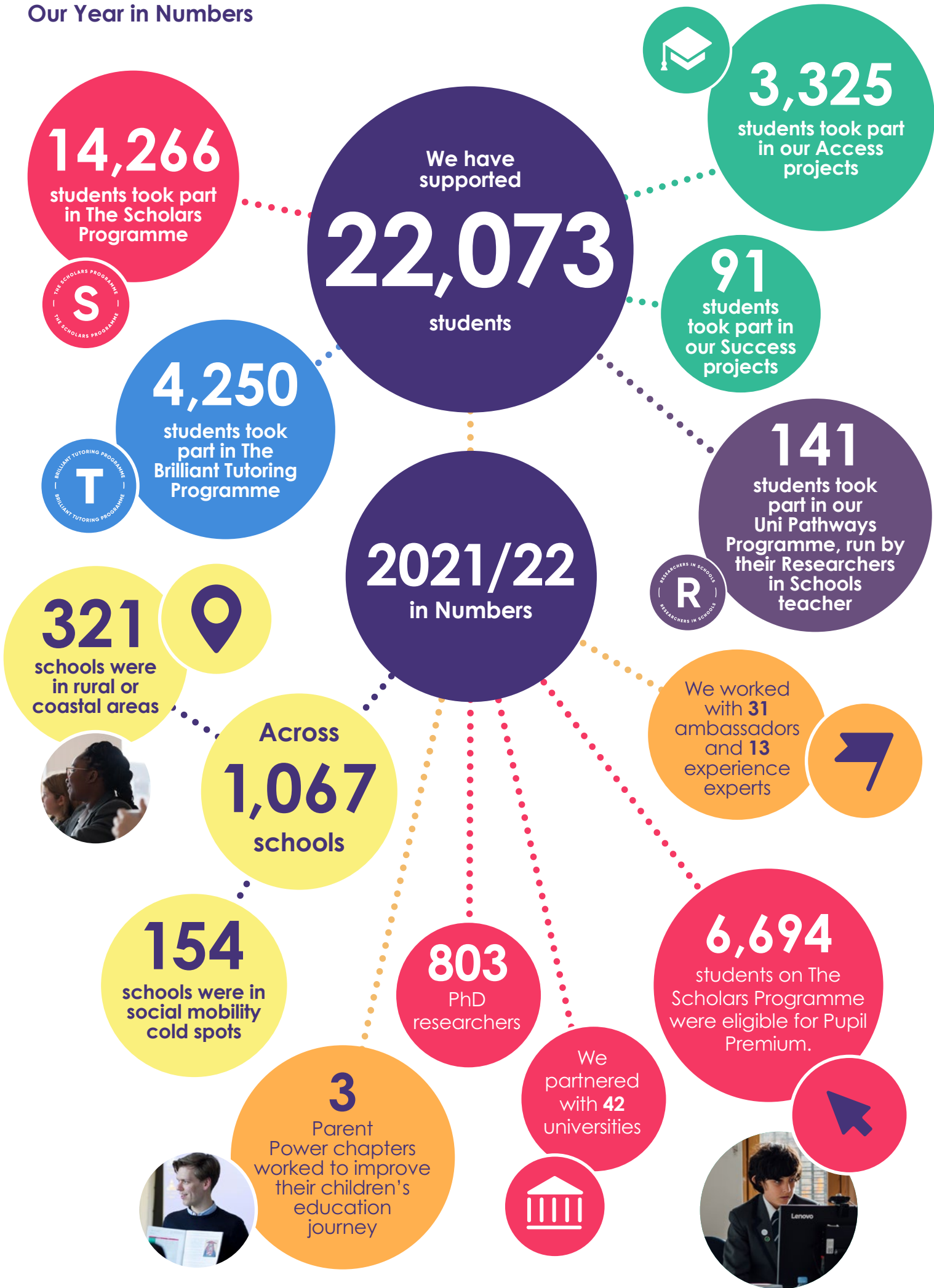




Our Year of Impact

The
Brilliant
Club
2021/22



Introductions

As Interim CEO, I am pleased to welcome you to our Annual Impact Report for the 2021/22 academic year.

