

Hillingdon Achievement for All- Primary

Sarah Mullins
14th October 2025

Today's session

- The EEF
- Effective Implementation
- Mechanisms for Behaviour Change
- Foundations for the Future Evidence into Action

The attainment gap in England in months



Education in England: Annual Report 2025, Education Policy Institute (EPI)

Addressing disadvantage

The attainment gap in England

Early Years

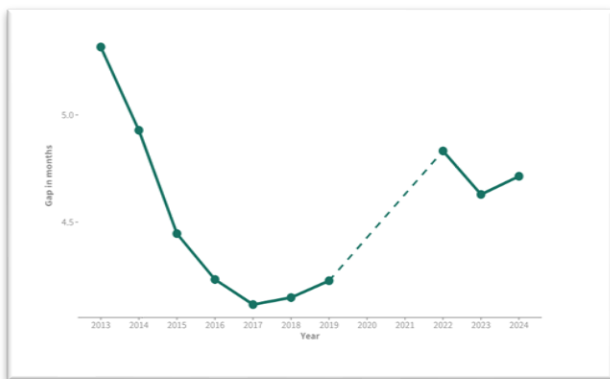


Figure D1: The disadvantage gap for pupils in reception year widened in 2024 and remains well above levels in recent years prior to the pandemic.

Primary

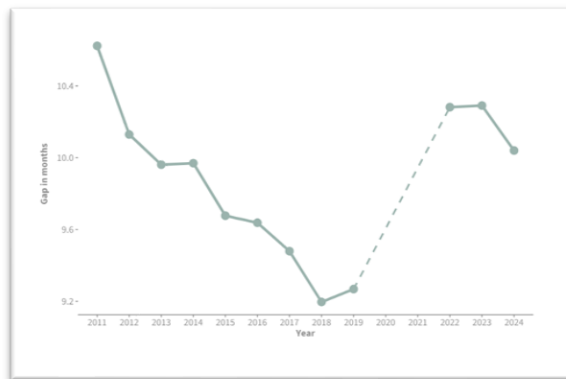


Figure D2: The disadvantage gap at the end of primary school narrowed in 2024 but remains substantially wider than before the pandemic.

Secondary

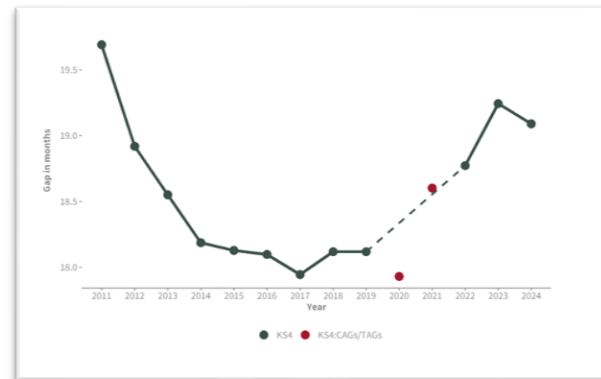


Figure D3: The disadvantage gap in GCSE English and maths narrowed in 2024 but, as at key stage 2, remains substantially wider than before the pandemic.

16-19

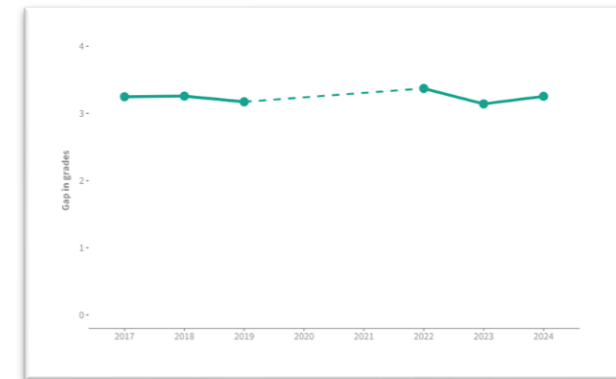


Figure D4: The 16-19 disadvantage gap across students' best three qualifications widened between 2023 and 2024, and remains at pre-pandemic levels.

Our mission

How well you do at school shouldn't be determined by **how much your parents earn.**

That's why we work to **improve teaching and learning** for the children and young people who need it most.

We do this by making sure the education sector has access to **trustworthy and actionable evidence** that makes a real difference.



Our impact

How we're helping schools, colleges, and early years settings to make a difference with evidence.

70%

of senior leaders use
our Teaching and
Learning Toolkit.

90%

of primary schools
found EEF resources
useful during the
pandemic.

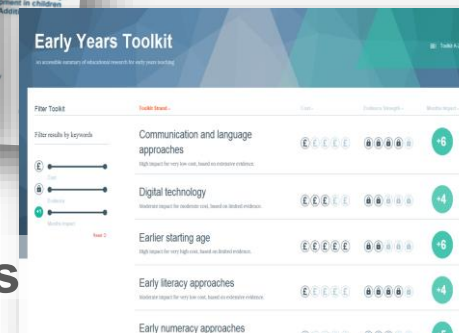
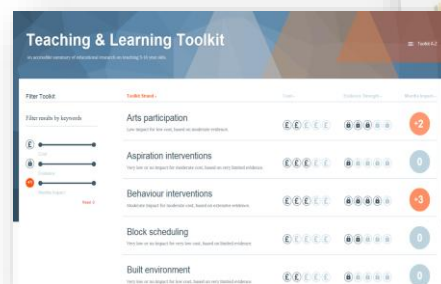
1.3m

resources are
downloaded from the
EEF website each year.

300+

projects
commissioned since
2011.

