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The EEF – an experiment in doing experiments!

Prof. Jonathan Sharples

Education Endowment Foundation and UCL Institute of Education

What we do ...

**Evidence
synthesis**



**Evidence
generation**

**Evidence
mobilisation**

- We support teachers and school leaders to use evidence to inform their decision-making.
- We believe evidence can make the biggest difference in the hands of practitioners.
- We believe that the evidence is best applied in concert with professional judgement.

The EEF by numbers



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10,695

schools
participating
in EEF trials

34

topics in
the Toolkit

24

members
of EEF
team

1,170,000

pupils involved in
EEF trials

8,000

heads
presented to
since launch

24

independent
evaluation
teams

£220_m

estimated spend
over lifetime of
the EEF

90

reports
published

159

project
evaluations
funded to
date

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The Toolkit - a starting point for making decisions



Feedback	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+8 months	Summer schools	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+3 months
Meta-cognition and self-regulation	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+8 months	Sports participation	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+2 months
Peer tutoring	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+6 months	Arts participation	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+2 months
Early years intervention	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+6 months	Individualised instruction	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+2 months
One to one tuition	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+5 months	Extended school time	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+2 months
Homework (Secondary)	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+5 months	After school programmes	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+2 months
Collaborative learning	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+5 months	Learning styles	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+2 months
Mastery learning	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+5 months	Mentoring	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+1 month
Oral language interventions	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+5 months	Teaching assistants	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+1 month
Phonics	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+4 months	Homework (Primary)	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+1 month
Small group tuition	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+4 months	Performance pay	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	0 months
Behaviour interventions	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+4 months	Aspiration interventions	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	0 months
Digital technology	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+4 months	Block scheduling	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	0 months
Social and emotional learning	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+4 months	School uniform	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	0 months
Parental involvement	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+3 months	Physical environment	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	0 months
Reducing class size	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+3 months	Setting or streaming	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	-1 month
Outdoor adventure learning	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	+3 months	Repeating a year	££££££	🔒🔒🔒🔒	-4 months

Guidance Reports – getting off the fence



- Clear actionable guidance (e.g. NICE)
- Digs deeper into EEF evidence and appropriates it in the wider evidence-base
- Bridges between evidence-based principles/practices and interventions
- A foundation for scale up actions
- 70% of Headteachers aware of the guidance. 40% of all teachers.

Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants guidance report



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Published guidance – issued to every school

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

see section five

I

TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils

The evidence on TA deployment suggests schools have drifted into a situation in which TAs are often used as an informal instructional resource for pupils in most need. Although this has happened with the best of intentions, this evidence suggests that the status quo is no longer an option. School leaders should systematically review the roles of both teachers and TAs and take a wider view of how TAs can support learning and improve attainment throughout the school.

II

Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them

If TAs have a direct instructional role it is important they supplement, rather than replace, the teacher – the expectation should be that the needs of all pupils are addressed, first and foremost, through high quality classroom teaching.

Schools should try and organise staff so that the pupils who struggle most have as much time with the teacher as others. Stepping away from a model of deployment where TAs are assigned to specific pupils for long periods requires more strategic approaches to classroom organisation.

Where TAs are working individually with low-attaining pupils the focus should be on retaining access to high-quality teaching, for example by delivering brief, but intensive, structured interventions.

III

Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning

New research has shown that improving the nature and quality of TAs' talk to pupils can support the development of independent learning skills, which are associated with improved learning outcomes. TAs should, for example, be trained to avoid prioritising task completion and instead concentrate on helping pupils develop ownership of tasks.

IV

Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

Schools should provide sufficient time for TA training and for teachers and TAs to meet out of class to enable the necessary lesson preparation and feedback.

Creative ways of ensuring teachers and TAs have time to meet include adjusting TAs' working hours (start early/finish early), using assembly time and having TAs join teachers for (part of) Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time.

During lesson preparation time ensure TAs have the essential 'need to know':

- Concepts, facts, information being taught
- Skills to be learned, applied, practised or extended
- Intended learning outcomes
- Expected/required feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN DELIVERING STRUCTURED INTERVENTIONS OUT OF CLASS

see section six

V

Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions

Research on TAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment of approximately three to four additional months' progress (effect size 0.2–0.3). Crucially, these positive effects are only observed when TAs work in structured settings with high-quality support and training. When TAs are deployed in more informal, unsupported instructional roles, they can impact negatively on pupils' learning outcomes.

