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# **Formative evaluation of the South & West Yorkshire teaching assistants scale-up campaign**

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The EEF aims to raise the attainment of children facing disadvantage by:

- identifying promising educational innovations that address the needs of disadvantaged children in primary and secondary schools in England;
- evaluating these innovations to extend and secure the evidence on what works and can be made to work at scale; and
- encouraging schools, government, charities, and others to apply evidence and adopt innovations found to be effective.

The EEF was established in 2011 by the Sutton Trust as lead charity in partnership with Impetus (formerly Impetus Trust) and received a founding £125m grant from the Department for Education. Together, the EEF and Sutton Trust are the government-designated What Works Centre for improving education outcomes for school-aged children.

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## Executive summary

### The project

The South and West Yorkshire (S&W Yorkshire) scale-up of the campaign led by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) aimed to enable schools to make better use of teaching assistants (TAs). There were three components: **an evidence-based guidance report (Sharples, Webster and Blatchford, 2015) (the EEF guidance)**, the commissioning and support of seven advocacy providers and the opportunity for schools to participate in randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of structured TA-led interventions. Advocacy providers (APs) ran programmes for schools from September 2015 to July 2016. These included a launch event and core workshops designed to engage schools with the EEF recommendations for making the best use of teaching assistants and implementing the recommendations in their school. Some advocacy providers facilitated school visits, provided additional support for implementation between workshops and/or delivered additional training. EEF steered and supported advocacy providers, and produced and facilitated access to supporting resources including audit tools.

The campaign was successful in recruiting advocacy providers in seven of the nine LA areas in S&W Yorkshire. A total of 480 schools (42% of primary schools) in S&W Yorkshire were recruited by these advocacy providers, of which 432 attended one or more of the core advocacy events. The campaign as a whole has not been successful in targeting underperforming schools or schools with the most disadvantaged pupils. Recruitment was significantly aided by LA support and impeded by negative perceptions of an advocacy provider's brand or a lack of local credibility. Attendance at advocacy events was generally high, but varied between providers. There was significant variation between advocacy providers in the numbers of schools recruited and attendance at core advocacy events.

### Key conclusions

1. The advocacy provision was successful in recruiting just under half of all primary schools in S&W Yorkshire but recruitment and attendance rates varied between providers. LA support was perceived to aid recruitment and lack of credibility or negative perceptions of advocacy provider brand was perceived to inhibit recruitment.
2. Some practices in schools that participated in the S&W Yorkshire scale-up campaign were more closely aligned to the EEF recommendations at the end of the campaign than the beginning. There were statistically significant changes in relation to reported communication between teachers and TAs and reported participation in training for teachers and TAs. There were some statistically significant changes in relation to the reported use of TA-led interventions, TA deployment and classroom practices, but changes in some aspects of these were not significant.
3. When comparing practices at the end of the campaign in participating schools to practices in comparison schools, there was very little difference in alignment with the EEF recommendations. The lack of a pre-campaign survey of comparison schools means that it is not possible to ascertain whether the degree of alignment of practices in participating schools was similar to the degree of alignment in comparison schools at the beginning of the campaign. If practices had been similar this would indicate that the campaign had had limited impact and the change observed in S&W Yorkshire would have occurred anyway. A possible explanation for the similarity in practices between the participating schools and the comparison schools, post-campaign, is the active control condition of a high level of national and regional promotion of the EEF guidance.
4. Schools were positive about the quality and usefulness of the advocacy provision and perceived that the campaign was impacting positively on their school.

5. Advocacy providers were viewed as most effective when they: were professionally credible, knowledgeable and supportive, with real world experience of schools and able to share their own experiences and resources; had established linkages with schools and reputation as a trusted brand; and were skilled adult learning facilitators, able to design engaging and interactive workshops.
6. For scale-up of research use to occur there needs to be sets of enabling characteristics in relation to the research object (the EEF guidance), the advocacy provision and the participating schools. This indicates that attention needs to be paid not just to the research object and the advocacy itself, but also to the engagement and characteristics of schools.

### **What are the findings?**

There was some evidence that practices in S&W Yorkshire schools who participated in the advocacy provision were more closely aligned to the EEF recommendations at the end of the campaign than the beginning. The difference between reported practices pre- and post-campaign was statistically significant for survey items related to communication between TAs and teachers and for training for teachers and TAs.

There was also closer alignment post-campaign in participating schools in the reported use of interventions that were supported by structured lesson plans and resources. However, there was little change in the reported use of interventions that were sustained over time or used regularly. Reported practice was more aligned with EEF recommendations on TA deployment and classroom practices, after the campaign on several, but not all, survey items. Post-campaign there were few significant differences between reported practices in participating schools and those in schools from the comparison group.

**The campaign was welcomed by most schools.** 480 schools (42%) of primary schools in S&W Yorkshire were recruited by advocacy providers to the campaign and attendance at advocacy events was generally high. Participating schools were generally positive about the quality and usefulness of the advocacy provision and perceived that the campaign was impacting positively on their school. Schools intend to continue implementing the EEF recommendations.

#### **The main reasons why schools did not participate were:**

- Lack of awareness of the campaign.
- A perception that their TAs were already effectively deployed.
- Few TAs in a school.
- Pressing accountability issues.
- Choosing not to work with local schools.

#### **Advocacy was perceived to be most effective when advocacy providers were:**

- Professionally credible, knowledgeable and supportive.
- Able to share their own experiences and resources.
- Skilled adult learning facilitators able to design engaging and interactive workshops.

And had:

- Real world experience of schools.
- Established linkages with schools.
- A reputation as a trusted brand.

#### **Aspects of the advocacy provision that enabled schools to implement the EEF recommendations were:**

- The focus and structure provided and the pattern of provision over time, which enabled schools to sequence change and implement manageable steps.

- The use and articulation of the EEF recommendations in advocacy events which provided the opportunity to contextualise the research.
- Activities that provided time to reflect, discuss and evaluate practice, share ideas and resources.
- The provision of resources, particularly auditing tools.
- A focus on how to implement change, including support for planning that enabled schools to address barriers to evidence-informed change.
- Advice and support between workshops.

**Implementation of the EEF recommendations was also influenced by school-related factors, which spanned:**

- Leadership characteristics, particularly the time and commitment of the key change agent and senior leadership support.
- The school culture, particularly a commitment to enabling all staff to support the outcomes for all children and a 'no fear of failure' ethos.
- Staff characteristics, attitudes and motivations.

**There was notable variation between advocacy providers in the number of schools recruited, some less marked differences in attendance and the perceived quality of provision,** but very limited variation in the extent to which participating schools' practices adhered to the EEF recommendations at the end of the campaign.

**EEF provided support that was perceived to effective for advocacy providers** including steering programme design, inputs to workshop and brokerage. This could be enhanced by setting clearer expectations, being more transparent and introducing efficient administrative processes.

### **How was the pilot conducted?**

The implementation and process evaluation, reported here, utilising a mixed methods design informed by the project theory of change, comprised:

- Longitudinal interviews with the EEF implementation team and advocacy providers.
- Pre- and post-campaign surveys of participating and non-participating schools in S&W Yorkshire.
- A survey of a group of comparison schools, selected using propensity score matching, at the post-campaign stage.
- Observations of EEF-led advocacy provider meetings.
- Post-campaign case studies of 14 participating schools.
- Analysis of attendance data provided by advocacy providers and of participation in structured TA-led intervention RCTs.

An assessment of impact on pupil attainment is provided in the IFS I report (**Sibieta et al., 2019**).

The SIOE evaluation team also conducted a parallel mixed-methods evaluation of the EEF's second 'Making best use of TA's' scale up projects, which led to the delivery of the Mobilise project in Lincolnshire (see the **Sheffield Hallam report, Maxwell et al., 2019**). A summary comparison of the two TA projects that draws out key lessons learned across these projects is published at the same time (see **Maxwell et al. 2019**). All of the papers on the campaign can be found **here** on the EEF website.



## Introduction

### The S&W Yorkshire scale-up campaign

#### Overview

The South & West Yorkshire (S&W Yorkshire) scale-up campaign, designed to enable schools to make better use of teaching assistants (TAs), was the first of a series of campaigns and other activity that support the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) remit to increase schools' use of research evidence. This EEF-led campaign comprised three components:

1. an **evidence-based guidance report**;
2. the commissioning and support of seven advocacy providers (APs); and
3. the opportunity for schools to participate in structured TA-led intervention randomised controlled trials (RCTs), facilitated by targeted EEF evaluation, scoping, and scale-up grants.

#### The EEF guidance and recommendations

An evidence-based guidance report (Sharples, Webster and Blatchford, 2015) (the EEF guidance), summarising the existing research on effective use of TAs, was sent in a hard copy format to all primary and secondary schools in England in June 2015. The report sets out **seven recommendations for best use of teaching assistants** (summary in Figure 1 and detail in Appendix 4) and offers guidance on implementing the recommendations.

Figure 1: EEF 'Making the best use of TAs' recommendations

<p><b>Recommendations for the use of TAs in everyday classroom contexts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils.</li><li>2. Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them.</li><li>3. Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning.</li><li>4. Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom.</li></ol> <p><b>Recommendations for the use of TAs in delivering structured interventions out of class</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions.</li><li>6. Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction.</li></ol> <p><b>Recommendations on linking learning from work led by teachers and TAs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions.</li></ol>
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#### Advocacy providers

Intermediaries, designated as advocacy providers, were commissioned in the academic year 2015/16 in seven local authority (LA) areas in S&W Yorkshire to provide support to schools to implement the EEF recommendations. Advocacy provision was led by different organisations in each of the local

authority areas. Further details of advocacy provider characteristics are presented in Findings 1 and Appendix 1.

### **EEF Activity**

The EEF implementation team:

- Provided support and guidance to advocacy providers on the development of their advocacy programme. This included steering advocacy providers to engage with head teachers, rather than TAs, and to structure their programme so that the initial focus was on structural and whole-school changes in the deployment of TAs, rather than on providing training for TAs.
- Delivered presentations on the EEF guidance and engaged participants in self-assessment at the launch events set up by advocacy providers. The EEF's academic consultant, who had been engaged in generating some of the evidence underpinning the EEF recommendations, was part of the implementation team. Further inputs to workshops by the EEF implementation team were made during the year by individual agreement with advocacy providers.
- Provided access to the Maximising the Impact of TAs (MITA) audit tool. This comprises separate surveys for senior leaders, teachers and TAs to support schools in reviewing their practices. Due to technical issues this resource was not made available to schools until after the advocacy provision had commenced.
- Provided other resources to advocacy providers and on the EEF website. The following resources were made available during the first two months of the advocacy provision:
  - Hard copies of the EEF guidance report and a poster summarising the recommendations.
  - Powerpoint presentation on the recommendations with links to supporting resources.
  - 'Acting on the evidence' one-page checklist on implementing the EEF recommendations, based on the MITA team's experiences of working with schools.
  - Red, Amber, Green (RAG) checklist to check progress in implementing the recommendations.
  - TA observation schedule to check how TAs are being deployed in the classroom.
  - 'Interventions health check' to review the effectiveness of the structured interventions that the school is using and how they link to classroom learning.
- Led three workshops for advocacy providers. The first two workshops held in July 2015 and October 2015 aimed to support advocacy providers in developing their programmes and facilitate the sharing of advocacy providers' experiences and resources. The four RCTs of structured TA-led interventions that participating schools were encouraged to take part in were also promoted at these workshops. The final workshop in July 2016 focused on gathering 'lessons learned'.
- Provided informal guidance and support by email or telephone to address queries raised by advocacy providers over the duration of the campaign.
- Facilitated support across advocacy providers. The initial design included designated 'floating consultants'. This was not implemented, however EEF brokered support links, for example for an advocacy provider that was recruited later in the campaign.

### **Structured evidence-based TA intervention trials**

The opportunity for schools to participate in structured TA-led interventions was provided through the EEF commissioning four RCTs: 1stClass@Number, Catch Up Numeracy, Switch-on Reading and Switch-on Reading and Writing, and Improving Working Memory. There was variation between the RCTs in terms of the degree to which they were able to offer places to schools in S&W Yorkshire (further details in the Findings 4 section).

The advocacy provision was intended to focus particularly on engaging underperforming schools with the EEF guidance, and the structured TA-led intervention RCTs were intended for schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils.

## **Evaluation and report remit**

The evaluation of the S&W Yorkshire campaign was jointly undertaken by the Sheffield Institute of Education (SIOE) at Sheffield Hallam University (the evaluators), who are responsible for the implementation and process evaluation, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) who are responsible for the impact evaluation and assessment of cost-effectiveness. The RCTs are being evaluated separately. This report provides a detailed account of the findings of the implementation and process evaluation which focused on the implementation and outcomes of advocacy provision in S&W Yorkshire.

## **Background evidence**

### **Policy context**

Evidence-informed practice within schools has been a policy intention of successive governments in England over at least the last 20 years (DfE, 1997; DfE, 2010; DfE, 2016). While 'evidence-informed practice is now viewed by educational policymakers in England as a driver of school and system self-improvement' (Brown and Greany, 2017, p18), long-standing issues remain. These relate both to the 'supply side', i.e. the production of high quality research evidence that is relevant to practice settings, and to the use of such evidence by schools. The EEF, founded in 2011, now plays a major role in improving the supply side through providing grants for RCTs of interventions with high potential to impact positively on the attainment of disadvantaged children and young people. EEF also have a remit to develop awareness of, and facilitate the use of, research evidence, in order to bridge the 'gulf' (Powell et al., 2017) between research production and its use. EEF have deployed a range of initiatives to fulfil this remit, including this project - the first EEF-led 'scale-up campaign' targeting the use of research evidence to improve a specific area of school practice.

### **Knowledge mobilisation processes and strategies**

The growing body of evidence on knowledge mobilisation processes, particularly from medicine and health-related fields, provides a frame of reference for developing understanding of how research knowledge, in this case about making the best use of TAs, can be presented and deployed to change practice in schools. Early models of knowledge mobilisation have relied on a linear, one-way 'transfer' of evidence from researchers to practitioners (Best and Holmes, 2010) through traditional dissemination methods such as academic papers, reports and conferences. However, more recent research indicates that knowledge flows are complex and rarely linear (Powell et al., 2017). Furthermore, the flow of knowledge across the boundaries between different professional groups (for example, researchers and teachers) can be 'sticky' due to social and cognitive differences (Ferlie et al., 2005). Recent research assessing how schools and teachers in England use research evidence also highlights the importance of the organisational context, particularly leadership capacity and commitment, and the impact of the educational policy context, in determining research use (Coldwell et al., 2017). This indicates the need for active knowledge mobilisation strategies that 'take account of competing definitions of knowledge, the internal and external contexts, the parties involved, the organisational factors and the political dynamics' (Powell et al., 2017, p 202).