EEF

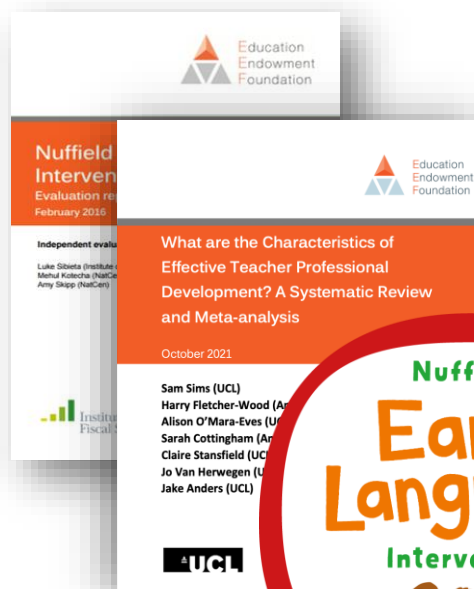


Synthesis



Generation

Mobilisation



“Simply disseminating research summaries and evidence-based resources to schools is not an effective way for research organisations to support schools to improve pupil outcomes.”

‘Literacy Octopus’ Dissemination
Trial evaluation report (2019)





Research Schools Network

Supported by the Education Endowment Foundation

North West Region

Alexandra Park Research School
Blackpool Research School
Lancashire Research School
Manchester Communication Research School
Pinnacle Learning Research School

West Midlands Region

Aspirer Research School
Billesley Research School
St Matthew's Research School
Staffordshire Research School at John Taylor
Tudor Grange Research School

South West and South Coast Region

Cornwall Research School
Gloucestershire Research School at GLA
Hampshire Research School at Front Lawn Primary
Kingsbridge Research School
Somerset Research School

London and South East Region

Durrington Research School
East London Research School
Greenshaw Research School
London South Research School at Charles Dickens
North London Alliance Research School

North Region

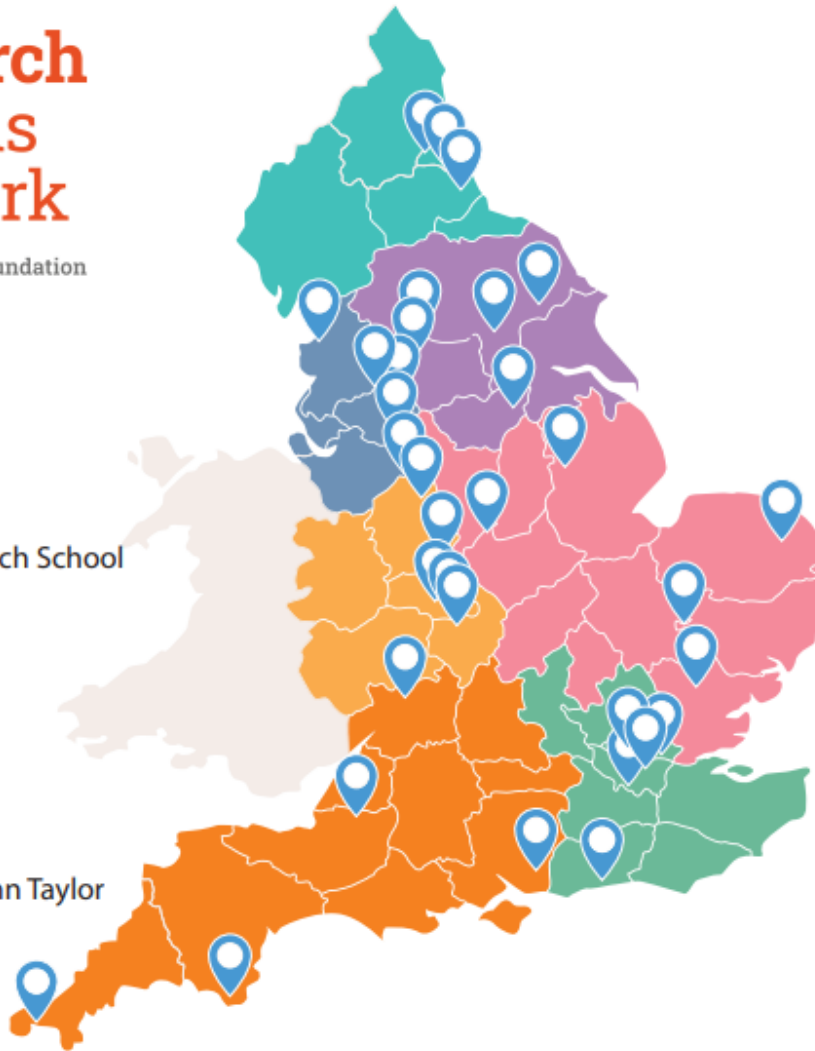
Newcastle Research School
Shotton Hall Research School
Town End Research School

Yorkshire Region

Bradford Research School
Exchange Research School at Don Valley Academy
Great Heights Research School: West Yorkshire
Huntington Research School
North Yorkshire Coast Research School

East and East Midlands Region

Derby Research School
Essex Research School at Lyons Hall Primary
Lincolnshire Research School
Norfolk Research School
Unity Research School



