

LSE Works: Spatial Economics Research Centre public lecture

Neighbours, Peers and Educational Achievement

Professor Stephen Gibbons

*Professor of Economic Geography
Director, Spatial Economics Research
Centre, LSE*

Dr Tim Leunig

*Chief Analyst and Chief Scientific Adviser
Department for Education*

Professor Ruth Lupton

*Professor of Education
University of Manchester*

Professor Julia Black

Chair, LSE

Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: #LSEworks

LSE events



Neighbours, peers and children's education: Quantitative evidence from the Spatial Economics Research Centre

Steve Gibbons

January 2015



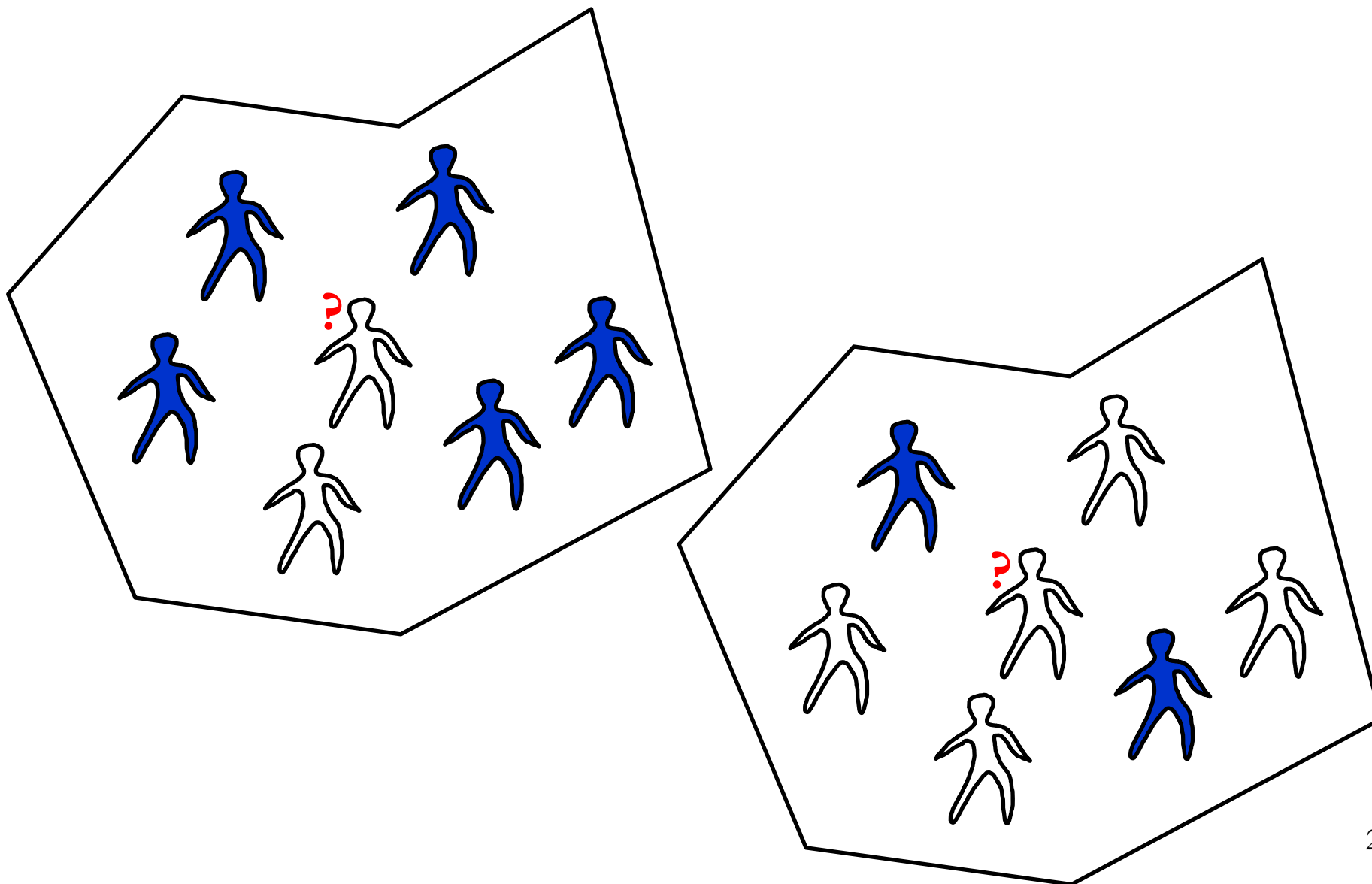
Outline of this talk

- Is there a 'transformative' role for neighbours and peers – do they really matter for children's education outcomes?
- Overview of recent quantitative empirical work on England from SERC researchers

- 1. 'Neighbourhood effects': Who your neighbours are
- 2. 'Peer effects': The ability of your child's school-mates
- 3. 'Mobility': How fast neighbours and peers come and go
- 4. Comparisons with other interventions
- 5. Conclusions and policy implications

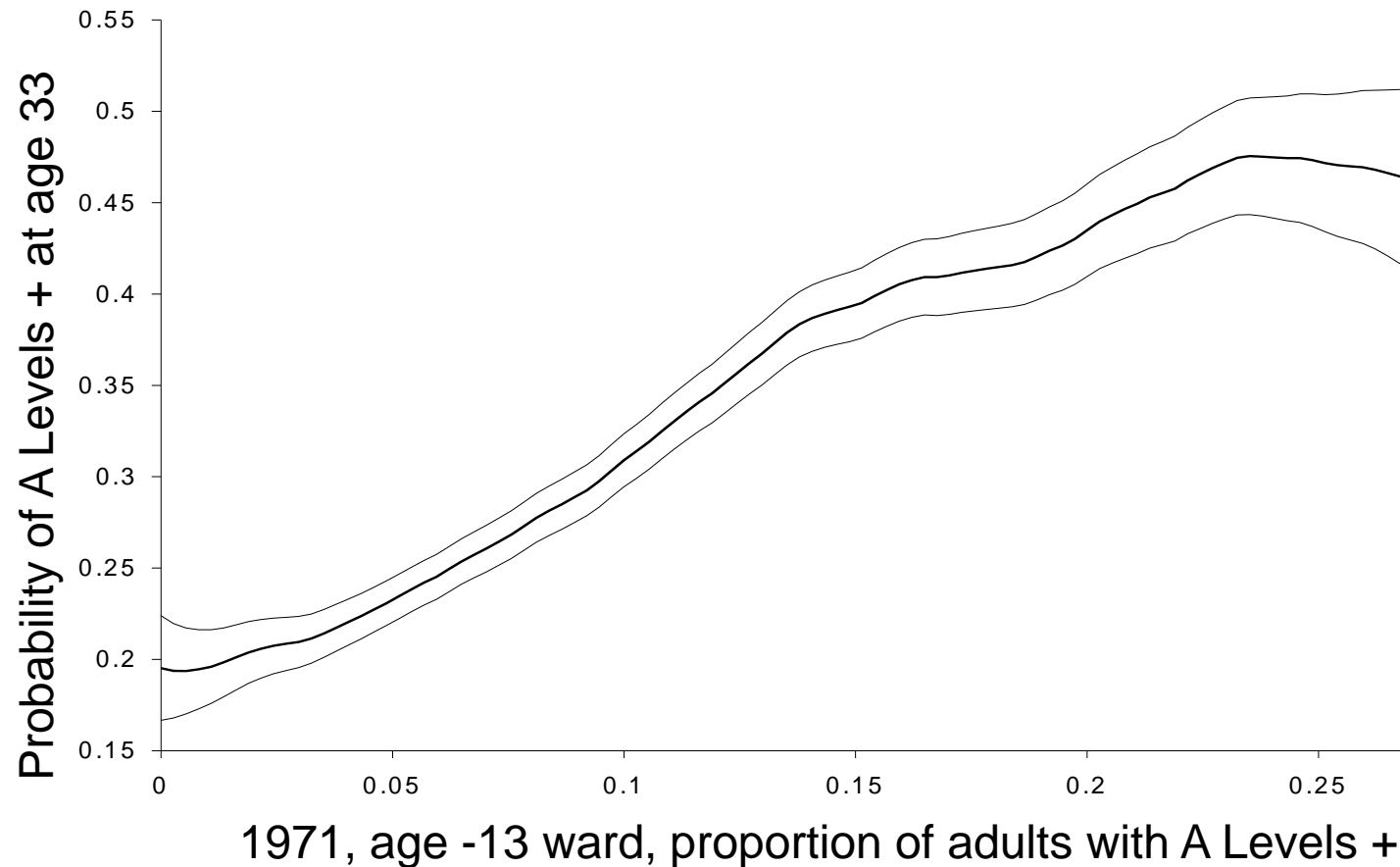
**‘Neighbourhood effects’: Who your
neighbours are**

