

CHILD OUTCOMES REPORT

[PROGRAMME] [DATE]



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INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the performance of a sample of children enrolled in 20 early learning programmes in KwaZulu-Natal. Children were assessed on the ELOM 4&5 direct assessment tool.

The report describes the sample's developmental performance on the ELOM.

Assessments were conducted in February and March 2023 by accredited ELOM assessors: Linda Smith and Annette Pieters.

Assessors primarily conducted the ELOM 4 & 5 in isiZulu.

This report was prepared at the request of Maria Ndlovu.



THE elom 4 & 5 YEARS ASSESSMENT [1]

The ELOM 4 & 5 Years Assessment is a standardised child assessment tool that measures children's performance across five key developmental domains for children aged between 4 and 5 years old:



Gross Motor Development (GMD): Children's ability to control the large muscles of their body.



Fine Motor Coordination & Visual Motor Integration (FMC-VMI): Children's ability to control small muscles and coordinate small movements with visual information perceived by the eyes.



Emergent Numeracy & Mathematics (ENM): Children's ability to understand number concepts, symbols, shapes, and size.



Cognition & Executive Functioning (CEF): Children's ability to stay focused, solve problems, form concepts, attend to instructions, and control impulses.



Emergent Literacy & Language (ELL): Children's ability to communicate effectively. This includes their ability to speak in full sentences, recognise the initial sounds of words, name common objects, relay events and listen to and understand stories told to them.

The ELOM suite of tools also includes measures of children's socio-emotional functioning and height-for-age (described on the following page). Home learning and classroom learning environment tools are available too, and can be explored [here](#). Your chosen domains and focus areas are highlighted on the following page.

THE **elom** 4 & 5 YEARS ASSESSMENT [2]

In addition to the developmental domains described on the previous page, the ELOM 4 & 5 includes two developmental checks, or screens:

Task Orientation: The ELOM assessor is asked yes/no questions about each child's ability to persist with attention and accomplish tasks during the ELOM 4 & 5 assessment. Four items ask about the child's level of attention, concentration, diligence and interest during the assessment tasks.

Children receive a score out of 4, and their task orientation (ability to stay on task) is deemed either satisfactory or poor.

World Health Organisation (WHO) disability screening: To determine whether a sampled child has a disability that might affect their performance on the assessment, they are screened using a modified version of the WHO Ten Question Screen. The assessor is asked four questions regarding each child's eyesight, hearing, ability to understand instruction, and movement abilities.

These two checks form part of the ELOM 4 & 5 screening process. If a child fails either one, they are removed from the sample.

YOUR FOCUS AREAS

Your study included the measurement of the following developmental areas:

Domains / Areas of Assessment		Measured in your Study
	Gross Motor Development	✓
	Fine Motor Coordination & Visual-Motor Integration	✓
	Emergent Numeracy & Mathematics	✓
	Cognition & Executive Functioning	✓
	Emergent Literacy & Language	✓
	Socio-emotional Functioning	X
	Height-for-Age (Growth)	X

What is the Socio-Emotional Rating Scale?

This ELOM tool measures a child's emotional readiness for school, as well as social relations with their peers and adults. This scale is completed by an adult who knows the child well. You can read more about this tool [here](#).

What is Height-for-Age?

This tool is a measure of a child's growth in relation to their age, indicating whether a child is exhibiting normal growth or is showing signs of malnutrition and stunting, Read more about how growth standards are calculated [here](#).

THE ELOM 4 & 5 YEARS STANDARDS

Each of the ELOM 4&5 domains is scored out of 20 points, with the total assessment scored out of 100 points. For each of the learning domains that are assessed, and for learning overall (total score), children's scores are compared against the expected developmental standards for their age.

Scores fall within one of three performance bands:

-  **On track** for their age: These children meet the learning standards and are able to do the tasks expected of a child their age.
-  **Falling behind** the expected standard for their age: These children will need support in order to catch up with other children of their age.
-  **Falling far behind** the expected standard; These children need intensive intervention to reach the standard and are at risk of not catching up with their peers.

Children's overall ELOM scores do improve naturally with age. This is to be expected as they grow and develop. However, their position within the ELOM performance bands does not change as a function of their increasing age alone, but rather, as a function of enhanced learning opportunities (such as participation in an early learning programme, and engagement with parents, other adults and peers).



The ELOM Standards

The ELOM development team followed accepted practices in setting standards. This requires the use of empirical data and the judgements of qualified people. In consultation with experts, the expected ELOM performance standards were benchmarked at the score achieved by the top 40% of children (the 60th Percentile) in the ELOM's 2016 age validation sample. The cut scores for *Falling Behind* fell between the 32nd and 59th percentile, and below the 32nd Percentile children are considered to be Falling Far Behind. Learn more about the standards in the [ELOM Technical Manual](#).

WHAT CAN THIS REPORT SAY ABOUT YOUR PROGRAMME?

Your ELOM study is a **dipstick assessment**, meaning that it is intended to give an indication of how your programme children are currently performing at this point in time.

How can dipstick data be used?

- To describe the developmental status of children in early learning programmes.
- To identify potential developmental domains that require intervention.
- To establish a baseline performance level, which can be compared to future ELOM assessments of the same children.

It is important to note that this kind of assessment **cannot** be used to:

- Provide a measurement of individual child performance. The ELOM 4 & 5 is designed to describe the average developmental status of groups of children. It should only be used as an individual assessment by registered professionals such as psychologists and occupational therapists to aid in assessment of developmental difficulties.
- Establish the impact of the learning programme. For this, you need to compare a baseline to a follow-up assessment of the same children.
- Replace an outcomes or implementation evaluation. This requires additional data collection, such as a pre- and post-measurement using the ELOM 4 & 5, as well as other measurements (e.g., [programme quality](#), staff interviews).



SAMPLE OVERVIEW

This ELOM study included a sample of children from the programme, believed to represent the whole programme cohort. The scores provided in this report represent the performance of sampled children only. Details of the sample are below.

Number of children in the sample	Children aged 4 years (50 - 59 months)	Children aged 5 years (60 - 69 months)	Total
Final sample size *	110	30	140
% Boys	44%	54%	46%
% Girls	56%	46%	54%
Average age (months)	54	60	55.5

*Note: Please note that one child was excluded from the sample because they did not complete the assessment, which took your total sample size from 141 to 140.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE SAMPLE [1]

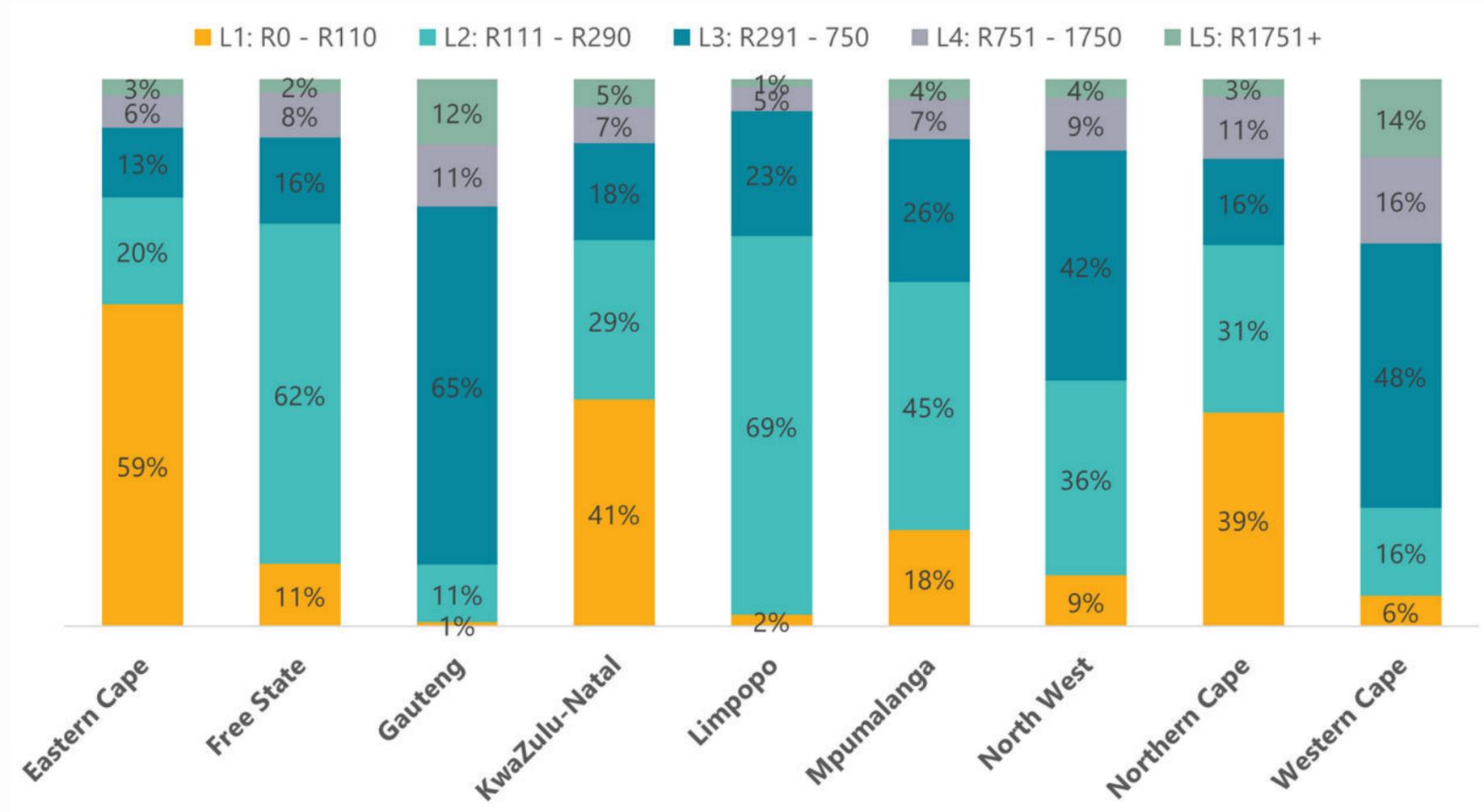
To determine the sample's socio-economic status of the 50-59 month cohort, we use the early learning programme's monthly fee charged as a proxy. Nationally, there are five distinct fee bands of between R0 – R1750+ per month:

- Level 1: R0-R110
- Level 2: R111-R290
- Level 3: R291-R750
- Level 4: R751-R1750
- Level 5: R1751+

Using fee levels allows us to compare your sample's ELOM results to national datasets within the same socio-economic band as your sample.