33 Research Schools in
our network, spread
across the country
organised into 7 regions



Research Schools Network

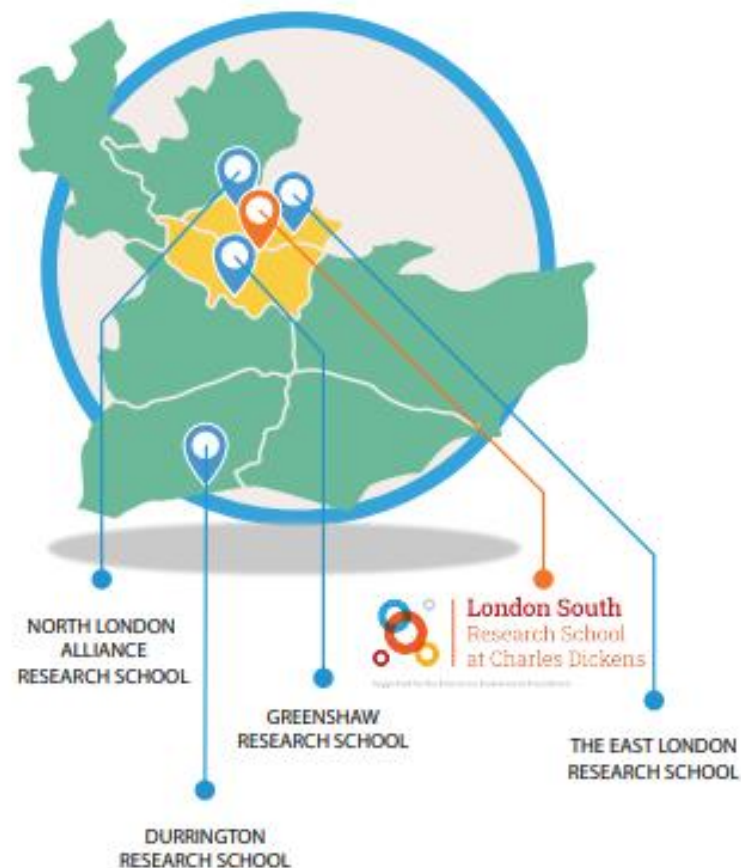
Supported by the Education Endowment Foundation



33 Research Schools in our network, spread across the country organised into 7 regions



London and South East Region





“

For us, as a school in an area of high disadvantage this thinking always starts with knowledge that equity must sit at the heart of any curriculum offer. All students, regardless of their background, deserve to flourish and we need to provide the intellectual environment where they can do so.

”

Sonia Thompson

Headteacher at St Matthews Primary School & Director of St Matthews Research School

“

In some schools, teachers and leaders may hold these unconscious biases about students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Phrases like ‘our kids can’t do homework’ or ‘school isn’t valued in this community’ all lead to lower expectations and lower aspirations. They are also simply not true. Our community is asset rich; our children are capable and brilliant.

”

Susie Fraser

**Director of Education for Greater Manchester Academies Trust &
Director of Manchester Communication Research School**



What exactly is implementation?



Making evidence-informed
decisions about what to
implement



Acting on these decisions
to put an approach into
practice

**“Making, and acting on, evidence-informed
decisions”**

1

Adopt the behaviours that drive effective implementation

2

Attend to the contextual factors that influence implementation

3

Use a structured but flexible implementation process

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS



What is being implemented

Consider whether the approach is:

- evidence-informed
- right for the setting
- feasible to implement



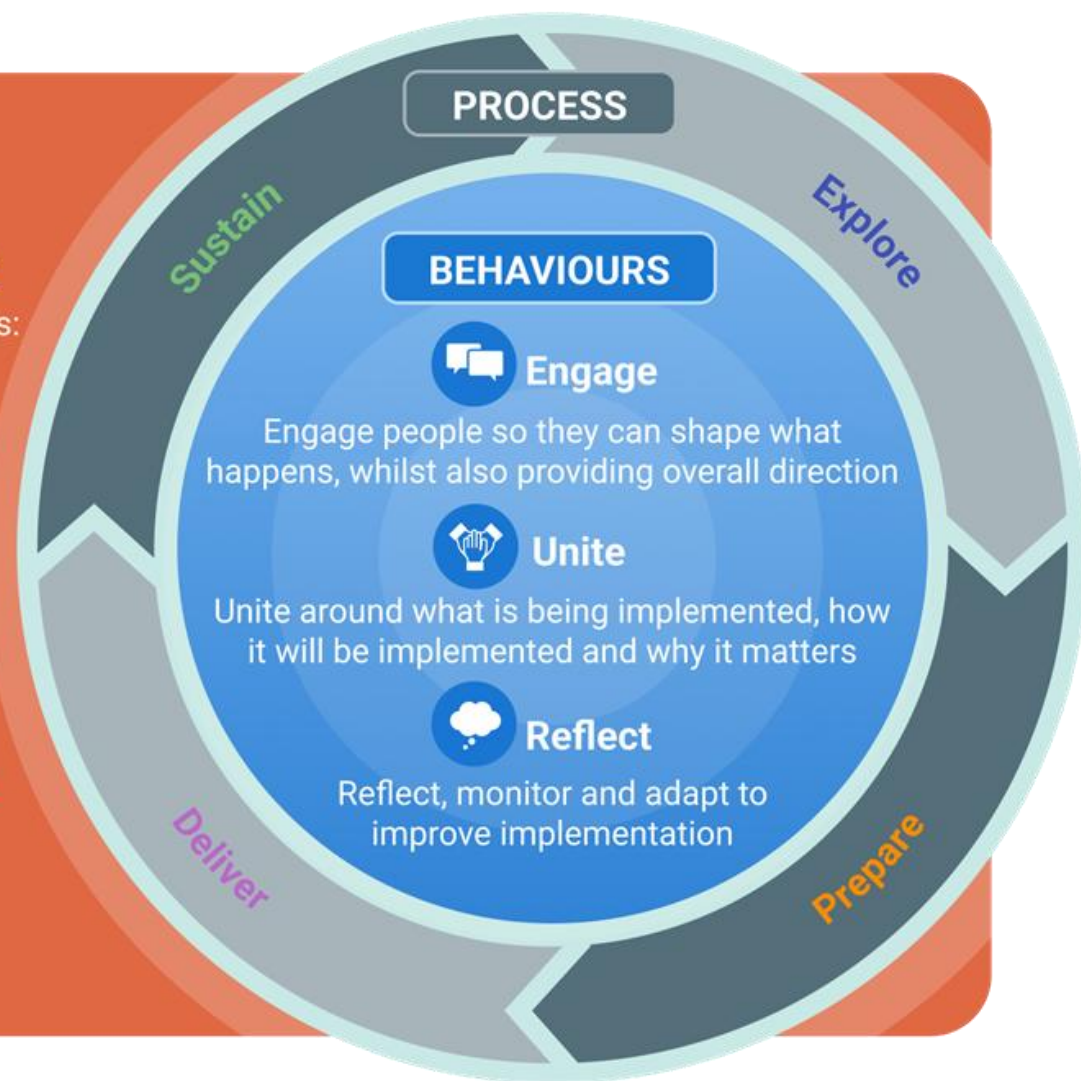
Systems and structures

Develop an infrastructure that supports implementation e.g. time, roles, logistics



People who enable change

Ensure people are in place across the school who can support, lead and positively influence implementation



Implementation is fundamentally a
collaborative and social process
driven by how people think, behave,
and interact....



