



University of
Nottingham

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

WELL Programme Evaluation

Workshop with schools

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October 2021



9.30am

Welcome and Introductions

What does an 'evaluation' make you think of?

Overview of the WELL evaluation

What (we think) this means for you and your schools

Action Research

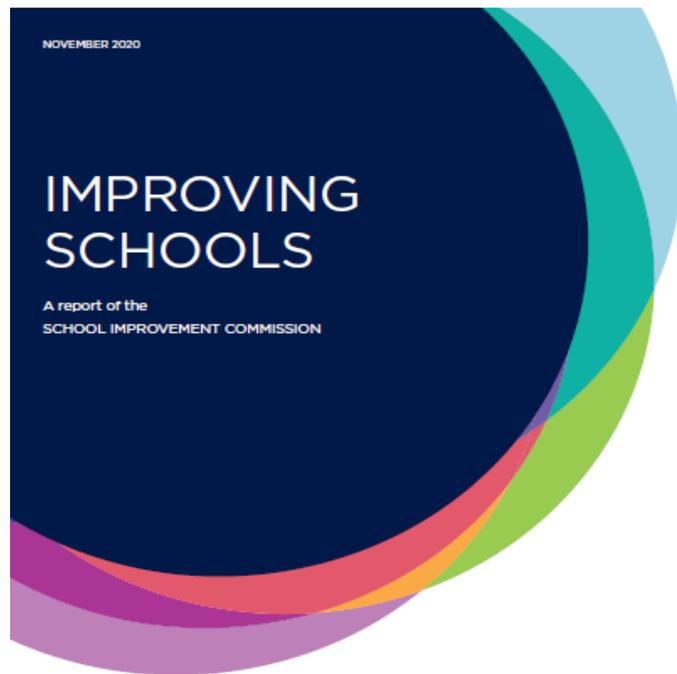
10.30am

Close



What does an 'evaluation' make you think of?





The best schools are the best at getting better.

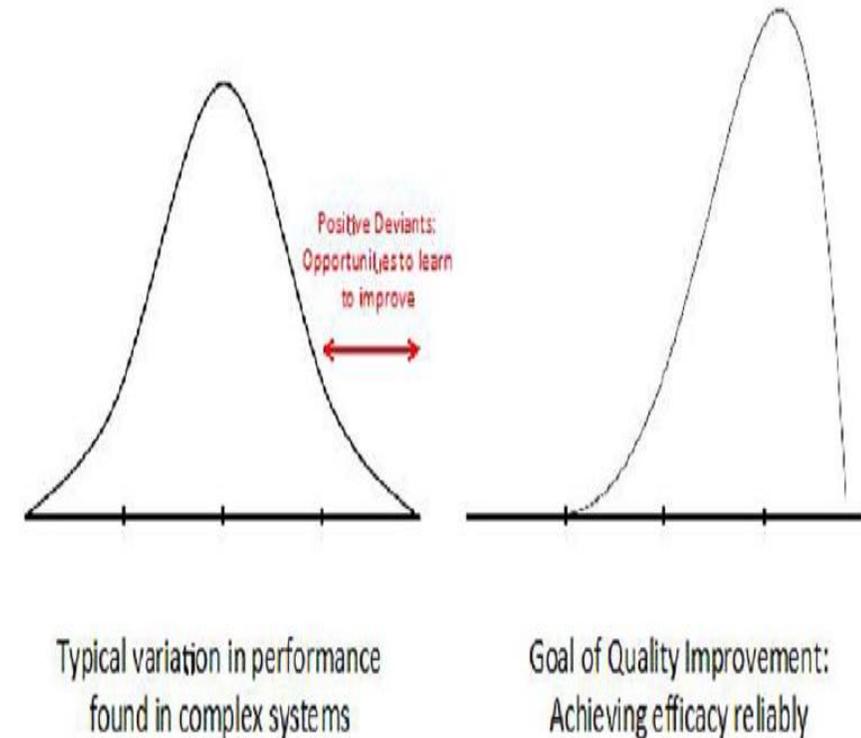
NAHT School Improvement Commission, 2020

... and so are the best school systems.



An improvement science approach

1. Start with the question: “What specifically is the problem we are trying to solve?”
2. Variation in performance is the core problem to address, so we help everyone learn together how to improve at scale.
3. Explore how local conditions shape work processes. Make your hypotheses for change public and clear.
4. We cannot improve at scale what we cannot measure. Anticipate unintended consequences and measure these too.
5. Anchor practice improvement in disciplined inquiry. Engage in rapid cycles of Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) to learn fast, fail fast, and improve quickly.
6. Accelerate and broaden improvements through networked communities.



