: PEA0003

Student class: ABLES

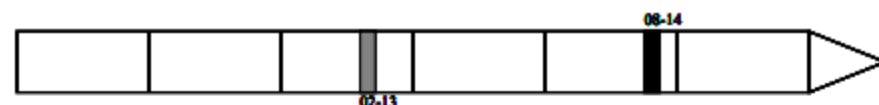
School code: 9999

Print date: 4 February 2015

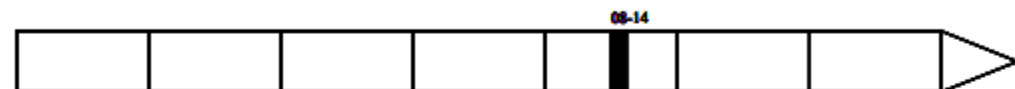


Department of
Education & Training

**English, Speaking
and Listening:**



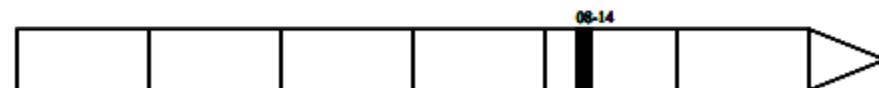
**English, Reading
and Writing:**



**Personal
Learning:**



**Interpersonal
Development:**



Current level description for student

**English, Speaking
and Listening:**

The student is learning to use communication skills appropriately in a variety of contexts and with different audiences (AusVELS Foundation Level).

**Reading and
Writing:**

The student matches print and spoken text in the environment, and recognises how sounds are represented alphabetically. In writing, the student uses conventional letters, groups of letters, and simple punctuation such as full stops and capital letters (AusVELS Foundation Level).

Personal Learning:

The student is learning to take initiative by asking questions when needed, and beginning to attempt small projects (AusVELS Foundation Level).

**Interpersonal
Development:**

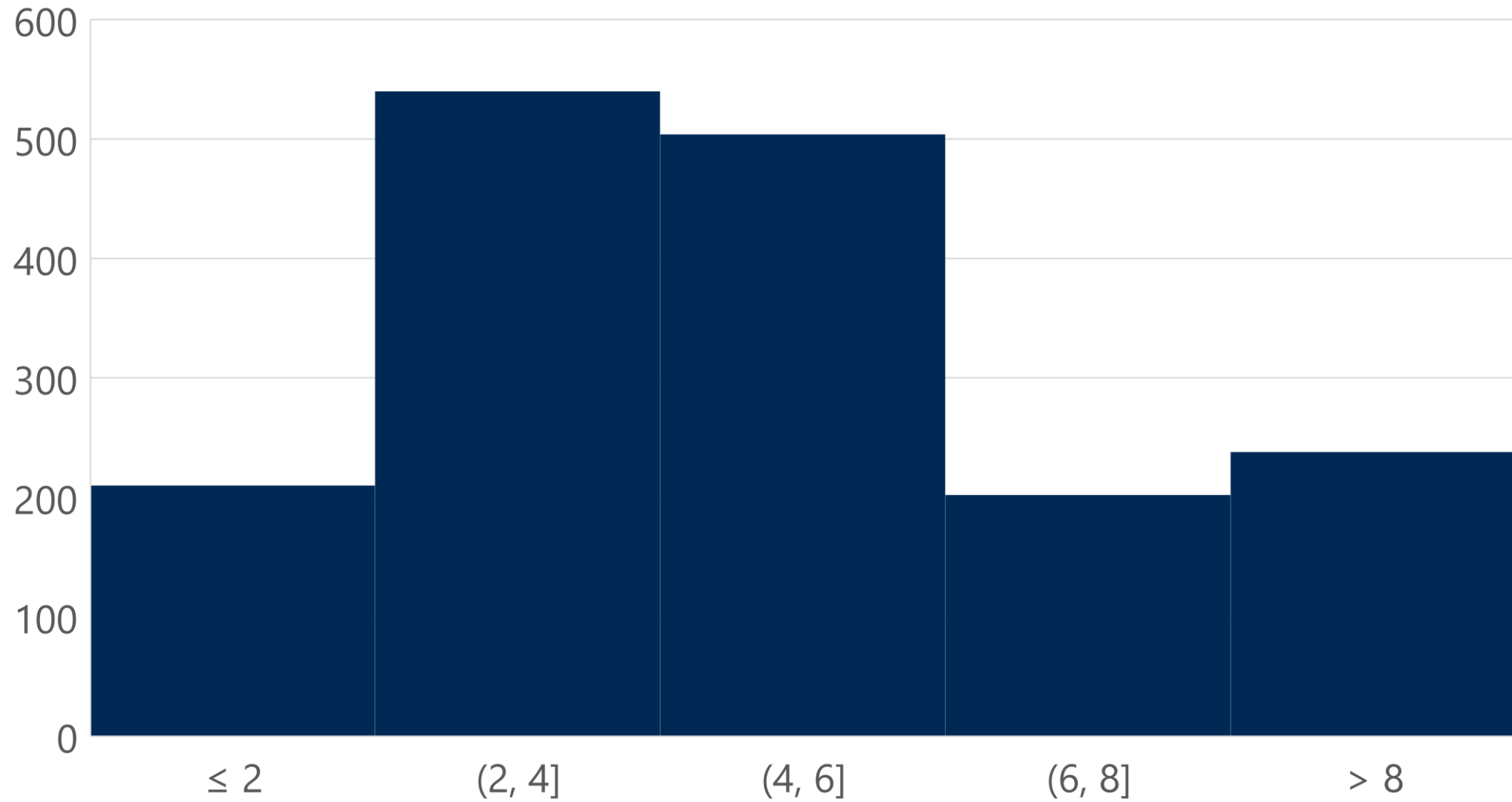
The student is learning to participate independently and cooperatively, and to negotiate most routine social situations without adult assistance (AusVELS Foundation Level).