Reviews of research (see for example, Hemsley-Brown, 2004; Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014; Nutley et al., 2007; and Langer, Tripney and Gough, 2016) identify a range of strategies that have been deployed to mobilise knowledge. These include: improving the quality, relevance and accessibility of research findings; raising awareness of evidence; transforming and communicating evidence for use; and supporting end-users to engage with and use evidence to inform practice. However, as Langer, Tripney and Gough (2016) note, there is limited evidence on the relative effectiveness of different

approaches. The evidence base on the effective use of evidence in schools is particularly limited (Brown and Greany, 2017) and there are very few studies that provide evidence of impact on pupil outcomes (Coldwell et al., 2017, Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014). This point is brought sharply into focus in the findings of a number of EEF evaluations of projects that were designed to engage schools in adopting interventions or practices based on research-evidence, which did not show impact on pupil attainment. See, for example, the 'Literacy Octopus' RCT (Lord et al., 2017) trial. Sharples (2017) identified several reasons that may explain the lack of impact found in the EEF research-use evaluations which stemmed from the interventions being too 'light touch' and lacking multiple strategies to support research use. The reasons included failure to generate sufficient opportunity and/or motivation to engage with the research and lack of capability to act on the evidence (Sharples, 2017). More broadly other reasons suggested for the lack of evidence of impact is the 'lack of systematic approaches to KMB [knowledge mobilisation] *within* and *across* organisations' (Cooper, 2014, p 30) and the under-developed use of research to inform practice in schools. It can be argued that research use in schools has increased since Dagenais's (2012) systematic review concluded that 'the available research suggests that the use of research-based information is hardly a significant part of the school-practice scenario' (p 296), although more recent research indicates that the degree to which schools use research varies considerably (Coldwell et al., 2017, Nelson et al., 2017).

The EEF 'Making the best use of TAs' campaign seeks to increase the use of the research on TAs in schools and, through the evaluation, add to the evidence base on effective knowledge mobilisation in educational contexts. Support for the overarching 'campaign' approach can be found in Langer, Tripney and Gough's (2016) scoping review of social science literature which 'suggests that advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns are effective in supporting behavioural change' (p 2).

Two of the three core components of the EEF campaign - the EEF guidance document and the use of intermediaries (advocacy providers) - are identified in knowledge mobilisation literature as strategies that support research use. Research summaries, such as the EEF guidance, are reported to have the potential to increase research use, providing that they have academic integrity, are written in an accessible manner, and address issues that are relevant to a practitioner audience. However, these claims rely heavily on self-report. A small-scale, randomised controlled trial of doctors' use of research summaries (Mukohara and Schwartz, 2005) found that while the doctors appreciated the ease of access to the information, it had little impact on their use of research. The extent to which research summaries impact on practice depends not only on the design of the summaries but also on the ways in which the summaries are communicated, and the support provided for implementation - a key role of the advocacy providers in the S&W Yorkshire campaign. As Sharples (2013) observes, 'packaging and posting' is unlikely to lead to behaviour change.

The potential of intermediaries in facilitating research use is being increasingly recognised in knowledge mobilisation literature and was highlighted in Campbell and Levin's (2012) discussion paper prepared to support EEF in developing knowledge mobilisation practices that could challenge educational disadvantage. Cooper's (2014) cross-case analysis of 44 research brokerage organisations in Canada found that they undertook (in varying combinations and using varying approaches) the following brokerage functions: linkages and networking; awareness; accessibility; engagement; organisational development; implementation support; capacity building; and policy influence. There are, however, very few studies that examine the ways in which intermediary organisations enable research use or measure their effectiveness (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015; Sharples, 2013). Both EEF and the advocacy providers can be considered as intermediary organisations. The role of EEF as an intermediary organisation in this research is only considered in relation to the TA campaign; consideration of EEF's broader role as a research use intermediary is beyond the scope of this report. The commissioning of advocacy providers in the S&W Yorkshire TA scale-up campaign was premised on the assumption that intermediaries from within the educational sector with expertise and experience in school improvement and/or the design and delivery of training to school staff can:

- Increase school leaders' awareness of research evidence.
- Motivate school leaders to engage with and use the evidence.
- Help 'translate' or 'transform' research evidence into practical actions.
- Support implementation in schools while ensuring fidelity of the evidence.

These aims broadly align with, or provide the basis for developing approaches that are consistent with, a number of factors that promote research use, according to the knowledge mobilisation literature, such as:

- Enhancing the opportunity, capability and motivation to use research evidence and engendering leadership commitment.
- Supporting effective communication, which takes account of variations in school contexts and the impact of the wider educational policy context.
- Facilitating the contextualisation and transformation of research by combining it with practice-based knowledge.
- Fostering networking, which as part of a wider collaborative social learning process, develops deeper understanding and supports a sense of ownership and a positive attitude towards research use.
- Incorporating the opportunity for informal peer-to-peer flows of knowledge, which are more likely to be believed and acted upon.
- Providing support for implementation that takes account of organisational barriers to evidence-informed improvement.

(Sources: Brown and Greany, 2017; Coldwell et al., 2016; Cooper, 2010 and 2014; Greany and Maxwell, 2017; Hemsley-Brown, 2004; Langer, Tripney and Gough, 2016; Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014; Nutley et al., 2007; McLaughlin et al., 2004; Sharples, 2014.)

Emerging, but not robustly tested, evidence relating to intermediaries suggests that the following attributes, knowledge and skills are likely to support effective engagement with and use of research:

- Trusted and credible.
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Understanding of research methodology and the cultures of both researchers and users, together with a broad overview of the research literature.
- Ability to find and assess relevant research, communicate with researchers, present research in different ways as applicable to different contexts, and translate complex information into meaningful resources for users.
- Entrepreneurial skills such as networking, problem-solving, innovating and negotiating.
- Established linkages, partnerships and/or collaborations with organisations the intermediary is seeking to influence.
- Understanding of the principles of adult learning and ability to design interactive workshops.

(Cooper, 2010 & 2014; Lavis et al., 2006; Lomas, 2007; Sin, 2008)

### **Project rationale**

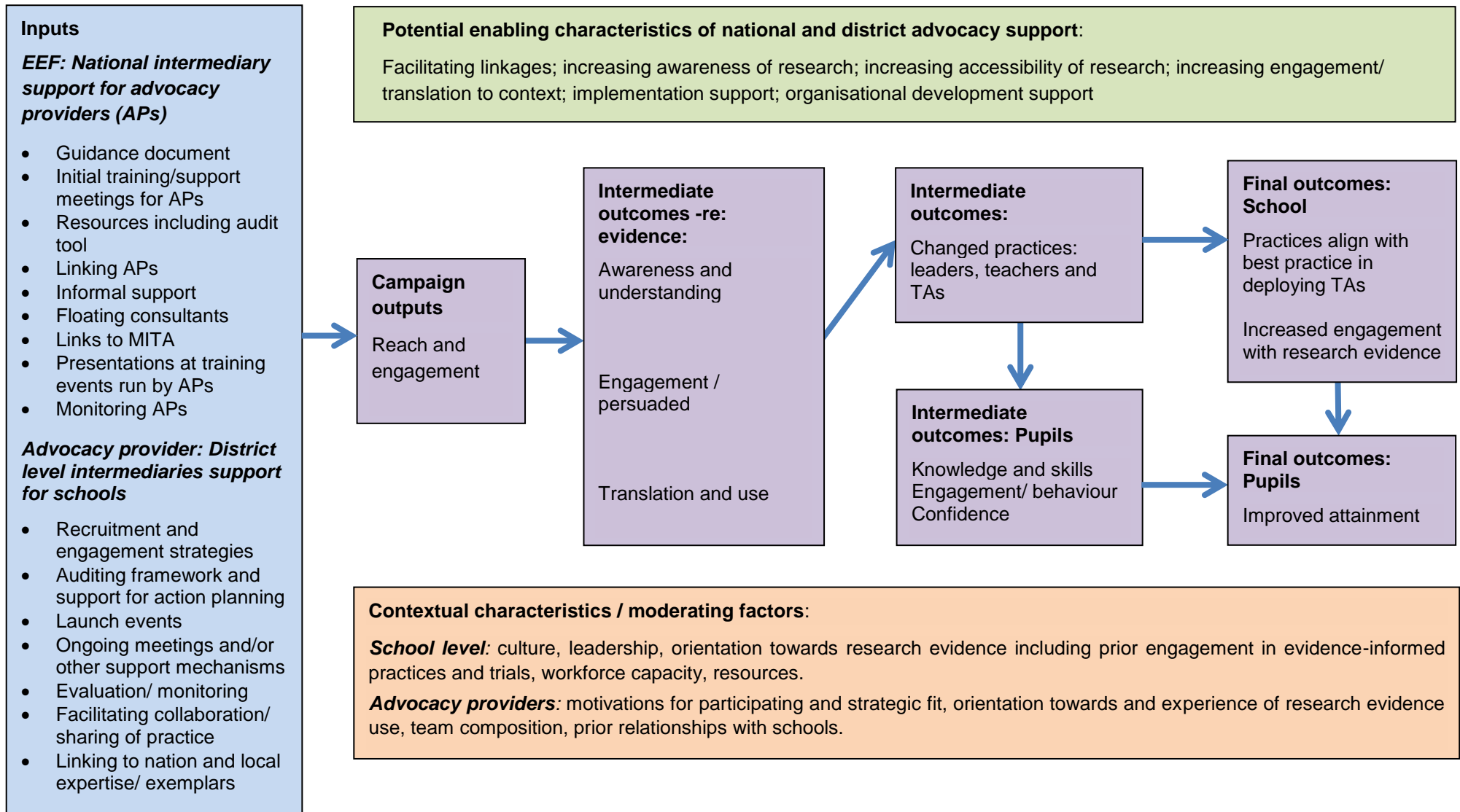
The EEF implementation team's rationale for selecting S&W Yorkshire for the campaign was:

- The large attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- The highest proportion of 'inadequate' and 'requiring improvement' primary schools in the UK at the time.
- The significant number of schools with a high percentage of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium.
- Established contacts in the region.

A programme theory of change, informed by knowledge mobilisation literature, was developed by the evaluators in discussion with the EEF strategic lead. The pathways from inputs to intended outcomes within the theory of change are summarised visually in a logic model (Figure 2), that was agreed with

the EEF strategic lead at the start of the campaign. The underpinning hypothesis of the theory of change was that the combination of EEF and advocacy provider inputs would lead to the recruitment of schools to the campaign. The advocacy provider would then develop school leaders' awareness and understanding of the research on the use of TAs, engage them with the evidence, support the translation of the evidence into strategies and actions to use in school and persuade school leaders of the value of making such changes. In turn this would lead to the intermediate outcomes of practice change by leaders, teachers and TAs. This would then enable the achievement of intermediate outcomes for pupils, such as enhanced knowledge, skills, engagement and confidence. The final outcomes were hypothesised to be school practices aligned with the EEF guidance, increased engagement with research evidence and improved pupil attainment. It was envisaged that the combination of the intermediary roles of EEF and the advocacy providers would enable change by facilitating linkages; increasing awareness of research; increasing accessibility of research; increasing engagement/translation to context; and supporting implementation and organisational development. A range of contextual factors that were likely to impact on the effectiveness of the campaign were identified. These spanned school-related factors such as culture, leadership, orientation towards research use, workforce capacity, and resources as well as factors related to the advocacy providers such as their motivations and experiences of research use, team composition, and prior relationships with schools.

Figure 2: Logic model at the start of the TA scale-up campaign



## Research questions

The research questions addressed in this report are:

### Evidence to support the theory of change

1. What models of advocacy were deployed to mobilise knowledge about the effective deployment of TAs?
2. What was the reach of, and the patterns of engagement in, the advocacy provision offered in S&W Yorkshire?
3. What changes occurred in the deployment of TAs as a result of engagement with the different models of advocacy provision and/or the EEF guidance, and what led to these changes?
4. Is the deployment of TAs more closely aligned to the EEF guidance in schools that participated in the advocacy offer than in schools that were not offered the advocacy?
5. Does participation in the advocacy offer lead to participation in the EEF targeted interventions, and if so what leads to participation in structured TA-led interventions?

### Feasibility

6. What factors influenced schools' engagement with the advocacy offer?
7. What were participants' perceptions of the different models of advocacy offered in S&W Yorkshire?
8. What enabled, and what impeded, the effectiveness of the scale-up?

## Ethical review

The evaluation was given ethical approval by the Faculty of Development and Society Ethics Committee at Sheffield Hallam University prior to commencement of the study. Copies of information and consent forms are provided in Appendix 3. Information was provided for survey participants in a covering letter for postal surveys and at the start of the online survey. Survey participants were informed that by completing the survey they were consenting for their data to be used anonymously in the evaluation.

Opt-in consent was gained from all interviewees. While the evaluators have tried as far as possible in reporting to protect the anonymity of advocacy providers, it was recognised that individuals and/or their organisations may be identifiable to others familiar with education provision in S&W Yorkshire. All advocacy providers consented to take part in the evaluation on the basis that although they would not be named they may be recognisable in the report. In a few instances quotations from advocacy provider and case study interviewees are not attributed to protect anonymity.

## Project team

The Sheffield Institute of Education team (the evaluators) who undertook the implementation and process evaluation comprises:



<b>SIOE evaluation team</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Dr Bronwen Maxwell	Lead Director. Qualitative data collection and analysis. Mixed methods triangulation.
Mike Coldwell	Co-Director. Qualitative data collection and analysis.
Ben Willis	Project manager. Qualitative data collection and analysis.
Anna Stevens	Survey administration, baseline analysis and attendance datasets.
Dr Martin Culliney	Survey analysis.
Sean Demack	Statistical oversight.
Dr Janet Goepel	Expert advice re: TA deployment and qualitative data collection and analysis.

The evaluation team were also supported by Dr Jo Booth, Sarah Reaney and Rohan Puri.

The EEF team responsible for implementing the campaign were:

<b>EEF implementation team</b>	<b>Role</b>
Professor Jonathan Sharples	Strategic lead.
James Richardson	Delivery lead.
Rob Webster	Academic consultant.

## Methods

### Overview of research design

The implementation and process evaluation utilised a mixed methods design comprising:

- Longitudinal interviews with the EEF implementation team and advocacy providers.
- Pre- and post-campaign surveys of participating and non-participating schools in S&W Yorkshire.
- Post-campaign survey of a group of comparison schools.
- Analysis of attendance data and of participation in structured TA-led intervention RCTs.
- Observations of EEF-led advocacy provider meetings.
- Case studies of participating schools after campaign completion.

The initial advocacy provision logic model (Figure 2) was used to inform the design of the data collection tools and analysis. This enabled exploration of how the campaign was implemented in S&W Yorkshire, to what extent schools were supported by the advocacy provision, participants' experiences of, and responses to, this support and how, and in what circumstances, this led to changes in the use and practices of TAs in schools.

The agreed focus for impact in the process and implementation evaluation was school practices. Measurements of perceived impact on practice in the survey and questions to explore practice change in school case studies were developed using the seven EEF recommendations.

All primary data was collected by the evaluators and analysis of all primary and secondary data was undertaken by the evaluators.