Working in partnership - with the WELL programme team and participating schools – we aim to help identify, distil and expand evidence-informed approaches that are working well to improve outcomes, so that more children can benefit.

We will:

- support volunteer schools to undertake action research and facilitate networked learning from this
- provide formative feedback on how the programme is working, including at school level
- gather summative evidence on impact over time.



What (we think) this means for you and your schools (2021-2024)

- Three online surveys – first one for all headteachers later this term
- School case studies – targeted and universal schools, annual and longitudinal
- Observations of programme sessions/events
- Action research by schools – drawn together to build collective evidence base
- Impact Evaluation – using National Pupil Database and data from participating schools to assess changes over time, including for disadvantaged students



Two strands – running in parallel, in annual cycles over three years:

- WELL target schools: How (successfully) are we using evidence to inform our school's improvement journey and work?
- Cumbrian Award Schools: To what extent, and how, does participation in the Cumbrian Award impact on student outcomes and school-wide approaches to teaching and curriculum?

Ethics – schools opt in to one or both strands. Head teachers will be asked to complete a consent form after half term.



Action Research operating principles

Action research (or “systematic enquiry made public”) can address two kinds of problems:

- Problems of understanding the world in which we are called upon to act
- Problems of understanding what we ought to try and do (Stenhouse)

For the WELL project’s action research strands, the goal is to understand both:

- the needs of our colleagues and learners; and
- what approaches to meeting those needs are the most practically effective in our context

To achieve this, we are building it around some key principles to ensure that it:

- is linked to powerful, relevant questions about what we are doing (defining our research question/s)
- is based on joined-up thinking about the difference our practice makes to learners (producing an outline Theory of Change)
- causes as little disruption to school life as possible (uses naturally-occurring evidence where it exists).



- These tools create a golden thread of evidence and reflection between pupils, teachers and leaders
- They help everyone consider how a new experience (e.g. a CA experience) can expand insights into, and possibilities for, pupils experiencing disadvantage
- They start with very engaging learning activities for a class which can be captured in detail for a small sample of pupils
- They include simple ways of recording:
 - pupils' reflections in response to an engaging stimulus,
 - Teachers' reflections on pupils' reflections
 - Leaders' reflections about how the school can capitalise on the teachers' and pupils' new insights
- They also help leaders analyse and reflect cumulatively on changes over time



