



# ALSTON HIGH SCHOOL

## INSPECTION REPORT COVID-19 EDITION

Principal: Mrs Murdina Latty-Johnson (Acting)  
Board Chair: Mr Venris Lavert Freckleton



National Education Inspectorate  
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**FINAL**

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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 critical 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 online classroom lessons, interview members of the school's staff – both online and face-to-face, students individually and in small groups. Inspectors also look at samples of student work (where possible) and study various school documents provided before and during the inspection. Additionally, School Inspectors hold meetings with the Principal and senior members of the staff to get clarity on their roles and responsibilities at the school.

## Key Questions

The inspection indicators remain structured around a set of eight key questions (domains) that inspectors ask about the educational provision and performance of every school. These are:

1. How effectively is the school led and managed by the Board, the Principal and senior management team and middle leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. How effectively does the online teaching support the students' learning?
3. How well do students perform in national and/or regional tests and assessments?
4. How much progress do students make in relation to their starting points?
5. How good are the students' personal and social understanding and awareness of the implications of COVID-19?
6. How effectively does the school use the human and material resources at its disposal to help the staff and students achieve as well as they can?
7. How well do the curriculum and any enhancement programmes meet the current needs of the students?
8. How well does the school ensure everyone's security, safety, health and well-being during the pandemic?

***See Addendum to Inspection Framework attached.***

## Modified Framework

Evaluating the school's effectiveness is predicated on the extent to which the variables under the school's control are led and managed under the COVID-19 event. The emphasis is, therefore, now on the adaptability of school leaders in ensuring that the quality of the provisions for students' learning takes place in a safe, secure and healthy environment. Also, that the well-being of students and staff is a priority as they explore and deliver the modified curricular offerings.

Note that, while other key performance indicators (KPIs) and domains of effectiveness are important parts of the indexation of school effectiveness, they have been temporarily relieved of the weighting.

**All the evaluations and discussions in this report are predicated on the work of the school during the pandemic, and with the number of students, they were able to reach.**

## 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 secondary level are determined based on students' proficiency in the 2020 Primary Exit Profile (PEP 6) language arts and mathematics as well as their performance in Grade 7 English and mathematics internal examinations in 2021.

## Profile

### School's Demographics

<b>School Code:</b>	13107
<b>School Name:</b>	Alston High
<b>Parish:</b>	Clarendon
<b>Region:</b>	7. May Pen
<b>Locale:</b>	Urban
<b>Day Structure</b>	Whole Day
<b>Population Composition:</b>	Co-educational
<b>Size:</b>	Class II
<b>Capacity:</b>	800
<b>Enrolment:</b>	584
<b>Attendance Rate:</b>	75
<b>Active Teachers:</b>	36
<b>Pupil-Teacher Ratio:</b>	16:1
<b>Owned By:</b>	Government
<b>Modality (ies):</b>	face-to-face
<b>Average Online Attendance:</b>	N/A
<b>Average Class Attendance Observed:</b>	23

### Socio-economic Context

Alston High School is approximately five km from the rural town of Spalding, 25 km from Cave Valley, 16 km from Frankfield and 58 km from Mandeville. The school currently facilitates students from the districts of Long Bough, Grantham, Peckham, Silent Hill, Aenon Town, James Hill, Tweed Side, Sanguinetti, Moravia, Baillieston, Loggie Green, Spalding Hill, Santa Hill, Mount Moriah, Wild Cane, Morgan's Forrest and other adjoining districts. Approximately 90 per cent of the parents of students attending the school are subsistence farmers; the other ten per cent are professionals and skilled workers who reside and work in the community. The school has 145 students who are beneficiaries of the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH).

### Internet penetration and support for learning modalities

The internet facility at the school is not strong enough to support consistent use in lessons.

# Executive Summary

## Leadership and management

The leadership accommodates the school's stakeholders and incorporates effective supervisory practices to monitor instruction. The school has a robust practice of monitoring the plans of the organisation. In addition, the Board provides the necessary oversight and support to move the school forward. Likewise, the school has reasonable provisions to engage the parents and the wider community.

## Teaching in support of learning

Most teachers plan well for their lessons and effectively employ assessment procedures that conform to the assessment policy. Many teachers have sufficient expertise in their subject area and use activities that encourage students' participation in lessons. Also, some students are adept at applying their knowledge to real-life situations and working together in lessons.

## Students' performance in English and mathematics from 2019 to 2021

Performance in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) mathematics for the period under review is below expectations and reflects a declining trend. However, the performances were better in the vocational areas where expectations were met.

## Students' progress in English and mathematics

Many students make adequate progress during lessons. The students made some progress in English from their starting point in Grade 7 to their performance in the CSEC English examinations. However, students' progress faltered in mathematics where their average scores on exit were lower than at their entry point.

## Students' personal and social understandings and awareness

Many students display socially appropriate behaviours on the compound and in lessons. However, their attendance pattern is below expectations. Nevertheless, most students display sufficient awareness of their civic identity, economic understanding and environmental awareness.

## The availability and use of human and material resources

The school has adequate academic staff to deliver the curriculum and support staff to serve the domestic needs of the school. However, despite the aesthetically pleasing grounds, there is inadequate classroom space to house all the students properly. Also, there is limited use of the available ICT resources by teachers to enhance lessons.

## Provisions for the curriculum and enhancement programmes

The school administers a range of subjects to students at all grade levels. Additionally, a curriculum implementation team (CIT) is in place to adapt the curriculum to meet students' learning needs. Also, pathway coaches administer intervention programmes to help students

achieve based on their potential. Likewise, the school offers a range of extra-curricular activities to enhance the students' learning experience.

### **Provisions for student safety, security, health and well-being**

The school has sufficient provisions to ensure the safety and security of students; the policy bolsters these. Also, there are sufficient provisions to ensure the health and well-being of students.

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

- Many students participate well in class activities by answering questions and attempting the work given.
- Many teachers are supportive of students in lessons and deliver their content enthusiastically.
- Most students encountered are helpful and respectful.

# 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 during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

### **School-based leadership and management**

The school has an accommodating leadership that understands the staff and students and creates an atmosphere of support for all stakeholders. In addition, the leadership maintains a visible presence to ensure that students conform to expectations. Moreover, the school provides targeted interventions to boost students' performance. Two pathway coaches spearhead the intervention process by assessing students' reading levels and administering planned interventions accordingly. However, the interventions have had limited success, and only a few students perform and meet assessment expectations. Nevertheless, the teachers show a deep commitment to the school and students. Many regularly submit their lesson plans and make provisions to cover their classes during absences. Moreover, leadership is strategic in the management of the school. The senior leaders have reduced teaching loads to facilitate supervision, and many lesson plans show evidence of vetting. Also, the school appraised most teachers in the last academic year, with almost all meeting expectations. There is also notable documentation of lesson plan submission. The school's audit report for 2017 highlights sound financial management and documentations regarding the financial accounts are current. However, there are limited records of lesson observations.

### **Self-evaluation and school improvement planning**

The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning practice meets some of the required expectations. The various departments conduct monthly meetings to track the progress of plans and make adjustments for the success of initiatives. However, while the school shares the targets with all stakeholders, only a few play an integral role in determining the goals. Nonetheless, the school has a comprehensive school self-evaluation (SSE) document that highlights myriads of improvement concerns; these include students' indiscipline, teacher reflections as per the NEI recommendations and infrastructure improvements. Likewise, the well-developed school improvement plan (SIP) has well-defined strategies, such as weekly devotions to control students' indiscipline and termly appraisals of teachers, to improve the concerns of the school. However, despite the successful implementation of some plans, such as the jolly phonics kit, planned lesson observations and the construction of the perimeter fence, there is no evaluation matrix to track the goals over time.

### **Governance**

The school has a functioning Board that conforms to most standard requirements and whose members have the required competencies to guide institutional development. The Board members include retired educators, guidance counsellors and retired police officers, who devoted time to lead psychosocial sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is no student representative on the Board. Nonetheless, the Board convenes termly meetings, during which the leadership reports on students' performance and planned maintenance status. Also, the Bursar reports on the financial position of the school. On record is that the bank reconciliation for the



canteen account was up to date. Further, the Board chairman is accessible for signing documents and remains in constant dialogue regarding strategic plans. Also, the chairman is satisfied with the school's achievements, given the current challenges.

### **Relationship with parents and the local community**

The school maintains reliable means of communication with the community and other stakeholders. The dominant channels are letters and social media platforms such as WhatsApp groups. Also, the school hosts annual PTA meetings; one has been had for the current school year to share information on the intervention programmes to be implemented and school rules, among other matters. However, only a few parents attend meetings, and some give limited support to having their children assessed for academic interventions. Also, only some visit the school regarding students' discipline and to collect academic reports. Nonetheless, the PTA executive is active and lends support to devotions. Moreover, the school receives some support from the immediate and wider community. The school received 60 tablets from the MoEYI, while private citizens donated four desktop computers and supplies. Also, CHASE Fund donated musical instruments, Food for the Poor donates food items, and the former parliament member helped the school procure a greenhouse.

## **2) Teaching in Support of Learning**

### **How effectively does the teaching support the student's learning?**

#### **Teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach and how best to teach them**

All teachers demonstrate secure knowledge of their content, are committed to imparting correct concepts and give a clear explanation of lesson concepts. For example, in a Grade 8 social studies lesson on the Caribbean landscape, the teacher explained that the mountains, hills, valleys, plateaus and plains are the physical features of the land. Many teachers demonstrate how best to teach their subjects as they provide adequate opportunities for students to participate actively in lesson activities and assignments. The repetition of concepts observed in a Grade 10 English language lesson on verb agreement is a prime example. The teacher used a game to recapitulate a previous lesson, explained how to complete the seatwork, and provided guidance as they worked. Further, many teachers write evaluations of their lessons; however, these are mainly descriptive. Only some guide improvements for subsequent lessons.

#### **Teaching methods**

Many teachers develop reasonable strategies to engage students during lessons. They have structured lesson plans with activities such as singing and discussions to solicit answers from students based on lesson content. However, only in a few lessons do teachers engage in differentiation to cater to students' varied abilities. Therefore, the dominant strategy teachers use in lessons is teacher-centred large group activity with a main focus on questioning, drill, and practice. To a lesser extent, teachers use games, songs, and collaboration among students to develop lesson concepts. Nevertheless, interaction is strong in many lessons where teachers create a nurturing classroom environment that affirms students for correct responses. For example, in Grade 10 and Grade 11 mathematics lessons on consumer arithmetic and angles, the students, through peer review, used the whiteboard to demonstrate how they arrived at the answers to given problems. Moreover, most teachers use the whiteboard in lessons, while others

use charts, printed worksheets and sentence strips. However, although a few teachers use ICT resources such as laptops or phones, they are often ineffective as the screens are too small to be impactful.

### **Students' assessment**

During lessons, most assessments take the form of questioning and seatwork. During a few lessons, especially for mathematics, teachers allow students to demonstrate their competence on the board. Additionally, teachers provide useful feedback to students, mainly through marking books and verbal affirmation, during lessons to encourage their continued performance. Moreover, the school's assessment practice is guided by a policy that stipulates monthly testing, two of which should be graded in addition to end-of-term and end-of-year examinations. The marks book of most teachers reflects the stipulations of the policy. Moreover, the Heads of Department (HoDs) analyse the results of internal assessments with the assistance of the pathway coaches and reading specialists and use them to develop intervention programmes for the school year.