In the graph on the right, we illustrate the percentage of programmes that fall within each fee band per province, based on data from the [2021 ECD Census](#). You can read more about the fee levels, and characteristics of early learning programmes at different fee levels, [here](#). This comparison data is **only available for children in the younger age band (4 years)**, as this was the age of the Thrive by Five sample.

Children in this 4-year old sample fall within **Fee Levels 1 and 2 - or from R0 – R290 per month.**



SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE SAMPLE [2]

To determine the socio-economic status of the 60-69 month age sample, we use the nearest school quintile as a proxy. Quintiles are assigned to schools on the basis of national poverty data; schools are classified according to the household income levels within their catchment area. Quintile 1 to 3 schools are attended by the poorest children and these schools do not charge fees. Quintile 4 and 5 schools operate in wealthier areas.

As a part of the ELOM 4 & 5 tool's validation process, it was administered to children across all quintiles. This means that your sample's data can be compared to a comparison group of children (who formed part of the validation process) who attend programmes in the same socio-economic conditions as your sample.

Children in this 5-year old sample fall within **Quintile 1**.



SAMPLE CONTEXT

The early learning programmes in the study sample are located in KwaZulu-Natal. To understand the provincial context in which your early learning programmes are operating, we looked at various data sources that describe the situation of young children in this province.

According to Statistics South Africa (2016), there are approximately 1 530 000 children between 0 and 6 years old in KwaZulu-Natal.

According to the Children's Institute, 70% of children living in KwaZulu-Natal are income-poor, meaning that they only have enough money for basic nutrition and other essentials such as clothing.

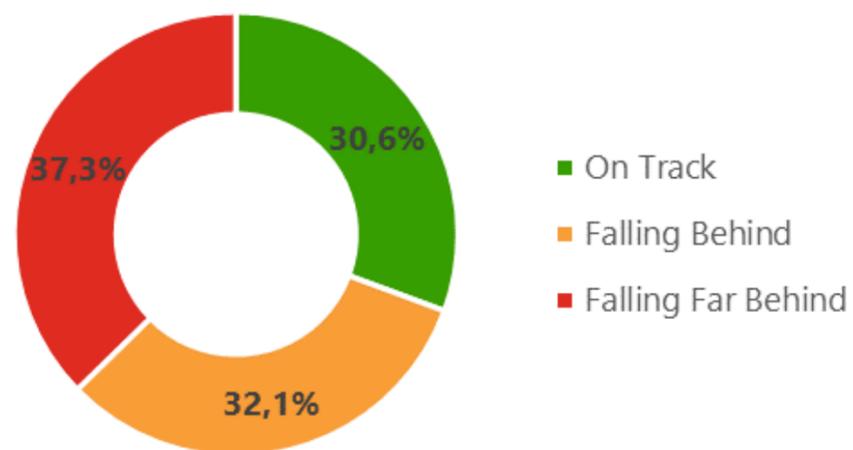
According to the General Household Survey (2019), 54.7% of 4-year old children in KwaZulu-Natal attend some form of early learning programme.

Finally, according to the baseline Thrive by Five national index, **30.6%** of children* in KwaZulu-Natal are **on track** for early learning (total ELOM 4&5 score) (see the graphs below).

Thrive by Five Provincial Results: KwaZulu-Natal

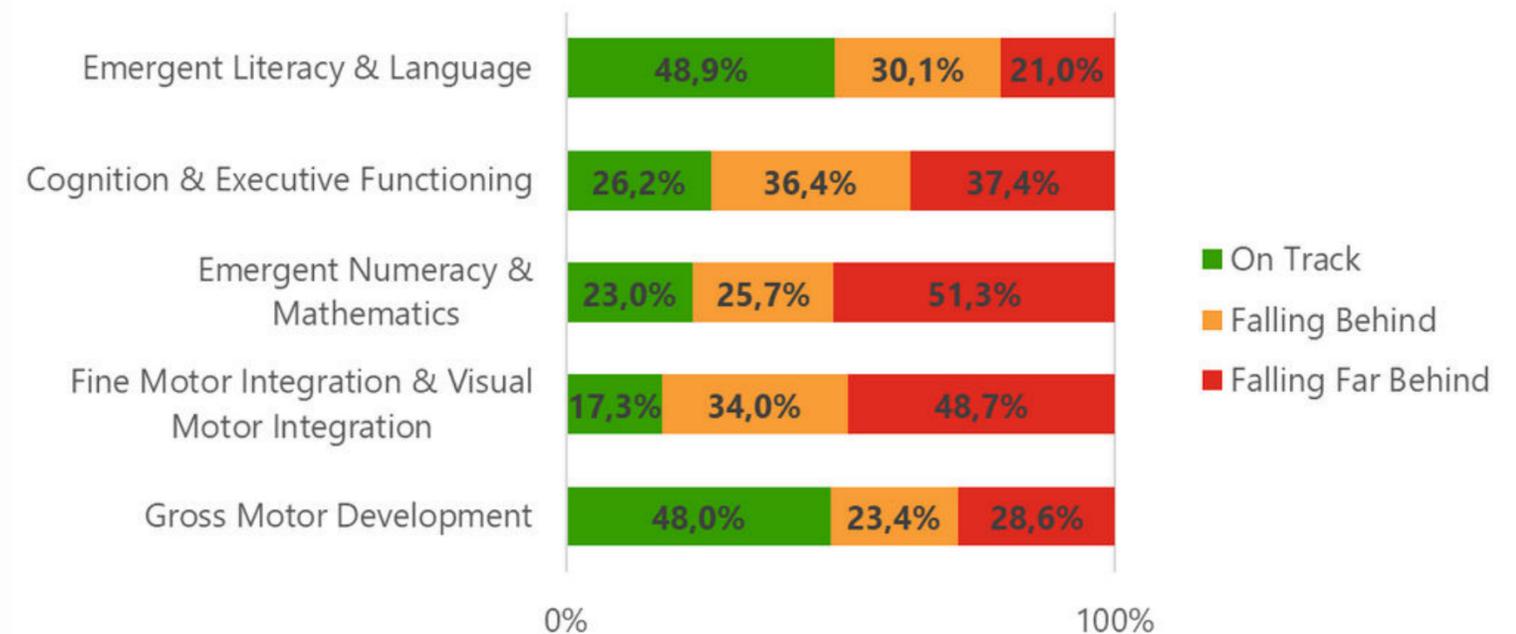
Percentage of Children On Track for Early Learning (Percentage of Children in each Performance Band):