### Data collection

#### Implementation team and advocacy provider interviews

Inception meetings, an initial semi-structured interview with the EEF strategic lead and more informal early conversations with the EEF implementation team were used to surface assumptions as to how and why the campaign was expected to work in schools and the assumed causal chain from intervention through to intended outcomes. This was developed by the evaluation team into an initial logic model that was agreed with the EEF strategic lead. A further interview was conducted with the EEF strategic lead to gather their experiences of, and perspectives on, implementing the scale-up campaign.

Semi-structured telephone interviews (14 in total) of approximately one hour's duration were conducted with each advocacy provider at the point at which they were recruiting participants and at the end of the campaign. The topics covered in each interview are set out in Appendix 2. One advocacy provider had two interviewees for both interviews. In all other cases it was a single interviewee.

A short semi-structured interview was conducted with the potential advocacy provider that decided to withdraw, to explore their reasons for not taking part in the campaign. Throughout the report, the code AP with a number (1-8) are used to identify the eight advocacy providers originally recruited. Advocacy provider AP7 withdrew before any activity was initiated,

#### Observations of advocacy provider meetings

Members of the evaluation team observed and recorded field notes at the three meetings of advocacy providers led by EEF.

### **Pre- and post-campaign surveys**

A census survey to capture a baseline of current practices related to the EEF recommendations and awareness of the EEF guidance was designed collaboratively by the evaluators and the EEF implementation team. This included questions that operationalised key components of the EEF recommendations on TA practice and deployment. The survey was sent to the 1133 primary schools in S&W Yorkshire at the beginning of the Autumn term 2015, for completion by the head teacher or another senior leader with responsibility for TA deployment. 433 responses were received, a response rate of 38%.

A post-campaign survey was administered in late Autumn 2016 to the same schools to capture practices in the year following the campaign. This mostly repeated the questions on the baseline survey about practices relating to the use of TAs and included routing for those who participated in the campaign and those who did not. Participating schools were asked further questions on the quality and usefulness of the advocacy provision, and whether participating in the advocacy had led to them taking part in the structured TA intervention RCTs. Schools that did not take up the advocacy provision were asked about their reasons for not doing so. The post-campaign survey was again sent to all schools in S&W Yorkshire, irrespective of whether they had completed the baseline survey. 377 responses were received, a response rate of 30%..

The pre- and post-campaign surveys were distributed in hard copy and via an email link by the evaluators. Advocacy providers promoted the completion of both surveys. Final payments to advocacy providers by EEF were contingent on a 70% return rate. Please refer to the 'costs' section in Findings 6 for a brief exploration of how budgets were arrived at across advocacy providers.

In addition, the online version of the post-campaign survey (containing only the questions related to practices) was sent to a comparison sample of schools outside S&W Yorkshire. Propensity score matching was used to identify this sample. This was to ensure that comparison schools had similar characteristics to those in S&W Yorkshire who completed the baseline survey and subsequently took part in the advocacy offer. See Table 1 for propensity score matching variables. A one-to-many approach was taken in creating the propensity score matched sample to ensure that the achieved sample size was sufficient for analysis.

Using school census data for 2013/14 and 2014/15, a logistic regression model was used to generate predicted probabilities (or propensity scores). Given past experience in using propensity scores to match schools, the approach taken was to draw on two separate years of school census data (2013/14 and 2014/15). Using two years and two Key Stages for the propensity score matching provided a more robust match than would be possible within a single year and/or a single Key Stage. Schools that were similar in terms of both Key Stage 1 and 2 (KS1 and KS2) attainment for the two academic years were included in the matched sample.

However, this increase in matching robustness does mean that it was not possible to match all of the S&W Yorkshire primary schools involved in the advocacy programme. Specifically, schools with missing KS1 or KS2 data for 2013/14 or 2014/15 were not matched, so no infant schools (Y0-Y2) or junior schools (Y3-Y6) were included in the matching. This left 231 schools, which were matched to 2,295 primary schools. All S&W Yorkshire schools had a 1:10 match, with the exception of nine – of these, seven had a 1:9 match, one had a 1:8 match and one had a 1:4 match. Details on the logistic regression model used for the matching can be found in Appendix 7.

Telephone calls were used to boost the survey response rate. Of the 2,295 matched contrast comparison schools, 131 responded to the survey, a response rate of 5.7%. Such a low response rate suggests this is likely to be a biased sample, perhaps comprising more schools that are engaged or interested in issues around TA deployment. This could reduce possible differences with participating schools.

Further information on the characteristics of the achieved sample can be found in Findings section 2.

**Table 1: Propensity score matching variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>S&amp;W Yorkshire schools Mean (standard deviation)</b>	<b>Matched comparison schools Mean (standard deviation)</b>
% eligible girls on school roll at time of tests 1415	49.1 (8.79)	49.2 (9.91)
Percentage of key stage 2 disadvantaged 1415	36.9 (21.26)	36.0 (21.26)
% eligible pupils with English not as first language 1415	15.8 (25.09)	17.1 (24.19)
% eligible pupils classified as non-mobile 1415	93.1 (5.56)	91.8 (7.92)
% eligible pupils with SEN (Special Educational Needs) statements 1415	1.9 (2.82)	2.0 (3.32)
% pupils achieving level 5 or above in GPS test 1314&1415	50.4 (13.22)	50.4 (14.06)
% pupils achieving level 5 or above in maths test 1314&1415	38.8 (13.28)	37.6 (13.4)
Average point score 1314&1415	28.5 (1.47)	28.5 (1.45)
Cohort level key stage 1 average points score 1314&1415	14.9 (1.26)	15 (1.21)
N	231	2301

### **Achieved sample**

The first section of Table 2 displays the number of respondents to the baseline and end-of-campaign surveys, which were sent to all state primary schools in S&W Yorkshire. Schools were sent the post-campaign survey regardless of whether they completed the baseline survey. Responses to the baseline survey from schools that did not take-up the advocacy provision are not included in these figures<sup>1</sup>.

The second section of Table 2 shows the number of S&W Yorkshire schools in the post-campaign survey that participated in the advocacy offer. This is calculated from survey questions asking respondents which activities their school took part in. Nine respondents did not answer this set of survey questions. It should be noted here that only 196 participating S&W Yorkshire schools responded to both surveys. This sample is used for the analysis of reported changes in school practice, in the Findings section 4.

The third section of the table shows the number of comparison schools that responded to the survey. Evaluation commissioning did not allow sufficient lead in time for a comparison group to be included in the baseline survey. Most of the analyses in this report compare the participating schools from S&W Yorkshire with the matched sample or the baseline sample, as these comparisons give us the

<sup>1</sup> At baseline, it was not known which schools participated in the programme, or were offered the opportunity to take part. This was only established post-intervention, hence the need to survey all schools. Throughout the findings sections, it is explicitly stated which respondents are included in the analysis. This may differ slightly between the tables presented, but it was necessary to decide on which cases to include based on what was most appropriate for each question.

best possible indication of change attributable to the campaign given the available data. The samples used for specific analyses are stated at the relevant junctures throughout the report.

**Table 2: Achieved sample for baseline and post-campaign surveys**

Respondent	Head teacher %	Other senior leader %	Other %	N	Response Rate
S&W Yorkshire Baseline	57.8	40.9	1.3	308	64%
S&W Yorkshire Post-campaign	55.2	43	1.9	377	33%
N				685	
Did participate	53.2	44.7	2	293	61%
Did not participate	60	38.7	1.3	75	11.5%
N				368	
S&W Yorkshire (all)	55.2	43	1.9	377	33%
Comparison	66.4	31.3	2.3	131	5.6%
N				508	

Source: SHU survey (row percentages). Did/not participate based on self-report in survey - 9 missing responses. Response rate for S&W Yorkshire baseline calculated using total number of schools offered advocacy provision as denominator (n=480). Response rate for S&W Yorkshire baseline calculated using total number of schools in the region (n=1133).

### Recruitment and attendance data

Recruitment data was sourced from advocacy providers at the beginning of the campaign. Data on attendance at the launch event and core workshops were collected on completion of the advocacy provision. Some advocacy providers provided additional attendance data on other optional activities, such as paid-for training events, but due to these optional activities varying across providers and some providers not recording attendance, these were not included in the attendance data analysis.

The evaluation team provided a standardised template for advocacy providers to submit data on participant attendance, however, most advocacy providers returned attendance data in their in-house data collection formats. The evaluation team then extracted the relevant attendance information into an overarching master template for comparative analysis. One advocacy provider (AP6) was unable to provide attendance data on core activity due to the integration of the advocacy provision within other structural arrangements (see Findings) and was therefore excluded from the analysis of attendance data.

### Participation in structured TA-led intervention RCTs data

Data on the interest shown in, and recruitment to, the four RCTs of structured TA-led interventions that were promoted by the advocacy providers, were sourced from the intervention providers. Caution is needed when interpreting data on participation in structured TA-led intervention RCTs, particularly in comparing participation among S&W Yorkshire schools to comparison schools, as the RCTs were not equally available to all schools. Different recruitment strategies and eligibility criteria were applied by the different intervention providers. For example, Catch Up Numeracy initially only targeted S&W Yorkshire schools and then extended to one London Borough when there was insufficient recruitment, so was not available nationally. In contrast, Switch-on Reading/ Reading and Writing was advertised nationally with only 27 of the 184 school places being allocated to S&W Yorkshire. Data on interest shown in trial participation is not presented in the report as inconsistency in the approaches intervention providers took in recording the number of schools that had shown interest in participation. For example, 1stClass@Number only recorded schools as interested following a conversation that specified the necessity to be able to attend training in Yorkshire.

### School case studies

A total of 14<sup>2</sup> half-day school case study visits (two per advocacy provider) were undertaken between December 2016 and January 2017, one term after the completion of the advocacy provision. The case studies were designed to provide evidence for developing the theory of change by providing in-depth data on:

- The ways that schools had engaged with the EEF guidance and advocacy provision and their perceptions of the guidance and advocacy provision.
- How this had enabled change within the school.
- School-level change processes.
- Perceived impacts on school practices and other outcomes.
- Enablers and barriers to implementation at the school level.
- Recommendations for the advocacy provision and other schools.

To gain these insights, the eligible population was limited to schools that had substantial participation in the advocacy provision, using the criterion that the school had attended at least 75% of the core workshops offered (in the case of AP6 this was based on attendance at optional training sessions as no data were available for the cluster meetings that were the predominant mode of delivery).

A sampling matrix was developed to support the achievement of a case study sample that was representative in terms of key school characteristics such as size, pupil attainment, OFSTED ratings, school type and number of TAs. Potential schools were contacted by email and telephone. Advocacy providers also encouraged participation. While the intended sample number was achieved, many schools either did not respond to requests to participate or declined, so the sample is not fully representative. The achieved sample outlined in Table 3 shows a broadly balanced set of schools in terms of size and pupil attainment but an over-representation of community schools and schools with high OFSTED ratings. In comparison to national averages, case study schools tended to have significantly higher numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) but far fewer pupils whose first language was not English and who had either a statement of educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan (EHC).

The need to limit the case study population to schools with high participation in the advocacy provision and self-selection in choosing whether or not to participate in the evaluation, means that the achieved sample schools are likely to have been more positive about the advocacy provision and have implemented more changes in practice than other schools involved in the campaign. Caution should be applied to generalising the findings from this dataset. Throughout the report, the following codes for case study schools and interviewees: CS followed by a unique letter (A-O) and a descriptor of an interviewee's role (eg CSC, head teacher).

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<sup>2</sup> When the protocol was written, an estimate of 15 case studies was provided as the number of advocacy providers involved remained unconfirmed. Once seven advocacy providers were confirmed it was agreed with EEF to undertake an two case studies related to each advocacy provider (14 in total).

**Table 3: School characteristics by advocacy provider and school type**

School code <sup>3</sup>	School type	Number of pupils on roll (all ages)	% of pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan *	% of pupils whose first language is not English **	% of pupils eligible for FSM at any time within the last 6 years ***	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths ****	Ofsted	Teachers	Number of full time equivalents	TAs	Number of full time equivalents TAs
CSA	Community	455	0.4	3.8	32.9	56	2	17	17	25	18.9
CSB	Voluntary Aided School	227	0	59.4	45.4	33	2	12	11.5	16	10.6
CSC	Foundation School	200	1.50	9.9	26.7	52	2	10	9.1	13	8.4
CSD	Community	140	4.3	5.9	59.8	27	2	11	10.1	12	10.2
CSE	Voluntary Aided School	344	1.5	6.8	15.8	No data	1	12	12	15	10.5
CSF	Community	222	0.5	1.2	9.3	50	3	9	9	16	7.3
CSG	Community	198	1	3	25.3	72	2	10	10	9	5.7
CSH	Community	417	0.5	85.2	46.5	22	2	26	24.6	29	25
CSI	Community	427	0.7	8.2	25.3	46	2	20	18.6	24	20
CSJ	Academy	209	0	2.2	11.5	75	2	10	8.5	9	6
CSK	Academy	522	1	2.6	27	67	1	24	22.2	25	15.4
CSL	Community	239	0.8	57.9	48.6	43	2	15	12.7	17	12.2
CSM	Community	442	1.1	14.3	35.7	37	2	19	18.40	25	15.18
CSN	Community	354	1.4	23.2	52.6	62	2	16	14	18	14.6

Based on 2015/16 sourced from <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/find-a-school-in-england> \* National average: 2.6%. \*\* National average: 20%. \*\*\* National average: 25.4%  
\*\*\*\* National average: 53%

<sup>3</sup> AP7 withdrew from the programme at an early stage (prior to delivery) and accounts for why no case study schools were visited

Each case study visit comprised: interviews with the head teacher and the person responsible for implementing the EEF guidance in the school if the head teacher had not led the implementation; a teacher focus group; and a TA focus group. In total, data were gathered from 20 head teachers or other senior leaders, 43 teachers and 52 TAs. All interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcribed. Documentary evidence such as school development plans were also collected to provide contextual information.

### **Data analysis**

#### **Quantitative data analysis**

The analysis presented in this report draws on several different quantitative data sources. Surveys for school head teachers and senior leaders were intended to provide information on school TA deployment practice and other campaign outcomes, and can be considered the main quantitative data source. Surveys were sent out to all primary schools in S&W Yorkshire at baseline, to the same schools again post-campaign, and also to comparison schools post-campaign. As mentioned, this comparison group was only surveyed at the post-campaign stage, so it was not possible to conduct any analyses using difference-in-difference approaches or ANCOVA, as there were no baseline values available for the comparison group.

For the whole baseline sample, a reliability analysis was undertaken to explore internal consistency of the items using Cronbach's Alpha. Prior to the analysis, the questionnaire items were mapped onto the seven recommendations, and the analysis assessed whether the questionnaire measures were consistent with the hypothesised underlying factors (the seven recommendations). Reliable scales were not identified for recommendations 2 and 3. This process was repeated for the post-campaign survey sample, although owing to changes to survey content at the post-campaign stage, it was necessary to alter the composition of the scales in some cases. While the Cronbach's Alpha values for most scales were still at an acceptable level, there was disagreement as to whether the survey items were all sufficiently relevant to the EEF recommendations. There were also concerns that items which were regarded as highly relevant to TA practice did not map neatly onto any of the recommendations. Therefore, exploratory factor analysis was undertaken in an attempt to resolve this. The scree plot and factor loadings can be found in Appendix 11.