### **Student learning**

Most students display positive attitudes in lessons and towards learning across grades. Many are eager to answer questions and complete lesson activities. However, students' engagement in research is absent during lessons, and there is a limited display of critical thinking. Nonetheless, there were some instances of collaboration where students worked together to solve problems, as seen in the Grade 10 mathematics lesson where students assisted each other while using the whiteboard to solve a problem. The same is true when some students can apply the new knowledge to everyday situations, such as in the Grade 8 social studies lesson, where most students could identify and distinguish between different physical features of the land, such as mountains and hills.

## **3) Students' Academic Performance 2019 to 2021**

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

#### **Students' performance in English**

The CSEC results showed that performance in English language decreased from 94 per cent in 2019 to 61 per cent in 2021. It was above the national pass rate in 2019. The participation rate increased over the period. The school's performance in City and Guilds English decreased over the period by 11 percentage points. It moved from 70 per cent in 2019 to 59 per cent in 2021. The participation rate also decreased from 2019 to 2021.

#### **Students' performance in mathematics**

The CSEC results showed that performance in mathematics declined from 61 per cent to five per cent over the 2019 to 2021 period. The school's pass rate remained below the national pass rate from 2020 to 2021. The participation rate increased over the period. The school's City and Guilds mathematics pass rate remained at 35 per cent in 2019 and 2021. The mathematics participation

rate, however, decreased by 47 percentage points, moving from 74 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort in 2019 to 27 per cent in 2021.

### **Students' performance in Technical/Vocational subjects**

Students participated in 13 Technical/Vocational subjects throughout the period. The highest level of participation was recorded in information technology and electronic document preparation and management. The pass rates were generally high for most of the subjects. The pass rates were 80 per cent and above in all years in agricultural science single award, industrial technology (building), physical education, and sport.

### **Students' matriculation rate**

The school's matriculation rate, based on CSEC results, decreased by five percentage points for the 2017 to 2021 period. It fell from six per cent to one per cent, the lowest for the period. The school's matriculation rate remained below the national matriculation rate throughout the period.

## **4) Students' Academic Progress**

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

#### **Students' progress in English**

Many students make progress during English language lessons at most grade levels. For example, at a Grade 8 lesson on homonyms, many students could distinguish between flour and flowers, bear and beer and use the words to complete sentences from a chart. At a Grade 9 reading lesson, many students could apply the suffix rule (y to i) to create new words, given the root word. While at a Grade 10 lesson on verb agreement, almost all students could correctly choose the verb that best completes the sentences, for example, "Bread and butter is my favourite breakfast." Concerning the progress of different groups of students, the records indicate that girls perform better than boys. For example, comparing students' performance in a monthly test in a Grade 10 class in September, five out of 21 boys and one of six girls reached 60% and over grades in the English language. In October, three of 21 boys and three of six girls realised 60% and over. While there was a decline in the boys' performance, there was an improvement for the girls.

The students who entered Grade 7 through the GSAT in 2016 attained an average of 41 per cent in the language arts component of the GSAT. In 2021, the pass rate for CSEC English language was 61 per cent, while the combined pass rate in City and Guilds English was 59 per cent. The schools' overall performance in CSEC English language increased from 61 per cent in 2019 to 94 per cent in 2021. There was, however, a decrease in the pass rate for City and Guilds English.

#### **Students' progress in mathematics**

Most students make satisfactory progress in mathematics across all grade levels. They answer questions and complete seat tasks accurately. For example, in a Grade 7 lesson, most students correctly used the manipulatives to count and calculate a third of 33, 66 and 99. In a Grade 8 lesson on solving linear equations, almost all students on Pathway 3 could correctly solve eight linear equations, such as  $12x + 2 = 46$ ;  $10y + 20 = 220$ . In Grade 9, some students could multiply

fractions, including mixed numbers, for example,  $1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{3}$ . At a Grade 10 lesson on consumer arithmetic, most students could convert the percentage to decimals to find the percentage of a number, for example, 6 per cent of \$550,000.00 =  $0.06 \times 550,000$ . In a Grade 11 lesson on co-interior angles, most students could differentiate between equivalent and co-interior angles. Most students could use co-interior angles to find missing angles. For example, angle  $a = 5x+1$ , angle  $b = 4x-1$ ; what are the values of angle  $a$  and angle  $b$ ?  $180 = 5x+1 + 4x-1 = 180 = 5x+4x+1-1 = 180 = 9x$ .  $x = 20$ . Angle  $a = 101$  Angle  $b = 79$ .

The students who were placed through the GSAT in 2016 entered with an average of 37 per cent in the mathematics component of the GSAT. In 2021, the pass rate for CSEC mathematics was five per cent, while the combined pass rate in City and Guild's mathematics was 35 per cent. The schools' overall performance in CSEC mathematics decreased from 61 per cent to five per cent throughout the 2019 to 2021 period. The performance in City and Guild's mathematics remained at 35 per cent.

## 5) Students' Personal and Social Understanding and Awareness

### How good are the student's personal and social understanding and awareness of the implications of COVID-19?

#### The student's behaviours and attitudes

Many students behave well in lessons and on the compound and are sufficiently compliant with the school rules. They interact well with their peers, support each other and show high regard for teachers and support staff. They receive instructions and reprimands appropriately. Most students also are eager to learn and have the requisite material to participate in the lessons. However, pockets of indiscipline exist in the school, such as fights, aggression and disrespect.

#### Punctuality and attendance

Attendance and punctuality are issues of concern. The attendance rate during the last school year was 75 per cent, and 71 per cent for the academic year 2022-2023, which is below the national standard of 85 per cent. Most students attend classes punctually, and the transition between classes is mostly orderly, with some prompting from teachers on duty.

#### The civic understanding and spiritual awareness of the students

Most students understand their national identity and civic responsibility. They clearly articulate what it means to be Jamaican and see themselves as good citizens. Civic awareness is enhanced by cultural celebrations such as National Heroes' Day, and most assume the correct posture while rendering the National Anthem. They appreciate that the National Heroes contributed to the country's development and fought for freedom. Some students express that carnival is a regional tradition. Also, many students understand the importance of religion as it influences their behaviour to be honest. The students serve in positions of responsibility in the prefect body as class monitors and on the students' council, where they assist with maintaining discipline in the school.

## **Students' economic awareness and understanding**

Most students have sufficient awareness of Jamaica's economic status. They can describe some economic activities in Jamaica that help people meet their needs. They identify sources of income for Jamaicans, such as farming and trading, and state that tourism is the largest foreign exchange earner. Many speak to the need to save money from existing income to fund tertiary education. Further, some students argue that there is a link between the Russian/Ukraine war and COVID-19, the scarcity of goods in the USA and other countries, the hike in oil prices contributing to high prices of goods and supply chain issues. Some Upper-Grade students believe that Jamaica's economy is not progressing as the high crime rate limits investment opportunities, and the lack of competition contributes to minimal job creation and sluggish growth. Further, most students explain that taxes and foreign exchange fund the activities of the government to fix roads and provide social services. Most students understand the potentially worthwhile contribution they can make to Jamaica's development. For example, many upper-grade students aspire to matriculate to a tertiary institution and, ultimately, their chosen careers and social volunteerism.

## **Students' awareness and understanding of environmental and health issues**

Many students have some knowledge of local and global environmental issues and how they affect individuals. They identify the irresponsible disposal of garbage, deforestation, and pollution in Jamaica, Haiti, and the UK. For example, some students posited that improper disposal of garbage in the sea causes water pollution, killing fish and becoming a breeding ground for mosquitos. A few students argue that climate change contributes to irregular weather patterns. Even though global environmental matters are not well known, many students assist in keeping the school compound clean by using the garbage receptacles provided. Some students are involved in the care of the school through clubs that adopt environmental projects such as recycling. However, some students fail to uphold the hygiene of their bathrooms and classroom floors. Additionally, most students recognise the importance of preserving the broader environment as they highlight their concern with the pile-up of garbage and overgrown shrubs and trees in some places, which have the potential to cause flooding. They believe that communities must practice good habits, such as clean-up drives for gullies and roadways and public education on the containerisation of garbage.

## **6) Use of Human and Material Resources**

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

### **The quality of human resources**

The school has sufficient human resources to administer the curriculum. Most academic staff possess bachelor's degrees in their area of specialisation; some have a diploma and a few specialist qualifications, especially in the skill areas. Further, the Principal and four other staff members hold master's degrees. Likewise, one of the two pathway coaches possesses professional certification in special education, while the other holds certification in primary education. The school frequently hosts professional development sessions both internally and externally based on needs assessment to sharpen teachers' pedagogical skills or to motivate them. For example, during September, the pathway coaches conducted internal sessions with teachers on how to differentiate instruction in lessons while the ministry had scheduled provisions

for teachers termly. The support staff is also adequate and includes two cooks, one chef, four janitors, two groundsmen, a bursar, one assistant bursar, a secretary, one security guards and four watchmen. However, there is no workshop for the support staff.

### **The use of human resources**

The school's leadership appropriately deploys the available academic staff to facilitate effective curriculum delivery. The leadership deploys most teachers with consideration for their area of qualification, the students' needs and skills and abilities. Almost all teachers are deployed according to their area of specialisation. For example, the teachers who serve the pathway three students have qualifications in special education, English language or literacy. Moreover, most teachers have good attendance patterns. Also, many teachers are regularly punctual for the start of school and lessons. The school adequately utilises the support staff to supplement the delivery of the curriculum. The two cooks prepare hot meals daily, the five janitors ensure an aesthetically pleasing environment, and two security guards and four watchmen ensure the safety of the school's personnel. There is also a bursar, a system administrator and five administrative assistants to ensure the smooth flow of school activities.

### **The quality and quantity of material resources**

The school has good quality infrastructure that creates an aesthetically pleasing student atmosphere. The three blocks of buildings that make up the school plant are sturdy and connected by covered stairways for easy access. There are also well-maintained lawns with trimmed edges and the school's name paved on the ground. In addition, there is a multipurpose court and a complete perimeter fence. However, there is limited classroom space to house all students comfortably. Also, while bathroom facilities are adequate, they lack proper maintenance, and there is no provision for wheelchair access. Likewise, there are insufficient water troughs on the compound. In addition, while the school has a large collection of resources to enhance teaching and learning, some are in limited supply or lack proper maintenance; these include the clothing and textile and the food and nutrition departments. Several pieces of equipment are inoperable or lack proper maintenance. Also, the computer lab has 32 functional computers, whilst the E-Learning lab has 21 functional computers. Also, there is a general inadequacy of textbooks and projectors, and the classrooms lack sufficient electrical outlets to use electronic gadgets for lessons.

### **The use of material resources**

Almost all of the schools facilitate learning. The school makes adequate use of the available resources to enhance instructional delivery. The murals on the walls provide cultural information on National Heroes and National emblems and highlight students' personal achievements on the Honour Board. The students use the outdoor seating at the front of the building and the available dining area for relaxation, socialisation and unsupervised work between lessons and during break and lunch periods. The school also has a reading room that accommodates students for intervention. During lessons, the teachers use the whiteboard as the dominant resource; in a few lessons, the teachers incorporate printed material, charts and audio devices. Moreover, in some departments, there is an inventory of resources for which the teachers log their removal before use. The school uses the cottage to store sporting equipment; however, the large greenhouse is not currently in use.