VI

Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction

Schools should use structured interventions with reliable evidence of effectiveness. There are presently only a handful of programmes in the UK for which there is a secure evidence base, so if schools are using programmes that are 'unproven', they should try and replicate some common elements of effective interventions:

- Sessions are often brief (20–30mins), occur regularly (3–5 times per week) and are maintained over a sustained period (8–20 weeks). Careful timetabling is in place to enable this consistent delivery
- TAs receive extensive training from experienced trainers and/or teachers (5–30 hours per intervention)
- The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear objectives
- TAs closely follow the plan and structure of the intervention
- Assessments are used to identify appropriate pupils, guide areas for focus and track pupil progress. Effective interventions ensure the right support is being provided to the right child
- Connections are made between the out-of-class learning in the intervention and classroom teaching (see Recommendation vii).

VII

Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions

Interventions are often quite separate from classroom activities. Lack of time for teachers and TAs to liaise allows relatively little connection between what pupils experience in, and away from, the classroom. The key is to ensure that learning in interventions is consistent with, and extends, work inside the classroom and that pupils understand the links between them. It should not be assumed that pupils can consistently identify and make sense of these links on their own.



Guidance Reports

Clear and actionable guidance for teachers on a range of high-priority issues

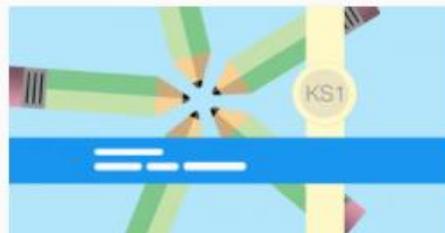


Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants

Published: 14th November, 2016

Primary & Secondary

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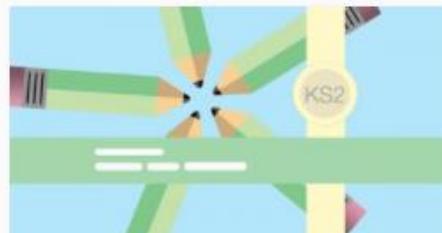


Improving Literacy in Key Stage One

Published: 30th September, 2016

Primary & Secondary

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Improving Literacy in Key Stage Two

Published: 28th April, 2017

Primary & Secondary

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Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 & 3

Published: 3rd November, 2017

Primary & Secondary

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Putting Evidence to Work - A School's Guide to Implementation

Published: 8th February, 2018

Primary & Secondary

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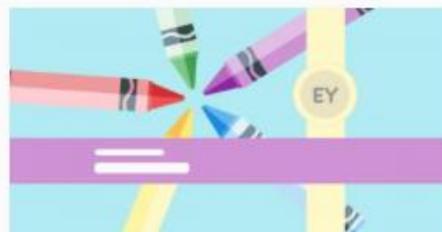


Metacognition and self-regulated learning

Published: 26th April, 2018

Primary & Secondary

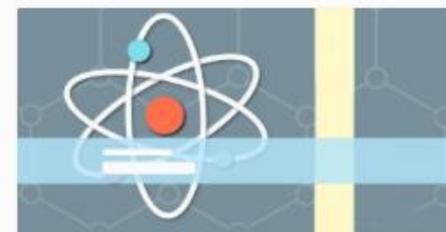
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Preparing for literacy

Coming Soon: June 2018

Early Years



Science

Coming Soon: Autumn 2018

Key Stages 3 and 4

What we do ...

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Multi-stranded 'campaigns' on key strategic issues



School inspection update

November 2016 | Issue: 8



HM Treasury



The Economist



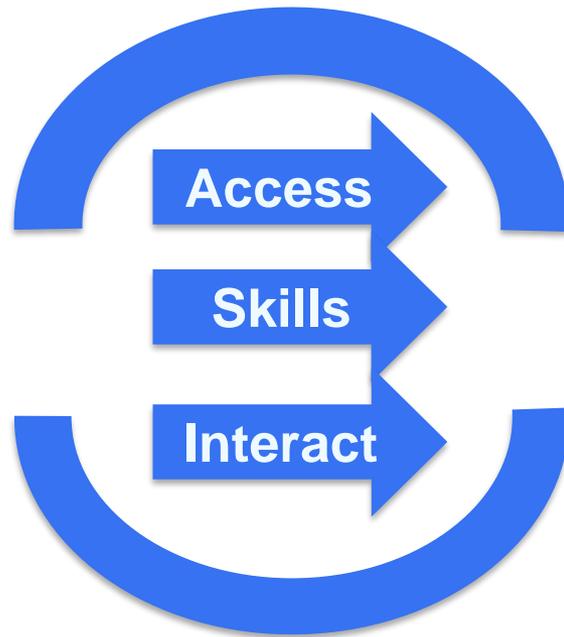
70% headteachers aware of the guidance (NFER, 2015)

Multi-stranded approaches, embedding in existing structures



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Interventions fostering changes to decision-making **structures and processes**, by **formalising & embedding** other mechanisms of change.





Why implementation?