The most commonly used method to choose the number of factors to extract is identifying the inflexion point in the scree plot (Cattell and Vogelmann, 1977). This suggests extracting far fewer than seven factors. Indeed, the steep decline in eigenvalues from the highest to the second highest value suggests that one factor may be the optimum solution. However, this would still leave several relevant survey items with low factor loadings, and could be difficult to interpret. It was then decided that rather than creating scales from the variables in question, it would be preferable to present each item individually in the report.

However, while the factor analysis did not produce a solution that fit exactly with theoretical expectations, it is still possible to discern some themes emerging from the results. The first factor extracted seems to broadly reflect TA deployment and classroom practices. This aligns with many of the components in recommendations 1, 2 and 3. Another factor centres on communication between TAs and teachers. This aligns with the components related to teacher and TA communication in recommendation 4 and recommendation 7. A third factor features the heaviest loadings from variables that pertain to training. This aligns with the components related to training for classroom practices in recommendation 4 and the elements on training to deliver interventions in recommendations 5 and 6. The fourth factor is about the use of evidence-based structured interventions and aligns with recommendations 5 and 6. The analysis of individual survey items is now presented in this structure so that the grouped items can be discussed in a more meaningful thematic manner.



Analysis of the survey data is mostly based on three types of comparison. The first approach contrasts S&W Yorkshire schools that participated in the programme with the comparison group in terms of measures relevant to the TA campaign and its intended outcomes. These analyses used Chi-square tests when the outcomes of interest were nominal and the Mann-Whitney U test when the outcomes were ordinal (or ranked, such as agree-disagree scales). This is discussed in more detail at the relevant points in the report, and in Appendix 12.

The second set of analyses undertaken using the survey data compared baseline and post-campaign responses from participating S&W Yorkshire schools. These analyses used Chi-square tests for nominal variables and the Wilcoxon signed rank test for ordinal variables. The items included are the same as in the S&W Yorkshire vs comparison analyses with the exception of survey items that did not feature in both surveys (the post-campaign survey was edited slightly in response to feedback on the baseline version).

Finally, drawing on data from the post-campaign survey, the full range of outcomes is presented according to the different advocacy providers. The number of cases in each category is not sufficient for multivariate analyses, and rather than present omnibus statistics that can identify a significant difference without specifying where, it was decided that the mean values for each would be provided in all tables instead, as this would be the easiest to interpret.

In addition to the survey data, *monitoring data* was obtained directly from the advocacy providers. This has enabled the research team to create a categorical attendance variable (high, medium or low) and explore variations in and between the seven advocacy providers and also to determine bivariate relationships between attendance and campaign outcomes (see Appendix 10).

Publicly available *schools data* from Edubase and the DfE schools comparison service was also used to profile participating schools and compare the achieved sample to the local and national population.

### **Qualitative data analysis**

Individual summaries of the approaches taken by each advocacy provider were constructed, summarising team composition, intended targets/recipients for delivery, an overview of provision, rationale for the approach taken, perceived strengths, and any changes made to delivery and resources utilised (Appendix 1). In addition, a thematic analysis of advocacy provider pre- and post-campaign interview transcripts was undertaken to explore similarities and differences in approach and address the evaluation research questions.

Individual school case study reports were created for each of the fourteen schools visited which summarised prior awareness of the EEF guidance, reasons for engagement in the advocacy provision, experiences and perceptions of the advocacy provision, the implementation journey in the school and ways in which the advocacy provision supported this, perceived outcomes and uptake of interventions, and school-level enablers and barriers. A cross-case analysis was then undertaken in which analytical categories and themes were developed, tested and refined with the fieldwork team.

Data from open questions in the survey were imported into the qualitative software package NVivo and each question was subject to inductive thematic analysis. Where comments fitted into more than one theme they were coded into each of those themes.

### **Presentation of findings**

Findings are presented in the following sections:

**1. Advocacy provider recruitment, characteristics and models of provision.** This section summarises descriptive data from pre- and post-campaign interviews with advocacy providers on their

recruitment to the campaign and the key features of the provision they delivered as part of the campaign (RQ1).

**2. Advocacy provision reach and engagement.** In this section we briefly summarise the recruitment strategies adopted by advocacy providers. We also present data on achieved recruitment, and then discuss the effectiveness of different recruitment strategies. Additionally, attendance of events held by advocacy providers is examined using data obtained directly from the providers and data obtained via the surveys (RQ1). Self-reported attendance data from survey respondents is presented here, broken down by advocacy provider (RQ2). Descriptive statistics on reasons for not participating in events/support are also provided here (RQ6).

**3. Evidence of promise – Changes in school practices.** Here, descriptive statistics are presented on reported changes to TA deployment, review of TA deployment policy, and which members of staff are responsible for TAs in participating schools. Analysis of campaign outcomes, namely TA deployment and classroom practice, TA/teacher communication, training and practices around interventions, is also presented in this section. Pre/post-campaign responses are compared, and post-campaign responses are also compared with the matched comparison sample. Analysis of these outcomes is also broken down by advocacy provider. In addition, cross-case findings on reported changes to practice from the case study schools and illustrative vignettes are presented (RQ3, RQ4).

**4. Evidence of promise – Other outcomes.** This section presents findings from the cross-case analysis of other outcomes for TAs, teachers, pupils, and the school as a whole, including the use of research evidence, as well as any perceived impacts on other schools. Furthermore, in this section, descriptive statistics are presented on the subsequent take-up of EEF targeted interventions, showing findings by advocacy provider. For each advocacy provider, the percentage take-up is shown. Additionally, the number of interventions taken up is shown (RQ5).

**5 Feasibility.** This section presents findings on the perceived feasibility and effectiveness of EEF's implementation of the commissioned model of scale-up and illuminates the campaign theory of change. Drawing on participant post-campaign survey data, and advocacy provider and case study interview data this includes: analysis of the enablers and barriers related to the EEF's activity; the quality of advocacy provision; enablers and barriers related to advocacy provision; the change processes implemented in case study schools; enablers and barriers at the school-level; and policy related enablers and barriers. (RQ8)

**6. Scalability.** This section reports on the potential for sustainability drawing on the cross-case analysis and the advocacy provider interview and costs are presented using data provided by EEF (RQ7, RQ8). The potential for deploying the commissioned model of scale-up of research-use are then considered, with reference to evidence presented in the earlier sections.

## Timeline

**Table 4: Timeline overview**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>June 2015</b>	Postal circulation of EEF guidance to all primary and secondary schools in England
<b>June 2015</b>	Recruitment of advocacy providers
<b>July 2015</b>	Campaign email re: Guidance from EEF Chief Executive to all schools in England
<b>Sept 2015</b>	Beginning of campaign advocacy provider interviews
<b>Sept-Nov 2015</b>	Further recruitment of advocacy providers*
<b>Sept-Oct 2015</b>	Pre-campaign survey - all S&W Yorkshire schools
<b>Sept 2015 and Feb 2016</b>	Interviews with EEF strategic lead
<b>July and Oct 2015 and July 2016</b>	EEF led meetings for advocacy providers
<b>Oct-Nov 2015</b>	Collection of recruitment data from advocacy providers
<b>July 2016</b>	End-of-campaign advocacy provider interviews
<b>Sept-Nov 2016</b>	Collection of attendance data from advocacy providers
<b>Oct-Dec 2016</b>	Post-campaign survey - all S&W Yorkshire schools and comparison group
<b>Dec 2016 - Jan 2017</b>	School case studies
<b>Apr-May 2017</b>	Collection of data on uptake of RCTs from trial intervention providers

\* One advocacy provider (AP8) was not recruited until November 2015. The initial interview for this advocacy provider was conducted in January 2016. The pre-campaign survey originally administered by the evaluators in September 2015 was sent again electronically in January 2016 to schools that had signed up to AP8's programme but had not completed the survey in September 2015.

## Findings 1: Advocacy provider recruitment, characteristics and models of provision

### Introduction

This section describes the recruitment of advocacy providers, their characteristics and the models of advocacy provision developed. It examines the ways in which different approaches enabled and/or inhibited successful outcomes. Findings on achieved recruitment and the perceived effectiveness of the models of advocacy provision are presented in the Evidence of promise and Feasibility sections.

#### Key findings

- Advocacy providers were recruited in seven of the nine target Local Authority areas in S&W Yorkshire.
- Advocacy providers' reasons for engagement with the campaign spanned:
  - High esteem for EEF.
  - Valuing the EEF guidance.
  - Availability of funding.
  - Alignment with their perceptions of what is required for school improvement, the strategic objectives of their organisation and their personal commitment to improving pupil outcomes.
- The short time-scale for promotion, recruitment and implementation limited, to some extent, the EEF implementation team's capacity to identify advocacy providers that were likely to be most effective at recruiting and engaging schools.
- Advocacy provider leadership and planning teams mostly comprised senior leaders who were highly experienced in school improvement, but had more limited experience of research brokerage.
- The extent to which advocacy provider leadership and planning teams engaged in delivery varied. Most providers drew on a wider group of individuals, who had specialist content expertise or established links with potential participants, to support delivery.
- All advocacy providers comprehended that the intended emphasis of the programme was to effect change at leadership level. However their confidence to practically help schools navigate their way through efficient change management procedures appeared variable.
- The core components of the advocacy provision common across providers were launch events, core workshops, schools showcasing best practice related to the EEF recommendations, and final celebration events.
- Some advocacy programmes also included free or paid-for training sessions, financial incentives for recruitment or retention and opportunities for school enquiry/peer visits.
- In most instances, the target participants were school leaders who were in positions that enabled them to implement change within their school.
- Advocacy providers drew on audit tools and resources provided by EEF and MITA, their own resources and, as the programme progressed, resources produced by participating schools. Delays in the availability of the EEF/MITA audit tool meant that alternatives were used or the baselining of school practices was delayed.

## Recruitment of advocacy providers

**Advocacy providers were recruited in seven of the nine target LA areas in S&W Yorkshire** by open tender, advertised through the EEF website, Twitter and email distribution lists, and a presentation at a Yorkshire and Humber Teaching Schools Network event in March 2015. The opportunity to tender was also promoted by the EEF implementation team through established contacts and their networks within the region. Prospective applicants submitted a 500-word application and attended a one-hour, face-to-face interview. Twelve applications were received and seven advocacy providers were appointed. One of these seven withdrew when the EEF implementation team asked them to review their model as it was felt to be overly focused on training TAs and not providing sufficient coverage across all seven recommendations (which was a non-negotiable criterion for involvement). By the launch of the advocacy provision activity in September 2015, advocacy providers were in place in six LA areas in S&W Yorkshire. An additional advocacy provider was subsequently recruited onto the programme to cover another LA area. EEF facilitated support for this provider from another advocacy provider, which enabled a launch in January 2016 - they finished the programme along with all the others in July 2016.

The time-scales for promotion, recruitment and start-up were short and although a rigorous selection process was followed, it was acknowledged by the EEF implementation team that the recruitment process was relatively quick and reliant on a limited amount of information. As a consequence, as reported by the EEF strategic lead, the team felt that they were not able to really 'get under the local politics' within each LA area to identify advocacy providers that would be best matched to being able to recruit and successfully engage schools.

## Advocacy providers' motivations for engaging with the campaign

**Advocacy provider leads were highly motivated to engage with the campaign** and cited a range of motivating factors that informed their decision to apply to deliver a programme of advocacy:

- **Reputation of EEF:** Advocacy providers were universally pleased to have the opportunity to work with such a 'well respected' organisation. For example, one advocacy provider reported 'I value what [EEF] stand for' and had previous experience of working with key individuals within the EEF team.
- **Quality of the EEF guidance document:** There was a high degree of familiarity with the EEF guidance document and the recommendations within it tended to resonate with the advocacy providers' own experiences of how to deploy TAs effectively, meaning they were comfortable to promote the recommendations to schools. 'I thought it was absolutely brilliant [the guidance document], particularly the online version – really easy to navigate and obvious messages'.
- **Funding to permit provision:** A number of advocacy providers explained they had wanted to offer something to schools around TAs for a while and the opportunity for funding gave a focus to this and made it practically feasible to run something significant.
- **Past experience of delivering TA-related professional development:** Most advocacy provider leads and lead members within the advocacy provider teams had significant experience of running professional development and school-based training. There were examples of where advocacy provider leads had delivered TA-specific training. For example, the leads at AP1 were already running training focused on TAs (based on a Sutton Trust report) and had run an authority-wide conference the previous year and were intending to run it again, so it made sense to accept EEF's invitation to be involved with the advocacy work. In a separate example, one advocacy provider lead had lectured on the National SENCO Award, something that involved a lot of direct work to improve the effective deployment of TAs, which they felt gave them a heightened awareness of how to effectively deploy TAs. Whereas another lead, who had a background in providing high quality interventions along with professional development for TAs, reflected that in the rare instances where these interventions had been ineffective this tended to be related to insufficient senior leader

support. They therefore welcomed the opportunity to be involved in a leadership-focused advocacy programme aimed at making best use of TAs.

- **The relevance of recommendations in relation to the new OFSTED framework:** Although TA deployment is not a specific criterion in the inspection framework, a number of advocacy provider leads were also OFSTED inspectors and were very conscious of 'the emphasis...on TAs, and even feeding into the leadership and management judgement around how staff are being developed in schools it seemed obvious to try and see if we could get the funding because we could really do something with that'..
- **Helps to fulfil teaching school responsibility:** Teaching school alliances (TSAs) and teaching schools often led or played a major role in the design and leadership of advocacy offers. Some advocacy provider leads located in teaching schools found the alignment with their remit to provide school-to-school support appealing. Other teaching school leads stated the EEF work fitted in with their broader commitment to research-informed practice. Another lead (AP5), the executive head of a comparatively new teaching school, welcomed the strategically appealing opportunity to be able to work with schools from different locality clusters across the region on something high-profile, evidence-based and meaningful.
- **Commitment to the area and the schools/pupils within it:** Finally, many of the advocacy leads had spent significant amounts of their career within the area that they were applying to run advocacy within and they reported a genuine affinity with the schools and staff. Some advocacy provider leads felt it was unacceptable that schools within their region were often below national average in pupil attainment and thought that focusing on an evidence-informed TA deployment programme offered exciting opportunities to effect positive pupil outcomes.

## Advocacy provider characteristics

### Leadership and planning team

**Most of the advocacy providers assembled a small core leadership and planning team**, typically consisting of between two and four members. These teams were responsible for shaping the content of the advocacy offer, quality assurance and strategic decision-making throughout. Semi-structured telephone interviews with advocacy leads included questions about prior experience, which revealed that they and other individuals within these small core planning groups tended to be senior system-level leaders with highly relevant school improvement related experience. However, there was much more limited evidence of experience in substantive research brokerage roles. Some of the roles\* represented across the advocacy providers are noted below, to indicate the range of expertise available to be drawn upon\*.