## 7) Curriculum and Enhancement Programmes

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

#### Curriculum provisions

The school offers multiple curricula, such as the NSC, CSEC and City and Guilds, to meet the needs of students. They receive students of varying ability levels, most of whom are at developing and beginning proficiency. Therefore, the APSE coaches administer diagnostic tests and assign the students for intervention based on their ability levels. The coaches place the students who perform at or below the pre-primer level at Grade 7 in a discreet class with a single teacher and prepare a group intervention plan (GIP) to receive instruction according to their ability. Curriculum offering is also restricted to the core subjects such as mathematics and language arts. The weak-performing students in grades 8 and 9 receive intervention through a pull-out programme for mathematics and English lessons. The coaches also do Individual Intervention Plans (IIP) for two students with a learning disability. However, the APSE programme ends at Grade 9, after which there is no further support for students, nor do they receive any accommodation for examinations. Also, there is limited differentiation in lessons across the grades. Nevertheless, the heads of department analyse the results of internal assessment and use this as a basis for further interventions. The school also has a curriculum implementation team (CIT) that meets at the beginning of the term to discuss the curriculum and the strategies to inform lesson delivery as the focus of planning sessions.

Further, the school has more than adequate provisions for the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Almost all grades have provisions for up to three and a half hours of language arts, with an additional hour of reading per week and up to four hours dedicated to mathematics each week. However, there are limited cross-curricular linkages in lessons to expose students to the interrelatedness of curriculum content. Notwithstanding, there is sufficient coverage, progression and continuity of the curriculum in the subject areas. For example, a sample of students' mathematics books from September 2022 reveals sufficient coverage of topics across grade levels and some books are sufficiently organised to reflect the curriculum's progression in each class.

#### Enhancement programmes

The school offers a mix of enrichment programmes to encourage students' learning and to provide them with exposure. The students have access to various clubs such as mathematics; environmental; speech and drama; ISCF; 4H; cadet; tourism; Red Cross, and sports. The executive body of the clubs comprises students who take minutes of their undertakings along with registers of attendance; however, record keeping is inconsistent. Also, the school has sufficient provisions to provide for student learning in the community. Students participate in sporting and football competitions such as the DaCosta Cup - under 16 and 19. Additionally, the past students conducted a health fair in August 2022.

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

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

#### Provisions for safety and security

The school has adequate policies and procedures to ensure the safety of all its members. The students are knowledgeable about security measures through the efforts of the school's safety and security officer. The school plant has a secure perimeter fence, and a security guard monitors the access points on the grounds. The school has also installed CCTV cameras at strategic locations, and the school leaders monitor students during breaks and lunchtime. Moreover, the students are subject to search upon entry to the school premises to restrict the prevalence of weapons or illegal objects on the premises. An adequate number of fire extinguishers are also placed in vulnerable areas. The school also conducts periodic fire and earthquake drills to sensitise students to emergency procedures, and there is a clearly labelled assembly area. However, there is a noticeable lack of evacuation instructions, and the last practice drill occurred last school year.

#### Provisions for students' health and well-being

Sufficient guidelines and procedures are in place to ensure a healthy school environment. The school canteen is clean and complies with the Ministry of Health and Wellness protocols. Both canteen and tuck shop personnel have their required food handler's permit. The 145 students on the PATH receive lunch three times per week at no cost. All other students in need receive assistance courtesy of the welfare programme supported by contributions from a charity organisation overseas and the Red Cross Club at the school. The bathroom facilities are spacious and adequate for the student population. The school procures water from the NWC and harvests rainwater in tanks and drums. Additionally, the school promotes a healthy lifestyle by supporting the guidance counsellor who conducts empowerment sessions, counselling, meditation and time-tabled guidance classes. The guidance counsellor also visits students who are reported absent by their teachers.

Further, the school transports students with medical emergencies to the Percy Junior Hospital in Spalding. Discipline management is directed by guidelines from a student handbook monitored by the dean of discipline. The school suspends students who display uncontrollable behaviour for up to 10 days. For example, the school recently suspended a student for ten days for infractions against a teacher and the parents were called in. However, there are no provisions for students while on suspension.



## Recommendations

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

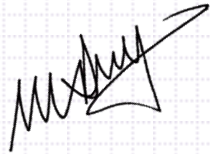
1. The leadership and Board should:
  - a. make a more deliberate effort to improve the facilities of the students' bathrooms; and
  - b. ensure the self-evaluation and improvement planning processes incorporate contributions from the parents and students.
  
2. The leadership should:
  - a. rigorously document the key observations from the lesson walkthroughs to inform instructional improvements;
  - b. prepare the annual school evaluation matrix to track the accomplishment of goals; and
  - c. require teachers to use more of the available ICT resources to enhance their lessons.
  
3. The teachers should improve students' outcomes by:
  - a. writing lesson evaluations to account for student learning, the effectiveness of strategies, resources and planned improvements;
  - b. planning their lessons using differentiated instructions to cater to the varied learning needs of students in lessons;
  - c. engaging students in the development of lesson content through research and critical thinking activities so they can own the learning experience; and
  - d. deliberately integrate lesson content so students see the relationship among subject disciplines.

## Recommendations from the previous inspection report

1. The Board of Governors should:
  - a. play a greater role in the development of the SIP to ensure that the vision of the school is reflected in the plans;
  - b. strengthen accountability systems of the Principal regarding set targets.
  
2. The Senior Leadership team should:
  - a. establish a Curriculum Implementation Team, per the standards of the MoEYI to provide oversight of curricula provisions, implementation, and monitoring;
  - b. be more deliberate in planning staff development sessions that cater to teachers' demonstrated weaknesses, particularly in the area of instructional strategies and differentiation;
  - c. urgently conduct the planned audit of the shortfalls in mathematics to facilitate the required interventions so that planned targets can be achieved,
  - d. urgently conduct the planned audit of the shortfalls in mathematics to facilitate the required interventions so that planned targets can be achieved,
  - e. engage the assistance of the National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC) to strengthen parental support for their student's learning.
  
3. The teachers should:
  - a. immediately develop a habit of reflective practice, by completing lesson evaluations;
  - b. use lesson evaluations to plan more deliberately, based on the needs of the students; and,
  - c. incorporate more of the available instructional resources at the school in lessons.

## 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 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  
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
MoEY	Ministry of Education and Youth
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 – Addendum to School Inspection Framework

Appendix 3 – National Test Data

## Appendix 1 - Record of Inspection Activities

Evidence for this report was based on the following:

Total number of lessons or part lessons observed	23
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	English	Math	Other
Number of lessons or part lessons observed <b>[Primary]</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of lessons or part lessons observed <b>[Secondary, either grades 7 – 13 or 7 – 9 in an all-age school]</b>	9	8	6

Number of scheduled interviews completed with members of staff, governing body and parents	7
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Number of scheduled interviews completed with students	2
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	Parents	Students	Teachers
Number of questionnaires returned and analysed			

## Appendix 2 – Addendum to Inspection Framework

### 1) School Leadership and Management

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

#### 1.1 School-based leadership and management

**Prompt:** Please describe the changes made, if any, to the current arrangements for students' learning and teacher accountability.

Inspector will evaluate:

- How responsive is the school's leadership to the current situation?
  - How flexible is the senior management team (SMT) in implementing new measures?
  - How creative is the SMT in facilitating and implementing the new measures given the current situation?
  - What has management put in place to ensure accountability for students' learning during COVID-19?
- 
- Leadership qualities
  - Vision and direction
  - **Prompt:** Has your vision for the school shifted? If so, how?
  - How has COVID-19 impacted the vision and direction of the school?
- 
- Focus on teaching, learning and student outcomes
  - **Prompt:** Please explain the learning modalities utilized and what has guided the decisions.
  - Why were those modalities selected?
  - What led to this decision?
- 
- Culture and ethos of school, relationships
  - **Prompt:** How has the ethos and culture of the school been altered by the pandemic?
  - What policies are in place to prevent discrimination etc.?
  - What preparations were made to the physical space to ensure the enhancement of the school amid COVID-19?
- 
- Commitment of the staff (confidence in and response to leadership)
  - **Prompt:** Are staff (s) committed to the changes? How do you know?
  - How compliant are staff members to the new arrangements for COVID-19 in the school?
  - Were teachers involved in the planning for the new arrangements?
  - What role do teachers play in the implementation and monitoring of the plans?
- 
- Management of the school
  - **Prompt:** Describe the process of documentation and other protocols undertaken to manage students' assessments and general records.
  - Are documents in place such as new protocols, policies, and how are they implemented and monitored; for example COVID-19 Protocols, Reopening Policy, and Assessment Policy?
- 
- Gathering and use of school information and document system
  - What data was used to arrive at the decision for the modality selected?

## **1.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning**

**Prompt:** Did you undertake a self- assessment activity? When and with what results? Who were involved?

- Rigour and accuracy of the school's routine self-evaluation process
- What measures have been taken and who are the persons involved in the school's self-evaluation processes and in particular as it relates to the plans for COVID-19?
- The extent to which the views of parents, staff, students, and others are taken into account
- What role did parents, staff and others play in the self-evaluation process as it relates to COVID-19?
- How were parents canvassed to ascertain their status as it relates to Internet connectivity and other measures to determine the type of modality?
- The identification of appropriate priorities for improvement
- What are the documented priorities relating to the management of COVID-19 in the school?
- The quality of plans for improvement
- (To be evaluated based on the inspector's professional judgment and knowledge as per document review guide.)
- The extent to which plans are implemented, monitored, and evaluated

## **1.3 Governance**

**Prompt:** In what ways has the Board been involved in the school's continuation and adaptation since the COVID- 19 pandemic?

- The quality of the Board's contribution to the leadership and management of the school
- In light of the crisis what has been the Board's contribution to the management of the school?
- The extent to which the Board holds the school's professional leaders to account for standards/protocols, outcomes and spending
- What is the evidence available to suggest that the Board holds the SMT accountable – (look at minutes for online meetings etc. to see the directives the Board gives, and the support provided.)
- Knowledge and understanding of the school
- How were the decisions taken as it relates to COVID-19 requirements in this school – modality? Implementation of mechanisms such as wash stations.
- How have you implemented, monitored, and evaluated the various plans such as Reopening Plan, Assessment Plan etc.?

## **1.4 Relations with parents and the local community**

**Prompt:** Describe the quality of the relationship among the school, parents, and business/local community since COVID-19

- The quality of the school's communication with, and reporting to, parents
- How often does the school communicate with and report to parents on matters relating to the response to COVID–19 - modalities, safety practices etc.?
- Parents' involvement with their children's education and the work of the school
- How are parents helping their children to access the various measures used by the school to deliver the curriculum?
- The school's links with organizations and agencies in the local community
- Have the school established any new linkages with organizations in the local community to support their COVID-19 related plans for PPE's, food, needy students etc.?



## 2) Teaching Support for Learning

How effectively does the teaching support the students' learning?