Does it matter which neighbourhood?



Older evidence

- Association between neighbourhood quals. (1970s) and child's adult attainment (1990s), Gibbons (2002)



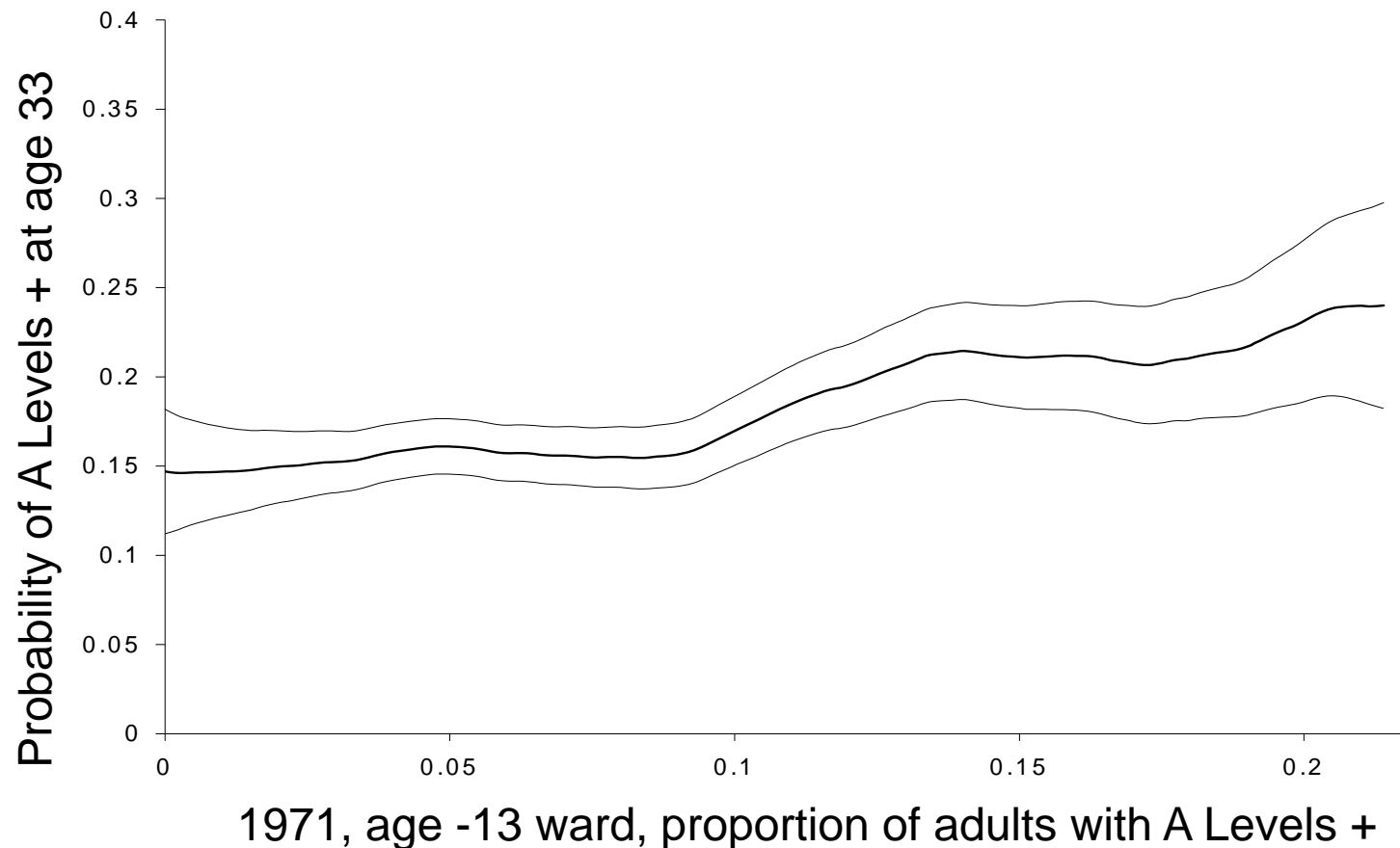
Adjust for family background

- Smaller effects: ‘Sorting’ matters - higher educated families choose higher educated neighbourhoods