- National Leader of Education (NLE)
- Local Leader of Education (LLE)
- Strategic lead (SL)
- Specialist Leader of Education (SLE)
- OFSTED inspector
- Leaders within LA education services

\* *Team members often held more than one such role.*

Three of the advocacy providers were jointly led as collaborations involving senior representation from either a lead school within a Teaching School Alliance (TSA) (AP2 & 8), or a community school (AP1) and the LA. The lead for AP8, employed both as a head teacher within a TSA and a part-time school improvement officer across the LA, was nominated to lead/co-ordinate their advocacy programme as it was felt they were best placed to fulfil a 'bridging role' across schools and the LA. The core teams of AP3, AP5 and AP6 were shaped and managed more narrowly by a single strategic leader from a TSA. AP5 was led by an executive head teacher of a teaching school, and AP6 by the head of a TSA. and in the case of AP3 by the director of a regionally-based TSA. The director described their role primarily in terms of being responsible for 'guarding the evidence' and working closely with three head

teachers unconnected to their own TSA to 'upskill' them as facilitators to run delivered sessions. AP4 was distinct in that it was led by Higher Education provider with an established track record of designing high quality interventions, resources, training and professional development for schools.

### **Delivery team**

**The extent to which strategic leads of the advocacy providers and/or the core planning team had a significant involvement in the face-to-face delivery of the advocacy varied markedly.** The leaders/core team of AP1, AP2, AP4 and AP8 were directly involved in delivering all of the face-to-face primary workshop sessions. In contrast, the leads at AP3, AP5 and AP6 were not directly involved in delivering core workshop sessions to primary schools (although the project lead at AP6 ran sessions for secondary schools).

In addition, it was common for advocacy providers to draw on a wider team of individuals who often featured less prominently in the terms of strategic leadership of the project, but who nevertheless fulfilled discrete and important roles, particularly in relation to delivery. For example, in AP6 (following training from the core team) LA school effectiveness officers were tasked with delivering programme content to schools on a half-termly basis through existing regional clusters that they already led. In contrast, in AP5, three facilitators who were all already working in wider SEN roles throughout the region, planned and ran all of the core workshops.

Other advocacy providers brought in additional staff to deliver either more specialist content within core sessions (e.g. AP4 worked with an OFSTED-trained independent consultant to provide input on OFSTED requirements and the SEND code of practice) or training that sat outside of the core workshop sessions, typically offered as optional additions - for example, AP3 utilised two SLEs from the Maths Hub attached to the TSA leading the programme to run two optional training sessions aimed at teachers and TAs working together to develop mastery in mathematics. In other instances, advocacy providers worked with other stakeholders to help raise awareness and engagement with the advocacy offer across the region (e.g. AP5 worked closely with a LA school improvement advisor).

### **Other support for advocacy providers**

AP6 enlisted the support of representatives from a regional excellence partnership that had led on a previous EEF trial to act in an advisory capacity, particularly at the design stage. Administrative support for tasks such as day-to-day communication with schools in relation to booking and data monitoring was provided either through a leading school or LA in all advocacy provision. AP8 also included a project manager within their team (a school business manager from within the TSA leading the project).

Finally, most advocacy providers sought to involve input from schools that showcased good practice in relation to an aspect of the EEF guidance. In some instances, this was provided through school-based representatives who were formally involved in the delivery team (in most cases they were running the project within their own school too), and in others through participating schools being invited to present throughout the course of the programme, as and when good practice was identified.

### **Provision**

Details of advocacy providers' offers are summarised in Table 5. The components of the offer that were common across all or most advocacy providers were:

- Launch events.
- Core workshops (typically three were delivered in either full or half-day formats).
- Formal opportunities for schools to showcase best practice in relation to an EEF guidance recommendation.
- Celebration events at the end of the advocacy campaign.

Some advocacy providers supplemented the core components of the offer with additional features, for example:

- Optional training sessions, some that schools were expected to pay for and others that were free.
- Financial incentives to encourage recruitment and retention.
- Opportunities for focused school enquiry/peer visits.

The key characteristics across advocacy providers are summarised below, highlighting commonalities and differences.

**All advocacy providers ran some form of launch event** usually involving key members of the leadership and delivery team. In addition, it was common for advocacy providers to invite either the EEF academic consultant and/or the EEF strategic lead to deliver a keynote address. In most instances, the launch was a standalone event focused entirely on the TA advocacy project. However, in the case of AP6, the launch event was incorporated into a pre-existing two-day primary head teacher conference (the advocacy provision being just one feature of many). Delegates at this event received a financial incentive for attending, with no guarantee that they would decide to formally sign up to the advocacy provision on offer. The extent to which 'launch' events were intended to fulfil a largely awareness-raising purpose to further bolster recruitment (most prominently the case in AP6) as opposed to concentrating primarily on substantive content and task allocation, varied among the advocacy providers (e.g AP1 schools were allocated with a paired school for a future reciprocal visit).

**All advocacy providers offered a core set of workshop events** that formed the foundation of every offer. Most of these workshops (AP1, 2, 4, 5) were run as full-day workshops, two (AP4 & 8) as half-days and one (AP6) was a *largely devolved model* as part of five, pre-existing regionally operating primary cluster meetings led by LA Senior Education Officers. As secondary schools were also involved in AP6's offer and did not have pre-existing cluster meetings, the advocacy provider lead delivered TA-specific sessions for them.



**Table 5: Key features of each advocacy provider's offer**

Advocacy provider	AP1	AP2	AP3	AP4	AP5	AP6	AP8
Launch event	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Core workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Final celebration event	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Events embedded within existing structures					✓	✓	
Training of staff outside of AP team to deliver core workshops						✓	
Targeted work with particular schools					✓	✓	
Peer school enquiry visits	✓		✓	✓			
Exemplar best practice shown at launch/ core workshops	✓			✓		✓	✓
Optional training (paid)		✓		✓			
Optional training (free)			✓			✓	
Financial incentive		✓				✓	
Secondary schools involved	✓					✓	

AP1: 3 half-day workshops each delivered in 3 separate geographical locations. Final celebration event linked into the launch of a cohort 2.

AP2: 3 half-day workshops each delivered in 4 separate geographical locations. Schools offered 7 additional workshops based on the TA recommendations and/or the opportunity to receive bespoke in-school training for an additional fee.

AP3: 3 full-day workshops. 2 free optional training twilights to consolidate learning from training days 1 and 2. 2 free optional Maths Mastery sessions. (funded by the Maths Hub).

AP4: 3 half-day workshops delivered in 2 separate geographical locations. Option of TA training for an additional fee.

AP5: 3 half-day workshops delivered across 7 existing locality clusters. A small amount of resource earmarked to help with 'struggling schools'.

AP6: Schools given £175 to attend launch conference. Campaign workshops embedded within existing cluster meetings. These were led by cluster leads outside of the main AP team. 7 showcase days across 3 schools identified as exhibiting good practice. 3 training courses aimed at TA/Teachers which were free at the point of access (additional funding secured through the LA).

AP8: 3 full-day workshops. Schools invited to present 'best practice' across all the workshops.

All advocacy provider leads reported that the core workshop sessions were strongly underpinned by the EEF guidance recommendations although the precise order in which they were reported to be addressed differed across advocacy providers. In most instances, advocacy providers ran workshops in such a way that the EEF guidance recommendations were addressed in a linear format with only AP2 presenting in a different order (see Table 6).

**Table 6: Guidance recommendations addressed at each core workshop**

Core workshop number	AP1	AP2	AP3	AP4	AP5	AP6	AP8
1	1-2	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	**	1-2
2	3-4	7	5-6	5-7	5-6		3-4
3	5-7	5-6	7	*	7		5-7

Note: \* This session was deliberately left open to what participants wanted most. In the case of AP6 this was more on professional development that could be offered within schools and specifically 'the role of the TA in the mastery environment'. Note: \*\* AP6 offered a more devolved model through existing half-termly regional clusters and therefore does not fit with the 3 workshop model shown within the table.

The frequency with which advocacy providers ran each workshop differed. AP3 and 8 offered workshops at just one location at a single time, whereas AP1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 offered them at multiple locations (ranging from two to seven) on different days. Advocacy providers able to offer more flexible arrangements for workshop attendance reported that schools had less distance to travel (this was particularly important for more geographically isolated schools) and greater opportunity to attend all of the workshops.

Beyond the core workshop offer, which was fairly consistently adopted across all advocacy providers, some advocacy providers offered a range of additional features. These included:

- *Peer school enquiry visits* (AP1, 3 and 4): Schools were either invited to form their own partnership with a different school(s) or allocated them by the advocacy provider lead. Advocacy providers prepared schools in various ways to receive and/or attend a partner school enquiry visit. For example, in AP1 a pro-forma was provided to help inform a learning walk and in AP3 schools were encouraged to formulate an enquiry question ahead of their visit.
- *Champion school visits*: AP6 identified three champion schools (with excellent Pupil Premium outcome data) judged to be displaying effective practice with their TAs. A total of seven showcase days were then run where participating schools were invited to send staff to observe.
- *Optional training*: AP3 and AP6 offered this to schools free of charge whereas AP2 and AP4 charged a fee. AP3 offered two optional twilight sessions; one following on from the first workshop on TAs in everyday contexts and the other specifically on interventions. In the case of AP6, having received action plans back from schools they identified a need for more support with training TAs to be more effective within the classroom. This prompted the project steering group to apply successfully for additional funding from the LA partnership board. The additional funding was used to provide three training courses, one around pedagogical training, focused on building independence (TAs and teachers invited to attend), and the other two based on raising English and maths subject knowledge (just TAs invited to attend). AP2 offered seven optional bolt-on training workshops, which schools could pay to take up, based around the seven EEF recommendations. In addition, schools were offered the option to buy in additional training tailored to their own school's circumstances. Based on feedback from schools, AP4 decided to offer optional extra training for TAs as some schools reported they 'didn't feel confident' to do so themselves.
- *Financial incentives*: As previously stated, AP6 offered a financial incentive to encourage schools to attend a launch event that was part of an existing two-day primary head teacher

conference. AP2 also offered financial incentives but only paid schools at the end of the programme subject to satisfactory attendance at core events and submission of action plans.

- *Targeted school support for implementation:* AP5 and AP6 reported protecting some funds to permit their delivery team to respond and provide additional support to a small number of schools who were 'struggling' to implement changes throughout the course of the programme.

All advocacy providers fully grasped that the intended **emphasis of the programme was about effecting change at leadership level**. How confident advocacy providers were at practically helping schools navigate their way through efficient change management procedures appeared to be variable.

Drawing upon the data from the advocacy provider interviews, there was variation in the degree to which change management procedures were specifically discussed and in the level of confidence possessed in helping schools navigate through them. Five advocacy provider leads made at least some reference to change teams, three of which specifically spoke about encouraging schools to create them and/or referenced occasions where they had personally presided over successful change teams to influence a desired outcome - which in at least one incidence related specifically to TAs. The lead at AP3 was particularly comfortable discussing change management theory and describes below the emphasis they placed on leadership change as part of their advocacy:

'What we very quickly learned was actually this is a leadership programme, it's a leadership issue, because when you are working with two or three people or four people, they then have to lead back in school. It's really about equipping those people to be able to do that and having the head teacher and the leadership team on board is absolutely critical.' (AP3)

The data allow only for tentative suggestions as to why certain advocacy providers appeared less able or willing to specifically promote change management processes compared with others - please refer to appendix 1 for an overview of each advocacy provider's team composition and experience. Some advocacy provider leads struggled to reconcile the ongoing tension between recognising the importance of influencing leadership change versus schools wanting to be 'given answers' and requesting that training be provided. Advocacy provider leads that could draw on a wider range of change management experiences across schools, as opposed to being more focused on delivering discrete training, seemed to be more able to persuade and explain with greater authority to schools why training alone was unlikely to lead to successful outcomes. For instance, the lead at AP3 emphasised that the facilitators they had identified to deliver sessions were 'not the type of people who will train people' but were instead those that would creatively work with school leaders to ensure they were 'co-creators of the process'. For at least one advocacy provider lead, change management approaches were only more meaningfully incorporated into their advocacy programme at the suggestion of EEF part way through their programme.

- *Five advocacy providers (AP 1, 2, 3, 5 and 8) ran some form of celebration event* that tended to reflect learning throughout the programme and allowed best practice to be showcased. In the case of AP1 the celebration event was merged into a launch event for a further cohort of schools.

### **Changes to the model/delivery**

**Across advocacy providers there was very little reported deviation from what advocacy provider leads outlined as their plans in the telephone interview conducted at the beginning of the campaign and what was actually offered and delivered to participants.** However, there were some instances of divergence. AP3 adapted their second workshop day to focus more on what 'great CPD looks like'. This included activities on developing lesson study, joint practice development and enquiry-based learning. The workshop also included a session on engaging adult learners; this was in

response to feedback received following the launch event and first workshop that schools needed more help with designing and delivering adult learning. AP4 had intended to run four concurrent cluster groups but lower than envisaged rates of enrolment meant this was revised down to just two cluster groups. Finally, AP5 dropped intended enquiry visits (facilitators visiting schools to inform delivery) partly due the financial implications of not recruiting quite as many schools as they projected (programme delivery costs remained the same), but also because of the additional time needed by facilitators for planning, responding to issues arising from the first round of workshops, and to focus extra time on schools 'struggling' to engage.

### **School role of targeted participants**

**In most instances, the core advocacy provision offer (e.g. workshops) was targeted at one or two members of staff - typically a representative from the senior leadership team (e.g. a head teacher or deputy) and a member of staff responsible for leading changes in relation to the use of TAs.** The rationale underpinning this targeting was that these members of staff were ultimately the ones with the authority to implement changes at a whole-school level.

In line with the steering from the EEF implementation team, TAs were rarely invited to attend the main workshop sessions - AP2 and AP3 were exceptions. AP2 requested that a 'key TA...well-respected by the other TAs' accompany a senior leader to the main sessions. AP3 tailored their invitation to the core workshops depending on the area of focus within each, and sometimes this included TAs.

Four of the advocacy providers explicitly mentioned encouraging schools to create change teams (AP1, 2, 3 and 8) to help action the change processes. The suggested composition of such teams was usually relatively small (around four to six) and tended to include representation from senior management, the member of staff responsible for TAs (e.g. a SENCO), skilled/experienced TAs and a teacher. In addition, a number of the advocacy providers offered additional opportunities to involve wider staff members, including at training events (AP 2, 3, 4 and 6) and school enquiry visits (AP1, 3 and 4).

### **Resources**

**Advocacy provider leads described using a mixture of pre-existing materials sourced by EEF or through MITA, bespoke materials provided by the advocacy provider leads/their core team, and shared materials from participating schools.** All of the advocacy provider leads were very positive about the user-friendly nature of the EEF guidance document and based their provision on the seven recommendations.