What can we learn from online lesson observations?

### 2.1 Teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach and how best to teach them

- Teachers knowledge of their subjects
- Teachers knowledge of how best to teach their subjects
- Teachers reflection on what they teach and how well students learn
- Teachers' knowledge of how to use the various platforms based on the modality the school employs
- How the teacher reflects on the various groups within the various modalities

### 2.2 Teaching Methods

- Quality and effectiveness of lesson planning
- Management of time
- Effective use of resources – textbooks, audio and visual materials, resource persons and ICT
- Quality of teacher and student interactions including questions and dialogue on the platform that the school employs
- Teaching strategies which challenge and cater to the needs of all students

### 2.3 Assessment

- Evaluating students' learning according to the various strands and in relation to the modalities used
- Continuous assessment as part of online teaching and learning
- Assessment practices including policies, implementation and record keeping
- Student self-assessment
- Use of assessment information by teachers and students to inform teaching and learning
- Quality of feedback by teachers, in lessons and in written work, to help students identify and make improvements
- Teachers' knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses (how teachers use differentiation)

### 2.4 Student learning

- Attitudes and motivation to learn
- Interactions and collaboration between students
- Application of learning to new situations and real life
- Inquiry and research skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Information and communication technology (ICT) skills

## 3) Students' Academic Performance

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

This is data provided by the National Education Inspectorate in the School Performance Profile

#### 4) Students' Academic Progress

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

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

Progress in English lessons take into consideration the fact that many schools will deliver a modified curriculum depending on the suite of modalities and the available resources at their disposal. What is doable and reasonable in light of the circumstances? Therefore, progress against starting point may be impacted by, one or a combination of any of the factors above, as well as others that the school will explain.

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

Progress in mathematics lessons take into consideration the fact that many schools will deliver a modified curriculum depending on the suite of modalities and the available resources at their disposal. What is doable and reasonable in light of the circumstances? Therefore, progress against starting point may be impacted by, one or a combination of any of the factors above, as well as others that the school will explain.

**This is supported by Students' Performance Data and Lesson Observation Data**

#### 5) Students' Personal and Social Development

How good is the students' personal and social development?

##### 5.1 Students behaviours and attitudes

- **Observed** behaviours and attitudes in online lessons and or around the school compound and places of learning.
- Students' adherence to COVID-19 protocols
- Students' relationship with other students and all school staff
- Self-organization and commitment to learning
- How do students respond to their own learning in light of the selected modality for delivering the curriculum?

##### 5.2 Students punctuality and attendance

- How does the school capture attendance and punctuality based on the modality?
- Attendance to school and lessons
- Punctuality to school and lessons – virtually or face to face
- Transition time between lessons

##### 5.3 Students civic understanding and spiritual awareness

- Understanding of national identity and regional traditions and culture
- Understanding of civic responsibility
- In light of COVID-19 are students **aware** of their responsibilities in its prevention?
- Taking on responsibilities for themselves and others

##### 5.4 Students' economic awareness and understanding

- Awareness and understanding of Jamaica's economic progress and importance both regionally and globally
- Awareness of the current world and local economic situation in relation to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- Awareness of their potential contribution to Jamaica

### **5.5. Students' understanding and awareness of environmental and health issues**

- Knowledge and understanding of national and global environmental issues
- Concern and care for the school environment
- Concern and care for the wider environment
- Concern and awareness of global and national health issues (COVID 19) Pandemics, viruses etc.

## **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?**

### **6.1 Human resources**

- Sufficiency of suitable qualified and knowledgeable teaching and support staff
- Have you retained additional and suitably qualified teaching and support staff to assist in the COVID-19 related protocols?
- Staff are supported and offered training
- Were all members of staff supported and trained in relation to the requisite protocols and standards now implemented for COVID-19?

### **6.2 Use of human resources**

- Deployment of teaching staff
- Have staff members been effectively deployed to support the new measures relating to the management of COVID-19 in the school?
- What is the attendance pattern of staff members since the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- Punctuality of staff
- Are staff members punctual for school and lessons to facilitate the effectiveness of the chosen modality as well as for the delivery of the NSC?
- Use of support staff
- How has the school utilized support staff in relation to reopening and COVID-19 activities and protocols?

### **6.3 Material resources – Quality and Quantity**

- Appropriateness and quality of the school premises
- Are classroom arrangements appropriate and effective to adequately house the number of students as prescribed by the Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) protocols?
- Appropriateness, quality and sufficiency of resources for teaching and learning
- Were adequate and appropriate resources introduced to support the different modalities in teaching and learning?

### **6.4 Use of material resources**

- Effective use of school premises
- Were additional sites acquired or temporary learning spaces created to facilitate the protocols relating to physical distancing?
- How effective are these spaces used?
- Effective organization and the use of available resources for teaching and learning
- How effectively do teachers use resources in relation to the new modalities?

## 7) Curriculum and Enhancement Programmes

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

### **7.1 How well does the curriculum meet the needs of the students?**

#### **Is the curriculum modified or suspended – what are they doing?**

- Review and adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of all students
- How is the curriculum reviewed in relation to the various modalities and the various groupings of students for impact?
- What are the creative means the school employs for the modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of the students?
- Breadth and balance
- How is the breadth and balance of the curriculum affected by the restrictions of COVID-19 and the chosen modality?
- Continuity and progression
- Cross-curricular links

### **7.2 Enhancement Programmes**

#### **Give consideration to the reality of COVID-19 and its potential impact on extracurricular and co-curricular activities**

- Relevance to all students
- What are the creative measures the school employs to ensure the viability of co-curricular, enhancement and intervention programmes amid COVID-19 protocols?
- Uptake of programmes
- What measures are in place to ensure that almost all students benefit from the provisions of the school's enhancement programmes?
- Links with the local environment and community

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

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

### **8.1 Safety and Security**

- Policy and procedures to ensure the safety and security of all members of the school community, including on and off-site school activities and in relation to COVID-19
- Quality of monitoring and maintenance

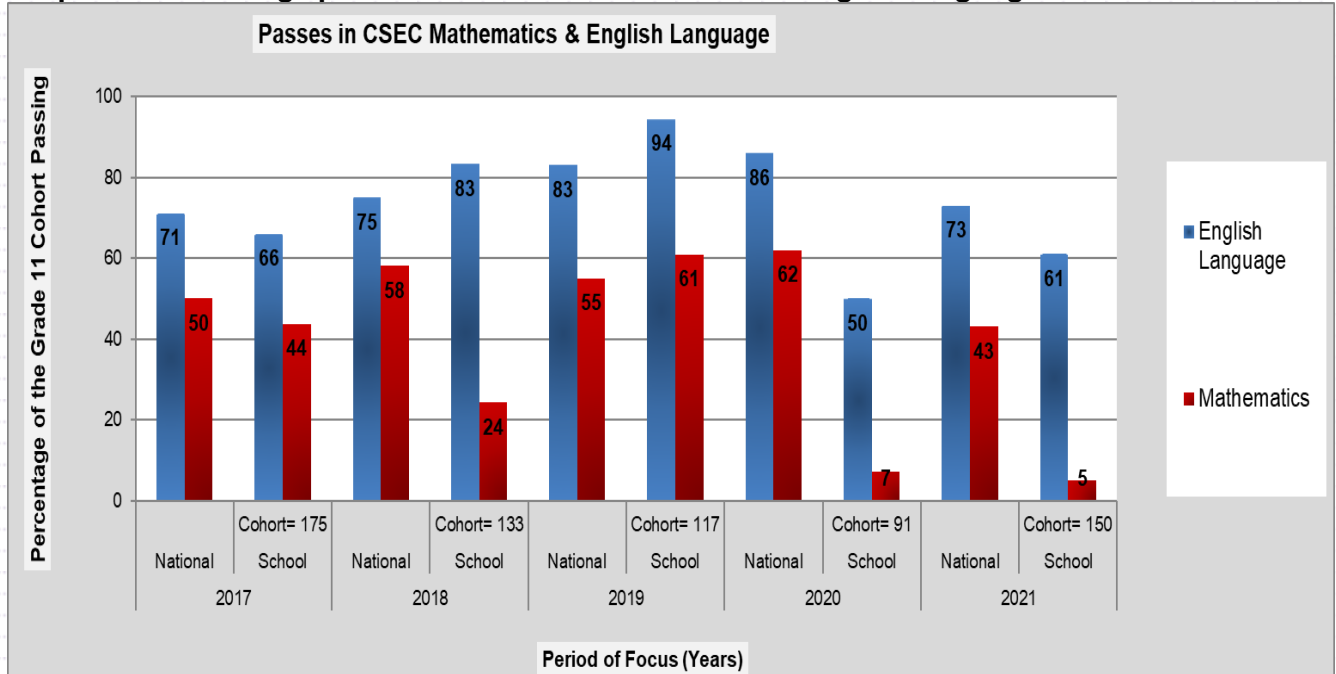
### **8.2 Health and Wellbeing**

- Policies and procedures governing health and in relation to COVID-19
- Staff relationship with students
- What is the relationship like between students and teachers in light of COVID-19?
- Guidance and counselling arrangements
- What psychosocial provisions are in place for students in relation to the impact of COVID-19?
- How well does the school's guidance programme address the needs of the students in relation to COVID-19?
- Management of discipline
- Are there new measures to address maladapted behaviours as it relates to COVID-19?
- Management of students' attendance and punctuality
- Are there new measures to address issues relating to attendance and punctuality in light of national restrictions and new protocols for public transportation?
- Arrangement for suspension and exclusion of students - number of students out of school due to suspension and exclusion
- Tracking of students' wellbeing
- How have students benefited in terms of PATH grants during the Pandemic?
- Have any member of the school community been directly impacted by COVID-19 and how was it treated?

## Appendix 3 - National Test Data

### STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

Graph 1a: Percentage passes in CSEC mathematics and English language 2017 to 2021



School passes for CSEC English language and mathematics are a percentage of the total number of students sitting the examination and may include grades 9 and 10 students.

Table 1a: Students sitting & passing CSEC mathematics and English language (2017-2021)

Year	Grade 11 Cohort*	Students Sitting CSEC Mathematics		Number passing CSEC Mathematics		Students Sitting CSEC English		Number passing CSEC English	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
2017	175	32	18%	14	44%	50	29%	33	66%
2018	133	33	25%	8	24%	36	27%	30	83%
2019	117	23	20%	14	61%	18	15%	17	94%
2020	91	14	15%	1	7%	16	18%	8	50%
2021	150	39	26%	2	5%	33	22%	20	61%

\*As at Census Day (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in October)

The Grade 11 cohort decreased from 175 to 150 over the 2017 to 2021 period. The school's performance in both subjects remained below the national pass rate for the review period, with the exception of English language in 2018, 2019 and Mathematics in 2019.

The participation rate for mathematics increased while English language decreased over the 2017 to 2021 period. Of the students sitting, the school's CSEC English language pass rate exceeded the mathematics pass rate each year.

The performance gap between the two subjects was widest in 2018 at 59 percentage points.