ELOM 4 & 5 Total



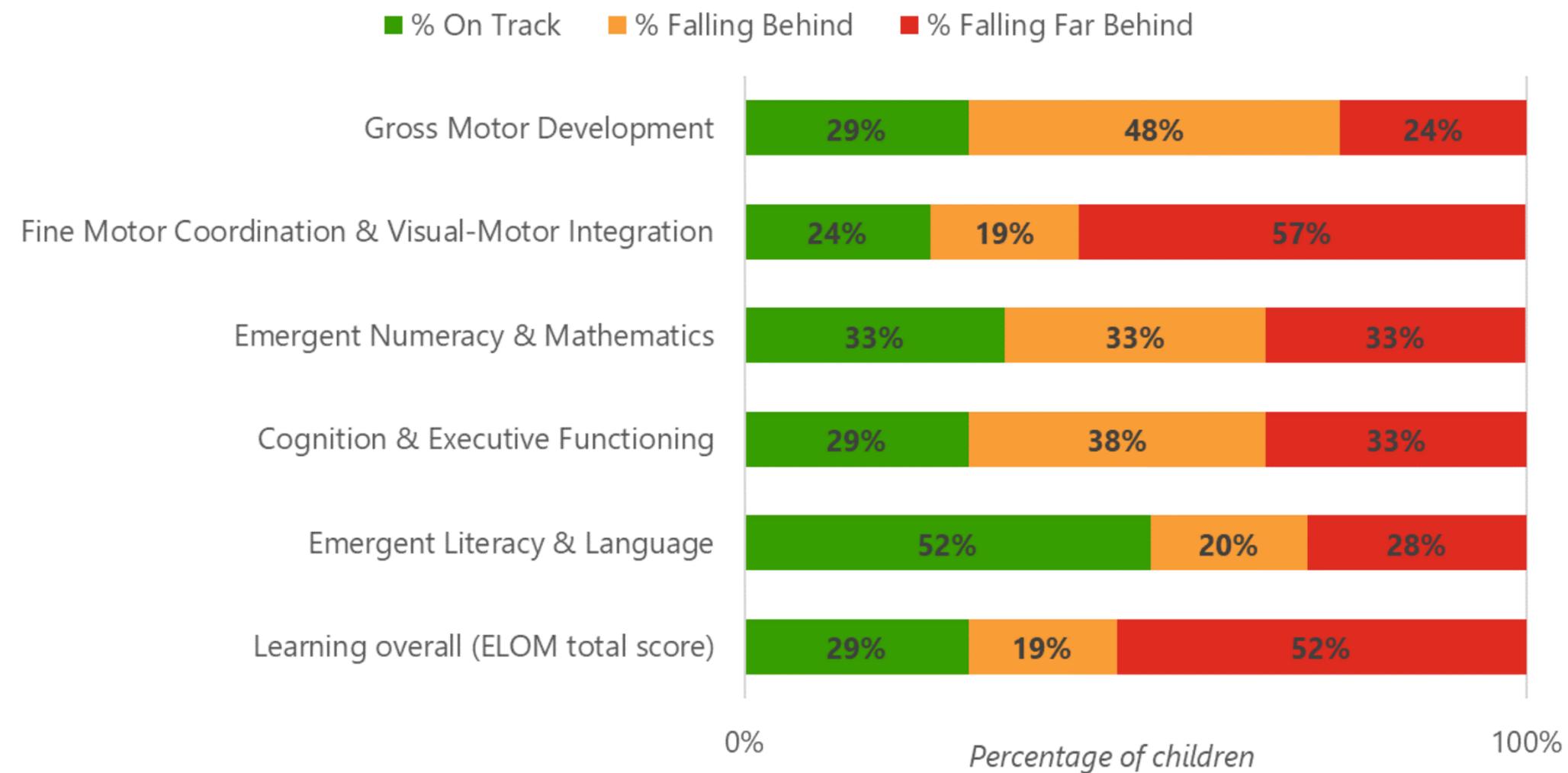
Percentage of Children On Track for Early Learning (Percentage of Children in each Performance Band):

ELOM 4 & 5 Domains



ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR CHILDREN ARE ON TRACK?

Your children were assessed on all five ELOM domains. **29%** of your sample are on track for ELOM Total. The graph below shows the percentage of children who are on track, falling behind, or falling far behind on each of the domains assessed.



 A large percentage of your children are falling far behind in Fine Motor Coordination & Visual-Motor Integration. More attention can be paid to this domains.

 Just over half of your children are on track in Emergent Literacy & Language, This is the strongest domain in your sample of children.

ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: UNDERSTANDING THE COMPARISON GROUPS

You elected to compare your sample's ELOM scores to a number of comparison groups. These are defined below.

Thrive by Five (Tb5) national averages: These scores represent the average performance on the ELOM 4 & 5 of the entire Tb5 South African sample - over 5,000 children in 1,247 early learning programmes across all provinces.

Thrive by Five (Tb5) provincial average: These scores represent the average ELOM 4 & 5 performance of the Tb5 sample in your province only.

Thrive by Five (Tb5) fee level: The Tb5 Index used fees charged by ELPs as a proxy for an area's socio-economic status. The Index distinguished between [five distinct fee bands](#), of between R0 and over R1750 per month.

Quintile: School quintile is often used as a proxy for an area's socio-economic status to help determine the income level associated with a particular programme. This is done by identifying the primary or combined school closest to the programme and identifying its associated quintile. The comparison data that we use here is the ELOM standardisation sample, a nationally representative sample that you can read more about in [this article](#).



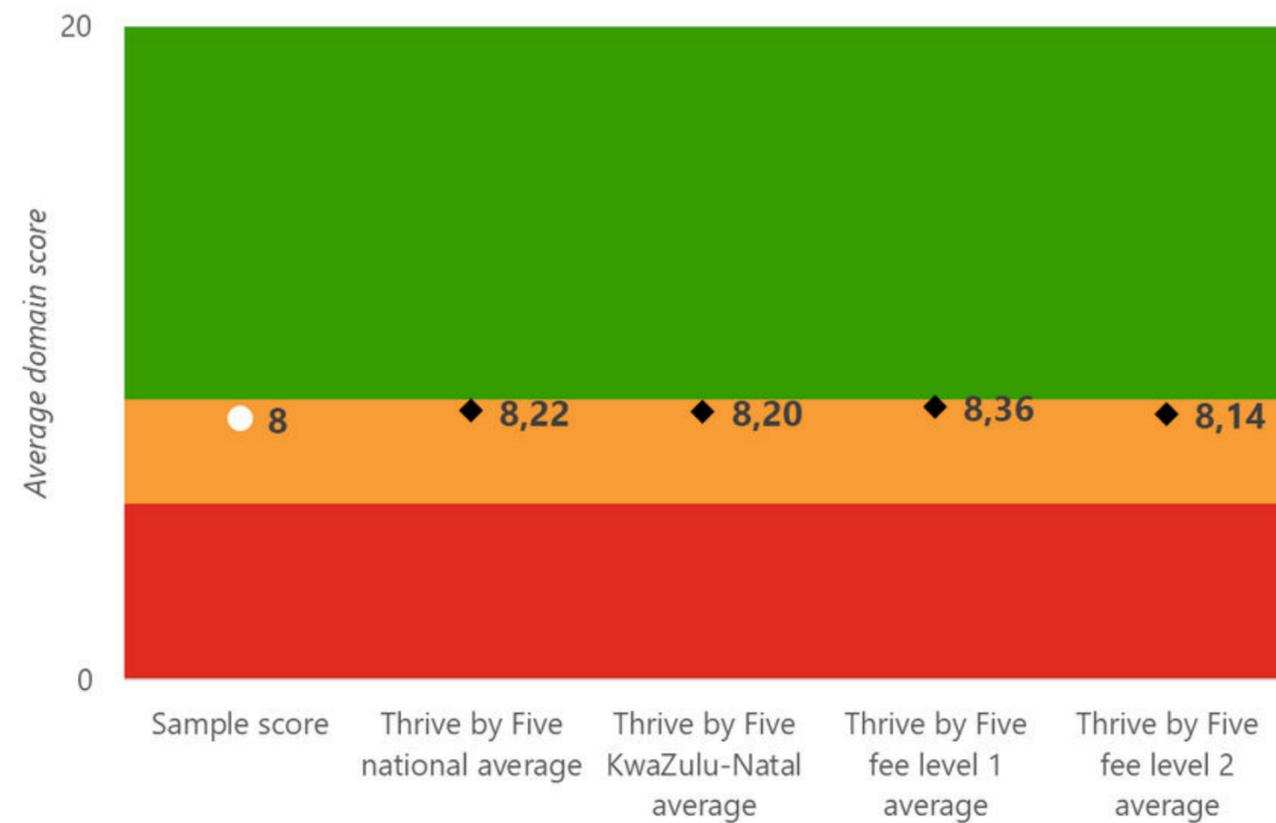
What is the Thrive by Five Index?

The 2021 [Thrive by Five Index](#), released in April 2022, is the largest representative survey of preschool child development ever undertaken in South Africa. It is the first in a series of surveys that will be repeated every three years to monitor whether children attending early learning programmes are developmentally on track for their age.

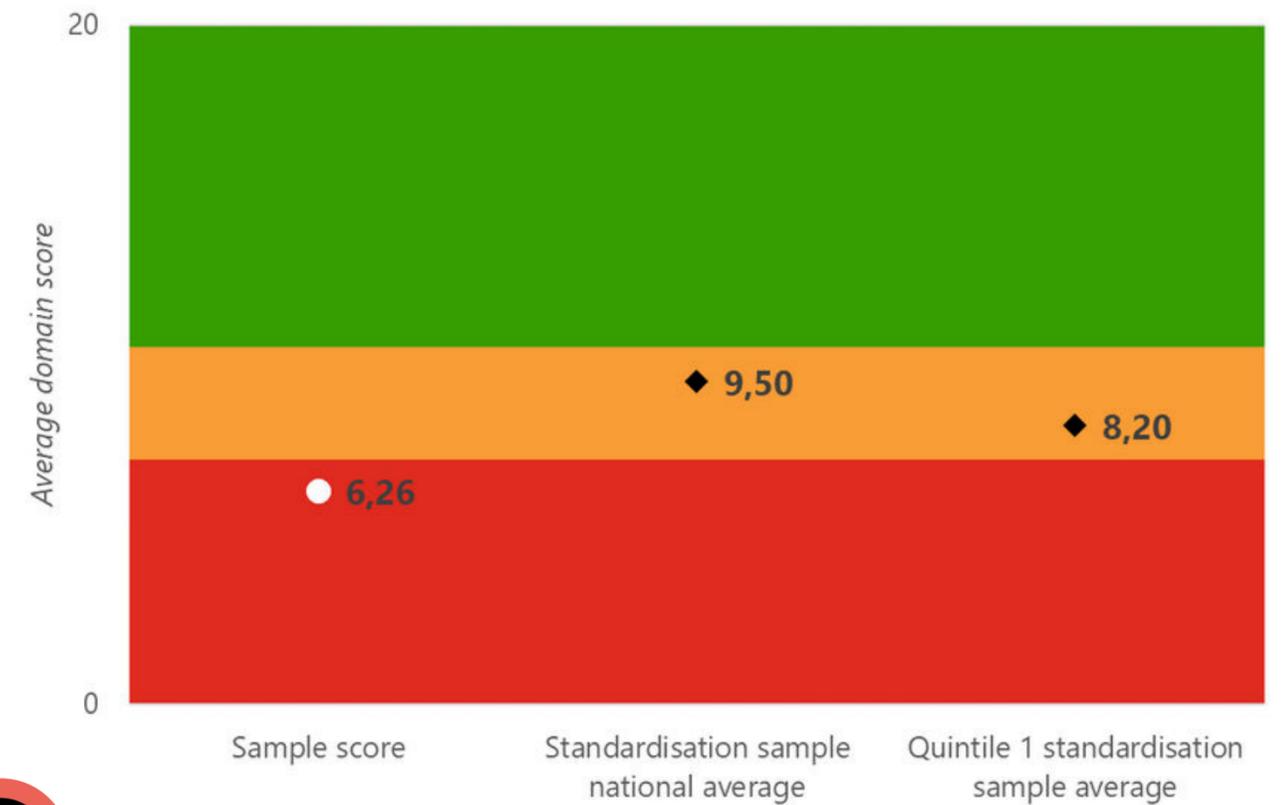
ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: HOW DO YOUR GMD SCORES COMPARE TO OTHERS?