#### *EEF/MITA sourced*

Despite all schools having previously received the EEF guidance document direct from EEF, most advocacy provider leads reported providing a printed copy for participating schools at the start of their programme. Several advocacy providers purchased books which emerged from the MITA study, the Teaching Assistant Guide to Effective Interaction and/or Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants: Guidance for school leaders and teachers, to inform their thinking and the design of their advocacy offer. Most advocacy providers (AP 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8) also made use of the MITA audit. However, owing to delays in making the online version available, at least two advocacy providers (AP1 and 3) had to defer using it until later in the programme and create their own version for the purposes of supporting schools to baseline existing practices. The EEF RAG audit (AP 1, 4 and 8) was a popular resource used. Finally, the use of an 'interventions health check' was mentioned by one advocacy provider (AP4).

#### *Advocacy provider/participant sourced*

The three head teacher facilitators from AP3 who were part of the core delivery team trialled three different approaches to audit. These included questionnaires for TAs/teachers, observations based on the MITA books and a learning walk process. All of these approaches were then shared with participating schools to allow them to decide the most appropriate for their own school.

More broadly it was common for advocacy providers to share resources from their own 'in-house' practice. Examples included:

- Timetables.
- Simple action plans.
- Pro-formas for learning walks.
- Buddy group check-ins.
- World café activities.
- Sorting and synthesising activities.
- Sorting walls.
- A diamond ranking activity around choosing interventions.
- A grid for different SEN categories of need and provision.

Advocacy providers also responded to the needs of participants as the project progressed and sourced new materials. For example, following a request from schools to learn more about '*the role of the TA in the mastery environment*', the AP6 lead proactively sourced relevant materials from the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM).

These resources were augmented by examples of best practice that emerged from participating schools themselves, for example using a spreadsheet for tracking interventions. Typically, advocacy providers applied a 'light touch' quality assurance of resources produced by schools before they were made available to all schools through a platform such as Google Drive.

Finally, AP3 in particular focused on equipping schools with resources related to change implementation theory so they could take away 'a process' as well as physical resources. Examples included key principles from the Bridge Change Leadership model (Bridges, 2009) which was used throughout the programme, the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984), the Teacher Development Trust research around effective CPD, and Guskey's model (Guskey, 1999; 2002) for evaluation of CPD.

## Findings 2: Advocacy provision reach and engagement

In this section we summarise the approaches advocacy providers took to recruitment. We also present data on achieved recruitment, and then discuss the effectiveness of different recruitment strategies. This is followed by an analysis of data on participation in the advocacy provision.

### Key findings

- The main recruitment strategies used by advocacy providers were presentations at existing events, email communication and launch events. Two advocacy providers offered financial incentives. The offer was promoted to all primary schools.
- 42% of all the primary schools in S&W Yorkshire, that is 480 schools were recruited to the advocacy provision and of this group, 432 (38% of schools), attended at least one of the core advocacy activities.
- There was substantial variation in the effectiveness of recruitment between advocacy providers. The proportion of schools recruited varied from 29% to 100%.
- On average, participating schools were larger than the regional or national average and had smaller proportions of children with SEN support, and pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). FSM eligibility was consistent with the regional average and below the national average. OFSTED ratings were similar to regional and national averages, and attainment was also very similar. There was variation between advocacy providers in the profile of the schools they recruited.
- The campaign as a whole has not been successful in targeting underperforming schools or schools with the most disadvantaged pupils in S&W Yorkshire. While this was set out by EEF in the original project aims, it is unclear whether this expectation was made clear to advocacy providers. There was very limited targeting of these schools by advocacy providers.
- The most frequent reasons non-participating schools gave for not signing up were a lack of awareness of the campaign and the perception that their TAs were already effectively deployed. Advocacy providers also noted that schools were less likely to sign up when they had low numbers of TAs, pressing accountability issues or had isolated themselves from working with local schools.
- Recruitment was significantly aided by LA support. Negative perceptions of an advocacy provider's brand affected recruitment, and advocacy providers located out of the region struggled to recruit at scale. Opt-out recruitment resulted in the highest levels of recruitment but participation rates were lower than for other advocacy providers.
- Attendance at advocacy events was generally high, but varied between providers. There appears to be an association between attendance and the participants' perceptions of quality of the provision. Attendance was lower for advocacy provision that used an opt-out recruitment strategy.

### Advocacy provider recruitment strategies

**Key strategies used to raise awareness and encourage participation** were:

- **Presentations at existing events** such as head teacher briefings.
- **Electronic media** such as email, tweets, Eventbrite invitations, using LA authority networks where the LA was jointly leading or informally attached to the advocacy provider, and their own networks, particularly TSAs, clusters/families of schools, via the Maths hubs and NCETM or, in the case of AP4, through the schools that had previously bought interventions from the university.
- **Launch events** were often used to boost recruitment. Sometimes these were standalone events dedicated solely to the TA work, while in others they were part of an existing event, for example a primary head teacher conference. Keynote speakers from EEF and other

individuals with high profiles locally were used to promote the provision. For example, at AP2's launch event the Assistant Director of the LA revealed headline performance data from across Key Stages, which was a significant incentive for schools' attendance.

Other strategies used by fewer advocacy providers were:

- **Financial incentives** to encourage participation. AP6 offered an incentive to attend the launch event and AP2 offered incentives for attending every workshop and submitting an action plan.
- AP5 assumed an **opt-out approach** to recruitment, pitching their offer in terms of 'why wouldn't you want to be involved in something evidence-based?'. This shifted the responsibility onto each school to present a valid reason not to engage.
- **Follow-up strategies** such as AP6 cluster leads emailing non-participating schools within their cluster to challenge them ('Why aren't you involved?'), and learning partners in AP3 encouraging schools to sign up when making their school visits.

Although the original EEF brief for the project specified that the campaign would target underperforming schools, this does not appear to have been a requirement placed on advocacy providers. All advocacy providers reported that their recruitment strategy was a **universal offer**, however, a few had also targeted schools with high numbers of Pupil Premium children and/or where there were concerns that their needs might be at risk of not being met effectively. For example, LA officers and school improvement partners in AP8 had:

'done some nudging of schools, especially schools... accessing support, schools requiring improvement or schools in OFSTED categories...because they tend to be the schools that are not always first in the queue for things like this. So the sort of harder to reach schools have had a nudge, if you like'. (AP8 lead)

There was however little to suggest that targeting underperforming schools was a priority focus for any advocacy provider.

### **Achieved school recruitment**

Data collected from advocacy providers in October/November 2015 indicated that in total **480 primary schools were recruited to the campaign, 42% of the primary schools in S&W Yorkshire**. The original target set by EEF for each advocacy provider was to recruit 80 primary schools from the LA area in which they were located or had been assigned to. This target did not account for the varying number of primary schools in different LAs, which ranged from 85 to 223. Table 7 illustrates **there was notable variation in the actual numbers of schools recruited by the advocacy providers**, ranging from 38 to 135. This in part can be accounted for by variation in number of schools in each local authority area. However, there was also significant variation in the proportion of schools advocacy providers recruited compared to the total number of primary schools in their LA area. This ranged from 29% (AP1) to 100% (AP5). Although EEF's initial intention was to recruit at scale across all the local authority areas, the extent to which each advocacy provider's offer focused on a universal versus more targeted approach varied (See Table 5 and Appendix 1). This is likely to account for some of the variation, however the qualitative data discussed later in this Findings chapter illuminates differences in the effectiveness of recruitment strategies adopted and other factors that are likely to explain some of the large variations between advocacy providers.

**Table 7: Number of schools recruited and number of schools with advocacy provider attendance records, by advocacy provider**

Advocacy provider	Number of schools recruited	% schools in LEA recruited	Number of schools with workshop attendance details
AP1	65	29%	55
AP2	76	53%	76
AP3	38	34%	31
AP4	52	56%	49
AP5	135	100%	119
AP6*	56	66%	-
AP8	56	58%	51
AP4 and AP8**	2	-	1
All***	480	43%	382
Missing attendance details			98

Source: Advocacy provider recruitment and attendance data.

\* AP6 was unable to provide workshop attendance detail - so it is not possible to present an attendance figure.

\*\* Two schools engaged with the advocacy provision offered by both AP4 and AP8. These are excluded from calculations of percentage of schools in LEA recruited.

\*\*\* The 'All' total for attendance underestimates the actual number of participating schools since it does not include the schools engaged with AP6.

The attendance detail column in Table 7 has been constructed from advocacy provider data on attendance at core workshops. Given the variation in the advocacy provision beyond the core workshops and, for most advocacy providers, the lack of data on additional activity, the most appropriate proxy for participation is attendance at core workshops. Excluding schools engaged in provision led by AP6, for which data is not available, 382 schools attended at least one of the core workshops. Of the 98 schools with no attendance details, most (56) relate to AP6 where the advocacy provider was unable to provide data on participation in the core activity in this programme of cluster meetings. Other gaps in the data concern individuals who have either been withdrawn by advocacy providers or signed up but did not attend the core workshops (AP1=10, AP2=0, AP3=7, AP4=3, AP5=16, AP8=5, AP4 & AP8 combined=1). Having estimated attendance in the core workshops for AP6, it is concluded that **in the region of 432 schools, 38% of schools in S&W Yorkshire, participated in at least one core workshop in the advocacy provision.**

## Profile of schools recruited to the campaign

This section provides an analysis of the characteristics of schools recruited to the campaign by the advocacy providers. This is based on the recruitment data sourced from advocacy providers.

**Participants were mostly maintained schools (75%),** which is above the average for both the S&W Yorkshire population (73%) and England overall (67%) (see Table 8).

There was some **variation between providers with regard to school type**, for example 39% of the schools engaged by AP4 were academies, compared to only 7% for AP2, although this could reflect the composition of local schools more than the recruitment strategy or its balance (see Table 8).



**Table 8: Type of school by advocacy provider**

Type of school	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	S&W Yorkshire advocacy schools %	All S&W Yorkshire primary schools %	All mainstream primary schools in England %
<b>Academy</b>	9.2	7.1	32.4	39.2	34.3	32.1	17.9	24.8	27.3	20.9
<b>Maintained school</b>	90.8	92.9	67.6	60.8	65.7	67.9	82.1	75.2	72.7	67.2
<b>N</b>	65	70	37	51	134	56	56	471**	1,130	18,400

Source: Advocacy Dataset / DfE school comparison data. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider. \*\* Whilst there was a total of 480 advocacy schools, for 9 of these without a URN or LAESTAB number, attaching these data to DfE school comparison data was not possible.

**Participating schools were larger** (mean = 337 pupils) **than the regional and national averages** for schools (see Table 9). Advocacy providers reported that smaller schools were harder to recruit as they found it more difficult than larger schools to release staff and had only a few TAs. **Participating schools had almost the same proportion of children with SEN support and pupils with EAL as the regional average, but lower proportions than the national average.** The percentage of **pupils eligible for FSM in the past six years is consistent with the regional population average but slightly lower than England overall.** The OFSTED ratings of schools in the achieved sample were very similar to averages from S&W Yorkshire and England overall (1 = outstanding, 2 = good, 3 = requires improvement, 4 = inadequate).

The average number of pupils per school varied between providers from 269 to 380. There was also variation in terms of the percentage of pupils eligible for SEN support, ranging from 9% to 15%. Advocacy providers also engaged schools with varying proportions of EAL pupils, from 10% to 27%, reflecting the diverse demographic context in which they operated. Average proportions of FSM pupils per school ranged from 25% to 33%. The lack of variation in pupils eligible for FSM between participating schools and non-participating schools in S&W Yorkshire, and the smaller proportion of children with SEN support and EAL compared to non-participating schools, together indicate that **the campaign as a whole has not been successful in targeting schools in S&W Yorkshire with the most disadvantaged pupils. There is variation between advocacy providers in the extent to which they have engaged schools with the most disadvantaged pupils.**

**Table 9: School characteristics by advocacy provider**

Advocacy provider	Mean total number of pupils (including part-time pupils)	Mean % eligible pupils with SEN support	Mean % pupils English not as first language	Mean % pupils eligible for FSM past 6 years	Mean OFSTED rating
<b>AP1</b>	375.2	13.3	18.6	32.5	1.98
<b>AP2</b>	344.4	9.3	26.7	25.4	1.92
<b>AP3</b>	307.5	11.8	18.9	30.3	2.09
<b>AP4</b>	304.3	14.0	9.8	32.7	2.21
<b>AP5</b>	380.1	14.7	21.5	28.4	2.02
<b>AP6</b>	268.8	12.5	12.2	26.8	1.84
<b>AP8</b>	307.1	10.9	10.2	30.7	2.06
<b>S&amp;W Yorkshire advocacy schools</b>	337.3	12.7	17.9	29.3	2.01
<b>All S&amp;W Yorkshire mainstream primary schools</b>	326.6	12.5	17.8	28.3	1.98
<b>England</b>	275.0	14.0	19.0	32.0	1.91

Source: Advocacy Dataset / DfE school comparison data, OFSTED data.

### Key Stage 1 attainment

Table 10 shows mean attainment figures for schools engaged with each advocacy provider. KS1 average points scores vary slightly between advocacy providers but are broadly in line with the regional average and only marginally below the national figure.

The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading for schools in the achieved sample (48%) is just below the S&W Yorkshire population mean (50%) but considerably lower than England overall (66%). The mean for AP1 and AP3, 45%, is nine percentage points lower than for AP5, demonstrating variation between providers.

For spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG), the sample performs slightly less well than S&W Yorkshire overall (69% of pupils attaining expected standard, compared to 70%), which is in turn slightly below national average (73% of pupils reaching expected standard). This pattern is replicated across the other two areas of attainment presented here: maths and writing. There is variation between providers on these measures. For instance, AP1 schools perform below average on all four areas.

**Table 10: School attainment by advocacy provider**

Advocacy provider	Cohort level KS1 average points score	% pupils reaching expected standard in reading	% pupils reaching expected standard in SPAG	% pupils reaching expected standard in maths	% pupils reaching expected standard in writing
AP1	14.9	45.0	68.2	62.8	66.5
AP2	15.4	46.7	67.3	65.0	70.0
AP3	15.0	44.7	63.3	61.2	72.0
AP4	15.3	48.6	70.9	67.4	75.3
AP5	15.1	52.4	70.7	69.6	74.2
AP6	15.5	46.7	68.6	65.9	58.8
AP8	15.4	48.2	67.4	65.8	74.8
S&W Yorkshire advocacy schools	15.2	48.3	68.6	66.2	70.6
All S&W Yorkshire mainstream primary schools	15.2	49.8	70.2	68.2	72.1
England	15.6	66	73	70	74

Source: Advocacy Dataset / DfE school comparison data

The tables above are based on all schools recruited to the programme. Appendix 6 provides comparative tables for the survey sample that is used in the main analysis. This shows that the survey sample (272 schools that participated in the advocacy and have been identified as engaging with a particular provider) is largely comparable to the population details shown in Tables 8 and 9 in terms of KS1 attainment, OFSTED ratings and mean school size, but had a slightly lower mean percentage of pupils certified as SEN (11.2%), EAL (16.7%) and FSM in the past six years (28.3%) compared with the population (n=480) of schools participating in the advocacy provision.