**FINAL**

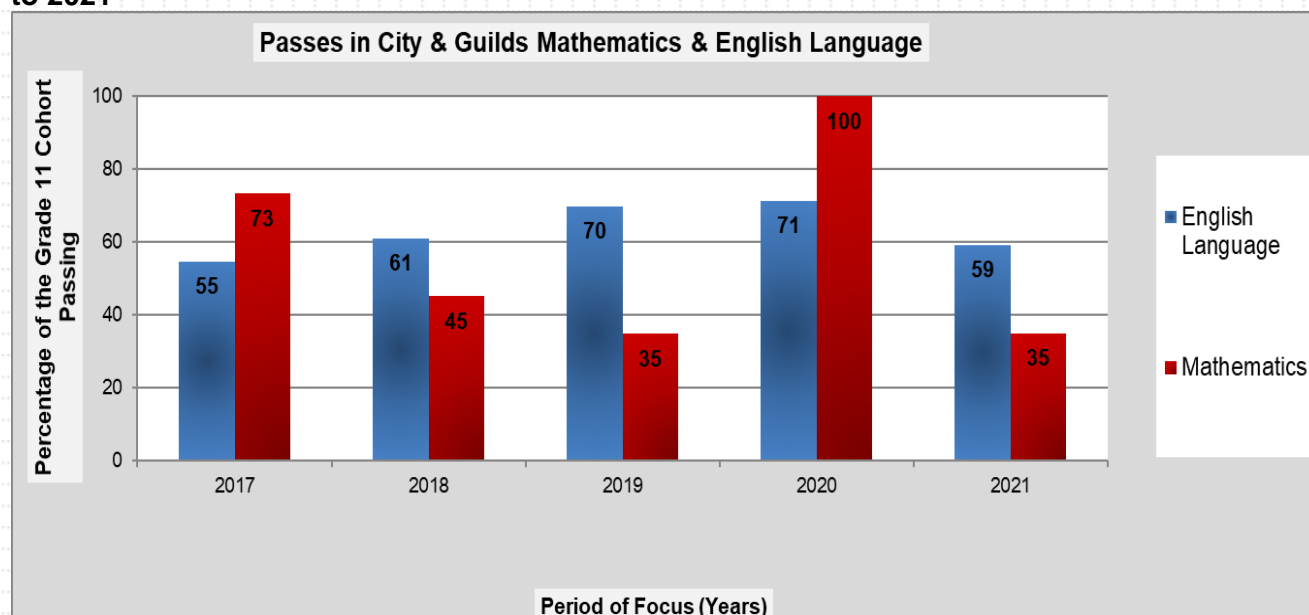
**CSEC English language:**

The English language participation rate decreased by seven percentage points overall for the 2017 to 2021 period. Of the students sitting throughout the period under review, the pass rate decreased by five percentage points. It moved from 66 per cent (33 of 50 students sitting) in 2017 to 61 per cent (20 of 33 students sitting) in 2021. The school's pass rate was lowest at 50 per cent (eight of 16 students sitting) in 2020. It remained below the national pass rate throughout the period, except in 2018 and 2019.

**CSEC Mathematics:**

The mathematics participation rate increased by eight percentage points overall over the period. It moved from 18 per cent in 2017 to 26 per cent in 2021. The pass rate decreased overall by 39 percentage points, falling from 44 per cent (14 of 32 students sitting) in 2017 to five per cent (two of 39 students sitting) in 2021. It remained below the national pass rate throughout the period, except in 2019.

**Graph 1b: Percentage passes in City and Guilds mathematics and English language 2017 to 2021**



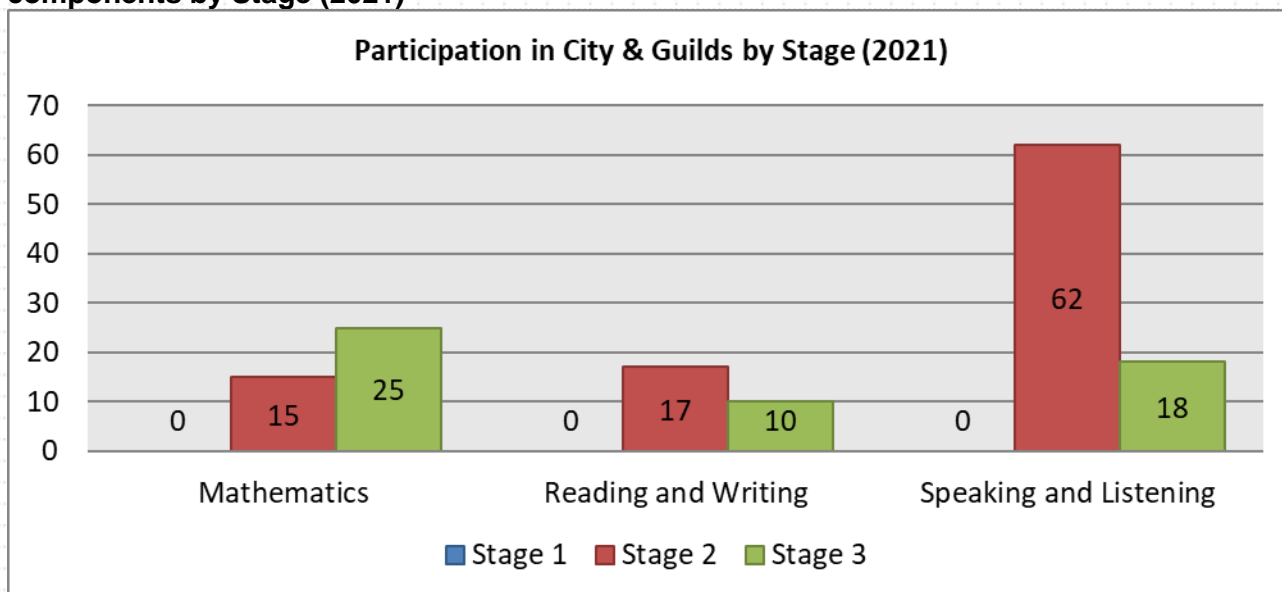
**Table 1b: Students sitting City & Guilds mathematics and English language (2017-2021)**

Year	Grade 11 Cohort*	Students Sitting City and Guilds Mathematics		Number passing City and Guilds Mathematics		Students Sitting City and Guilds English		Number passing City and Guilds English	
		Count	Pass Rate	Count	Pass Rate	Count	Pass Rate	Count	Pass Rate
2017	175	120	69%	88	73%	119	68%	65	55%
2018	133	104	78%	47	45%	203	153%	124	61%
2019	117	86	74%	30	35%	166	142%	116	70%
2020	91	91	100%	91	100%	115	126%	82	71%
2021	150	40	27%	14	35%	27	18%	16	59%

The school's pass rate in City and Guilds English increased over the 2017 to 2021 period by four percentage points. It moved from its lowest point of 55 per cent to 59 per cent. It was highest at 71 per cent in 2020. The participation rate decreased, moving from 68 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort in 2017 to 18 per cent of the cohort in 2021.

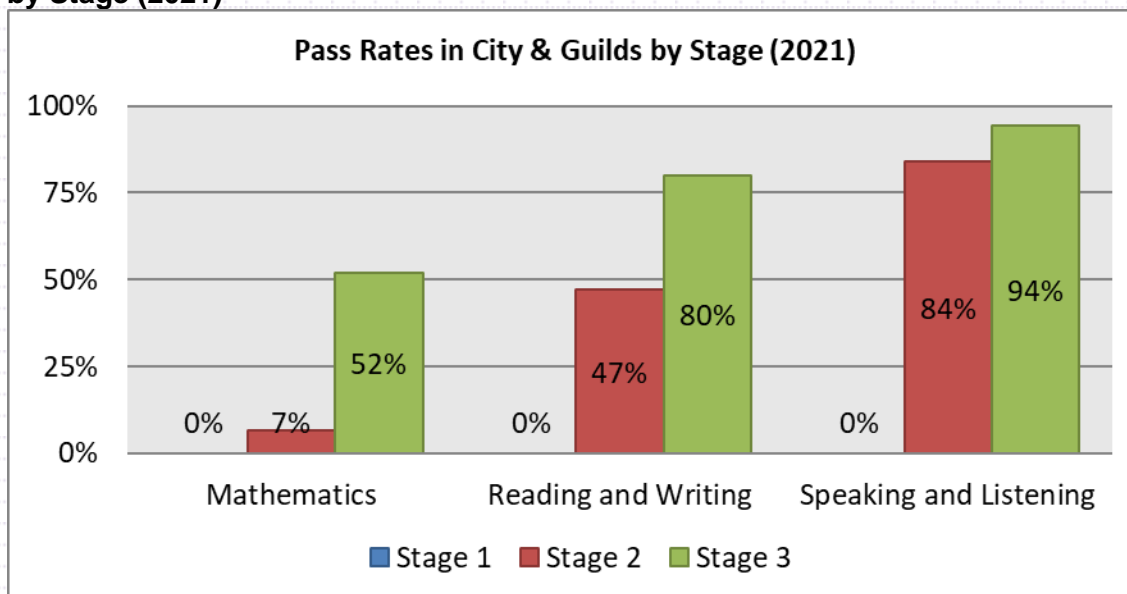
The school's City and Guilds mathematics pass rate decreased by 38 percentage points between 2017 and 2021. It was highest at 100 per cent in 2020. The participation rate decreased from 69 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort in 2017 to 27 per cent in 2021.

**Graph 1c: Participation in City and Guilds mathematics and English language components by Stage (2021)**



A closer analysis of the number of students sitting City and Guilds mathematics in 2021 revealed that most students sat at Stage 3. In Reading and Writing and Speaking and Listening, most students sat at stage 2.