The graph below depicts your sample's average performance in Gross Motor Development (white dot). On the left, we compare your younger sample to Thrive by Five data at the national, provincial and fee level for children of the same age as your sample. On the right, we compare your older sample to the ELOM standardisation data for children in the same quintiles as your sample. Remember, the shaded areas refer to the ELOM performance bands (*on track*, *falling behind*, *falling far behind*).

4-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE



5-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE

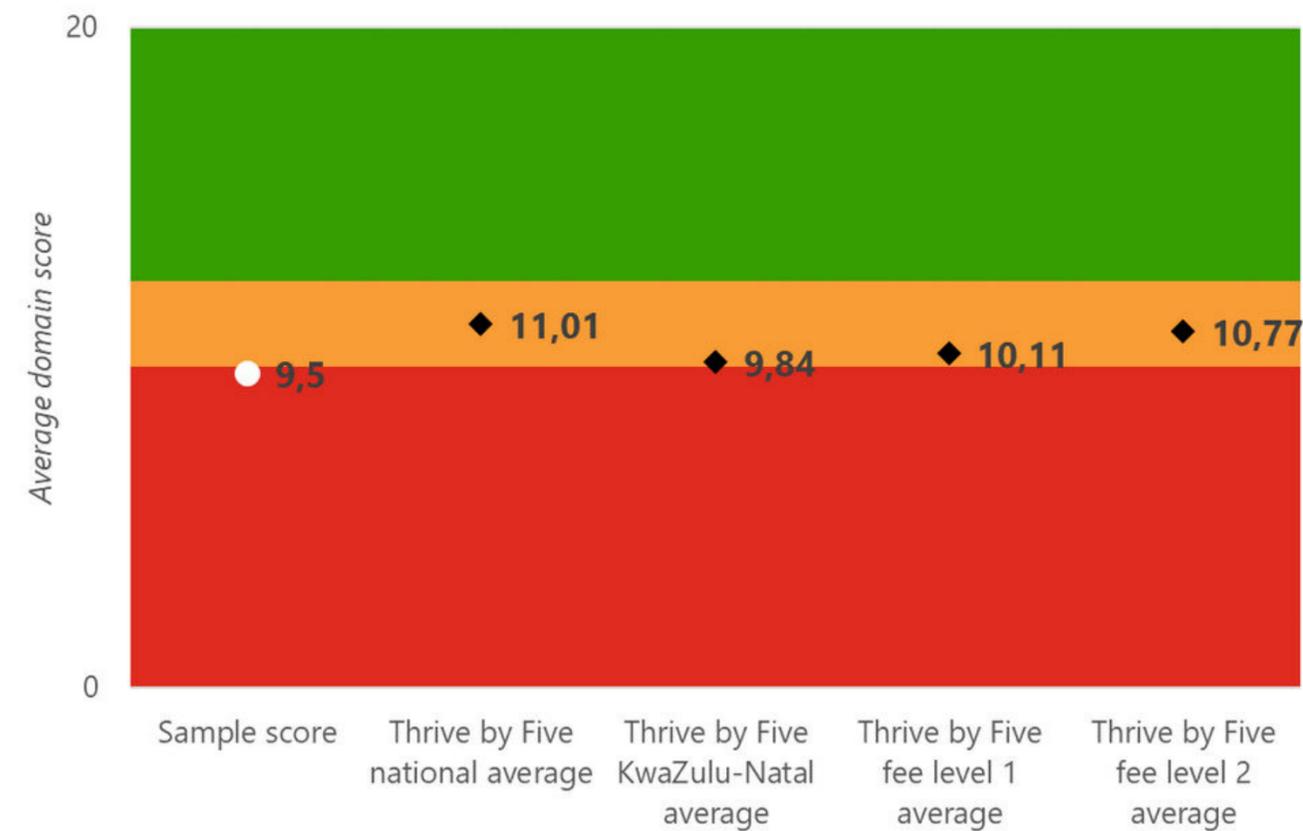


!
Your sample's average GMD scores are below all benchmarks. Your older sample is falling far behind in this domain.

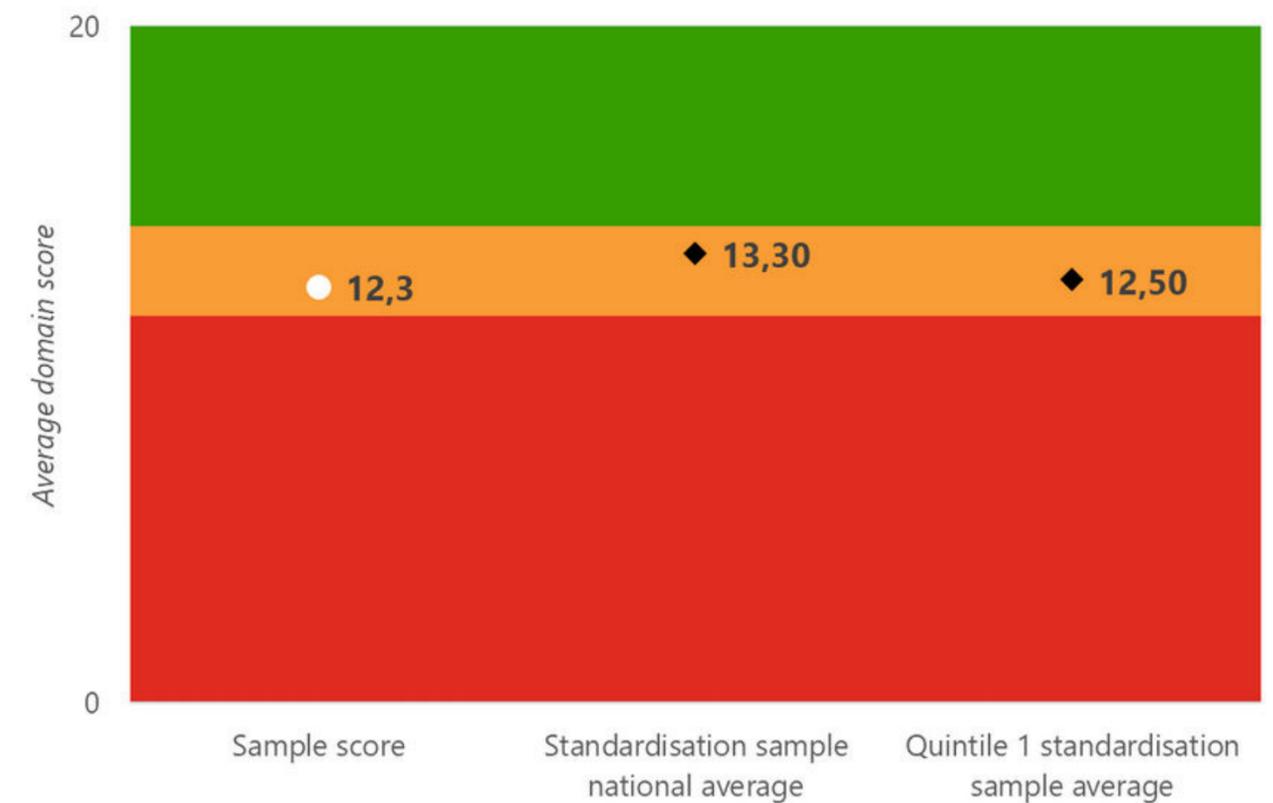
ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: HOW DO YOUR FMC-VMI SCORES COMPARE TO OTHERS?

The graph below depicts your sample's average performance in Fine Motor Coordination and Visual-Motor Integration (white dot). On the left, we compare your younger sample to Thrive by Five data at the national, provincial and fee level for children of the same age as your sample. On the right, we compare your older sample to the ELOM standardisation data for children in the same quintiles as your sample. Remember, the shaded areas refer to the ELOM performance bands (*on track*, *falling behind*, *falling far behind*).