Adopt the behaviours that drive effective implementation



ENGAGE

Engage people so they can shape what happens while also providing overall direction

“When the school community feels included in decisions that affect them, then implementation is likely to improve. People, ultimately, value what they feel part of.”

Adopt the behaviours that drive effective implementation



UNITE

Unite peoples around what is being implemented, how it will be implemented, and why it matters

“Poor implementation can often be traced to differing values, understanding, and practices among staff. This incoherence creates ambiguity, meaning colleagues can appear as though they are on the same page when they are not.”

How do you help people to unite?

- Co-construct the rationale for change
- Conduct local consensus discussions (implementation strategy)
- Collaborate on implementation plans
- Share reminders e.g. a core components checklist
- Use high quality professional development to unite knowledge and skills
- Discuss core components and adaptations
- Show how your work aligns with strategic goals and organisational values

“If an approach **can fit existing practices and re-enforces strategic goals**, studies suggest that schools are more likely to **sustain** the new practice and achieve the intervention goals despite challenges” (Koh and Askill Williams, 2021).

Adopt the behaviours that drive effective implementation



REFLECT

Reflect, monitor and adapt
to improve implementation

“A theme across this guidance report is that evidence and data should inform all aspects of implementation, both what to implement and how. Reflection underpins evidence-informed decision-making within implementation.”

