
The error resulted from the author: (i) confusing the length of a school week and a calendar week; and (ii) taking the length of the thirteen-week school term to be equivalent to one-quarter of a year. The actual error occurs on p.123, 15th line of the paragraph, where it is stated: “the duration of one school term was 0.25 of a year.” In fact, if one takes one school year to be 190 days (The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No. 3181). London: The Stationery Office), the duration of one school term should have been taken to be either 63 or 64 and not 91 (0.25 x 364) days. On pages 115, 123,126 and 127 the error is compounded because the two-term difference in attendance between the two attendance groups between the ages of 7 and 11 years is incorrectly given as half a year (182 days): the figure should have been 127 days. Because of the error the effect of the absence on the attainments is considerably under-estimated. This is revealed in the following examples in which the errors and corrections are given in italic and dense type respectively.

(i) An absence of half a calendar year, i.e., 182 days (127 days) leading to a reduction in reading and mathematics scores of approximately 0.7 of a year and 1 year respectively is equivalent to one day’s absence leading to a reduction in reading and mathematics scores of 1.4 days (2.0 days) and 2.0 days (2.9 days) respectively.

(ii) A reduction in reading and mathematics scores of approximately 0.7 and 1 year respectively resulting from missing half a calendar year, i.e. 182 days (127 days) of schooling is equivalent to a one month reduction in reading and mathematics scores resulting from an absence from school of 21.7 days (15.1 days) and 15.2 days (10.6 days) respectively.

The author offers SPI readers his most sincere apologies for the error.