4-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE



5-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE

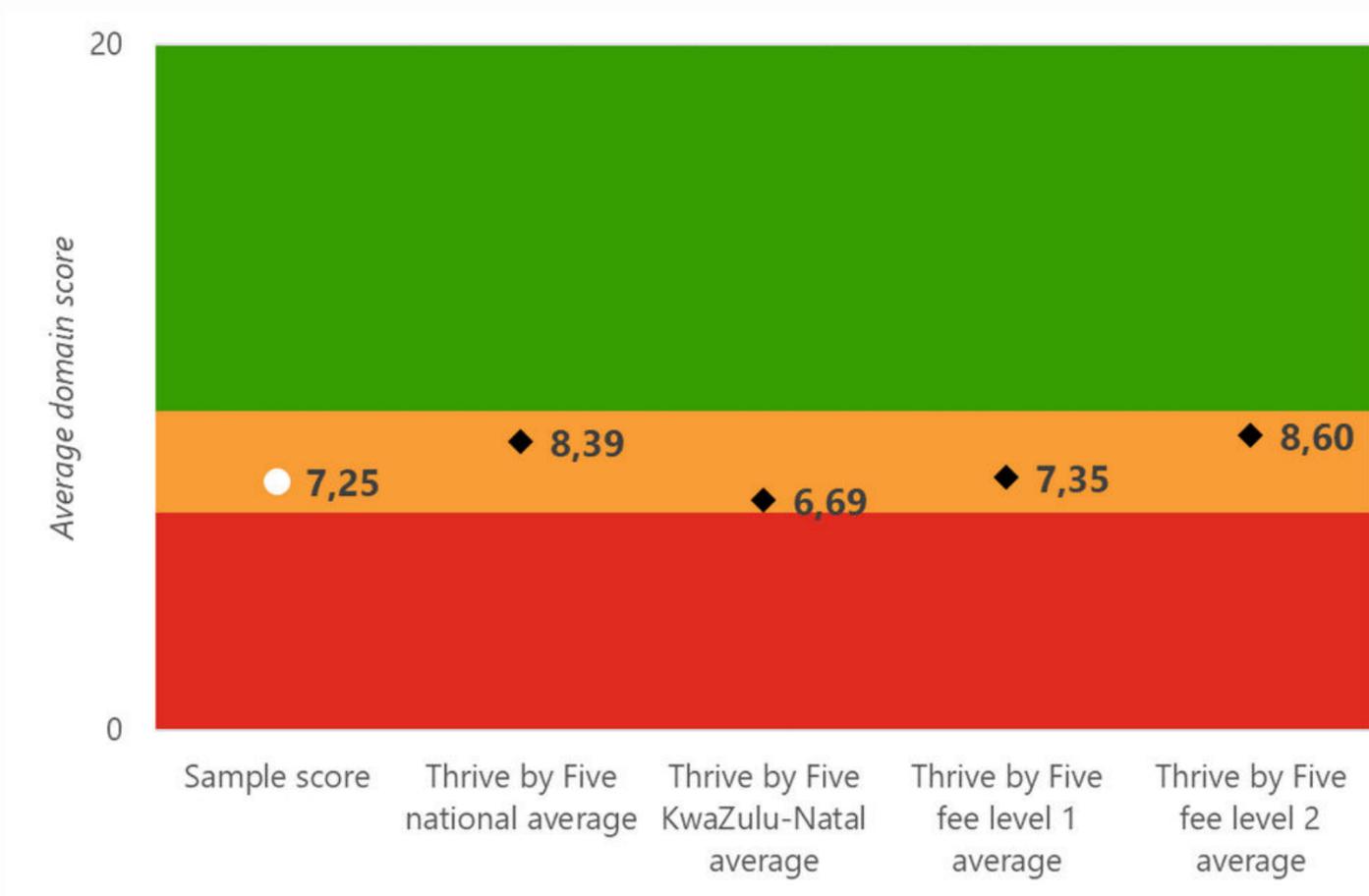


!
Your sample's average FMC-VMI scores are below all benchmarks.

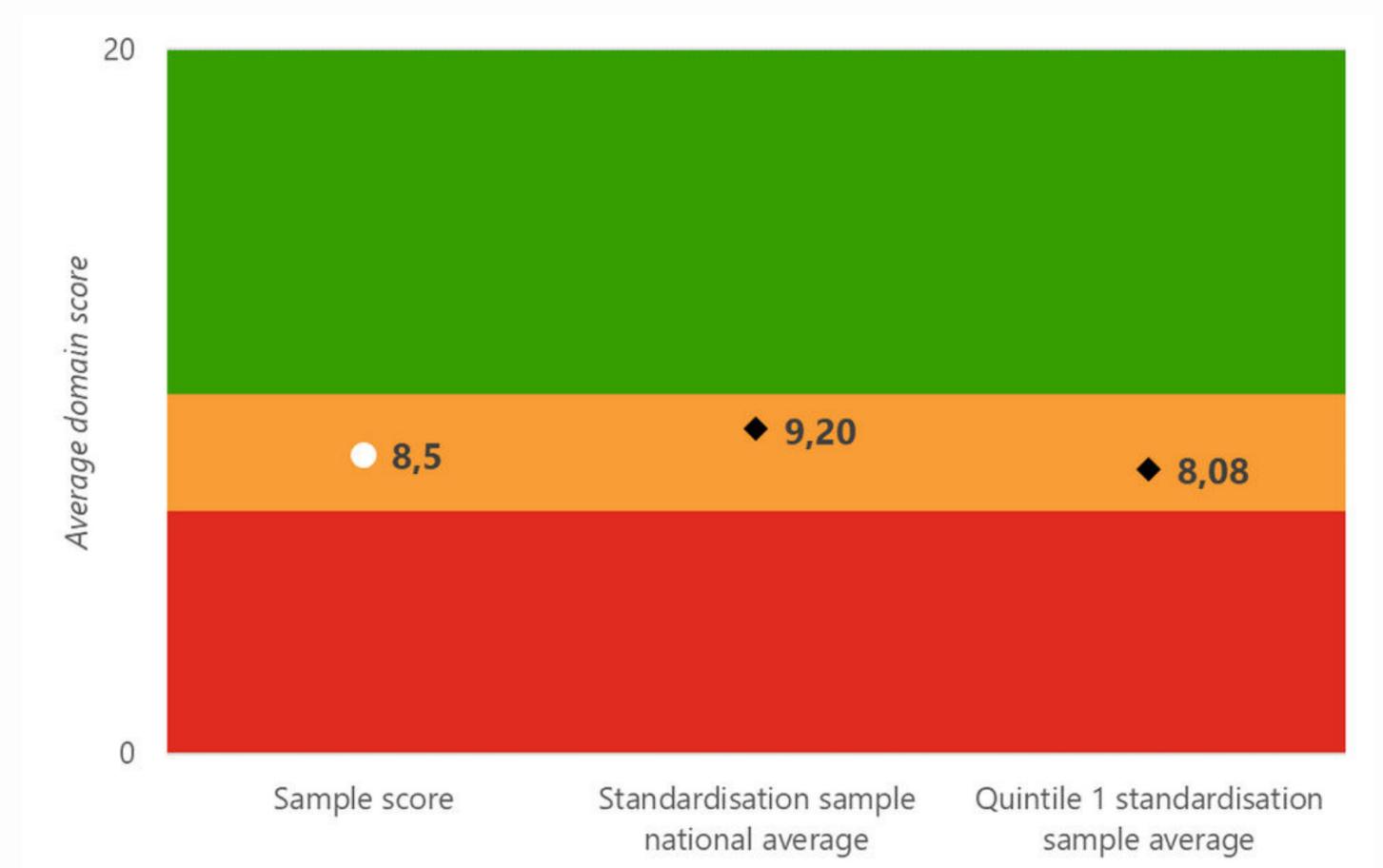
ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: HOW DO YOUR ENM SCORES COMPARE TO OTHERS?

The graph below depicts your sample's average performance in Emergent Numeracy and Mathematics (white dot). On the left, we compare your younger sample to Thrive by Five data at the national, provincial and fee level for children of the same age as your sample. On the right, we compare your older sample to the ELOM standardisation data for children in the same quintiles as your sample. Remember, the shaded areas refer to the ELOM performance bands (*on track*, *falling behind*, *falling far behind*).