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS



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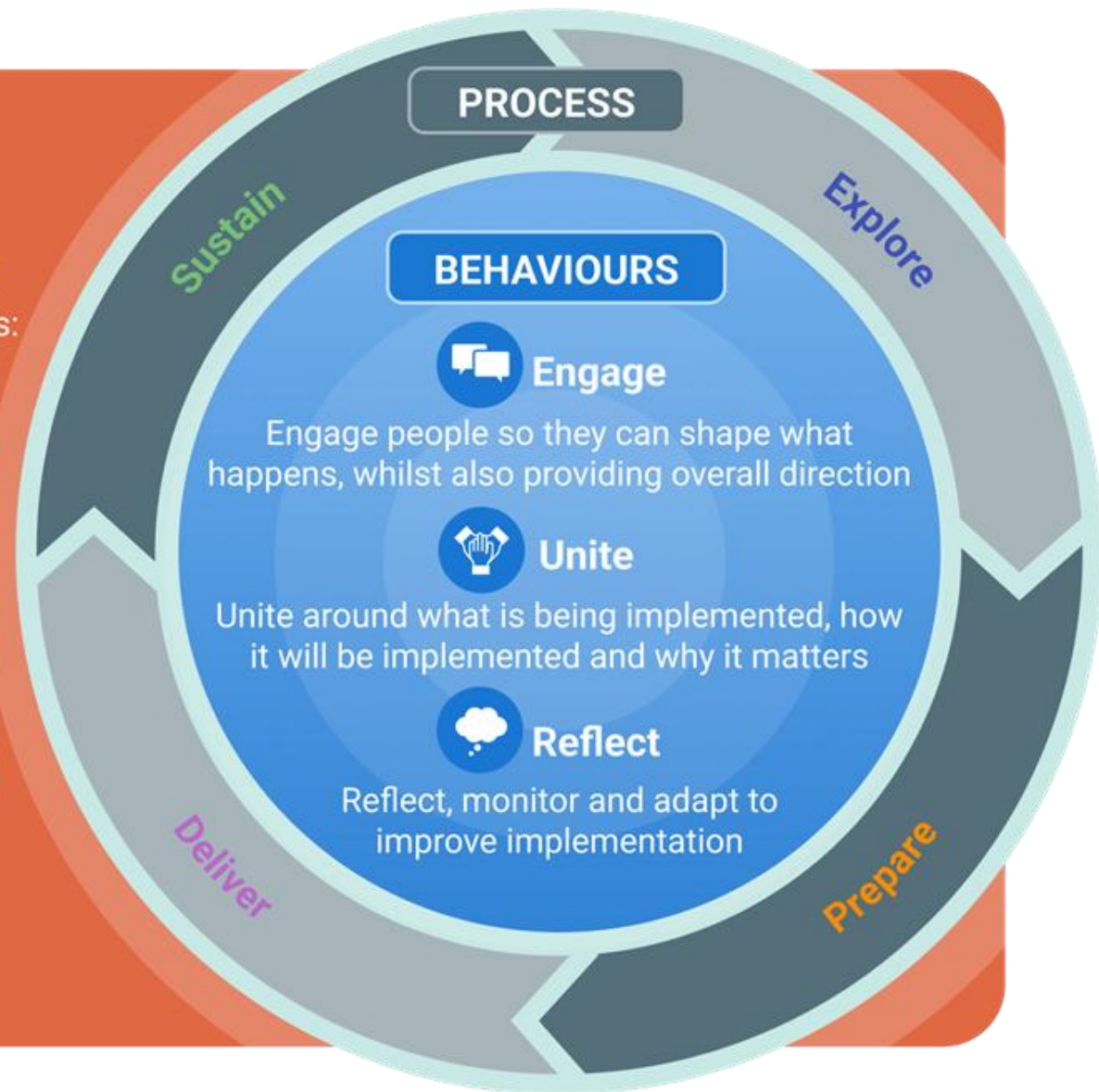
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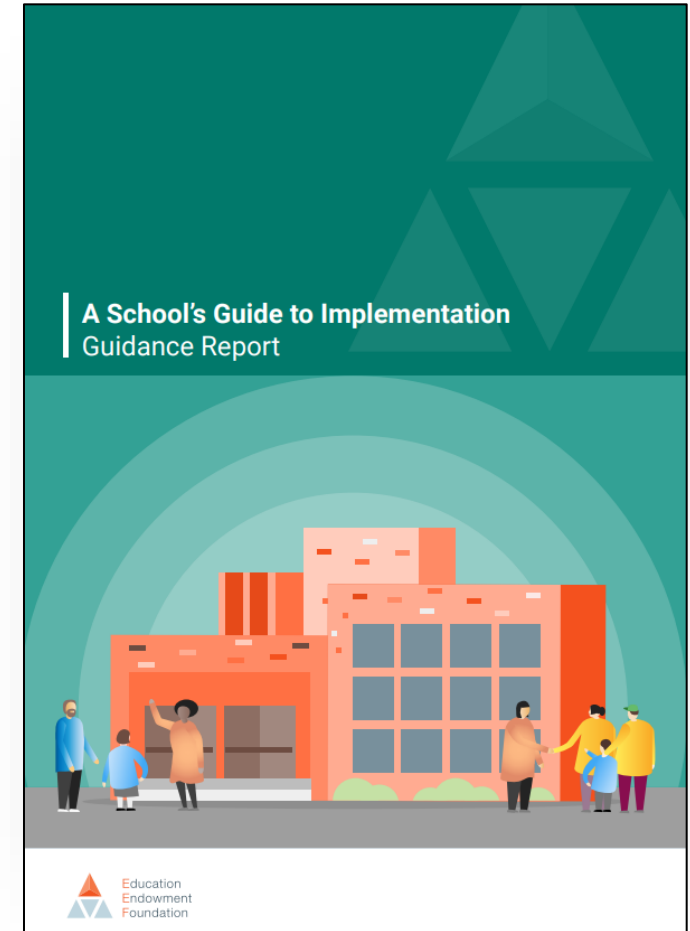
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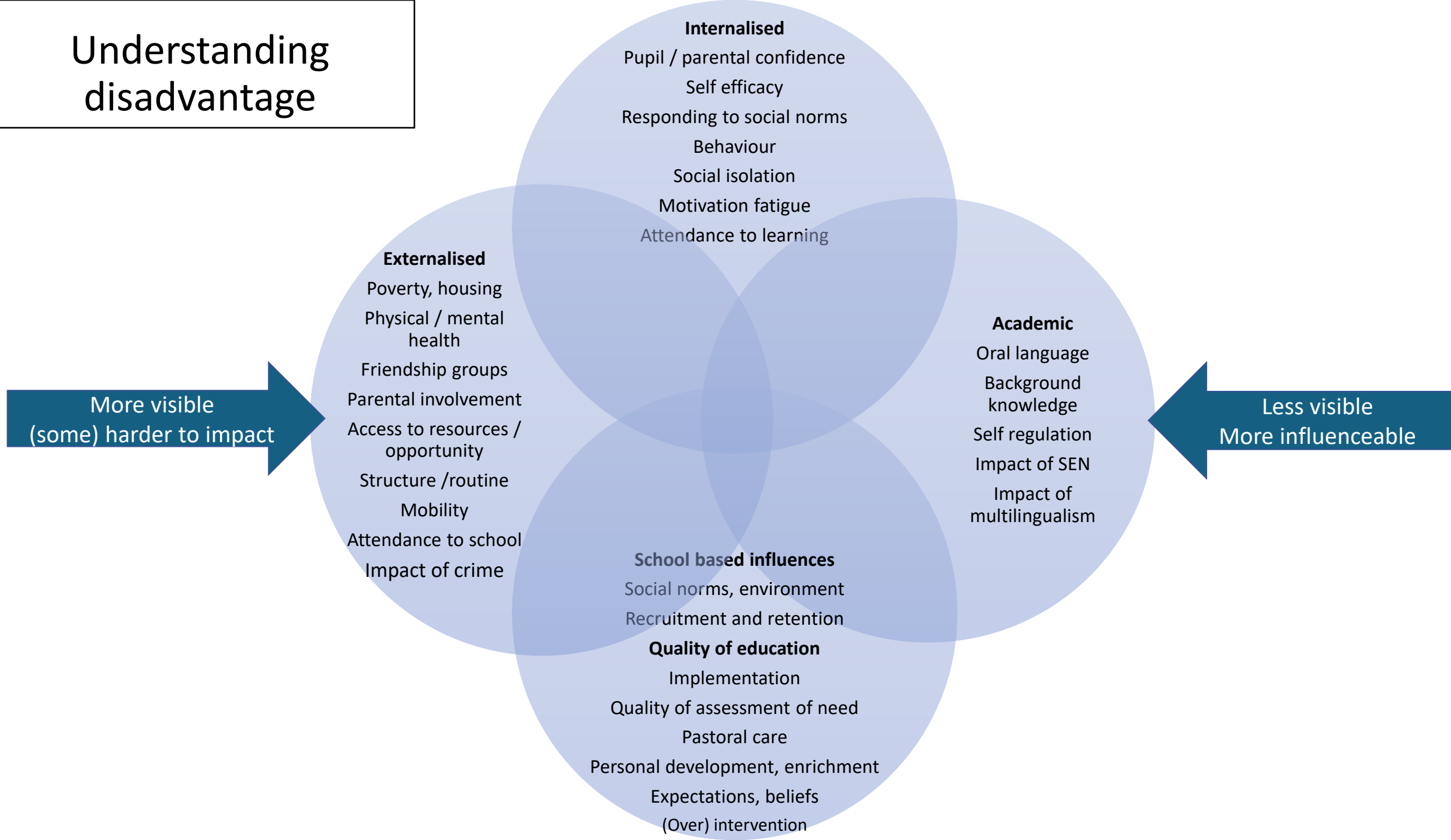