This has been a fantastic year for The Brilliant Club. We have mobilised **803 researchers** to support **22,073 students** in **1,067 schools** across the UK, working alongside our 42 university partners. We've also worked with **over 100 parents** through our new Parent Power programme, **31 student ambassadors** from our alumni community, and launched two new programmes.

This year has presented fresh new challenges for schools, students, and universities. In the context of the rise in cost-of-living and as we slowly recover from the learning lost during the pandemic, The Brilliant Club continues its efforts to ensure that no student is at risk of missing out on higher education because of factors beyond their control. Recently, the Fair Education Alliance reported that the attainment gap at primary and GCSE level is at its widest since 2012. As inequalities deepen, The Brilliant Club's work is more important than ever.

We are making excellent progress at The Brilliant Club. For the sixth consecutive year, an independent UCAS evaluation found that students who complete our Scholars Programme are significantly more likely to apply and progress to a competitive university than students from similar backgrounds. As we move into the second year of our Join the Club strategy, we look forward to launching the pilot of our new attainment-raising programme, Make your Mark, in the spring of 2023. In the coming year, we will also be expanding Join the Dots, our university transition programme, designed to create a network of support for students in the first months of their university life.

We couldn't do any of this without our network of tutors, ambassadors, parents, students, and volunteers, who are endlessly creative and innovative, and do so much to support our mission. I extend my thanks to you all.

Susie Whigham, Interim CEO of The Brilliant Club

This has been a wonderful year of change for The Brilliant Club, and there really could not be a better time to Join the Club.

As the charity's first Young Trustee, it has been an absolute pleasure to see the organisation thrive and grow this year. Connecting with young people and the alumni network through our new youth advisory board the 'Experience Experts Panel' has been such an encouraging and inspiring process.

The young people's passion, deep knowledge, and drive to break down barriers for future learners is so motivating and listening to them has really helped us tailor our programmes to the specific needs of the students we work with.

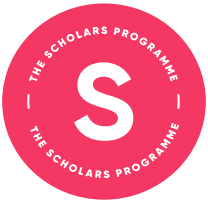
Recent years have not been kind to the most vulnerable in our society - the UK is battling multiple crises, and vulnerable young people are really feeling the hit. It feels more necessary than ever to pour our energy into changing the narrative for them and allow them to imagine new futures for themselves.

I feel so proud to work with The Brilliant Club, and I am so grateful that all of you are with us on this journey as we aim for even bigger and better things in 2023.

Hannah Chukwu, Young Trustee at The Brilliant Club



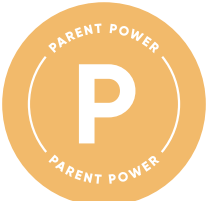
In 2021/22, we offered four core programmes:



The Scholars Programme:
We train our PhD tutors to deliver The Scholars Programme in our partner schools across the UK; sharing their subject knowledge and passion for learning with small groups of students aged 8-18.



The Brilliant Tutoring Programme:
The Brilliant Tutoring Programme offers Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 tutoring in core curriculum subjects led by a subject expert postgraduate tutor.



Parent Power:
Parent Power is driven by parents and carers tackling barriers to education and leading change in their communities, with each chapter supported by an anchor institution and connected by a national network.