### Effectiveness of recruitment strategies

This section draws on data from non-participating schools and advocacy providers to provide insights that may explain the achieved recruitment pattern presented above.

When survey respondents who had not participated in the campaign were asked why they did not participate, **the most frequent response was that they were not aware of the provision (42%) followed by the perception that their TAs were already deployed effectively (28%)**. 18% said that there was no capacity to release staff, although this amounted to only eight responses (see Table 11).

**Table 11: Reasons why schools did not participate in any events and/or support activity**

Q22	N responses	% cases
Was not aware	31	41.9
Not a school priority	11	14.9
Already effectively deploy TAs	21	28.4
No capacity to release staff to take part	13	17.6
Other	8	10.8
N	76	

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire respondents indicating that they did not participate in post-campaign survey. Multiple response question: as more than one answer is allowed, N responses do not equal total N.

**Key factors that advocacy providers perceived to enable or inhibit effective recruitment were:**

- **Involvement of the LA**

**Advocacy providers that involved LAs found recruitment far more straightforward.** For example, working with an LA often meant gaining immediate access to up-to-date mailing lists for most if not all schools across the region. There was also a belief that having LA involvement acted as a further endorsement to become involved. In the instances **where the LA was not meaningfully involved, disseminating information to all schools was more problematic.** In at least one instance, the EEF implementation team attempted to broker improved relationships between the LA and the advocacy provider to help facilitate marketing of the offer.

- **The credibility of the advocacy provider within the LA area**

Advocacy providers led by an organisation from outside of the region being served and/or by individuals with only limited experience of working within the region struggled disproportionately with recruiting schools at scale. Advocacy providers in such circumstances reported lacking a track record in the area and had more limited understanding of the subtle dynamics across schools, which impeded their ability to bring a wide range of schools together.

- **Perceptions of the advocacy provider's brand**

One advocacy provider was perceived negatively by some local schools. This was largely attributed to their role as an academy sponsor to under-performing schools. This, combined with a lack of LA support, significantly limited local recruitment and an agreement was made with EEF to recruit via their wider 'partners' which extended beyond the LA area.

- **An opt-out approach to recruitment**

AP5 was the only advocacy provider who used an opt-out model and comfortably recruited both the highest number of schools and the highest proportion of schools in an LA area. However, as reported in the following section, participation rates were lower than for other providers.

Advocacy providers also pointed to a number of **school-related factors** that had impacted on recruitment:

- A minority of schools felt that their **TAs were already 'outstanding'** and so they had little to gain from becoming involved.
- In models where delivery was based on **existing geographically bounded locality structures**, a small minority of more **isolated schools** had already decided not to engage

with that model, so found the idea of working with the same schools in relation to the TA work unappealing.

- A small number of schools reported that they had **cut back TA numbers** so significantly that engagement in a project of such scale could not be justified.
- **Schools with particularly pressing accountability issues to address** felt too inundated with action plans and too far away from 'quality teaching' to justify involvement at the current time.

As noted earlier, the targeting of schools with high proportions of pupils eligible for FSM and poorly performing schools was limited. Various reasons were given for this. In one example (AP1), the decision not to target was predicated on the volume of existing programmes being led by teaching schools and other EEF RCTs focused on such schools. This led to reservations about the schools' capacity to fully commit and possibly even making them 'more vulnerable rather than less vulnerable'. Another advocacy provider lead fundamentally disagreed with targeting any school, particularly a vulnerable one, because in the context of tight budgets schools needed to think really hard about which CPD programmes to be involved with. Ultimately, given the scale of the commitment to be involved, this lead believed that school leaders should only sign up to their offer if the TA work was a key priority area and they were prepared to fully commit. The **EEF brand** was perceived to be an important enabler of recruitment.

## Programme attendance

Table 12 below draws on monitoring data obtained from the advocacy providers. The main finding is that, in general, attendance was high, although there was some variation between the advocacy providers.

AP5 had the lowest proportion of attendance at events. This may be a consequence, in part, of this provider's opt-in recruitment approach. This is likely to have brought in schools that placed less priority on improving the use of TAs, than those recruited by other advocacy providers, and in turn these schools may have been less amenable to releasing staff to attend events. Participants' perceptions of the quality of events provided by AP5 were generally lower than for other advocacy providers (see Findings 6: Feasibility) which may also account for lower attendance.

AP8 had by some margin the highest level of attendance. It is likely that, in part, this can be attributed to joining the campaign later than the other advocacy providers. This meant that all supporting resources, including the audit, were available from the start and the advocacy provider benefited from feedback from EEF on lessons learned and support from another advocacy provider. The quality ratings for AP8's provision were also high and the shorter time span for delivery may have aided retention.

**Table 12: Attendance at events by advocacy provider (from monitoring data)**

	AP1%	AP2%	AP3%	AP4%	AP5%	AP6%	AP8%	AP8&AP4%	All%
<b>Low (1 event or less)</b>	5.5	19.7	9.7	6.1	21.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	13.4
<b>Medium (2 events)</b>	9.1	13.2	9.7	20.4	11.8	0.0	2.0	0.0	11.3
<b>High (3+ events)</b>	85.5	67.1	80.6	73.5	66.4	0.0	98.0	0.0	75.4
<b>N</b>	55	76	31	49	119	0	51	1	382

Source: monitoring data from advocacy providers. Note: cell percentages are rounded up to the nearest 0.1%, so totals may not sum exactly to 100%. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

\* AP6 was unable to supply monitoring data.

Table 13 below, drawing on survey data (as opposed to the advocacy provider attendance data used in Table 12 above), shows that 43% of survey respondents attended all events that were on offer. A further 31% said they attended most, 22% attended only some, while 4% only went to the launch event. Given the different metrics used for the attendance data obtained directly from advocacy providers and the survey, it is difficult to directly compare these statistics; one thing that seems apparent is that attendance was largely high. For AP6, we only have survey data with which to examine attendance and for this provider, attendance does seem to be notably lower. This may reflect the mode of delivery through existing cluster meetings.

**Table 13: Attendance at events by advocacy provider (from survey data)**

Q17	AP1%	AP2%	AP3%	AP4%	AP5%	AP6%	AP8%	All%
Attended launch event only	0.0	4.3	3.8	0.0	3.5	10.0	4.7	4.1
Attended some of the events on offer	16.1	14.9	15.4	20.0	26.3	45.0	11.6	21.9
Attended most of the events on offer	25.8	51.1	30.8	32.0	22.8	27.5	25.6	30.9
Attended all of the events on offer	58.1	29.8	50.0	48.0	47.4	17.5	58.1	43.1
<b>N</b>	31	47	26	25	57	40	43	269

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire schools that experienced advocacy. Chi-square = 40.929, df = 18, p<0.01. Note: cell percentages are rounded up to the nearest 0.1%, so totals may not sum exactly to 100%. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

Please note that subsequent analyses in this report use the attendance data for core provision obtained from providers, not the survey responses as the MI data contains information on all participants. Please refer to Findings chapter 6 (Feasibility)- which presents findings on the the key characteristics of effective advocacy provision likely to be connected to high levels of attendance.

## **Findings 3: Evidence of promise - Changes in school practices**

In this section, survey findings on pre-campaign awareness of the EEF guidance, changes already made to TA deployment and the attribution by schools of changes in practice to the advocacy provision are reported. The alignment of school practices to the EEF recommendations is compared pre- and post-campaign for participating schools and between participating and comparison schools post-campaign. The nature of these changes is illustrated using case study data.

## Key findings

- There was high level of awareness of the EEF guidance prior to the commencement of the advocacy provision, and just over half of pre-campaign survey respondents had already made some changes to the use of TAs in their school, based on either the EEF guidance or other research.
- The vast majority of schools who had participated in the advocacy provision reported making some changes to the use of TAs, which most attributed, at least in part, to participation in the advocacy provision.
- More schools who participated in the campaign had their own written guidance or a policy on TA deployment by the end of the campaign than the beginning, and were more likely to have a policy than comparison schools.
- In terms of TA deployment and classroom practice, there is some evidence that participating schools were more closely aligned with EEF guidance after the campaign than beforehand. This relates to EEF recommendations 1, 2 and 3.
- There is evidence that in participating schools, communication between TAs and teachers improved over the study period. This relates to EEF recommendation 7 and aspects of recommendation 4.
- The training for teachers and TAs in participating schools was more consistent with EEF guidance at the post-campaign stage than at baseline. This relates to the components in recommendations 4, 5 and 6 that relate specifically to training.
- Participating schools were making greater use of interventions that were supported by structured lesson plans and resources by the end of the campaign. This relates to EEF recommendations 5 and 6.
- There is evidence of a statistically significant difference between participating S&W Yorkshire schools and the matched comparison sample on only three of the 27 items analysed. These items each relate to different areas of EEF recommendations (TA deployment and classroom practice, interventions, and training) and show practice which is more aligned with EEF recommendations in participating schools in each case, although findings should be treated cautiously owing to the number of significance tests conducted.
- There was some variation between advocacy providers on the measures examined but generally practice in participating schools was fairly similar across the seven providers.
- In participating schools, more TAs were reportedly being appraised at the end of the campaign than the beginning, but post-campaign a lower percentage of TAs were reportedly being appraised in participating schools than in comparison schools.
- There are indications, but not conclusive evidence, that advocacy provision may be more effective when there is an emphasis on how to implement change within schools and support to implement change is provided between advocacy events.
- The active comparison group conditions included a high level of activity led by EEF and other education stakeholders to promote the EEF guidance.



## Interpreting findings on changes in schools

### Active comparison group conditions

It is important to note that while the campaign was running in S&W Yorkshire, EEF undertook extensive and high-profile promotion of the EEF guidance nationally, including:

- Hard copies of the EEF guidance and promotional emails to all schools in England in June/July 2015.
- Email promotion by the EEF Chief Executive to a wide range of educational stakeholders, including all Local Authorities in June/July 2015.
- A range of organisations publicising the EEF guidance to their schools and associates including: Challenge Partners, Achievement for All, The Key, Unison, National Education Trust, Cornwall LA, Berkshire LA (summer and autumn 2015).
- Promotion via over 50 presentations at EEF and other events for schools over the year of the campaign.
- Promotion via social, print and broadcast media and at national and international policy conferences. This included a press release for the publication of the EEF guidance report in March 2015 and articles on the guidance, including: in the TES, The Economist, Radio 4 Today Programme, Education Business, and the National Governors' Association magazine, on an ongoing basis through 2015/16.
- Development of an online course via the TES which was available towards the end of the campaign.

Further details of this 'business as usual' activity are set out in Appendix 5.

### Sampling decisions for analysis of campaign outcomes

Only 196 participating S&W Yorkshire schools responded to both surveys. The pre- and post-campaign comparisons presented here are based only on schools that responded to both, and who indicated on the post-campaign survey that they took part in some of the programme activity. This approach has been taken so that comparisons can be more meaningfully attributed to the intervention. Of course, we cannot definitively make claims about causality. The evaluation was never intended to follow an experimental design. The absence of a baseline survey for the matched comparison group means that differences in both samples over the study period cannot be compared. However, given the available data, we feel that restricting the sample to include only schools that took part in some of the campaign activity and returned both surveys, offers the most robust analysis of pre/post-campaign outcomes. Please note that this is not a true complete cases approach given that there is still a small amount of item non-response on the variables analysed below.

For comparisons between the intervention schools and the matched sample, we have included all participating S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey, irrespective of whether they completed the baseline survey. This increases the sample size to make these comparisons. As a result of this, the base samples sizes for S&W Yorkshire participating schools differ according to whether the comparison is with the S&W Yorkshire baseline sample or the matched sample. This approach ensures that the best use is made of the available data.

### Awareness of the EEF guidance and changes in the use of TAs prior to the advocacy provision

**There was a high level of awareness of the EEF guidance and research on TAs before the advocacy provision was delivered, which had already led to changes in the use of TAs in some schools.** Nearly all pre-campaign survey respondents were aware of the EEF guidance document, 63% had read the document and a further 30% were aware of the EEF guidance but had not read it

(n=422). Just over half of the pre-campaign survey respondents (54%) reported that they had already made some changes in how they deployed TAs as a result of the research evidence either in the EEF guidance or from other sources (n=385).

### Practice change overview

Overall, the evaluation found that the vast majority of schools who had participated in the advocacy provision had made some changes to the use of TAs. These changes were attributed in most schools, at least in part, to participation in the advocacy provision. Table 14 shows that only 3% of schools responding to the post-campaign survey reported making no changes to TA deployment. This varied between advocacy providers. For instance, 73 per cent of respondents engaged with AP5 reported making at least some changes to TA deployment that were influenced by their participation, compared to 94% of the schools engaged with AP1. Almost one-quarter (24%) of respondents attributed changes to their deployment of TAs 'entirely or mostly' to their participation in the advocacy. A further 59% said that such changes were somewhat influenced by their participation. 14% stated that the changes would have happened anyway, and only 2.6% reported making no changes.

The extent to which schools attributed change in TA deployment to participation in the advocacy provision varied between the different providers, although this was not statistically significant. There is some evidence to suggest that schools that worked with advocacy providers who focused most strongly on supporting the implementation of change within schools and where the intensity of support beyond the core workshops was highest, were more likely to attribute change to the advocacy provision. However, the evidence is not conclusive. 14% of the schools reported that they would have made changes in the use of TAs without the support of the advocacy provision.

**Table 14: Attribution of changes in TA deployment to participation in the advocacy provision**

Q18	AP1%	AP2%	AP3%	AP4%	AP5%	AP6%	AP8%	All%
Changes entirely or mostly due to participation	22.6	15.6	44.4	16.0	21.4	25.0	31.0	24.4
Changes somewhat influenced by participation	71.0	71.1	37.0	72.0	51.8	55.0	59.5	59.4
Changes would have happened anyway	6.5	6.7	14.8	12.0	25.0	15.0	9.5	13.5
Did not make any changes	0.0	6.7	3.7	0.0	1.8	5.0	0.0	2.6
Sum: Changes entirely, mostly or somewhat influenced by participation	93.6	86.7	81.4	88.0	73.2	80.0	90.5	83.8
N	31	45	27	25	56	40	42	266

Source: SHU post-campaign survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire schools that experienced advocacy. Chi-square = 28.227, df = 18, ns; Cell percentages are rounded up to the nearest 0.1%, so totals may not sum exactly to 100%. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

### Changes in whole school policy, structures and processes

The number of schools with written TA guidance or a policy on TA deployment has increased over the campaign. At baseline, only 25% of participating schools had written, up-to-date guidance. This figure increased to 55% in the post-campaign survey. The sample includes only S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to both surveys and indicated that they took part in some of the campaign activity.