Aiming for a challenge/small number of challenges that are:

- A. Amenable to change
- B. Root causes, not symptoms
- C. If successfully addressed,
would improve pupil attainment



Understanding disadvantage



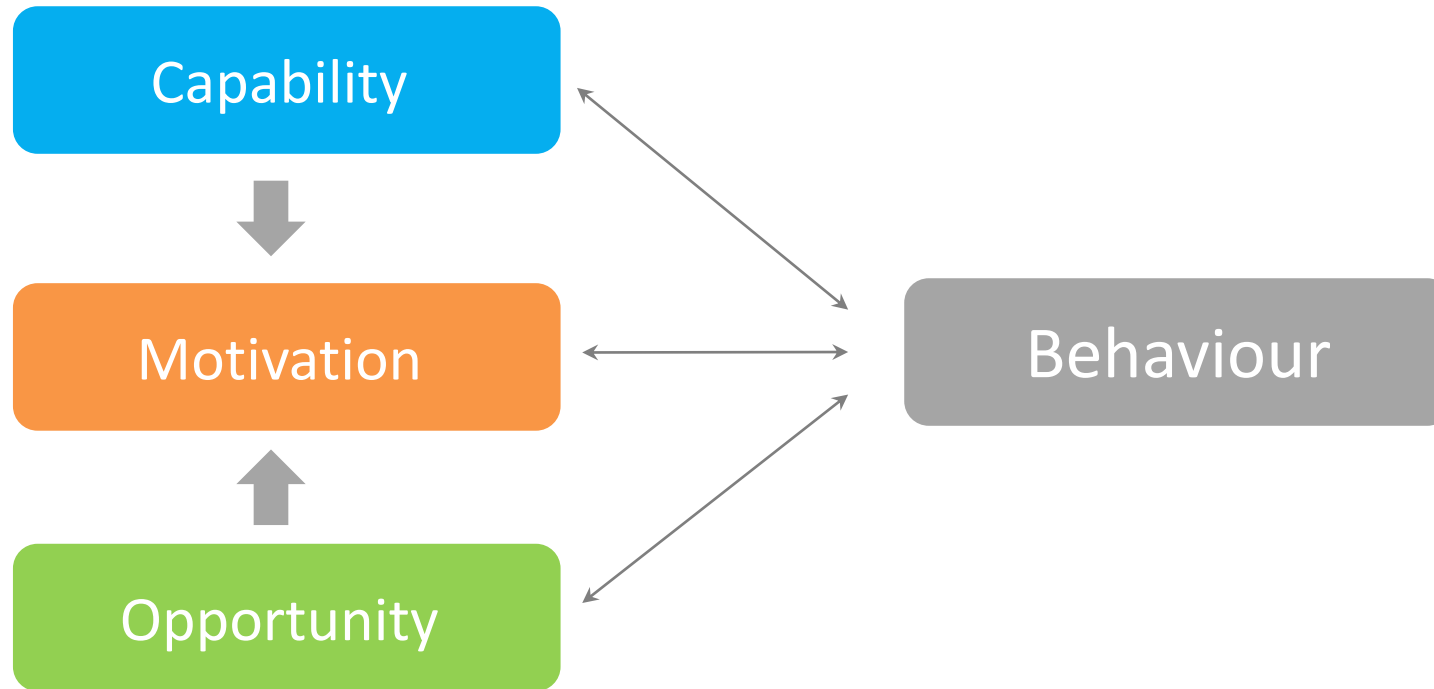
Understanding behaviour

A behaviour is..

Anything a person does in response to internal or external events. Actions may be overt (motor or verbal) and directly measurable or, covert (activities not viewable but involving voluntary muscles) and indirectly measurable; behaviours are **physical events that occur in the body and are controlled by the brain'**

Michie et al (2014)

Influencing behaviour change



Michie et al *Implementation Science* (2011)

Influencing behaviour change

Capability

- > *Psychological* - understanding of how to perform the action
- > *Physical* - skills or ability to perform the action

Motivation

- > *Reflective* - self-conscious planning and evaluation
- > *Automatic* - wants, needs, desires, impulses, inhibitions

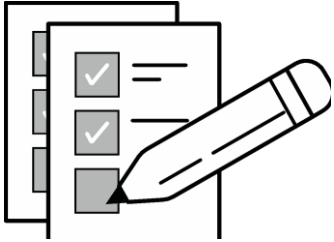
Opportunity

- > *Physical* - time, affordability, location, accessibility
- > *Social* – social norms, cues, support network



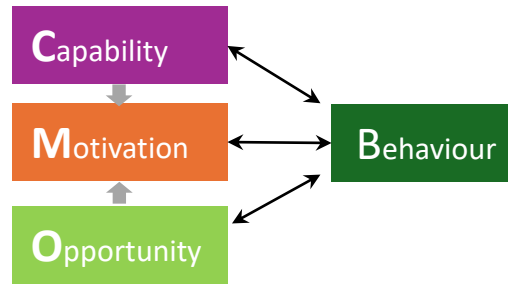
The Behavioural Change Strategy Process

1



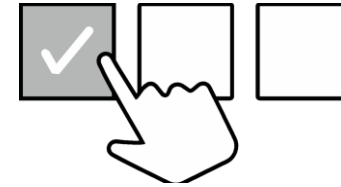
Specify the desired behaviour you want

2



Use COM-B to identify **focus** for behaviour change

3



Select behavioural change strategies

Adapted from Michie, S., van Stralen M., West R. (2011)

Education Behavioural Change Strategies

Build knowledge

Provide teachers with credible information so they understand the problem and solution.

Engage staff values

Consider teachers' existing values and beliefs so they feel part of the development process.

Celebrate success

Ensure successful milestones celebrated so teachers motivated to continue developing.