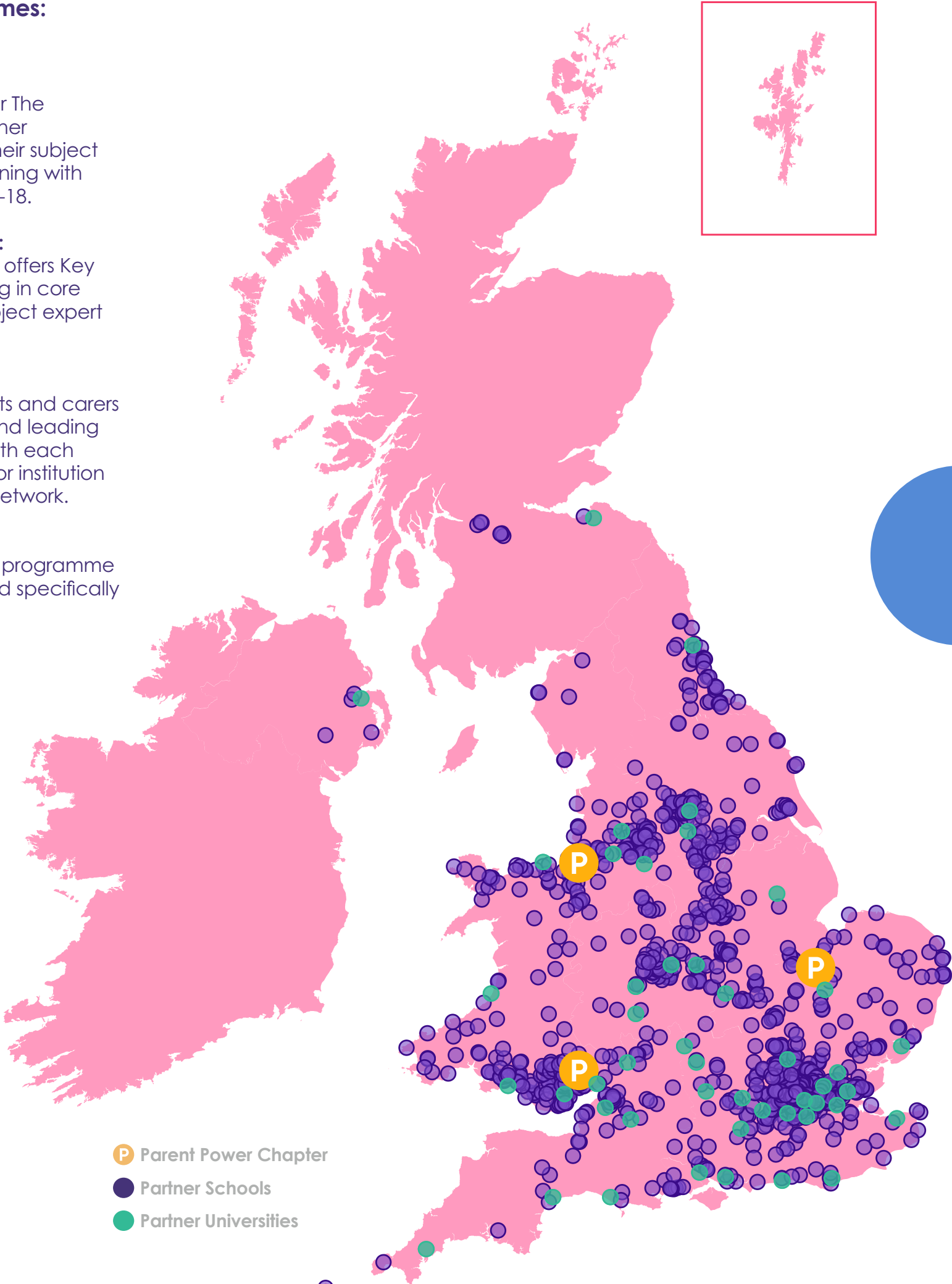


Researchers in Schools:
The Researchers in Schools (RIS) programme is a route into teaching designed specifically for PhD graduates.



I love working with The Brilliant Club and think everyone carrying out a PhD should grab the opportunity with open arms. I am living and breathing my doctorate. My confidence about subject knowledge, teaching and relating research to differing audiences has improved exponentially as a result.