Summary statistics of ABLES results for 2019, where A=1 to H=8

NB: Raw data used

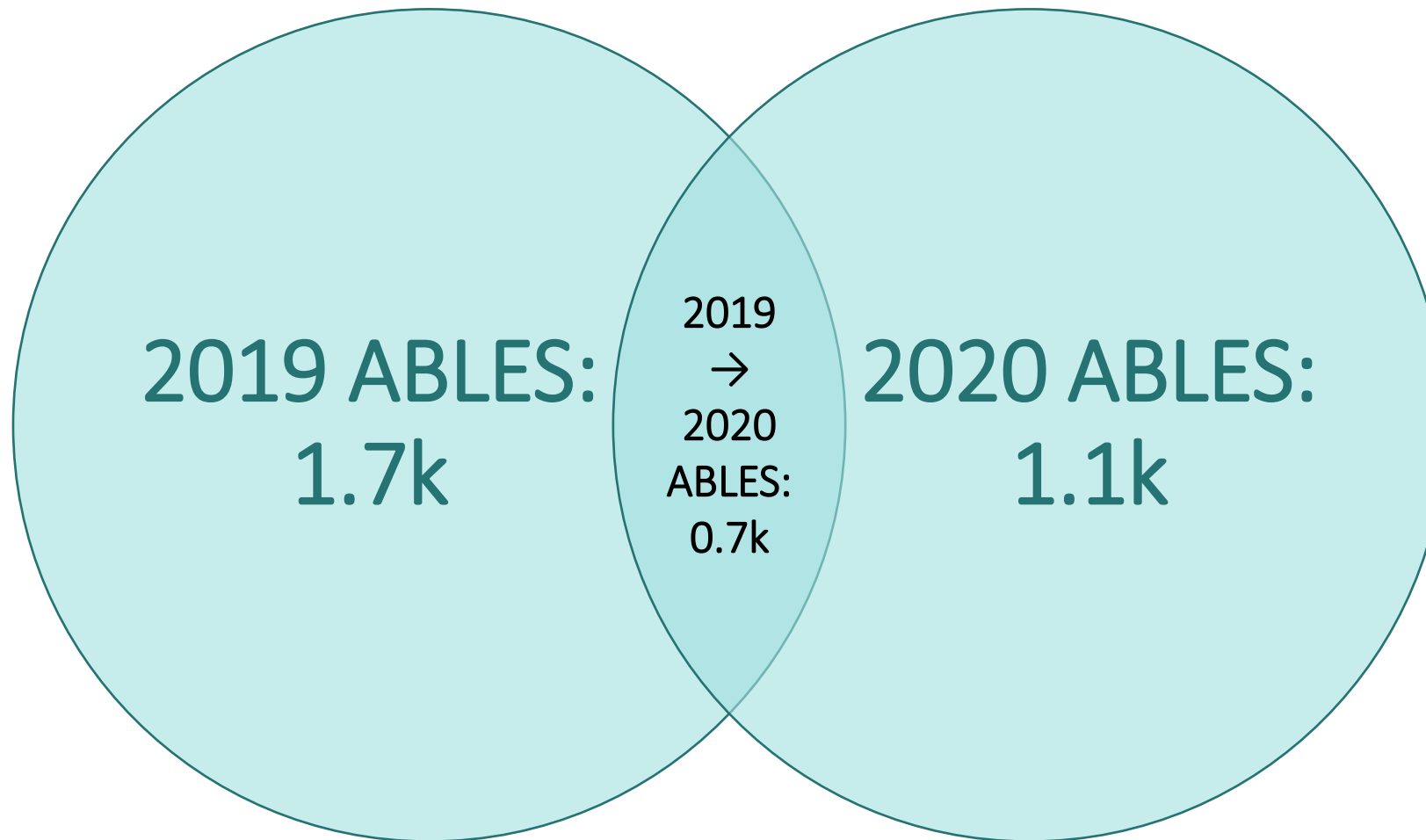
Strand	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	Mean	3rd Qu.	Max.	NA's
Critical and Creative Thinking	1	2	3	3.04	4	5	1366
Digital Literacy	1	3	4	3.74	5	6	1348
Emotional Management	1	2	3	3.33	4	7	415
English, Reading and Writing	1	2	4	3.87	5	7	462
English, Speaking and Listening	1	2	3	3.50	5	6	273
Interpersonal Development	1	2	3	3.25	5	6	609
Mathematics	1	2	4	4.37	6	8	426
Movement and Physical Activity	1	4	5	4.65	6	6	1265
Personal Learning ASD	1	3	4	4.43	6	8	1110
Personal Learning	1	4	5	4.99	6	8	1173

Number of strand reports per student



A total of 2.1k students have been assessed through ABLES in 2019 and 2020

30



Potential research questions

- **How can we use ABLES to measure student progress?**
- **What can we learn from the ABLES reporting framework?**

Long term

- What is the relationship between ABLES and student outcomes?
 - Is implementation of ABLES in schools associated with increased parent and caregiver satisfaction?
 - Can ABLES be used systematically for behaviour management, for students with or without disability?
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