Mandate change

Make sure teachers know the change is important so they can prioritise their actions.

Provide training

Give balanced training so teachers know how and why to make changes to their practice.

Clarify expectation

Provide clear success criteria so teachers know exactly what they are trying to achieve.

Give time & space

Make sure there is time and space for teachers to make the desired changes to their practice.

Use examples

Use different examples so that teachers have clear mental models of what is required.

Offer support

Provide teachers with practical and social support so changes made become habitual.

Can be Influenced
through professional
development
activities

Capability

Opportunity

Motivation

Identify barriers and enablers to behaviour change

Behaviour

Teachers routinely use robust diagnostic information from a wide range of pupils to inform their next steps in the classroom.

What factors might help this behaviour to happen? (Enablers)	What factors might prevent this behaviour from happening? (Barriers)
- Seeing examples of this in practice (in different phases/subjects). - Understanding the positive impact of using diagnostic information to improve pupil attainment. - Having support from SLT to do this e.g. prompts in Departmental meetings.	- Knowledge of how to use diagnostic information to support pupils. - Confidence with engaging with evidence. - Time to make changes to practice and knowing what changes to make.

Evidence Exploration Partnership Aims



Evidence Exploration Partnership

- Evidence Exploration Partnership was a collaboration between Hillingdon LA, EEF and East London Research School



Education
Endowment
Foundation



Evidence Exploration Partnership Aims



Work together to identify a challenge or small number of challenges that can be effectively addressed.



Draw on a range of backgrounds, expertise, and influence in the system to co-construct evidence-based solutions aimed at meeting this need.



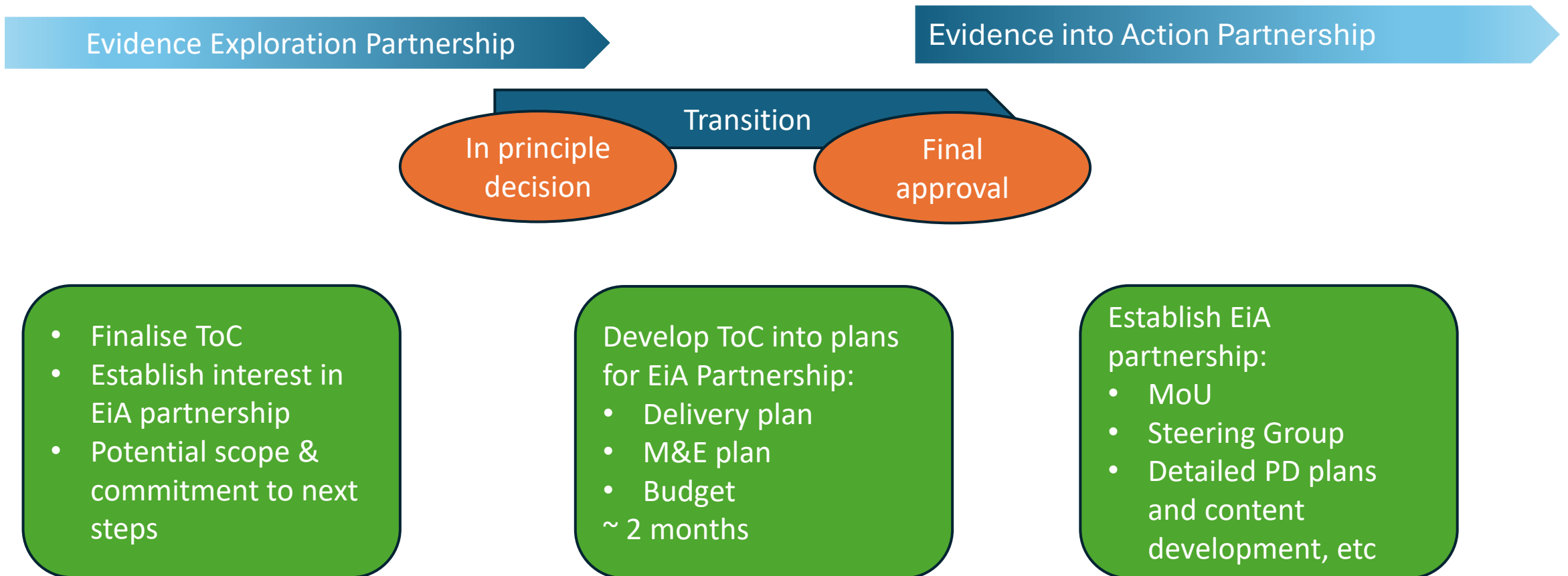
Develop a theory of change to inform onward pathways for addressing the challenge, including whether continuing with an EEF Evidence into Action partnership is an appropriate way forward for all partners.

Evidence Exploration Partnership stages

1. Evidence use and partnership working
2. Data interpretation and priority identification
3. Defining the desired behaviours
4. Identifying the solution and finalising the theory of change