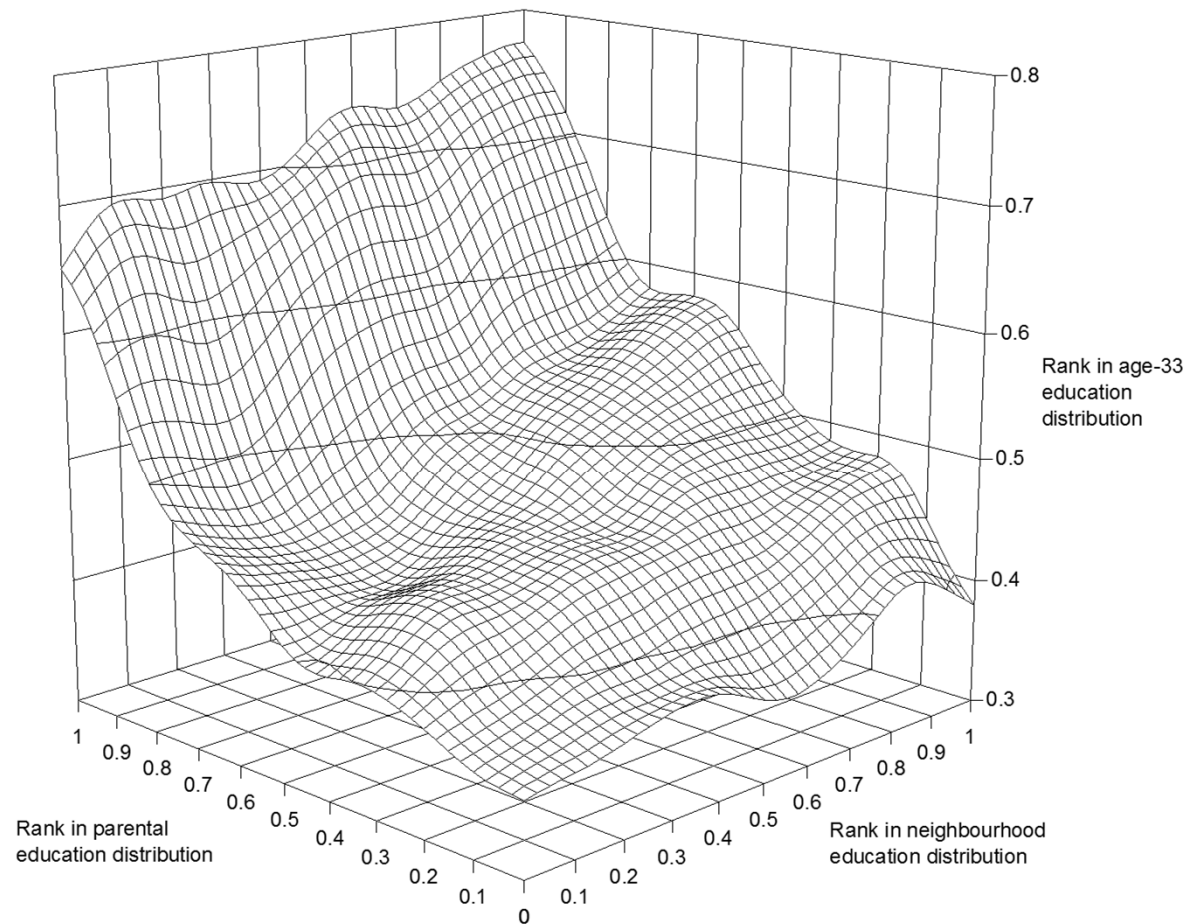
Social tenants in the 1970s

- Arguably, social tenants had less choice over housing location:
less 'sorting'



Parent's education versus neighbours

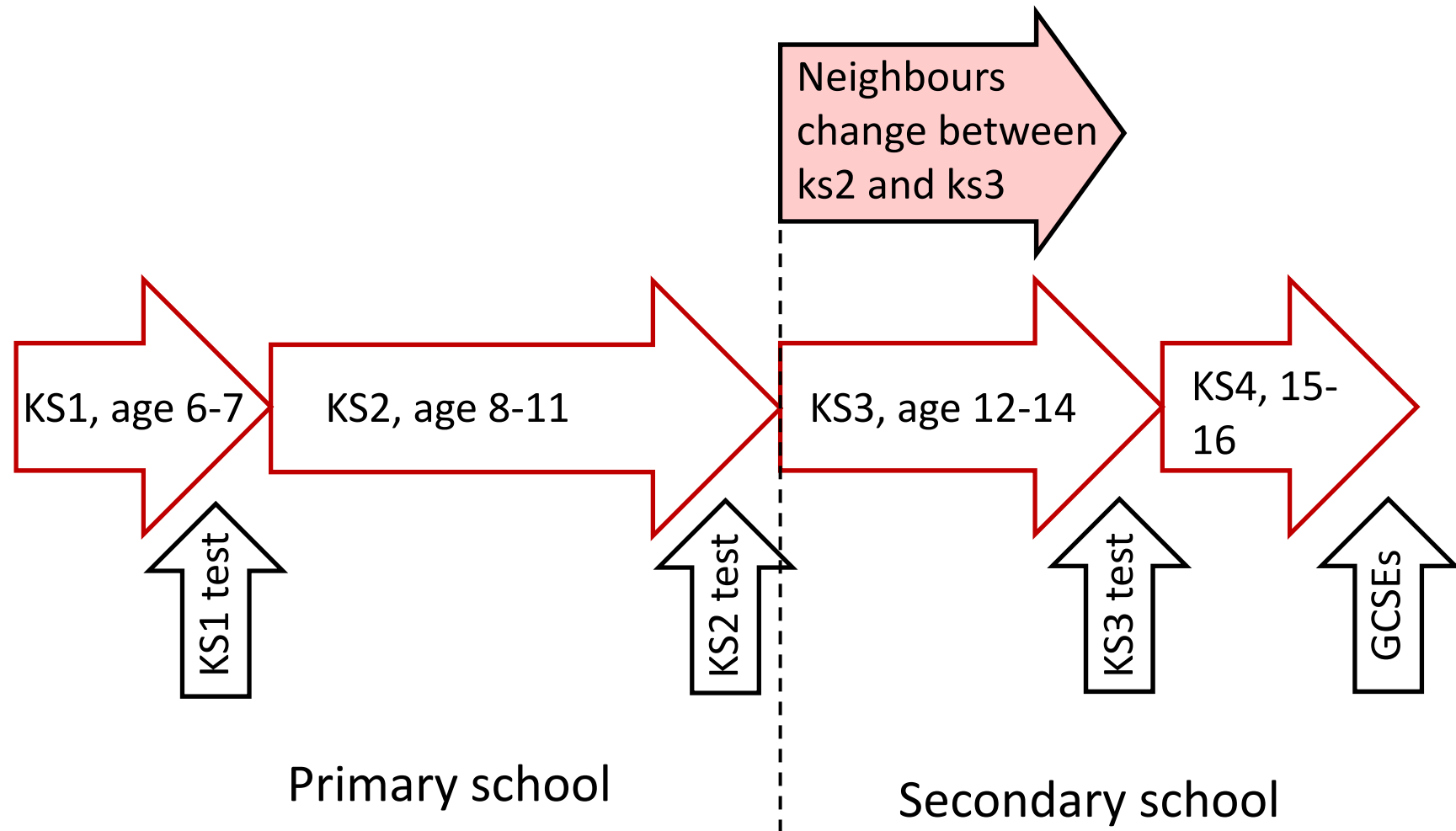
- Parent's education matters way more than neighbours' education in 1970s