An illustration of the learning activity that starts the process

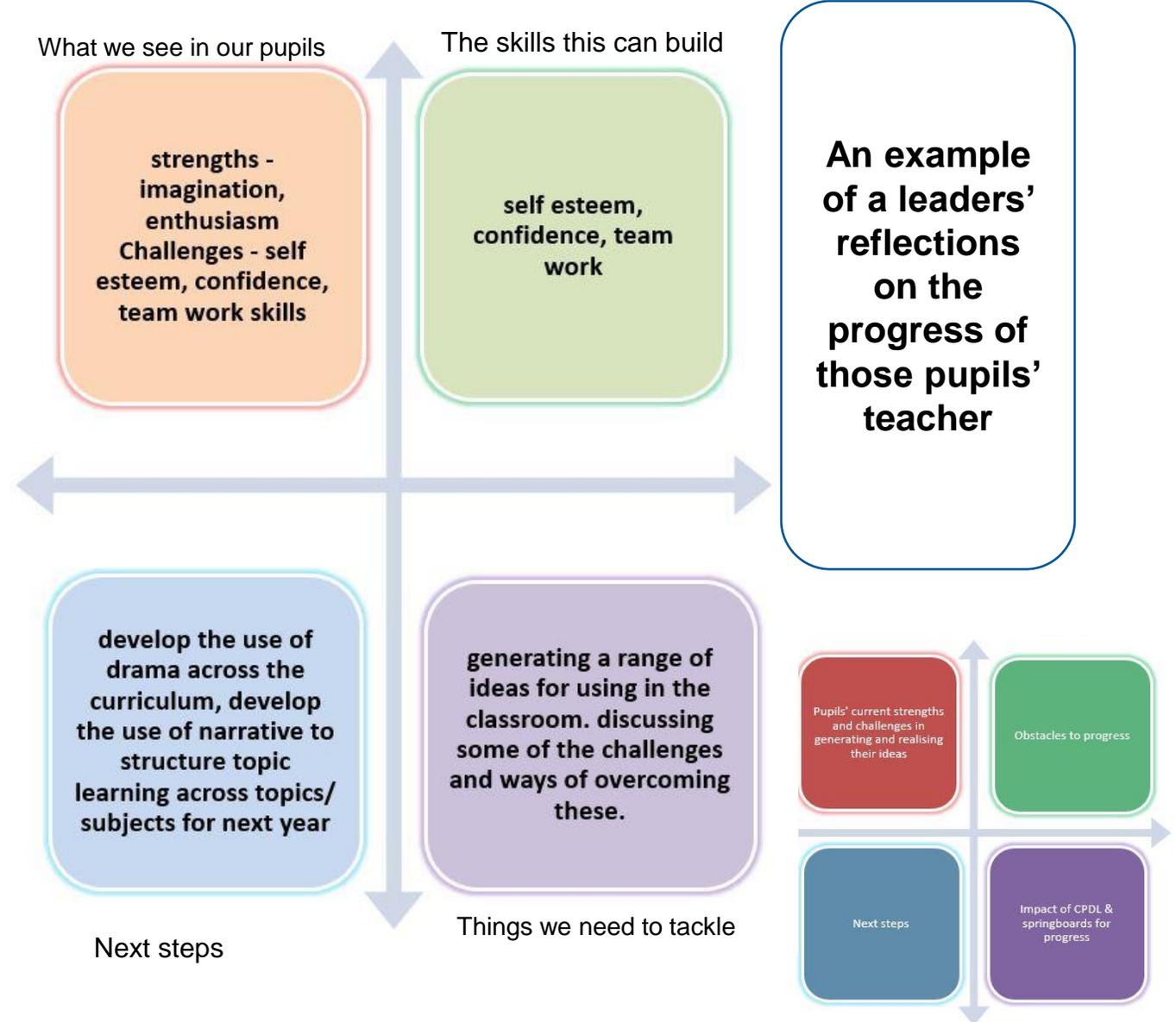


- A partial example of the discussion prompt which is used to focus teacher and leader reflections on a consistent learning activity
- All pupils are asked to select jelly baby figures who best represent their feelings about learning before and then, later (after an new activity) and jot down what sparked any changes
- Teachers work closely with a target sample of pupils to capture their thinking and then reflect on that afterwards
- The precise nature of the activity teachers use this prompt with can be tailored for particular learning goals

An example of evidence from a teacher and leadership enquiry tool

	Characteristics of sample pupils – strengths in relation to drama	Characteristics of sample pupils – <u>weaknesses in</u> relation to drama	Obstacles to progress
Pupil 1	Ayman is enthusiastic and has lots of ideas which he is willing to share. Same strengths	Sometimes Ayman can struggle to work as a team when doing drama – he wants to do his idea. Ayman was much better at listening to other children's ideas and leading a group by including everyone.	Team work and communication none
Pupil 2	Eemaan reads very widely and has fantastic ideas. Much more willing to participate in	Eemaan is shy and lacks confidence in her abilities, she sometimes struggles to participate in drama activities and	Confidence and self esteem Continue to develop this

A partial example of a teachers' reflections on the learning of some sample pupils





Pause for thought

- Take a few minutes to enter into the chat / talk in break out rooms
- Use this opportunity to explore:
 - some of the whole school issues which might provide fresh insights into successes for pupil experiencing disadvantage arising from Cumbria Award
 - How tracking how those experiences and prompting reflection amongst participating teachers and leaders would help you press forward with some of your wider school priorities

We'll pool some ideas about how to make sure the action research helps you maximise the benefit of the Cumbria award together afterwards



Action Research next steps

- November – confirm whether your school will participate in the Cumbrian Award and action research strand and complete headteacher consent form
- Early January – (if participating) prepare provisional school-level Action Research question/s and send in so we can take an overview.
- Jan/Feb – attend workshops we run to finalise questions, work up Theory of Change and plan approach.
- Half termly virtual workshops and or coaching sessions depending on stage in the cycle and termly workshops i.e. :
 - i. Spring (second half/term?) - virtual coaching
 - ii. Summer (first half/term?) - virtual workshop and follow up trouble shooting workshops
 - iii. Summer (second half/term?) - face to face workshop to undertake analysis collaboratively and start to complete year one summary report plus follow up virtual coaching

Repeat – but develop further - in years 2 and 3.



Next steps for you....

Confirm whether your school will participate in the action research:

- be aware that this has implications for attendance at sessions and work in schools, so be prepared to commit time and resources!
- if yes, complete consent form (head teachers) and consider research enquiry questions before January workshops

Headteachers - complete online survey when issued (late November)

All schools will be asked if they are willing to become potential case studies

All schools will be asked to share data for impact evaluation