Kelly Hatley, Brilliant Club Tutor and Creative Writing PhD student, Falmouth University



[The Scholars Programme] provides students with a fantastic opportunity and gives them an insight into university life, which for many of the students would've been completely off their radar prior to taking part. It provides students with the tools to become independent learners and question their own viewpoints, perhaps for the first time.

Scholars Programme Lead Teacher, Northamptonshire



I really enjoyed participating in The Scholars Programme and it's made me want to work harder and aim for a more ambitious choice in higher education. Now it feels like an attainable goal and I'm hopeful I can challenge myself to do better.

Scholars Programme Student, Swansea



Activities and Impact

Access Programmes

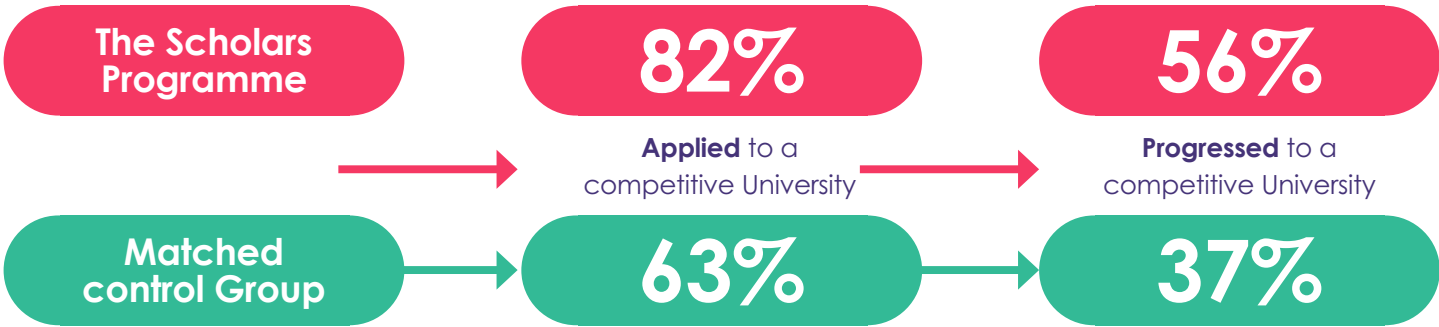


The Scholars Programme supports students aged 8-18 to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to progress to the most competitive universities. We train our PhD tutors to deliver The Scholars Programme in our partner schools across the UK and share their subject knowledge and passion for learning with small groups of students. The programme is bookended by Launch and Graduation Events, including a visit to a competitive university.

We monitor the impact of the programme on intermediate outcomes that are associated with academic achievement and progression to university. These outcomes include critical thinking, subject knowledge, written communication, and university self-efficacy. We measure academic achievement through a baseline and end of programme assignment and university self-efficacy using a pre and post survey.

We also measure the impact of The Scholars Programme on progression to university.

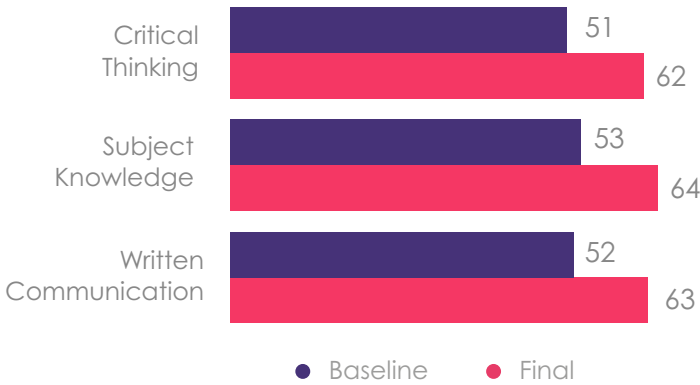
Independent UCAS evaluation has found that Year 12 students who complete The Scholars Programme are statistically significantly more likely to apply and progress to a competitive university than students from similar backgrounds.