4-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE



5-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE

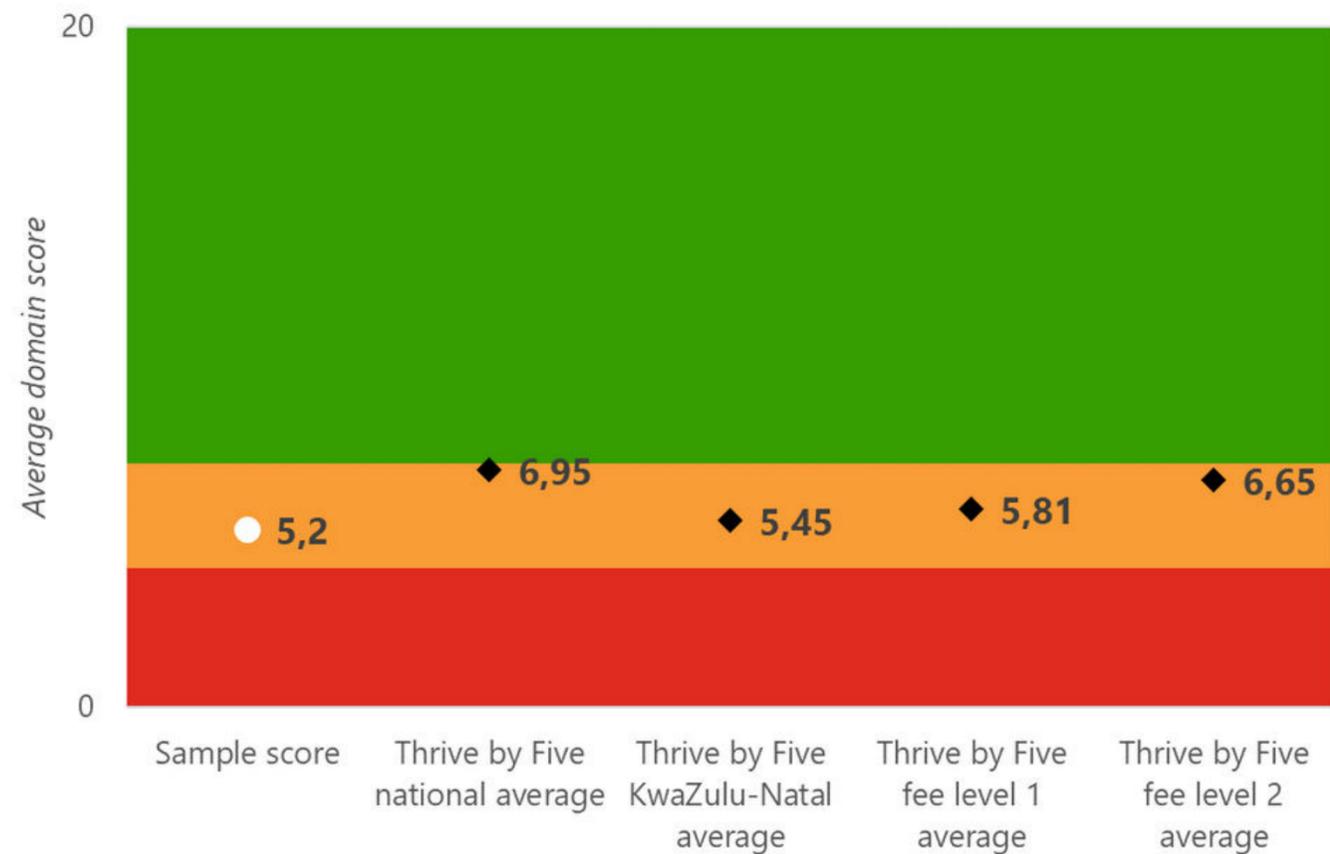


Your sample's average ENM scores are below all benchmarks, and both age groups are falling behind.

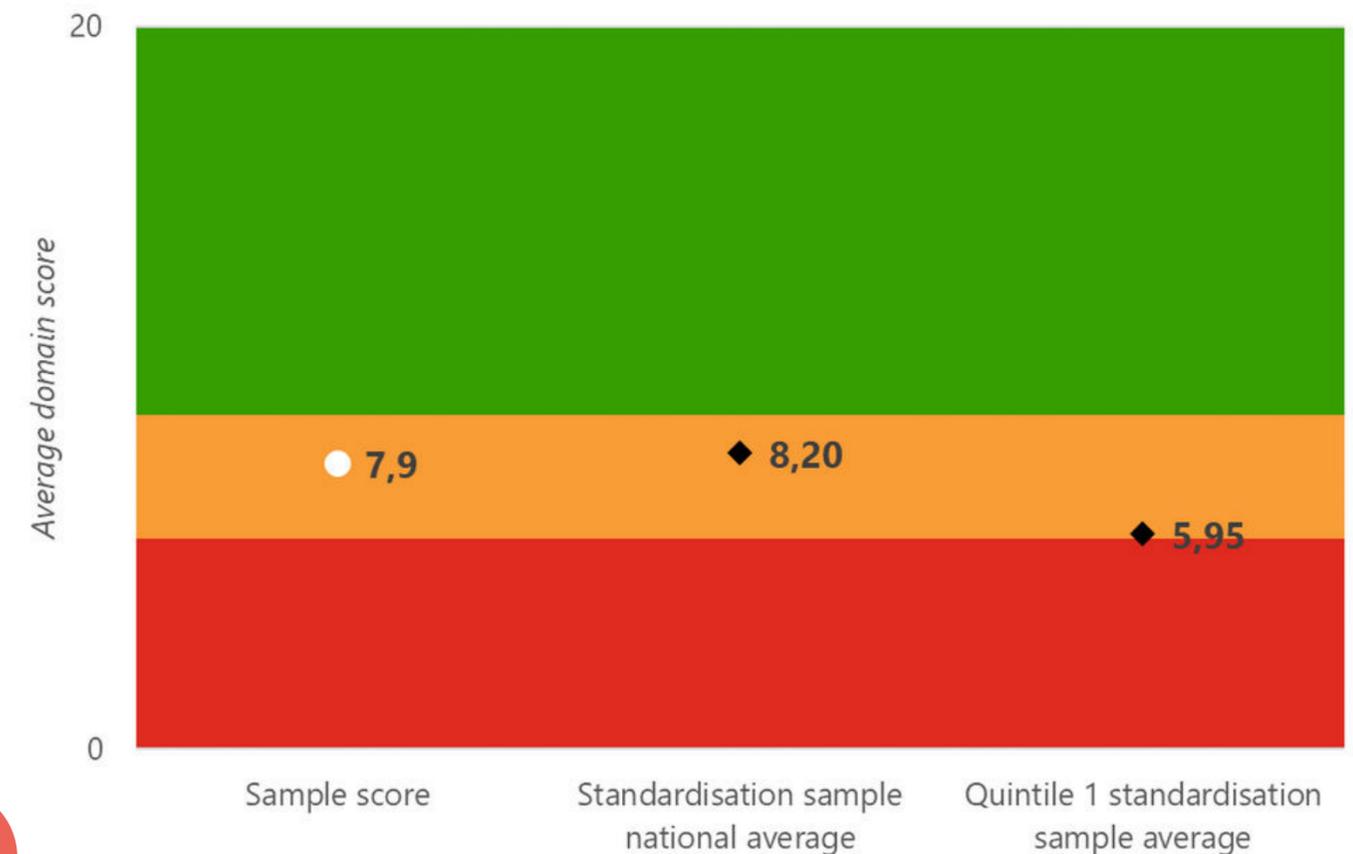
ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: HOW DO YOUR CEF SCORES COMPARE TO OTHERS?

The graph below depicts your sample's average performance in Cognition and Executive Functioning (white dot). On the left, we compare your younger sample to Thrive by Five data at the national, provincial and fee level for children of the same age as your sample. On the right, we compare your older sample to the ELOM standardisation data for children in the same quintiles as your sample. Remember, the shaded areas refer to the ELOM performance bands (*on track*, *falling behind*, *falling far behind*).

4-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE



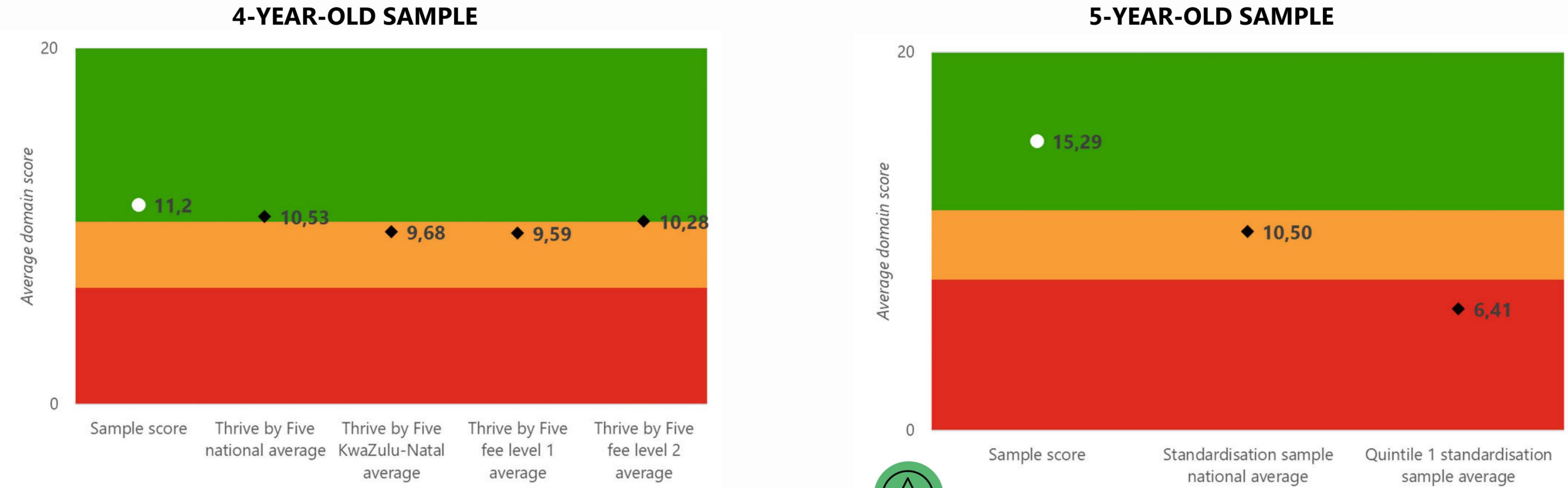
5-YEAR-OLD SAMPLE



 Your sample's average CEF scores are below most benchmarks.

ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: HOW DO YOUR ELL SCORES COMPARE TO OTHERS?