More recent evidence on neighbours

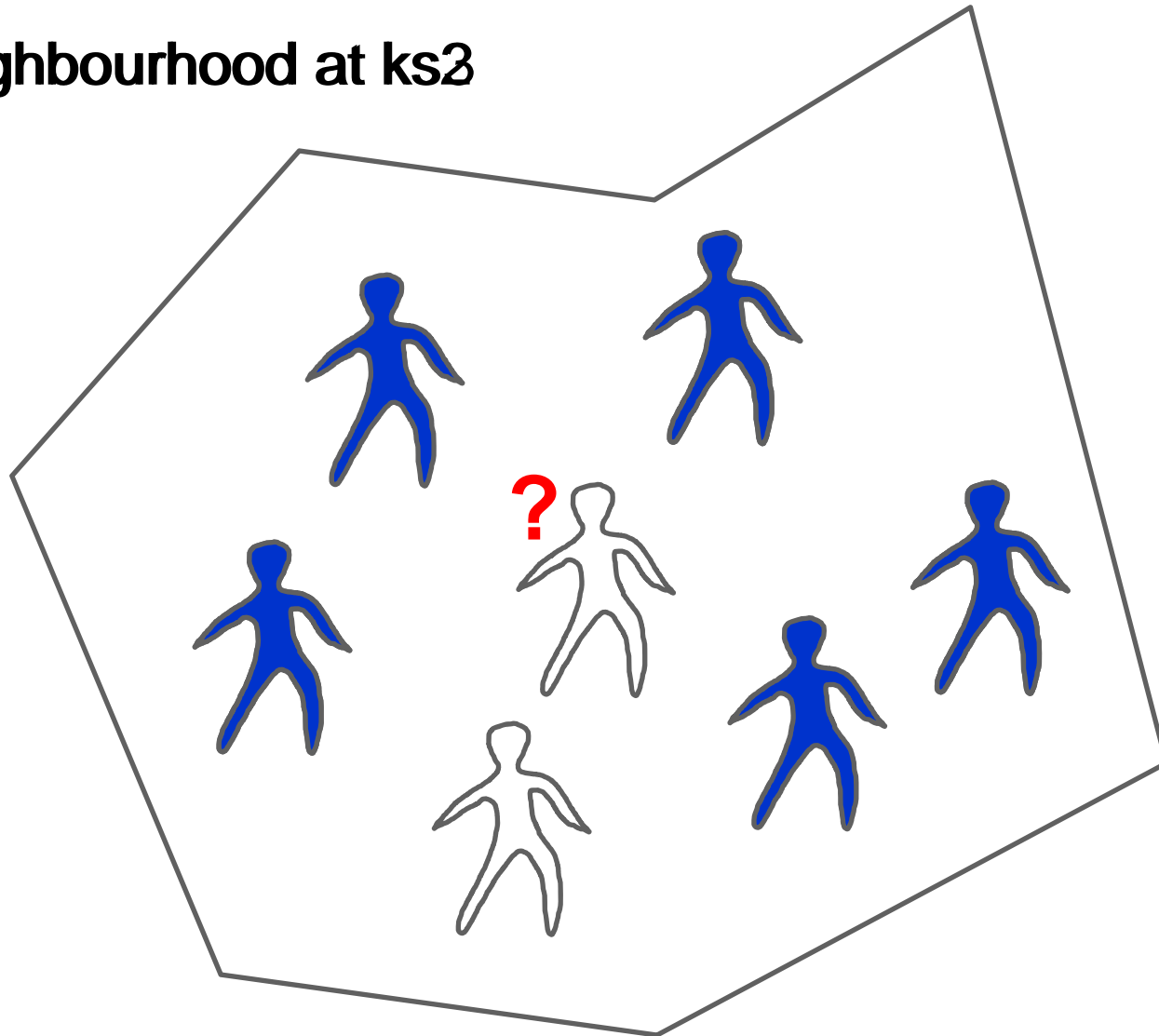
- Ideally we need an experiment
 - e.g. Moving to Opportunity Programme in US, which finds no systematic impacts on substantive outcomes
- No explicit experiments in Britain
- Alternative research designs using ‘random’ sources of variation in neighbourhood quality
- Big administrative data on England– the National Pupil Database

Timing of National Curriculum tests



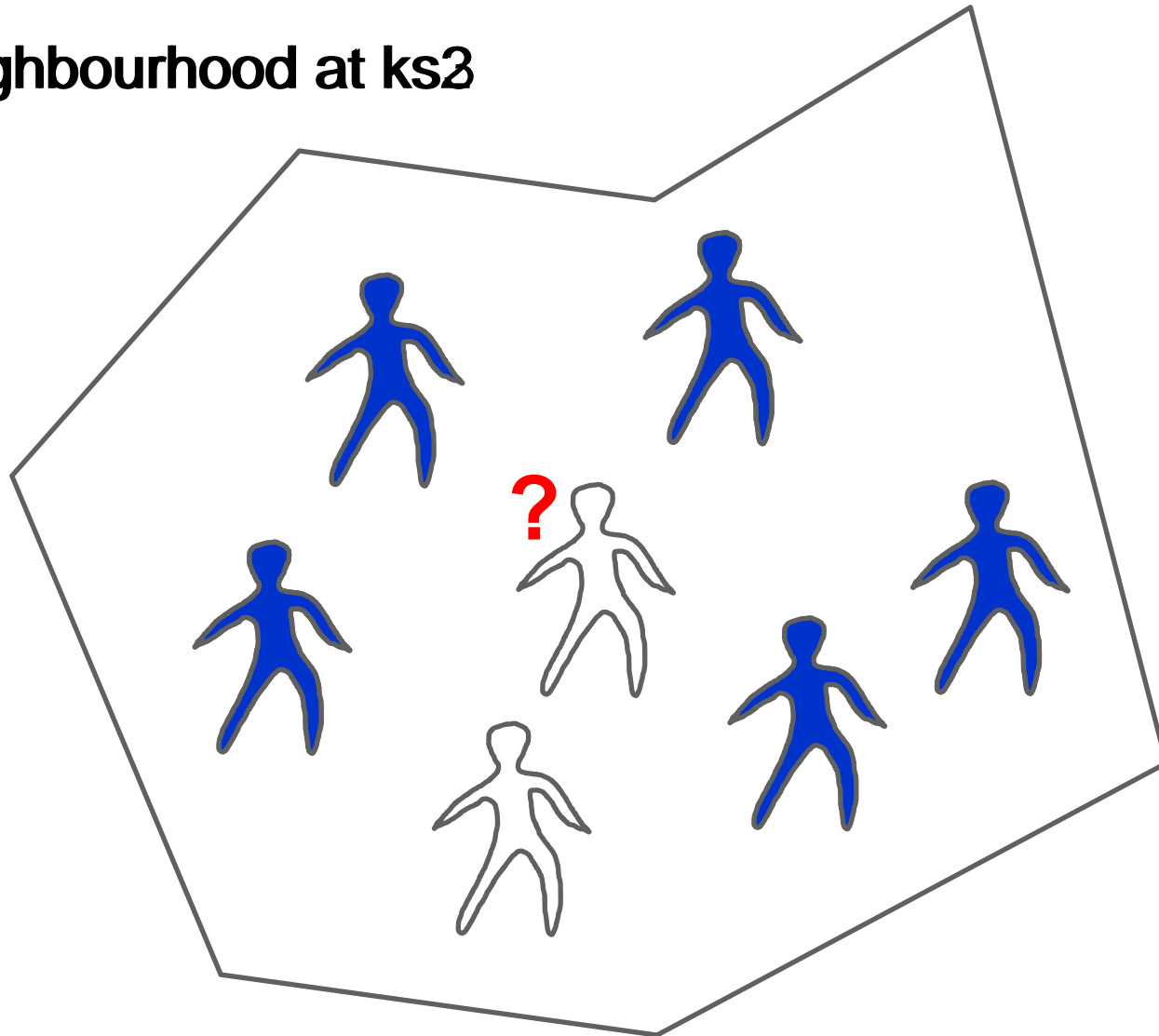
Effects of changing neighbours on stayers