1. *Access and Awareness*

Are teachers able to access appropriate research? Are they aware of it?

2. *Understanding and Persuasion*

Can people understand the implications for classroom practice?

Are they persuaded by it?

3. *Translation and Use*

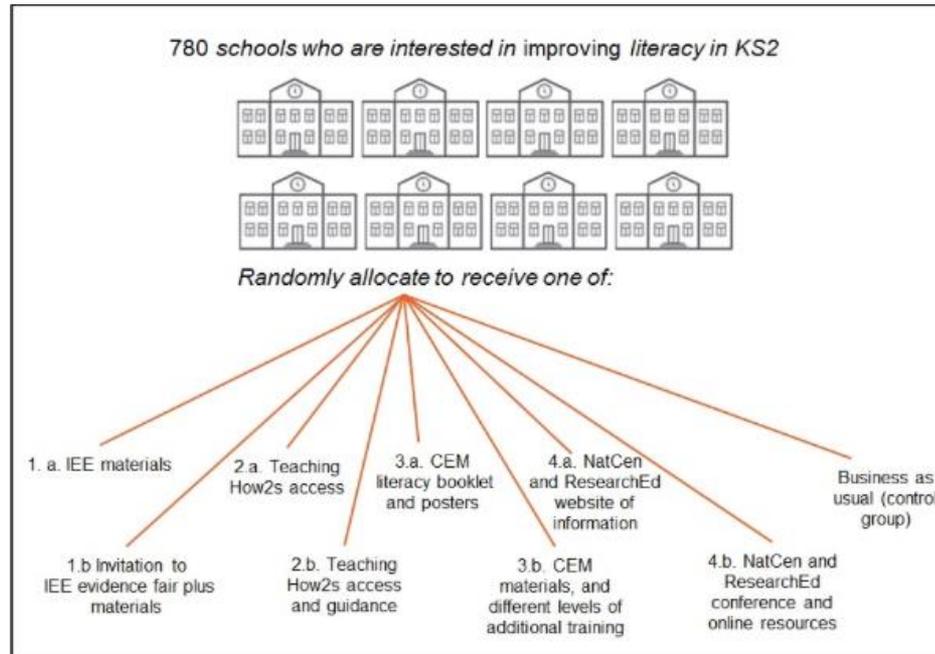
Can that understanding be translated to a specific school context? Is it informing changes in practice?

A range of EEF projects – Literacy Octopus, TEEP, Challenge Partners, Hampshire Hundreds etc – show exposure to the evidence isn't enough.

Additional support to translate conceptual understanding → classroom practice

The 'Literacy Octopus' trial

Two multi-armed Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) investigating different approaches to communicating and engaging schools with research on primary literacy



- 'Active' vs 'passive' dissemination. No impacts on any arm!
- Implications:
 - Communication should be seen as just one strand of a multi-faceted approach to mobilising knowledge.
 - We need to provide better support for translation and adoption back in the school.

(Sharples, 2017. EEF blog - 'Untangling the Literacy Octopus')



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Guidance on processes – e.g. implementation, evaluation – as well as practices

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS BEGINS

Treat scale-up as a new implementation process

Identify a key priority that is amenable to change

Continuously acknowledge support and reward good implementation practices

Systematically explore programmes or practices to implement

Plan for sustaining and scaling the intervention from the outset

Examine the fit and feasibility with the school context

STABLE USE OF APPROACH

SUSTAIN

EXPLORE

ADOPTION DECISION

Use implementation data to drive faithful adoption and intelligent adaption

DELIVER

PREPARE

Develop a clear, logical and well specified plan

Reinforce initial training with follow-on support within the school

Assess the readiness of the school to deliver the implementation plan

NOT READY - ADAPT PLAN

READY

Support staff and solve problems using a flexible leadership approach

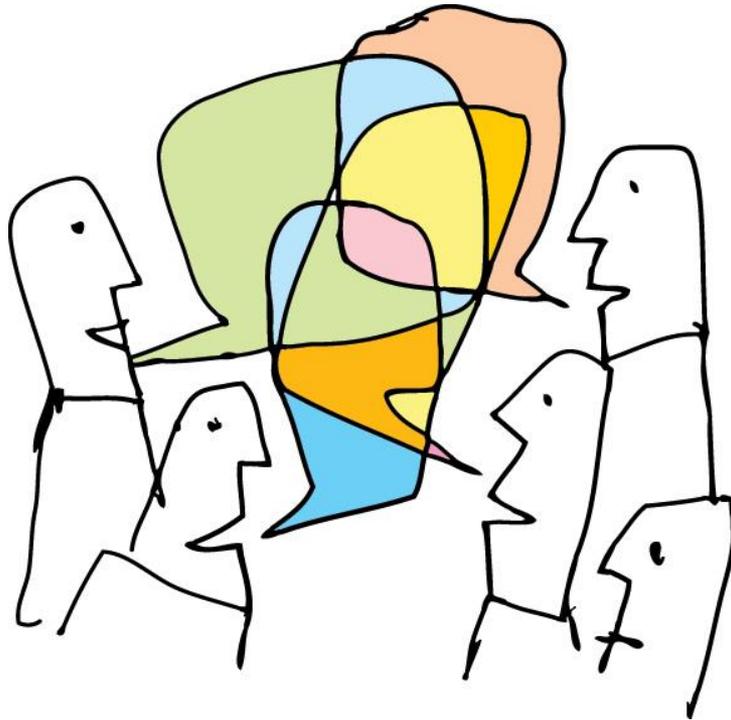
Prepare practically e.g. train staff, develop infrastructure