The graph below depicts your sample's average performance in Emergent Literacy and Language (white dot). On the left, we compare your younger sample to Thrive by Five data at the national, provincial and fee level for children of the same age as your sample. On the right, we compare your older sample to the ELOM standardisation data for children in the same quintiles as your sample. Remember, the shaded areas refer to the ELOM performance bands (*on track*, *falling behind*, *falling far behind*).

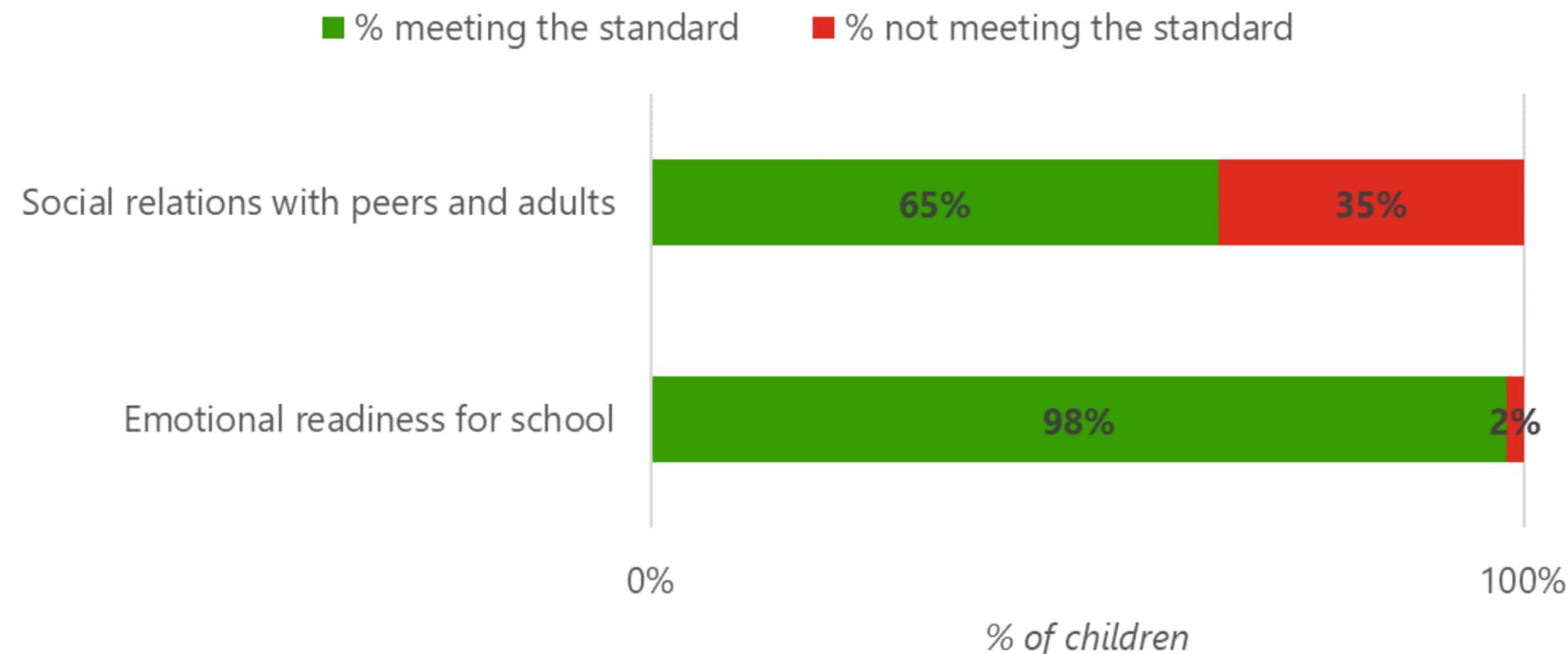


★ Both of your samples are on track in the domain, and are performing better than all benchmarks.

ELOM 4 & 5 RESULTS: HOW DOES YOUR SAMPLE SCORE ON SOCIO-EMOTIONAL FUNCTIONING?

The ELOM [Social-Emotional Rating Scale](#) assesses children in terms of their emotional readiness for school and their social relations with peers and adults. The scale is used alongside the ELOM 4&5 assessment in order to measure aspects of the same child's behaviour that cannot be reliably assessed by a stranger in a testing situation. It consists of a set of questions that can be completed by the child's teacher (or playgroup facilitator) once they have known the child for at least 4 months.

The graph below depicts your sample's socio-emotional functioning performance in relation to the ELOM standards.



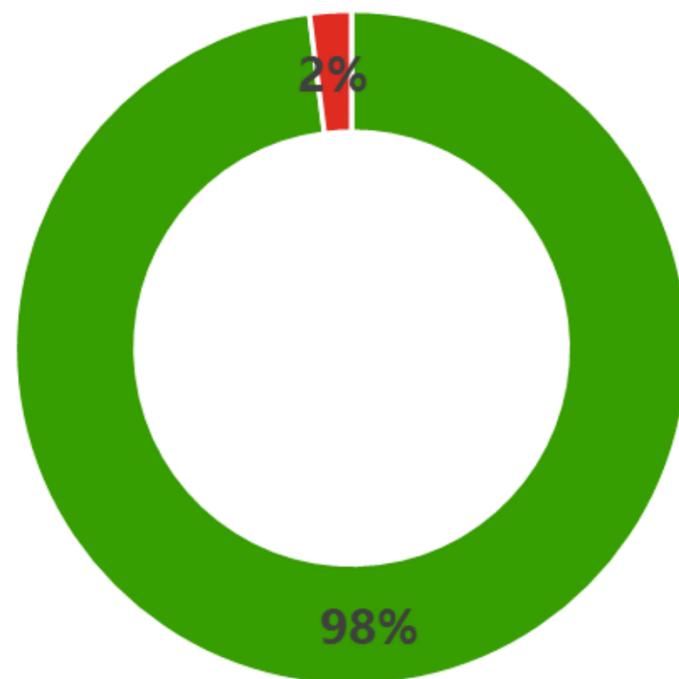
 Almost all of your sample is meeting the standard for emotional readiness for school.

 35% of your sample is not meeting the standard in terms of their social relations with peers and adults.

HEIGHT-FOR-AGE: IS YOUR SAMPLE EXHIBITING NORMAL GROWTH?

The Thive by Five Index found that by the age of 4 years, a child who has stunted growth is, on average, 5 to 6 months behind their peers when it comes to early learning. As part of your ELOM study, the sample children's height was measured in order to track their growth status. This was done using a portable stadiometer, which uses a free-standing ruler and a sliding headpiece that rests on top of the child's head for an accurate height measurement.

In the graph below, we present the percentage of your sample showing normal vs stunted growth.



- Normal height-for-age
- Stunted growth

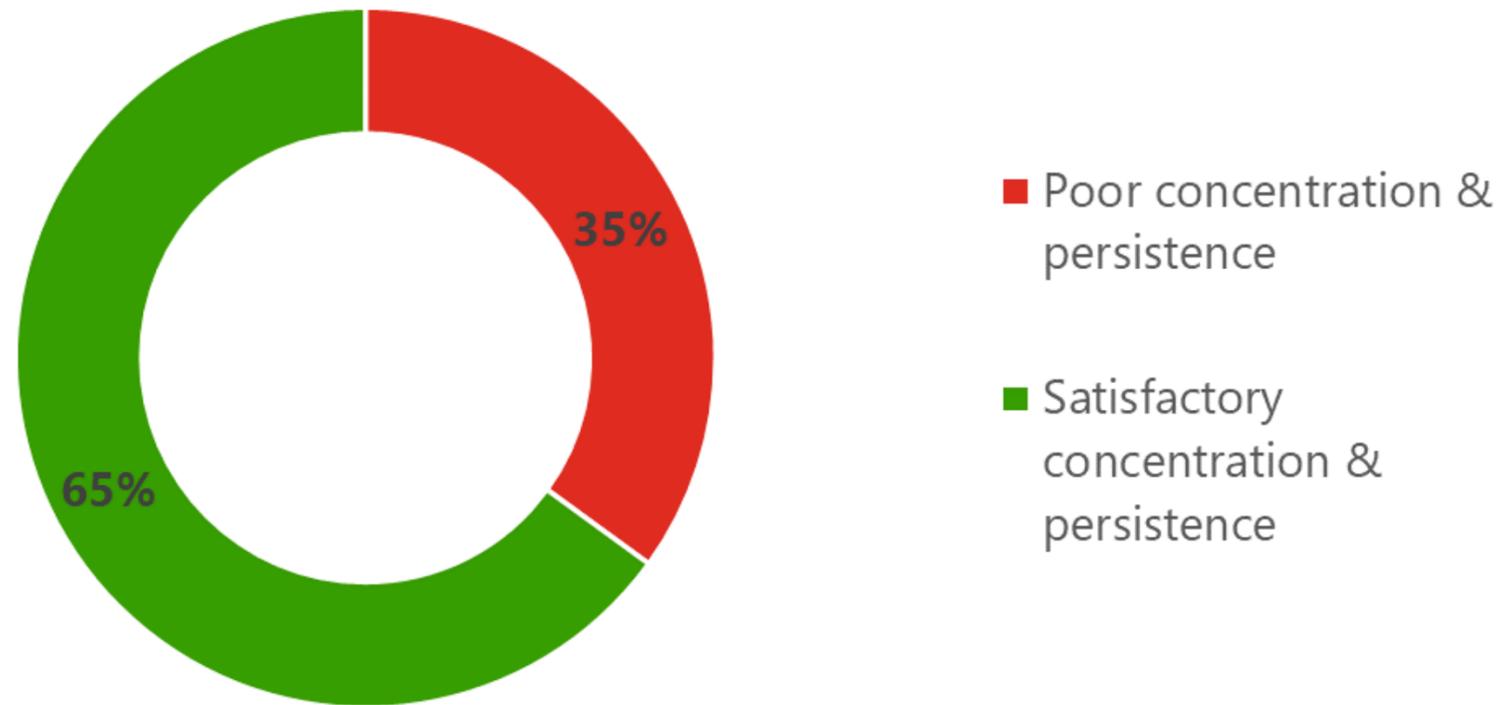


Children who are short for their age are often chronically under-nourished. These children are at risk of not achieving their developmental potential.