Neighbourhood at ks2

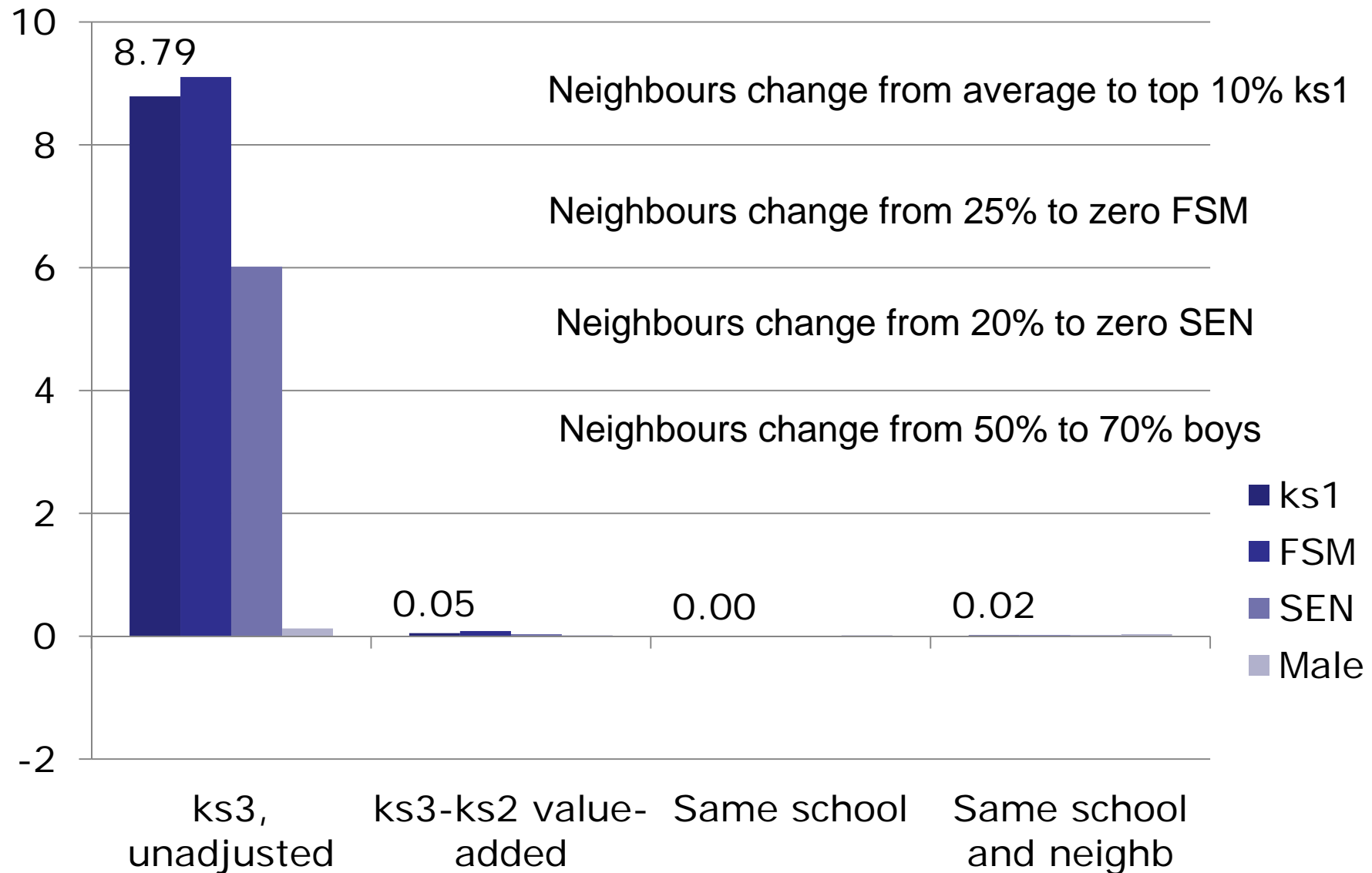


Effects of changing neighbours on stayers

Neighbourhood at ks2

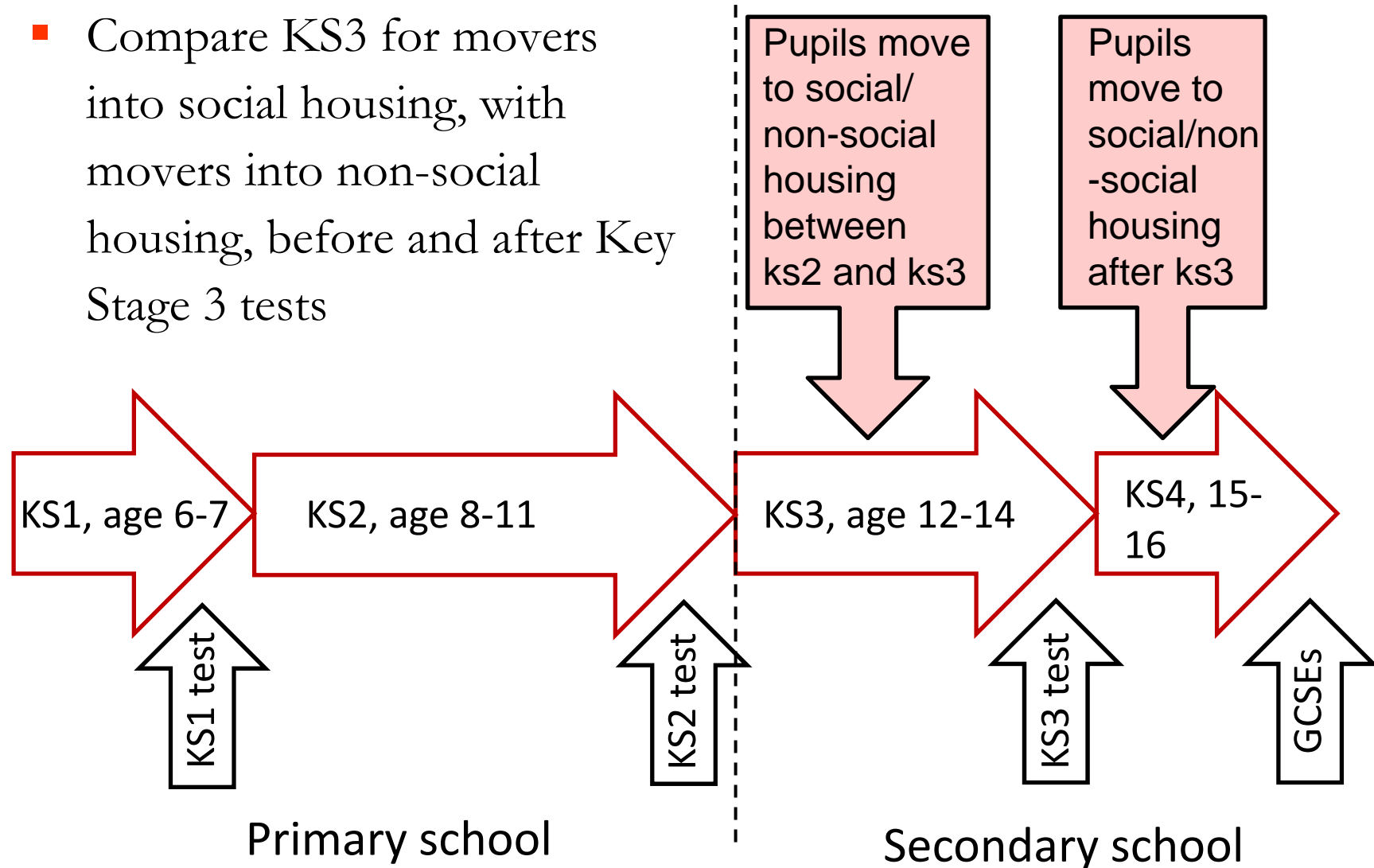


Effect of neighbour changes on own ks3



Does moving into social housing matter?