Students make 5% progress on university self-efficacy from the beginning to the end of The Scholars Programme

The Scholars Programme: Academic Achievement

Based on 8800 pupils with baseline and end of programme assignments



Student Success Programmes

We have launched our student success work this year, developing our transition programme Join the Dots and delivering bespoke student success projects with our university partners.



Join the Dots

We have developed a university transition programme, Join the Dots, to support Year 13 students transitioning to university. Participants are supported throughout the first six months of university through 1-1 coaching, academic support and peer group sessions.

We know that disadvantage does not disappear when a student walks through the doors of a university. Disadvantaged university students are almost 2x as likely to drop out of their undergraduate course in the first year and 3x more likely to miss out on a 1st or a 2:1 degree. Designed in collaboration with schools, our Join the Dots programme aims to combat these problems and foster a sense of belonging at university.



We are piloting our Join the Dots programme and initial data shows that students who take part in the programme report higher levels of academic self-efficacy and use more effective study strategies in their first term of university.

Join the Dots: Impact Data

Based on a 1-5 Likert scale, where a higher number represents higher levels of academic self-efficacy and study strategy use



The programme has helped me to understand what it means to be an independent learner and my coach has given great assistance and feedback to my coursework.

Join the Dots Student

Case study: University of Essex



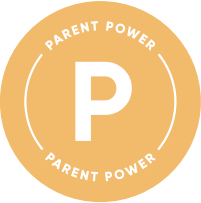
We have partnered with the University of Essex to improve access and participation for Black students in postgraduate research. We will be running training and internships to support Transitions and Transformations, a four-year project beginning in 2022 that aims to boost postgraduate research access, participation, and good outcomes for UK-domiciled Black students.

Our community and our partners want to take bold and far-reaching actions to challenge underrepresentation and make sure talented Black students have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and achieve their aspirations within higher education and in other types of research-related organisations.

Professor Sanja Bahun, Dean of Postgraduate Research and Education at the University of Essex

Communities Programmes

This year, we have focused on growing our Brilliant Club network. We want to learn more about how we can connect to, learn from, and mobilise the communities that we come into contact with.



Parent Power

Parent Power creates networks of parent communities across the UK, each one facilitated by The Brilliant Club and an anchor institution. Parent Power is targeted at parents and carers who are unfamiliar with the university admissions system, including those who have not been to university themselves. Parents receive community organising training so they are empowered to make change in their children's future and ensure they have a fair chance at success in education and beyond.

To join the existing groups in South London and Oldham, in 2021/22 we launched Parent Power chapters in Fenland, Cardiff, and Knowsley. In 2022/23, we are launching a further four chapters: in East Oxford, Mansfield, Peterborough and East London.

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Parent Power Chapters

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Parents

“None of our family have been to university... university's never really entered my head because it doesn't 'exist' in my world. So being invited to be a part of Parent Power Fenland has opened up this subject area and now I feel I have a 'partner' in which to confidently explore this with support.

Parent Leader from Fenland Parent Power, 2021/22

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Ambassador Programme

We continue to work with programme alumni as part of our ambassador programme. This year, we have increased the number of ambassadors from 13 to 31. These ambassadors are now at university or recent graduates and support the charity by sharing their own stories, helping us to improve our programmes for the next generation of participants.

“I know first-hand how influential The Brilliant Club has been in supporting my career aspirations and I'm truly grateful for that, so it's now really exciting to be able to give something back to a scheme that has helped me tremendously and hopefully contribute to inspiring thousands more students across the UK to achieve their dreams of higher education.

Josh, Brilliant Club Ambassador, Medicine, Imperial College London

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Experience Experts Panel

This year, we also set up our Experience Experts Panel (EEP), which is our youth advisory panel. The EEP will allow us to test our approach on strategic challenges collaboratively with young people who have experienced our programmes. So far, the group has helped us to shape our university transition programme, Join the Dots, by sharing their own experiences of the barriers that they faced during their first few months of university life. The panel is chaired by our young trustee, Hannah Chukwu.