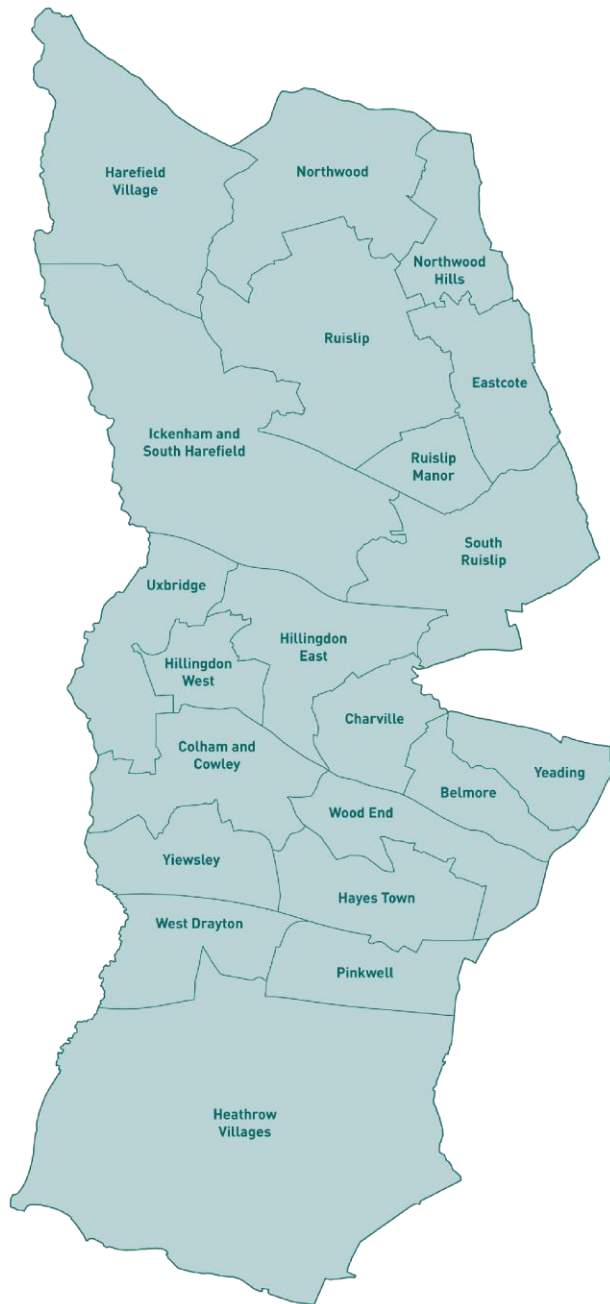
Transition process: Evidence Exploration to Evidence into Action



Evidence into Action Hillingdon

Date





HILLINGDON

A borough with significant need—and limited prior access to RSN or EEF-supported work.

A unique opportunity to embed evidence-informed practice in the early years

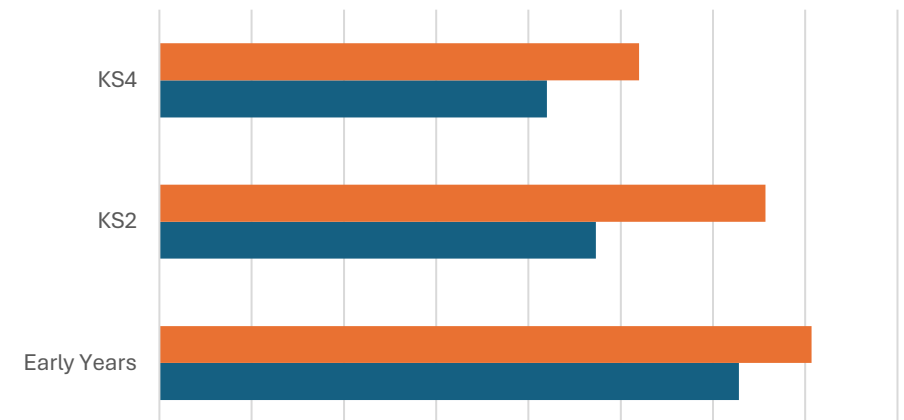
1. Why this partnership matters

1. Persistent and widening gaps:

- Only 50% of children reach a GLD in Reception
- FSM children: 54.2% in Communication & Language vs. 71.8% non-FSM

2. System opportunity:

- High proportion of children start school with little or no English
- Many are from refugee, migrant or EAL backgrounds
- Hillingdon schools are calling for support to meet this challenge
- No prior EEF/RSN engagement
- Currently schools working in silos, North/South divide
- Opportunity to align with key partners



Our Theory of Change

Priority:

Improve quality and frequency of multi-turn, meaningful conversations

Key Behaviours:

- Educators use the **ShREC Approach**
- Core practice of **interactive reading** supports **rich vocabulary**
- Language development through **inclusive, culturally responsive practice**
- Focus on **vocabulary, listening, attention, and confidence**
- Shifting from intervention to **high-quality universal teaching**



Support Model

21 schools select Interaction Champions

Support includes:

- High-quality PD on early language and inclusion
- Video coaching and mentoring
- 3 locality-based Communities of Practice

→ Designed for equity, reflection, peer learning



Support Model and Delivery Partners

- 21 schools nominate Interaction Champions
- High-quality PD, video coaching, community hubs

• Led by:

East London Research School (Sheringham Nursery)

– National leaders in early interaction and inclusion

– Currently working with DfE and Princess of Wales's Centre for Early Childhood

Also supported by:

- KST English Hub – Literacy
- Brunel University – Evaluation
- Soofia Amin – Multilingualism



Shape and Scale of the Partnership

Selection of schools

- High levels of pupil premium
- -Demographic fit: linguistically diverse communities
- SLT engagement and strategic alignment

Why this model?

- 3 Locality Hubs support collaboration
- Small, intensive cohort to build deep practice
- **Each champion contributes to Hillingdon Evidence Store (tools, videos, case studies)**
- Designed to build scalable expertise



Alignment with the System

Complements 5-year disadvantaged strategy

Adds:

- Structured, evidence-informed depth
- Connection between early years, primaries & LA
- National expertise + local leadership
- Borough-wide culture of inclusive, reflective practice





Fliss James
Research
School
Director at
East London
Research
School and
EEF Content
Lead alumni



**Melissa
Prendecast**
Strategic Lead
of the East
London
Research
School



Soofia Amin
Specialist
Lead for
Education for
Multilingualism
.



**Annette
Linnane**
Early
Years
Advisory
Teacher



**Richard
Woodfin**
Lead Primary
Education
Advisor



**Caroline
Ryder**
SEND
Education
Advisor



**Karen
Western**
Widening
Access Officer
at Brunel
University



Dr Julien Grenier
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Senior Content &
Engagement
Manager-EEF



Dr Wayne Tennent
Senior Lecturer –
Primary English
Education
Brunel University



Raj Mehta
Education
Consultant

Get involved

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