- Compare KS3 for movers into social housing, with movers into non-social housing, before and after Key Stage 3 tests



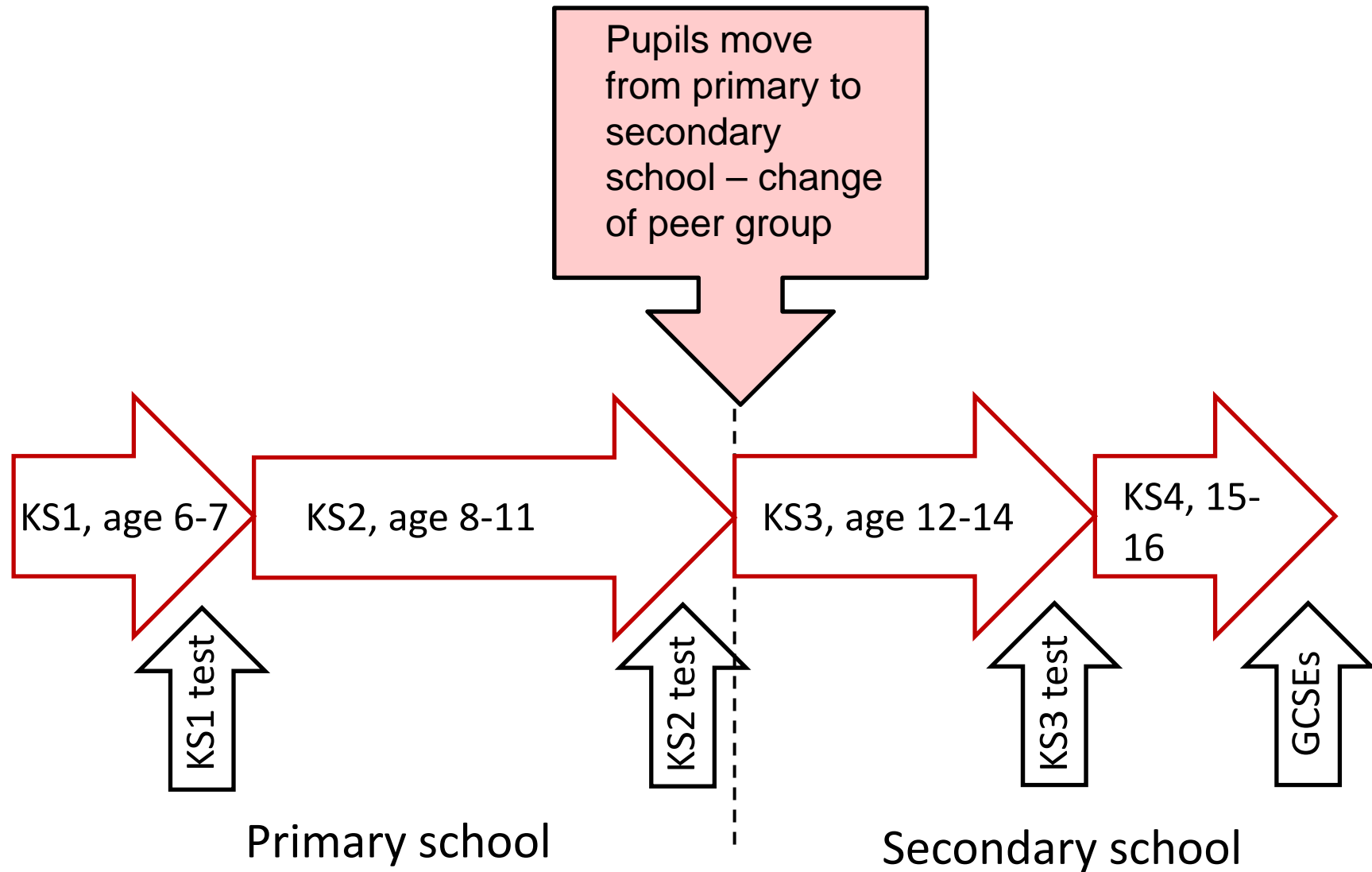
Evidence from movers into social housing

- Effects of moving to social housing neighbourhoods and non-social housing neighbourhoods on KS3 scores (in percentiles)

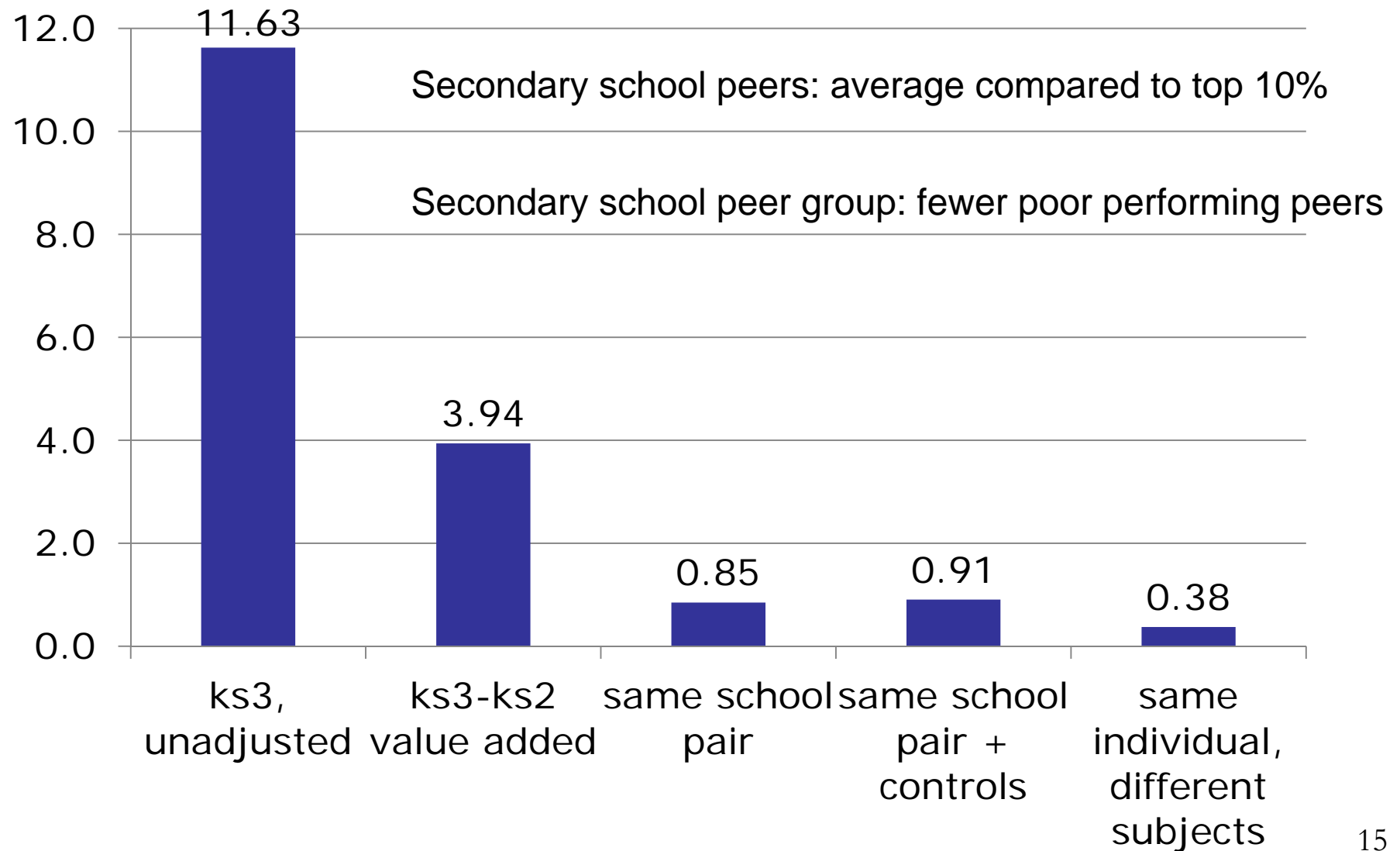
	Social n'hood	Non-social n'hood	Difference	'Dif-in-dif'
Move before ks3	34.20	45.71	-12.51	-0.16
Move after ks3	33.07	45.42	-12.35	