Evaluation and Consultancy

Our team of social science researchers evaluate the impact of our access and success programmes and provide consultancy services to universities and other education organisations, looking to build their research and evaluation skills and capacity.

Case study: TASO

We are delivering a sector-wide research project that examines the intermediate outcomes and measures for student access and success. This project has been commissioned by the affiliated What Works Centre, Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO), and we are conducting this project in collaboration with researchers at the University of Cambridge. The findings from this research project will shape how universities and third sector organisations measure outcomes in access and success.

Case study: Lancaster

Lancaster University's Outreach and Student Success Team wished to understand and evaluate how their widening participation activities contribute to raising attainment. We equipped the team with a toolkit of survey measures relevant to their activities, and held workshops to help them understand how the outcomes linked to their access work.

“The Brilliant Club were excellent to work with on this project [...] they were keen to ensure that we were making the best use of the toolkit and were not prescriptive in their approach. The evaluation training was excellent and clearly developed the confidence of those participating within it.

Chris Bayes, Outreach and Student Success Manager, Lancaster University

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Next Steps

As we look ahead to the 2022/23 academic year, we will continue to improve and increase the work that we do to improve student access and success.



Make Your Mark

We are launching our new attainment raising programme, Make your Mark, which we have developed through a collaboration with the University of Sussex, and using an attainment raising model designed by our Research and Impact Department. In partnership with universities, we'll be increasing attainment through subject curriculum tutoring and teacher CPD.

Digital Transformation

We were delighted to receive funding in 2021 to develop our mobile-first platform, which is a key turning point in providing a much-improved digital experience. The platform has been built with inclusivity in mind as we aim to better support students with device and connectivity issues. The new platform was launched to a small group of schools in May 2022 and a full roll out across all schools is planned for 2023.

Supporters

Our supporters play a vital role in supporting students to access to the most competitive universities and succeed when they get there.

We would like to thank everyone who helped to make a positive difference for young people, including partner organisations, individuals and those who wish to remain anonymous.

- AKO Foundation
- Allen & Overy
- Astra Foundation
- BCS Consulting
- Dataiku
- The David and Elaine Potter Foundation
- DeepMind
- The Dulverton Trust
- Department for Education
- Evolve Care Group
- Prakash and Shila Dewani
- Epic Foundation
- Frank Walding and Dr Rosie Gilbert
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- GMSP Foundation
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- The Hugh Fraser Foundation
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- The Taylor Family Foundation
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Partners

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- Birmingham City University
- Brunel University, London
- Cardiff Metropolitan University
- Cardiff University
- CHASE DTP
- Citizens UK
- Falmouth University
- Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Opportunity Area
- Goldsmiths, University of London
- Hartpury University
- King's College London
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- NERCS GW4+ DTP
- Newcastle University
- Northumbria University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Queen's University Belfast
- Royal Holloway, University of London
- SC DTP
- SeNSS
- Shaping Futures
- Sheffield Hallam University
- SOAS, University of London
- St George's, University of London
- Swansea University
- SWW DTP
- The Courtauld Institute of Art
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- The University of Bath
- The University of Brighton
- The University of Bristol
- The University of Cambridge
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- The University of Edinburgh
- The University of Essex
- The University of Exeter
- The University of Huddersfield
- The University of Kent
- The University of Leeds
- The University of Lincoln
- The University of Manchester
- The University of Oxford
- The University of Plymouth
- The University of Portsmouth
- The University of Reading
- The University of Roehampton
- The University of Sheffield
- The University of South Wales
- The University of Southampton
- The University of Strathclyde
- The University of Surrey
- The University of Sussex
- The University of Warwick
- The University of Worcester
- UBEL DTP
- University College London
- York St John University

**We mobilise the PhD
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who are less advantaged to
access the most competitive
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