**Graph 1d: Pass rates in City and Guilds mathematics and English language components by Stage (2021)**

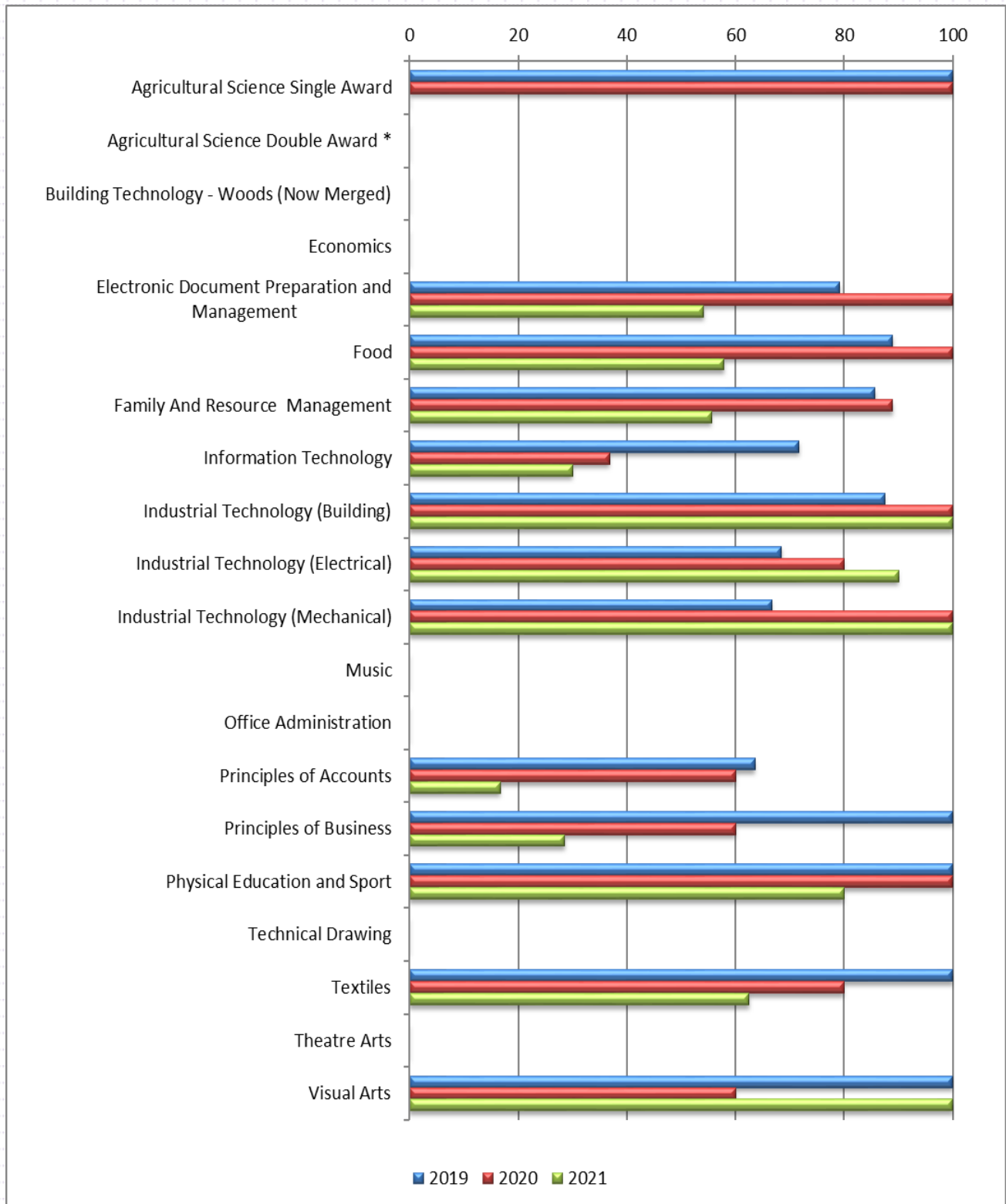


No more than 52 per cent of the students sitting City and Guilds mathematics attained passing grades regardless of the level at which they sat. The pass rates were even higher for Speaking and Listening at Stages 3, where no less than 84 per cent of the students sitting attained passing grades. The pass rates for Reading and Writing revealed that students attained no more than 80 per cent.

**FINAL**



**Graph 1e: Percentage Passes in CSEC Technical/Vocational Subjects (2019 to 2021)**



**Table 1c: Students sitting & passing CSEC Technical/Vocational subjects (2019 to 2021)**

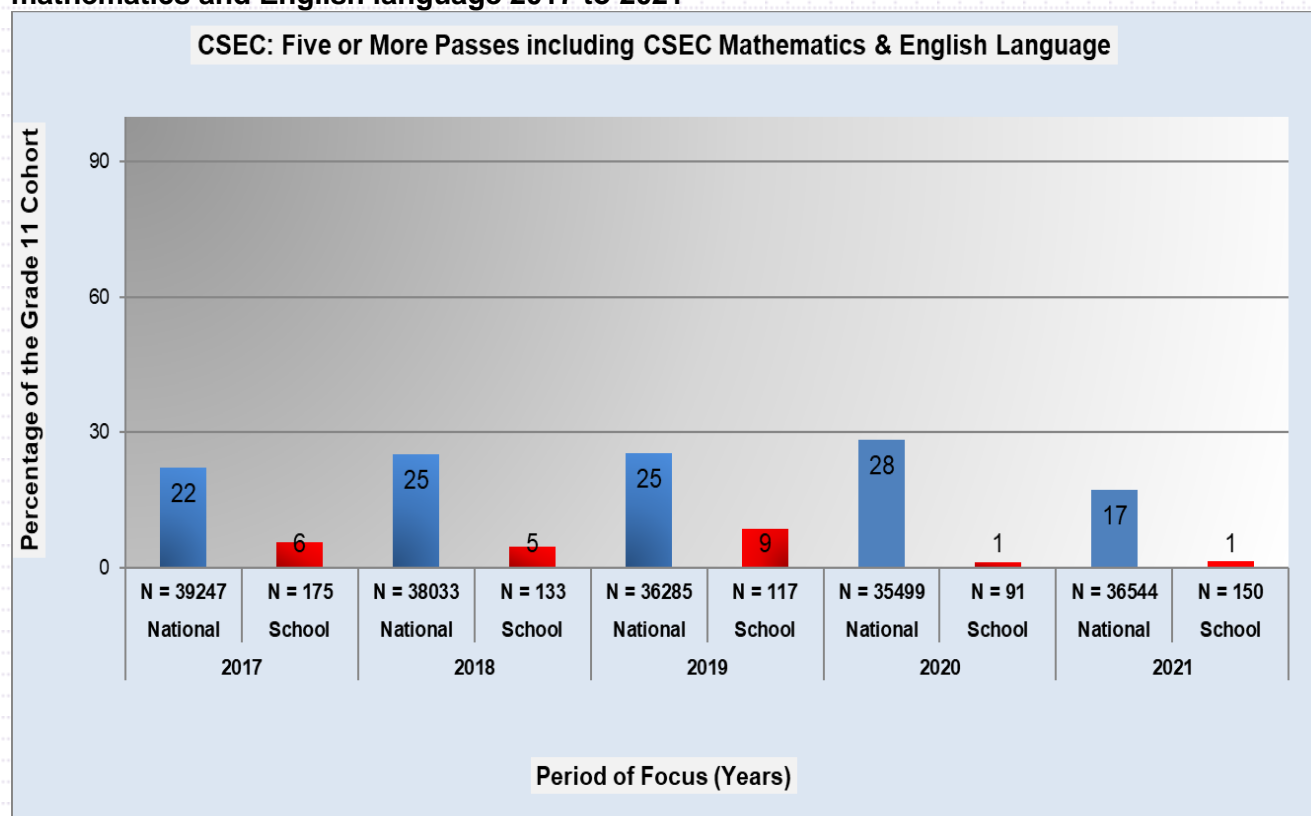
Technical/Vocational Subjects	Alston High					
	Number of Students Sitting			Percentage of Students Sitting and Attaining Grades I-III		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Agricultural Science Single Award	3	1	0	100	100	-
Agricultural Science Double Award *	0	0	0	-	-	-
Building Technology - Woods (Now Merged)	0	0	0	-	-	-
Economics	0	0	0	-	-	-
Electronic Document Preparation and Management	24	28	24	79	100	54
Food	9	7	19	89	100	58
Family And Resource Management	7	9	9	86	89	56
Information Technology	46	19	30	72	37	30
Industrial Technology (Building)	8	6	3	88	100	100
Industrial Technology (Electrical)	19	5	10	68	80	90
Industrial Technology (Mechanical)	3	6	2	67	100	100
Music	0	0	0	-	-	-
Office Administration	0	0	0	-	-	-
Principles of Accounts	11	5	6	64	60	17
Principles of Business	9	5	7	100	60	29
Physical Education and Sport	17	10	15	100	100	80
Technical Drawing	0	0	0	-	-	-
Textiles	4	5	8	100	80	63
Theatre Arts	0	0	0	-	-	-
Visual Arts	2	5	4	100	60	100

Students participated in 13 Technical/Vocational subjects throughout the period. The highest level of participation was recorded in Information Technology and Electronic Document Preparation and Management. The participation rates in the other subjects were notably low when compared to the enrolment for each year.

The pass rates were generally high for most of the subjects. The pass rates were 80 per cent and above in all years in Agricultural Science Single Award, Industrial Technology (Building) and Physical Education and Sport.

## STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

**Graph 2: Percentage of students attaining five or more CSEC passes including mathematics and English language 2017 to 2021**



The secondary school target set by The Ministry of Education, Youth & Information is 54% of students sitting CSEC attaining five or more passes by 2016.

The school's matriculation rate, based on CSEC results, decreased overall by five percentage points for the 2017 to 2021 period. It fell from six per cent to one per cent, the lowest for the period. The school's matriculation rate remained below the national matriculation rate throughout the period.

Note: Actual matriculation rates may differ as students may have sat and passed English Language and/or mathematics in previous years or in City and Guilds.

**Table 2: Percentage of students attaining five or more CSEC passes including mathematics and English language (2019)**

Students attaining passes in 5+ CSEC or equivalent subjects	
National Education Performance Target (2016)	54 per cent
School's Current (2020) attainment	1 per cent

## STUDENTS' PROGRESS

### Students' Starting Point

Graph 3a: Proficiency Levels (%) for students entering the school (2020)

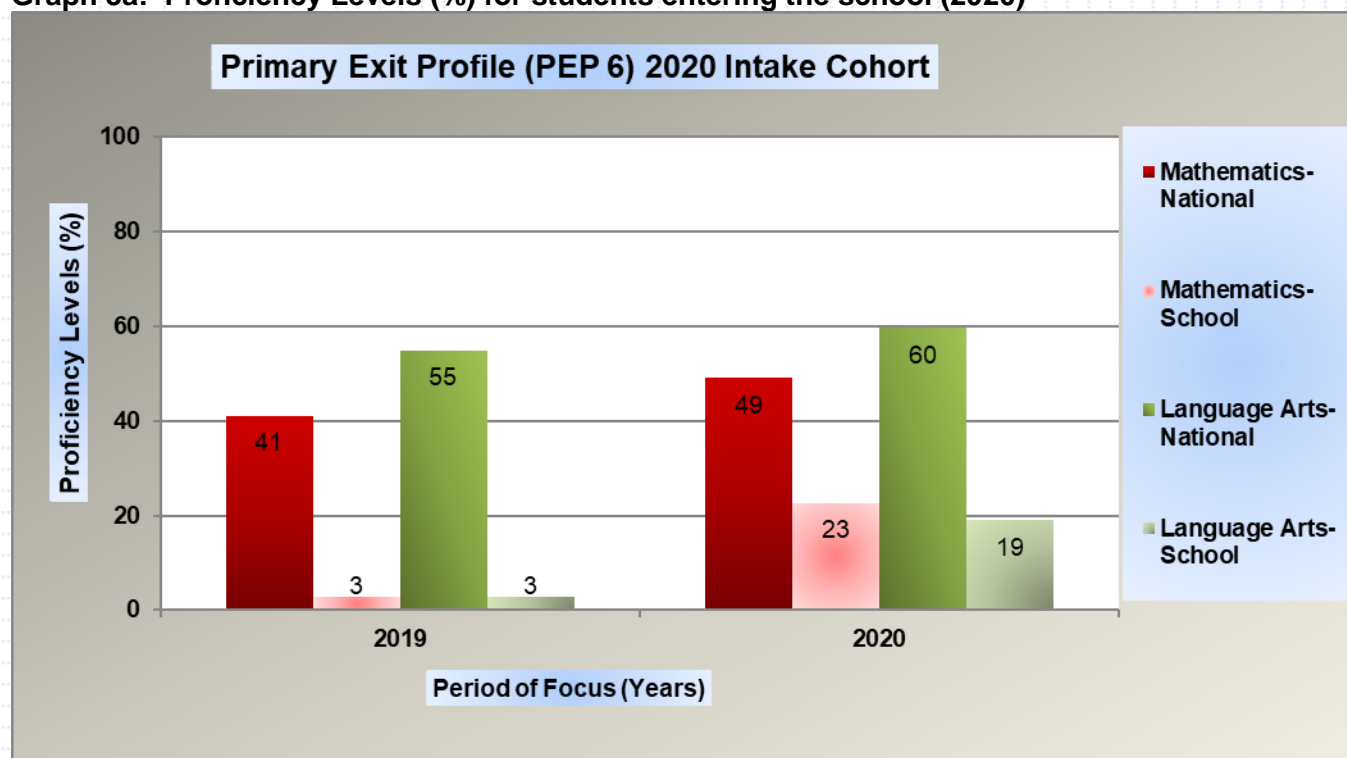


Table 3a: Proficiency Levels (%) for students entering the school (2020)

Entrance Cohort	Mathematics		Language Arts	
	National	School	National	School
2020	49	23	60	19
2019	41	3	55	3

Overall, 23 per cent of the students entering Alston High in 2020 were proficient in mathematics. This was below the national proficiency of 49 per cent. In 2019, three per cent of the entrance cohort were proficient in mathematics. This was below the national performance.