**‘Peer effects’: The ability of your
child’s school mates**

New peer groups at secondary school



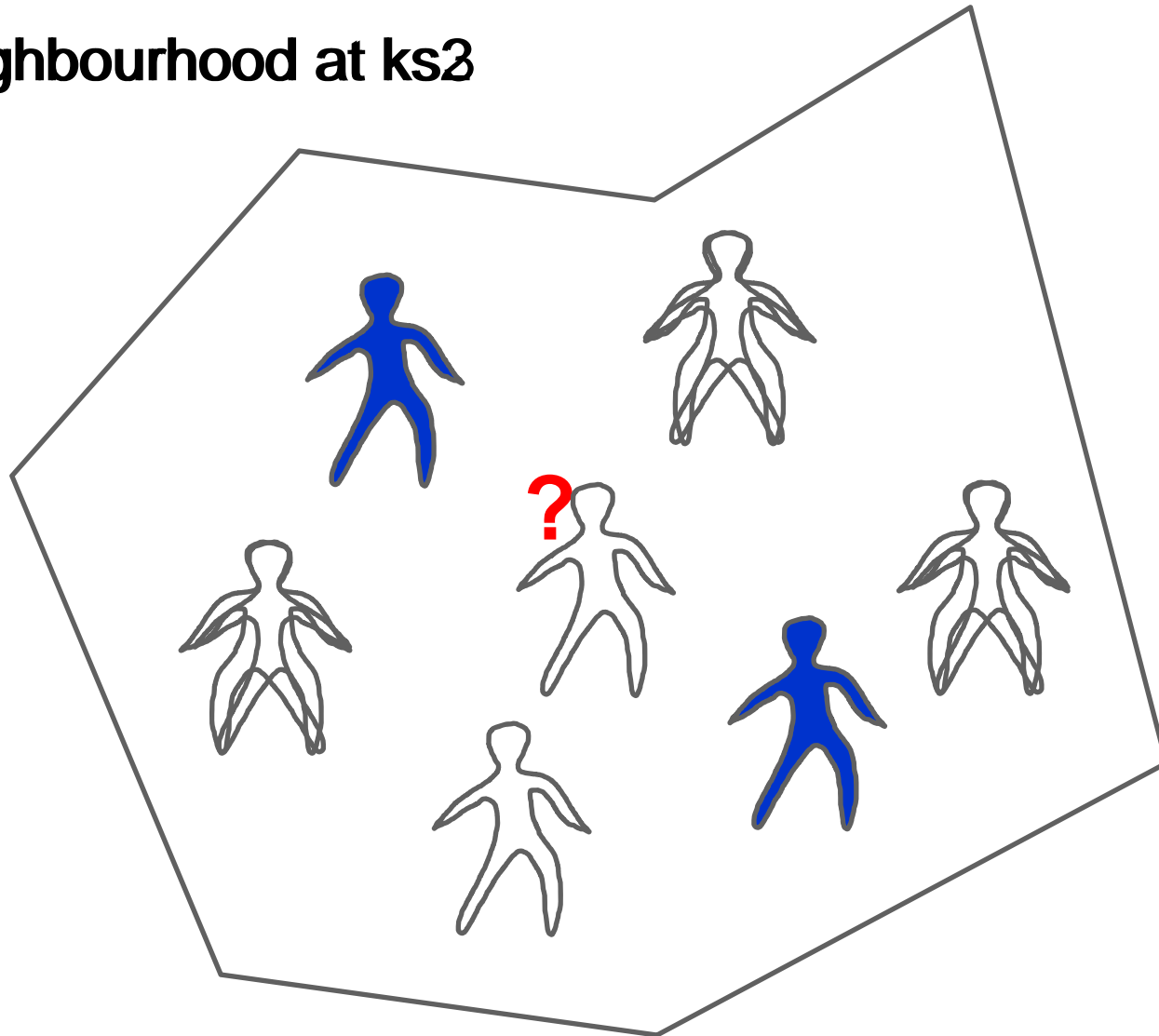
Effect of peer group ks2 on own ks3



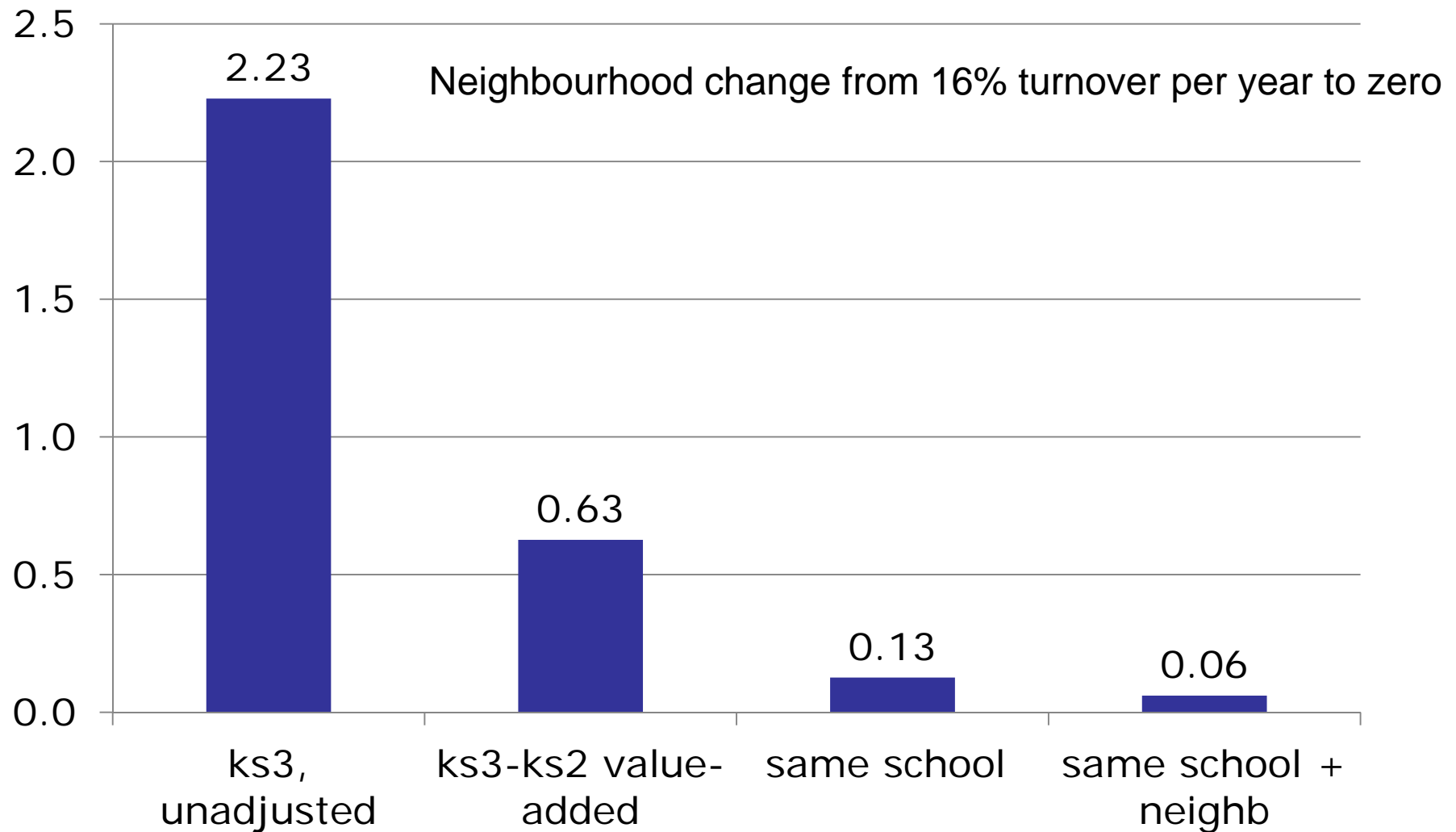
**‘Mobility’: How fast neighbours and
peers come and go**