DELIVERY BEGINS



Social nature of research use

Uptake of research is based on trust and personality as much as practical usefulness - networks, direct contacts and brokerage are important (Nutley et al, 2007)



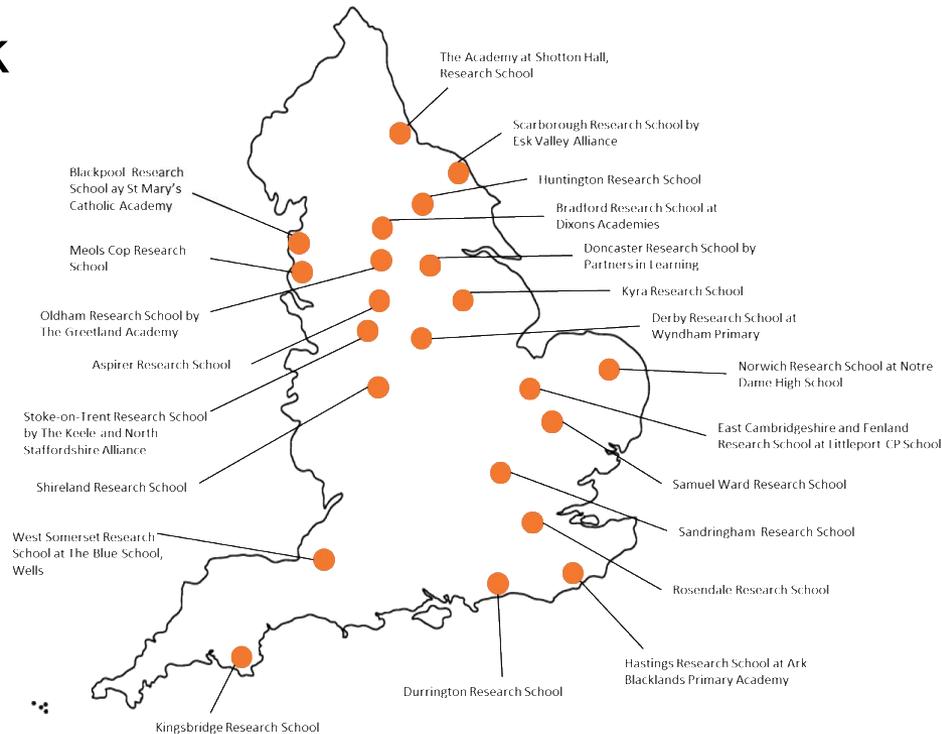
Nevertheless, default mechanism is 'push' (Davis et al, 2015)

Research Schools Network



The Research Schools Network a partnership between the EEF, the Institute for Effective Education and the Department for Education.

There are now 22 Research Schools which provide school led support for the use of evidence to improve teaching practice.



Research Schools Network



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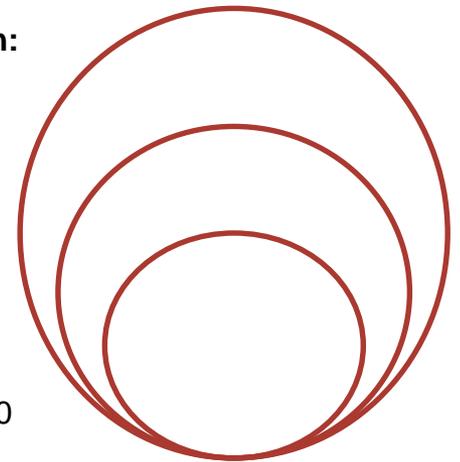


- 1. Communication** – regular communication on new and existing evidence – blogs, conferences etc.
- 2. Training** – evidence-based practices or processes
- 3. Innovation** – develop and evaluate teaching and learning innovation

Communication:
100s of schools

Training: 50
schools

Innovation: 5-10
schools



Co-creation – Coordinated but differentiated roles