In 2020, proficiency levels in language arts were lower than in mathematics as 19 per cent of the students were found to be proficient. This performance was below the national proficiency by 41 percentage points. In 2019, three per cent of the students were proficient, remaining below the national proficiency level by 52 percentage points.

## STUDENTS' PROGRESS

### Students' Starting Point

Graph 3b: Proficiency Levels (%) for students entering the school (2020) by Gender

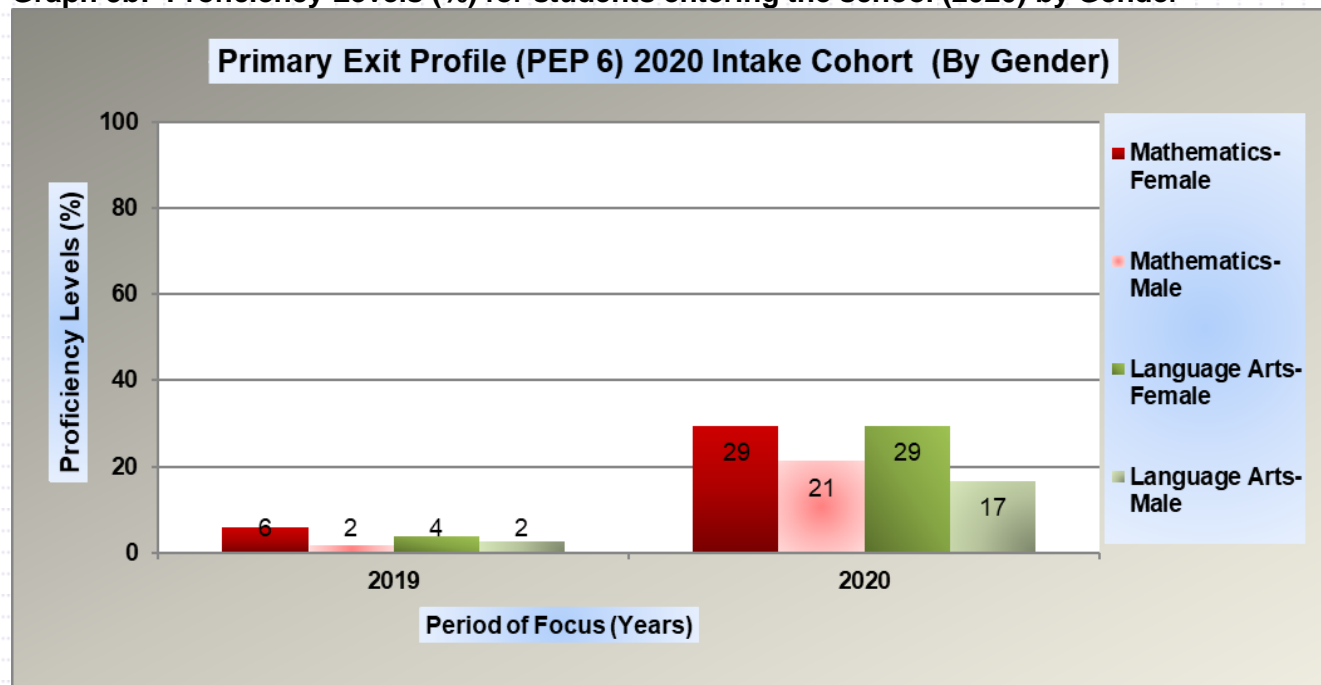


Table 3b: Proficiency Levels (%) for students entering the school (2020) by Gender

Entrance Cohort	Mathematics		Language Arts	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
2020	29	21	29	17
2019	6	2	4	2

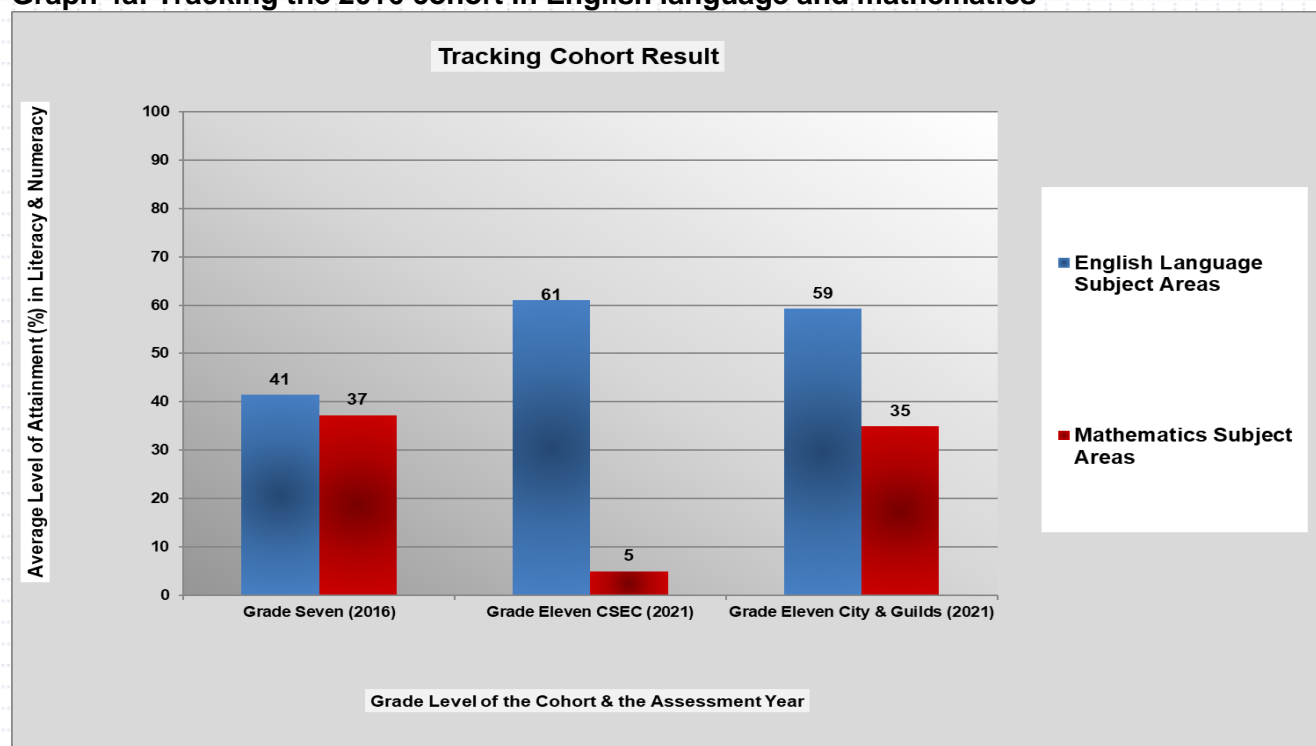
Overall, girls outperformed the boys in both subject areas in the 2019 and 2020 sittings of the PEP.

In 2020, 29 per cent of the girls sitting the PEP6 mathematics were proficient. This is in comparison to 21 per cent of the boys sitting in that year. Similarly, six per cent of the girls were proficient in mathematics in 2019, compared to two per cent of the boys.

In 2020, 29 per cent of the girls were proficient in language arts compared to 17 per cent of the boys. Similarly, in 2019, four per cent of the girls were proficient in language arts compared to two per cent of the boys.

## STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Graph 4a: Tracking the 2016 cohort in English language and mathematics



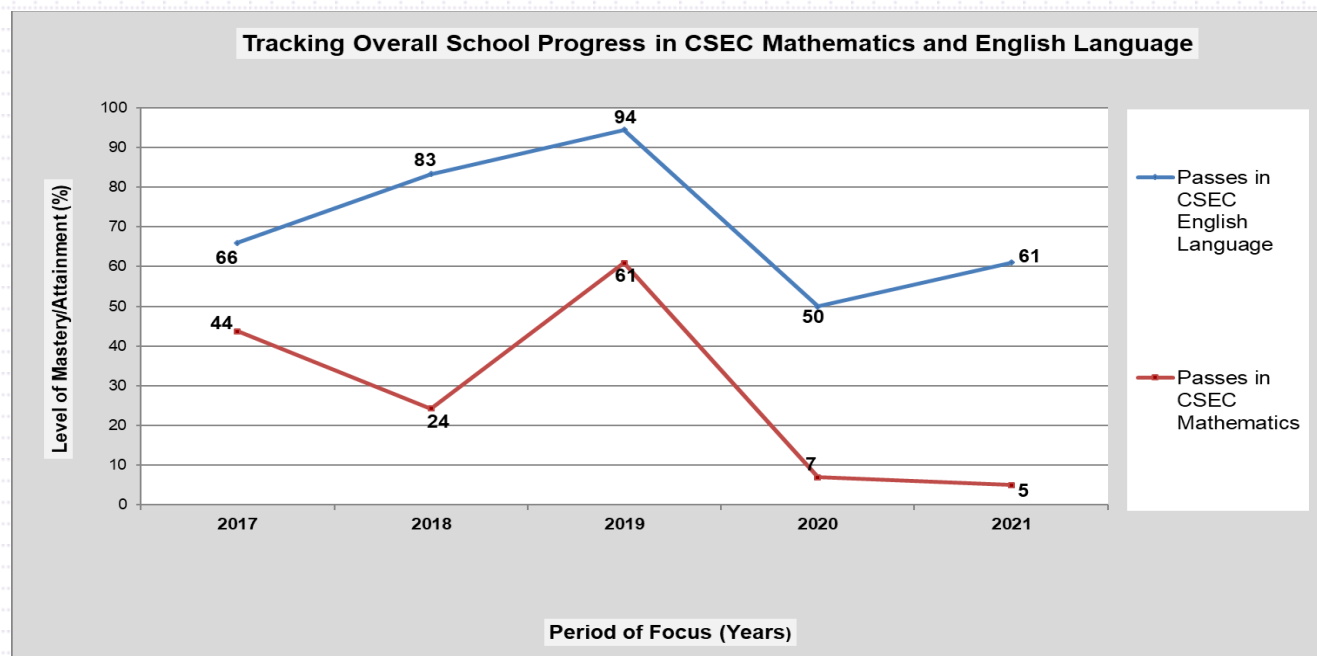
This graph tracks the performance of the **2016 Cohort** of students entering Alston High. It shows their **average intake scores** in the 2016 GSAT (language arts and mathematics) and the **pass rates** in the 2021 CSEC and City and Guilds examinations (English language and mathematics).