People move, neighbourhood stays the same

Neighbourhood at ks2



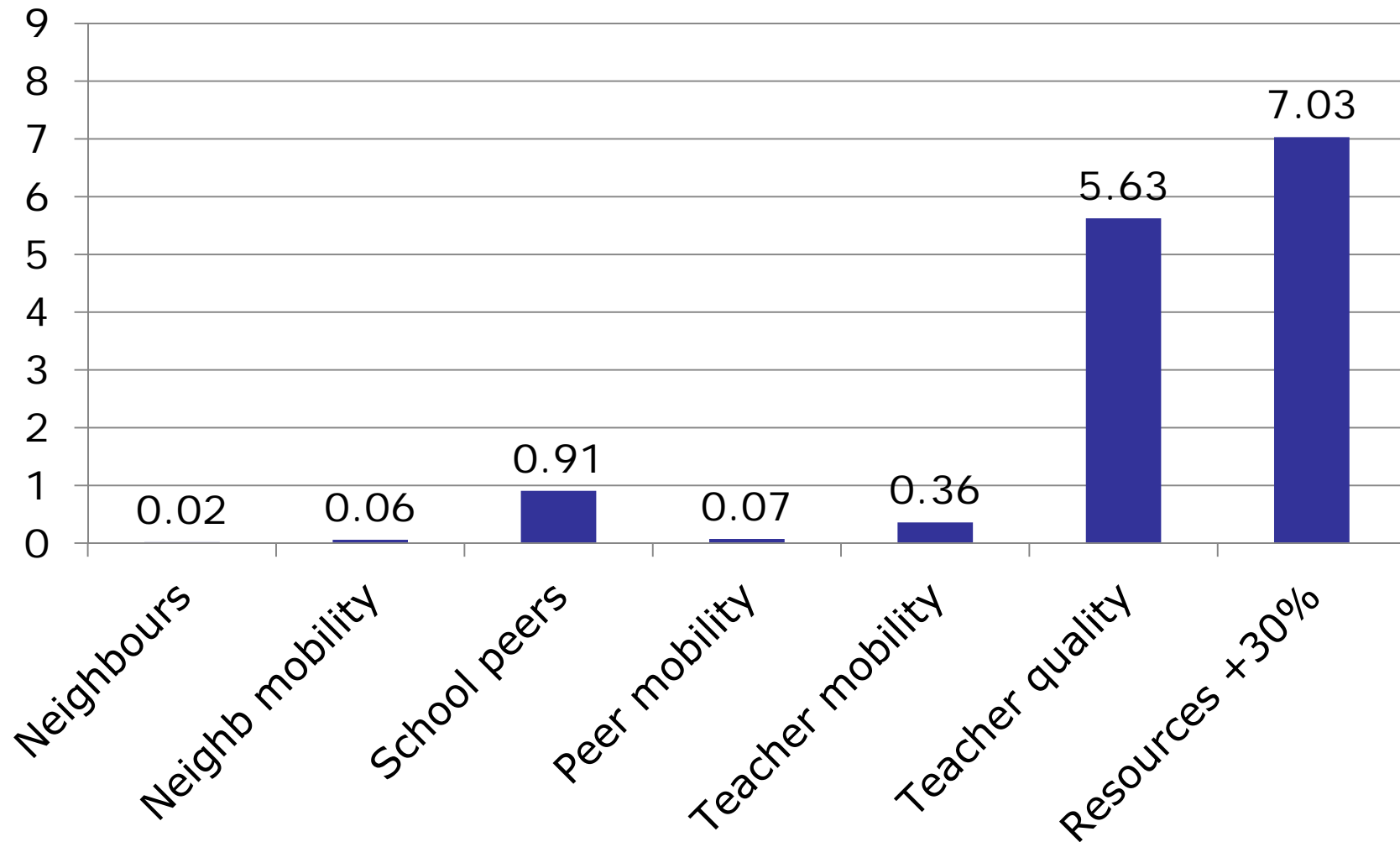
Effect of neighbour mobility, ks2 to ks3



Comparisons with other inputs

Comparison with other inputs

- Effects of various education related inputs (0-100 scale)



Conclusion and policy implications

- Neighbourhood composition irrelevant for a child's education
- Turnover seems to matter more, in neighbourhoods and schools
 - Disruption in teaching and breaking of social ties potentially important – theory rather than evidence
- School peer groups moderately important, though account for only 0.04% of the variance in pupil achievement
- No role for engineering neighbourhood mixing to address education performance or inequality
 - E.g. mixed communities planning
- We should be more much concerned about school resources and teacher quality

Works by SERC researchers referred to

- Gibbons, S. (2002) Neighbourhood Effects on Educational Achievement: Evidence from the Census and National Child Development Study, Centre for Economics of Education DP18
- Cheshire, P., S. Gibbons and I. Gordon (2008) Policies for 'mixed communities': A critical evaluation, Spatial Economics Research Centre, Policy Paper 2
- Gibbons, S. and S. Telhaj, (2011), Pupil mobility and school disruption, Journal of Public Economics
- Gibbons, S., S. McNally and M. Viarengo (2011), Does Additional Spending Help Urban Schools? An Evaluation Using Boundary Discontinuities, SERC DP0090
- Lavy, V., O.Silva, F. Weinhardt (2012), The Good the Bad and the Average: Evidence on Ability Peer Effects in Schools, Journal of Labor Economics
- Gibbons, S., O. Silva and F. Weinhardt (2013), Everybody Needs Good Neighbours?, Economic Journal (revised version of SERC DP0063)
- Weinhardt, F. (2014) Social Housing, Neighborhood Quality and Student Performance, Journal of Urban Economics (revised version of SERC DP 0044)
- Gibbons, S. and S. Telhaj, (2014) Peer Effects: Evidence from Secondary School Transition in England, forthcoming Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics (revised version of SERC DP0001)
- Gibbons, S., O.Silva and F. Weinhardt (2014) Neighbourhood Turnover and Teenage Attainment, SERCDP0163

LSE Works: Spatial Economics Research Centre public lecture

Neighbours, Peers and Educational Achievement

Professor Stephen Gibbons

*Professor of Economic Geography
Director, Spatial Economics Research
Centre, LSE*

Dr Tim Leunig

*Chief Analyst and Chief Scientific Adviser
Department for Education*

Professor Ruth Lupton

*Professor of Education
University of Manchester*

Professor Julia Black

Chair, LSE

Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: #LSEworks

LSE events