TASK ORIENTATION: HOW WELL DID YOUR SAMPLE CONCENTRATE DURING ASSESSMENT?

Task orientation measures how well children concentrate and are able to persist on tasks during an ELOM assessment - important attributes for entering school. Your sample's task orientation scores were assigned by the ELOM assessors after completing each child's assessment. Note that the scores are subjective and may be affected by factors such as the assessor's own ability to hold the child's attention.

The graph below shows the proportion of your sample that demonstrated satisfactory versus poor levels of concentration and persistence.



Most of your sample demonstrated satisfactory concentration and persistence during ELOM assessments, meaning that they were able to stay on task.

KEY FINDINGS I

This report provides details on how your sample of children are performing, on average, on the ELOM 4 & 5 assessment. The report is intended to help you identify areas of strengths and weaknesses among your children, relative to specific benchmarks, to help inform your programming and track your children's developmental progress. Follow-up ELOM assessments of the same children will help you obtain a more in-depth understanding of change over time, and whether your programme is having an observable effect on child outcomes. The tables that follow summarise your study results and may help you to prioritise programmatic areas that need attention.

ELOM 4 & 5 domains		The performance band that the majority of your sample is in per domain
	Gross Motor Development	48% are falling behind
	Fine Motor Coordination & Visual Motor Integration	57% are falling far behind
	Emergent Numeracy & Mathematics	33% are falling far behind
	Cognition & Executive Functioning	38% are falling behind
	Emergent Literacy & Language	52% are on track

 Based on your sample's scores, we have flagged 2 areas we recommend you prioritise for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS II

For task orientation, only 15% of children demonstrated low concentration and persistence during the ELOM assessment. In socio-emotional functioning, 100% of the sample children who were assessed met the expected standard for emotional readiness for school, and 65% for social relations with peers and adults. Both of these scores have been shown to be strongly correlated with learning outcomes.

Additional measures	How the majority of your sample is performing on average
Emotional Readiness for School	98% are on track
Social Relations with Peers & Adults	> 60% are on track
Task Orientation	> 60% performed satisfactorily
Growth / Height-for-Age	> 90% have a normal height for their age

WHAT ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN BASED ON THE DATA?

We recommend that you study this report together with your staff to determine your priorities for the coming year. On the following pages we have included some ideas for interventions and/or programmatic changes that you might want to focus on. Our recommendations are based on the literature on what works.

Gross Motor Development

1. Support safe play spaces: Support programmes in establishing safe and accessible areas for children to play, both indoors and outdoors, that are free of hazards.
2. Encourage outdoor play: Outdoor play promotes physical activity and the development of gross motor skills. If possible, children should be encouraged to run, jump, climb, swing, and explore in outdoor settings.
3. Provide age-appropriate toys & materials: A variety of materials can promote gross motor skills, such as balls, hula hoops, jump ropes, and climbing structures.
4. Structured physical activities: Provide structured activities like group games, sports, and dancing. These activities not only develop gross motor skills but also provide opportunities for social engagement and teamwork.

Fine Motor Coordination & Visual-Motor Integration

1. Encourage writing, arts & crafts: Encourage children to engage in activities that involve writing, drawing, cutting, colouring, and using small tools like paintbrushes, scissors, and glue sticks.
2. Provide age-appropriate toys & materials: Puzzles, building blocks and beads with string require fine motor manipulation and hand-eye coordination.
3. Train teachers to provide encouragement and praise: Fine motor skills can be frustrating for children to develop. Patience and positive reinforcement can help children to persist with these tasks.

Emergent Numeracy & Mathematics

1. Include number talk in everyday routines: Encourage children to talk about numbers and mathematical concepts in their daily lives. Discuss the time, money, measurements, and quantities encountered during daily routines.
2. Teach children counting songs: Incorporate counting songs and finger counting into daily activities. These help children become familiar with numbers and counting in a fun way.
3. Provide age-appropriate toys & materials: Hands-on materials like counting blocks, beads, and puzzles help children visualise and understand mathematical concepts.
4. Provide structured games and activities: Sorting games (colour, size, object), hopscotch, counting, and matching will help to engage children in numeracy and mathematical concepts.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN BASED ON THE DATA?

We recommend that you study this report together with your staff to determine your priorities for the coming year. On this page we have included some ideas for interventions and/or programmatic changes that you might want to focus on to improve child outcomes. Our recommendations are based on the literature on what works.

Cognition & Executive Functioning

1. Encourage pretend play & storytelling: Pretend play and storytelling helps children develop their imagination, creativity, memory, and language skills.
2. Incorporate music & rhythm: Playing music, singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments can enhance memory and pattern recognition.
3. Train teachers to create a supportive learning environment: A supportive and nurturing environment can ensure that children feel safe to make mistakes and learn from them.
4. Encourage outdoor exploration: Spending time outdoors exploring nature and encouraging children to be curious. Discuss observations, identify plants and animals, and encourage questions about the world to stimulate their critical thinking.
5. Incorporate problem-solving games: Age-appropriate challenges and puzzles can encourage children to think critically and find solutions. Start with simple tasks and gradually increase complexity.

Emergent Literacy & Language

1. Incorporate daily reading aloud: Provide a variety of books to expose children to different concepts, vocabulary, and ideas. Encourage children to ask questions and discuss the stories.
2. Encourage teachers to actively talk & listen: Engaging in conversations with children encourages them to express themselves, ask questions, and share their thoughts.
3. Incorporate vocabulary into daily activities: Introduce new words and concepts during everyday activities. Describe objects, actions, and feelings using descriptive language.
4. Provide age-appropriate materials: Introduce words and letters through games, flashcards, and alphabet books. Encourage teachers to make learning letters and their sounds enjoyable and interactive.
5. Provide a literacy-rich environment: Provide classrooms with written materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, and educational posters, make reading materials readily accessible and familiar.

Social & Emotional Functioning

1. Train teachers to model positive social behaviour: Teachers can be positive role models by demonstrating good social skills, such as active listening, empathy, politeness, and cooperation with both children and colleagues.
2. Encourage sharing & teamwork: Children should be taught to share toys and take turns. Collaborative games that require teamwork can teach children to work together.
3. Foster the development of empathy: Feelings and emotions can be discussed regularly with children, encouraging them to identify and validate others' emotions. Books that explore emotions can also help to explore characters' feelings.

WHAT ARE BEST PRACTICES TO SUPPORT TEACHERS?

In addition to the actions mentioned previously, continued professional development and support for teachers is key to improving child outcomes. Best practices from the literature on supporting and developing teachers include the following:

Management Best Practices	Peer Support Best Practices	Training Best Practices	Tailoring Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide individual mentoring by pairing more experienced staff members, or someone from another programme, with less experienced teachers.• Ensure supervision that includes actual time observing in the classroom, joint planning, monitoring, regular feedback and discussions around goal-setting.• Create an enabling environment that is supportive and developmental, ensuring leadership provides practical assistance and opportunities for on-the-job learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create time for group reflection among practitioners who work together or in similar spaces, so they can share successes, challenges and troubleshoot together.• Create time for critical individual reflection in which practitioners consider their strengths and what is working well in their contexts, as well as to identify the areas in which they need to develop. This should also include a critical reflection on teachers' own beliefs about how children best learn and develop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the reasons behind certain classroom practices to ensure practitioners understand how activities work to achieve outcomes.• Provide concrete examples of good practice, such as video clips or observing a skilled teacher at work.• Include role plays and other practice-oriented activities that enable practitioners to practice engaging in different activities and interacting with children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gathering input from teachers on what types of support they may find helpful can also be useful in deciding whether and how to update your current activities, and ensuring that teachers get the targeted support that they need.

HOW TO PLAN FOR YOUR NEXT STEPS

Turning data into action is a critical component of quality programme planning and delivery. Consider how you will take the insights from this report and use them effectively to enhance your programme, or what additional information you need to do so.

Collectively identify 5 key priorities

- What changes need to be made based on the ELOM results? Or what do you need to investigate further?
- What key issues require your immediate attention?

Determine the actions needed to turn those priorities into reality

- What particular actions, tasks or deliverables are needed to turn these five priorities into reality?
- What do you need to do, or who do we need to consult?

Agree on the people responsible for taking action

- Which team members are responsible for each action item?
- What support do they require?

Agree on deadlines

- By when should these action items be completed?



A planning worksheet to work through with your team is available [here](#).



**This report was produced by
DataDrive2030 as part of our efforts to
democratise early years data, making
relevant information accessible,
understandable and actionable for all key
stakeholders.**

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