The **2016 Cohort** attained an average of 41 per cent in the language arts component of the GSAT. In 2021, the pass rate for CSEC English language was 61 per cent. This pass rate is reflective of the 22 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort who sat the examination. In 2021, the total pass rate for the different stages of City and Guilds English was 59 per cent. This pass rate is reflective of the 18 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort who sat City and Guilds English.

The **2016 Cohort** attained an average of 37 per cent in the mathematics component of the GSAT. In 2021, the pass rate for CSEC mathematics was five per cent. This pass rate is reflective of the 26 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort who sat the examination. In 2021, the total pass rate for the different stages of City and Guilds mathematics was 35 per cent. This pass rate is reflective of the 27 per cent of the Grade 11 cohort who sat City and Guilds mathematics.

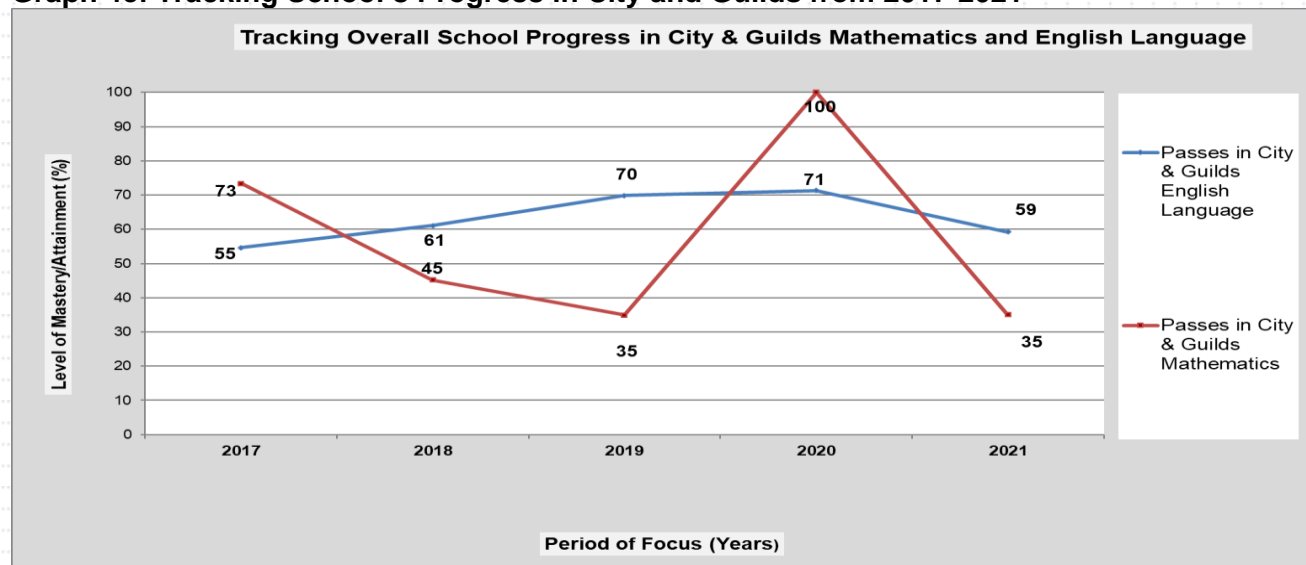
## STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Graph 4b: Tracking School's Progress in CSEC from 2017-2021



The school's English language pass rate decreased, while the mathematics pass rate also decreased over the period of review. The mathematics pass rate was below the English language pass rate throughout the 2017 to 2021 period.

Graph 4c: Tracking School's Progress in City and Guilds from 2017-2021



The school's City and Guilds English language pass rate increased, while the mathematics pass rate decreased for the period. The City and Guilds English language pass rate was above the City and Guilds mathematics pass rate in 2018, 2019 and 2021 but was below in 2017 and 2020.

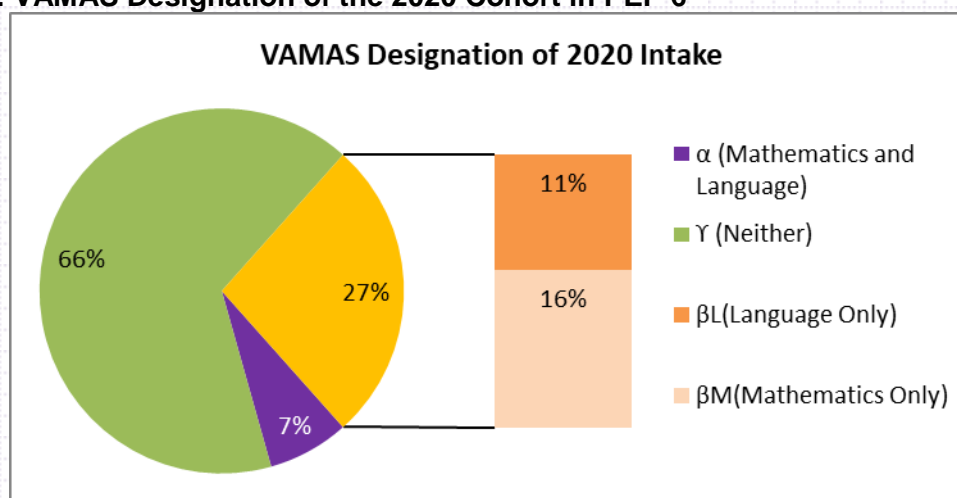
## STUDENTS' PROGRESS – VALUE ADDED MODEL FOR ASSESSING SCHOOLS (VAMAS)

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 ( $\alpha$ )** while those attaining satisfactory performance in either English or mathematics are designated as **Betas ( $\beta$ )** and those with unsatisfactory performance in both subjects are designated as **Gammas ( $\gamma$ )**. Within the **Beta ( $\beta$ )** category, students are further designated a **Beta M ( $\beta_M$ )** where they are found to be proficient in mathematics only and as **Beta L ( $\beta_L$ )** where they are proficient in language arts only.

At the secondary level, value added progress under the VAMAS is determined by comparing students' proficiency levels in the PEP 6 with their performance on internal tests.

Graph 5a: VAMAS Designation of the 2020 Cohort in PEP 6



An application of the VAMAS revealed that less than one tenth of the students in the 2020 entrance cohort at Alston High were at the requisite level of performance in 2020 PEP6.

Table 5a: VAMAS Designation of the 2020 Cohort in PEP 6

VAMAS Designation	Number of Students	Percentage
$\alpha$ (Proficient in Both)	7	7%
$\beta$ (Proficient in Either)	26	27%
$\gamma$ (Proficient in Neither)	64	66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>

Some seven per cent or seven of the 97 students were designated **Alphas** having been deemed proficient in both language arts and mathematics in the 2020 PEP 6.

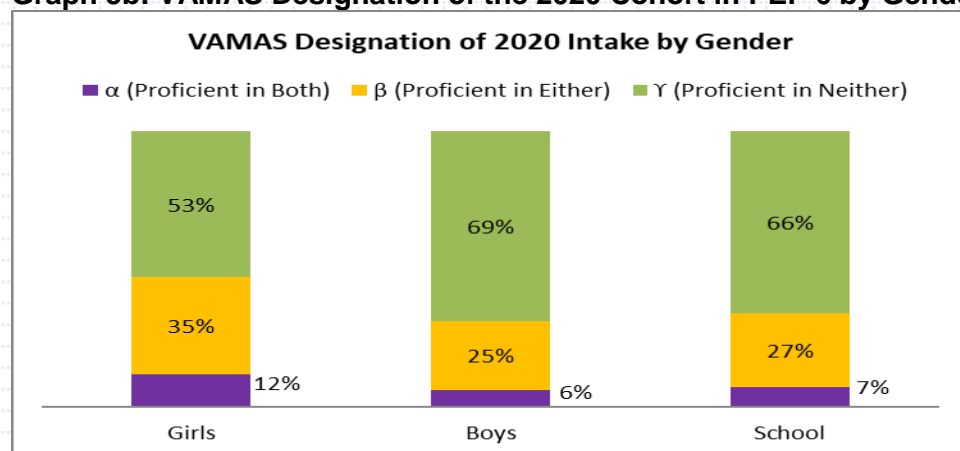


## STUDENTS' PROGRESS – VALUE ADDED MODEL FOR ASSESSING SCHOOLS (VAMAS)

The expectation is that these students should remain **Alphas** during their tenure at the school. A gender comparison revealed that the proportion of **Alphas** among the girls was higher than that of the boys.

Another 27 per cent or 26 of the students were in a partial state of readiness for secondary level education as they were proficient in either language arts or mathematics and were designated as **Betas**. Within this category, it was found that more of these **Betas** were proficient in Mathematics thus implying a general weakness of the entrance cohort in English Language. The data showed that a larger proportion of girls were designated as **Betas** than boys. The expectation is that the school should put measures in place to move these **Betas** to **Alphas** or at least maintain their **Beta** status.

**Graph 5b: VAMAS Designation of the 2020 Cohort in PEP 6 by Gender**



There were 64 students or 66 per cent of the 2020 entrance cohort who were in a worrisome state of readiness. These students were neither proficient in language arts nor in mathematics and were in jeopardy of being able to access secondary education. These 64 students were designated as **Gammas** and will require special intervention by the school in order to move them to **Alpha** or **Beta** status. The number of **Gammas** was higher among boys than it was for the girls.

**Table 5b: VAMAS Designation of the 2020 Cohort in PEP 6 by Gender**

VAMAS Designation	Girls	Boys	School	Girls	Boys	School
<b>α (Proficient in Both)</b>	2	5	7	12%	6%	7%
<b>β (Proficient in Either)</b>	6	20	26	35%	25%	27%
<b>γ (Proficient in Neither)</b>	9	55	64	53%	69%	66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Definitions:**

**Cohort:** A specific group of students who are expected to move through the education system during a particular time span. For example, the 2014 cohort entering Grade seven are expected to complete Grade 11 in 2019.

**Matriculation Rate:** The number of students attaining passes in five or more CSEC subjects including English language and mathematics in one academic year.

**Percentage:** The expression of a fraction into 100 equal parts. It is calculated by multiplying the fraction by 100. For example,  $\frac{2}{5}$  expressed as a percentage equals  $(\frac{2}{5}) \times 100 = 40$  per cent.

**Percentage Point:** The unit for the arithmetic difference between two percentages. For example, 20 per cent is lower than 45 per cent by 25 percentage points.

**Trend:** The pattern observed or general tendency of a series of data points over time. There must be at least three (3) consecutive years of data before a trend can be established.

## **List of Acronyms:**

CSEC - Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate

GNAT - Grade Nine Achievement Test

GSAT - Grade Six Achievement Test

MoEYI - Ministry of Education and Youth

PEP - Primary Exit Profile

VAMAS - Value Added Model for Assessing Schools

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