Table 15 compares the percentage of participating S&W Yorkshire schools that have written, up-to-date guidance or policy on TA deployment with the matched comparison sample. This comparison

includes all participating S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey, irrespective of whether they completed the baseline survey. Thus, the sample size differs from the previous table, as does the percentage of schools answering the question 'yes' or 'no'. The table shows that by the end of the campaign 52% of intervention schools had written TA guidance or a policy but only 44% of comparison schools did, although the difference is not statistically significant.

**Table 15: Does your school have written and up-to-date guidance or a policy on TA deployment? S&W Yorkshire participating schools vs comparison sample**

Q3	S&W Yorkshire %	Comparison %
Yes	51.5	44.0
No	48.5	56.0
N	266	125

Source: SHU and comparison group post-campaign survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire respondents that self-reported that they participated in the advocacy and comparison schools. Chi-square = 1.916, df = 1, ns.

There is variation across the advocacy providers, but by the end of the campaign AP1 stands out as having the highest proportion (70%) of schools with TA guidance or a policy on TA deployment, whereas the second highest is AP8 with only 56% of schools. The lowest is AP4 with 42% of schools (Table 16). There is no qualitative evidence to account for these differences, however the approach taken by AP1 in sharing the school practices of the advocacy delivery team and the high level of informal support for implementation provided may have contributed to the high level of change.

**Table 16: Does your school have written and up-to-date guidance or a policy on TA deployment? By advocacy provider**

Q3	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
Yes	70.0	48.9	48.1	41.7	45.6	52.5	56.1	51.5
No	30.0	51.1	51.9	58.3	54.4	47.5	43.9	48.5
N	30	47	27	24	57	40	41	266

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire post-campaign survey respondents with allocation to advocacy provider as reported by respondent. Missing data - 13 respondents who self-reported taking part in the advocacy provision but who did not indicate which provider. Chi-square = 6.439, df = 6, ns. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

**More TAs were being appraised by the end of the campaign, although there was some variation in the percentage of schools appraising TAs by advocacy provider.** The percentage of schools stating that TAs receive appraisals or reviews as part of the annual performance management cycle increased from 85% to 90% over the campaign, although this was not statistically significant. However, the percentage of TAs in participating schools receiving appraisals by the end of the campaign (88%) was lower than in comparison schools (96%). The percentage of schools stating that all TAs receive appraisals or reviews as part of the annual performance management cycle varied somewhat between the seven advocacy providers, ranging from 97% for AP1 to 84% for AP8 (see Appendix 9 for data tables).

### Practice outcomes related to EEF recommendations

The survey questions on TA deployment practices have been asked using multiple choice options. Full description of the survey design and method can be found in the Methods section of the report (above). Specifically, these questions asked either the extent to which respondents agreed with certain statements or the frequency of certain occurrences in their school. Data collected in this

format are known as 'ordinal'.<sup>4</sup> Ordinal data are not suitable for parametric tests such as the t-test to compare group means. We have displayed the mean values of each variable to aid interpretation, and have also calculated other relevant test statistics to quantify the differences in question. For analyses of the S&W Yorkshire and comparison samples, the Mann-Whitney U test was used, as it is appropriate for independent samples. For analyses of the baseline and post-campaign samples, the Wilcoxon signed rank test is used, as is suitable for repeated measures designs. Both of these procedures involve ranking the responses according to the range of ordinal values possible, but the calculation of test statistics differs slightly. The relevant equations can be found in Appendix 12.

Effect sizes and Z-statistics are always negative due to the equations used to calculate these values. Both involve subtracting the sample mean from the test statistic, and the latter is always larger, hence Z and *r* are always negative (see equations in Appendix 12). In this sense, these statistics are useful only to gauge the magnitude of the differences between the two groups, not the direction of the difference. Mean values have therefore been included to aid interpretation of the direction of the difference. Taken together, the mean values and effect size give the most complete picture of the variation, either between the two groups in the case of the intervention/matched comparison analyses, or between the two observation points for the pre/post-campaign analyses.

All tables relating to these four groupings of practices present survey responses in numerical form, with lower values indicating practice more closely aligned with EEF recommendations.

In Tables 21-32, questions 8 and 9 are structured on a 1 ('Very frequently') to 5 ('Never') scale. Questions 10, 14 and 15 are presented on a 1 ('Strongly agree') to 5 ('Strongly disagree') scale. Question numbers in Tables 21-32 relate to those used in the post-campaign survey. The full post-campaign questionnaire can be found in Appendix 9. To ensure consistency and aid interpretation, certain response scales have been reversed, as indicated in the tables.

In the four sub-sections that follow (TA deployment and classroom practices, TA/teacher communication, Use of interventions, and Training), we include analyses by advocacy provider. However, it is problematic to provide explanation for variations between providers in the quantitative data from our qualitative data, for three principal reasons. Firstly, differences in practice outcomes between different advocacy providers tend to be marginal. Secondly, where differences do occur they tend to be inconsistent. For example, a particular feature or input of a specific advocacy provider may appear to account for a specific practice outcome indicator that is strongly aligned to the EEF recommendations, but this is often then contradicted by a lower alignment indicator for something very similar, thus undermining any theory of association. Finally, the findings are based on fairly small numbers which would prove difficult to analyse if separated by provider.

Before discussing findings, one further limitation should be highlighted. The survey was completed by school leaders, who are best placed to comment on whole school change and school policy, but perhaps not best placed to report on what happens in the classroom. Teachers or TAs may have been more appropriate respondents to these questions. Teacher and TA perspectives are included in the case study findings.

The illustrative case study data presented within this section draws on our individual and cross-case analyses. As indicated in the methodology, the case study sample was limited to schools with a high level of participation in the advocacy provision, and was dependent on schools being willing to host a research visit. Both of these factors may have skewed the case study sample towards schools more strongly committed to the campaign. It is also important to note that for many of the case study schools the campaign was part of an ongoing journey, so outcomes reported were sometimes related

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<sup>4</sup> This is distinct from 'nominal' data, which is essentially qualitative information that has been assigned numerical values solely for analytical purposes, and 'scale' data, which is numerical in a more conventional sense, such as units of measurement for height or weight.

to a series of changes - some related to the campaign and others pre-dating it. Also, as would be expected, schools were implementing other changes in the same time period as the scale-up campaign. For example, one such change that appeared to support notable changes in the deployment of TAs, mostly to align practice more with the EEF recommendations was the implementation mastery approaches to mathematics.

### **TA deployment and classroom practices**

TA deployment and classroom practices relate to EEF recommendations 1, 2 and 3.

#### ***Survey findings***

Comparison of S&W Yorkshire schools indicating on the survey that they took part in the intervention shows that on several indicators, practice was more aligned with these recommendations on TA deployment and classroom practices after the campaign. Table 17 shows that TAs in these schools were more likely to report be engaged in leading the teaching of the whole class and supporting the teacher in whole-class teaching. S&W Yorkshire TAs were less likely to be deployed in teaching specific groups of pupils after the intervention. However, the change in the perceived TA awareness of the learning needs of all pupils in the class was not statistically significant

Table 17: TA deployment and classroom practice, S&amp;W Yorkshire participating schools, baseline vs post-campaign

	N	Mean baseline	Mean post	Z	r
<b>8. When TAs are providing direct teaching support in the classroom, how often, on average, do they work in the following roles? (1 = Very frequently, 5 = Never)</b>					
Leading the teaching of the whole class***	182	3.61	3.30	-4.07	-0.21
Supporting the teacher in their whole class delivery***	183	2.28	1.96	-4.09	-0.21
Teaching specific pupils or small groups of pupils (reversed)**	184	4.31	4.47	-2.74	-0.14
<b>9. When your TAs are working in the classroom with pupils in a direct teaching role, how often, on average, do they work with the following pupil groups? (1 = Never, 5 = Very frequently)*</b>					
Pupils with SEND (reversed)**	184	4.14	4.01	-2.60	-0.14
Lower attaining pupils (reversed)**	183	4.12	3.96	-3.17	-0.17
Higher attaining children (reversed)***	177	3.43	3.61	-3.61	-0.19
Average attaining children (reversed)	179	3.58	3.65	-1.64	-0.09
Pupils eligible for FSM (reversed)	176	3.96	3.87	-1.38	-0.07
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class	185	1.82	1.82	-0.24	-0.01

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to both the baseline and post-campaign surveys, and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ . \* These labels have been reversed from the original survey to aid interpretation here.

Table 18 compares S&W Yorkshire participating schools to the matched comparison group in terms of variables relating to TA deployment and classroom practices. The only significant difference discovered was for the amount of reported time TAs spent working in the classroom with lower-attaining pupils. Respondents in S&W Yorkshire schools report that TAs spend less time on this than respondents from comparison schools, suggesting that practice in S&W Yorkshire schools comprising is more aligned with EEF guidance, but overall there is little meaningful difference.

Table 18: TA deployment and classroom practice, S&amp;W Yorkshire participating schools vs comparison sample

	N	SWY mean	Comp. mean	Z	r
<b>8. When TAs are providing direct teaching support in the classroom, how often, on average, do they work in the following roles? (1 = Very frequently, 5 = Never)</b>					
Leading the teaching of the whole class	397	3.33	3.39	-0.63	-0.03
Supporting the teacher in their whole class delivery	399	1.97	1.93	-0.38	-0.02
Teaching specific pupils or small groups of pupils (reversed)	400	4.49	4.52	-0.61	-0.03
<b>9. When your TAs are working in the classroom with pupils in a direct teaching role, how often, on average, do they work with the following pupil groups? (1 = Never, 5 = Very frequently)*</b>					
Pupils with SEND (reversed)	400	4.04	4.13	-1.44	-0.07
Lower attaining pupils (reversed)*	400	3.96	4.09	-1.99	-0.1
Higher attaining children (reversed)	395	3.61	3.58	-0.30	-0.02
Average attaining children (reversed)	398	3.64	3.60	-0.57	-0.03
Pupils eligible for FSM (reversed)	389	3.88	3.88	-0.29	-0.01
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class	393	1.85	1.90	-0.23	-0.01
TAs often teach specific pupils different content from the rest of the class during lessons (reversed)	390	3.23	3.35	-0.94	-0.05
TAs ensure that pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work	390	2.09	2.15	-0.04	0
TAs interactions tend to focus on completing a task with pupils rather than encouraging independent learning (reversed)	392	2.42	2.56	-0.82	-0.04
TAs understand how to scaffold learning, for example by allowing pupils time to ask questions before providing help	392	2.14	2.22	-0.14	-0.01
Teachers deploy TAs during lessons to respond to 'real-time' needs of pupils	390	1.88	1.91	-0.13	-0.01
Teachers spend at least as much time working with lower-attaining pupils as others (reversed)	393	3.90	3.82	-0.12	-0.01
Teachers and TAs have a precise and shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives	392	1.95	2.06	-0.57	-0.03

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\* p<.001, \*\* p<.01, \*p<.05 . \* These labels have been reversed from the original survey to aid interpretation here.

Table 19 shows the mean values on each of the survey items relating to TA deployment and classroom practices broken down by advocacy provider. These data are drawn from the post-campaign survey, as are all data in this section comparing outcomes between providers. Lower mean values on each of the items tabulated below represent practice that is more closely aligned with EEF guidance on TA deployment.

The frequency with which TAs are reported to lead the teaching of the whole class varies by advocacy provider. The mean values range from 3.04 (the most consistent with EEF guidance) to 3.83 f (the least consistent with EEF guidance). TAs are reported to support teachers in whole-class delivery more commonly, with the overall mean value 1.96. There is far less variation between providers on this indicator, with the highest mean value 2.07), and the lowest, indicating better practice, 1.85.

It appears that TAs still frequently work with small groups of pupils, particularly those with SEND, eligible for FSM, or lower-attaining pupils. There is some variation by provider on these items but the main message is that this aspect of TA practice is still not aligned with EEF recommendations.

Survey respondents generally agree that TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class, and this is quite consistent across the seven advocacy providers. The mean values range from 1.74 to 1.95, demonstrating similarity of responses between providers.

On the whole, respondents were more likely to agree than disagree with the statement 'TAs often teach specific pupils different content from the rest of the class during lessons' (overall mean 3.23). Again, variation between providers is relatively low, with the range extending from 3.05 to 3.40.

By way of contrast, respondents were more likely to agree that 'TAs ensure that pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work' (overall mean 2.08). Variation between providers is again low here. The mean values range from 1.94 to 2.22).

Overall, respondents seem to agree that TAs' interactions tend to focus on completing a task with pupils rather than encouraging independent learning, although the overall mean (2.41) is fairly close to the midpoint on the given questionnaire scale, on which 2 = agree and 3 = unsure.

Respondents agreed more with the statement that 'TAs understand how to scaffold learning, for example by allowing pupils time to ask questions before providing help' (overall mean 2.13). Provider means ranged from 2 to 2.25. Agreement with the statement 'Teachers deploy TAs during lessons to respond to 'real-time' needs of pupils' was stronger still (overall mean 1.87), alt. Agreement was also expressed for the statement 'Teachers and TAs have a precise and shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives' (overall mean 1.93), but on this item the range of means varied far less across providers, from 1.84 to 2.

Finally, there was agreement across providers that 'Teachers spend at least as much time working with lower-attaining pupils as other pupils' (overall mean 3.90). Despite some variation between providers, this indicates that on the whole practice is not consistent with EEF guidance.



Table 19: TA deployment and classroom practice, S&amp;W Yorkshire participating schools, by advocacy provider (mean values)

	AP1	AP2	AP3	AP4	AP5	AP6	AP8	All	N
<b>8. When TAs are providing direct teaching support in the classroom, how often, on average, do they work in the following roles? (1 = Very frequently, 5 = Never)</b>									
Leading the teaching of the whole class	3.35	3.83	3.04	3.16	3.25	3.20	3.10	3.30	268
Supporting the teacher in their whole class delivery	1.94	2.00	1.89	2.00	2.07	1.85	1.93	1.96	270
Teaching specific pupils or small groups of pupils (reversed)	4.32	4.57	4.48	4.54	4.39	4.54	4.60	4.49	270
<b>9. When your TAs are working in the classroom with pupils in a direct teaching role, how often, on average, do they work with the following pupil groups? (1 = Never, 5 = Very frequently)*</b>									
Pupils with SEND (reversed)	4.16	4.09	4.12	4.04	4.05	3.88	4.02	4.04	270
Lower attaining pupils (reversed)	3.97	3.98	4.04	4.08	3.98	3.85	3.95	3.97	270
Higher attaining children (reversed)	3.53	3.61	3.81	3.76	3.49	3.50	3.70	3.61	265
Average attaining children (reversed)	3.61	3.74	3.88	3.84	3.48	3.46	3.70	3.65	268
Pupils eligible for FSM (reversed)	3.90	4.00	4.08	3.92	3.83	3.75	3.81	3.89	263
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>									
TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class	1.87	1.74	1.78	1.76	1.95	1.88	1.81	1.84	271
TAs often teach specific pupils different content from the rest of the class during lessons	3.30	3.28	3.37	3.08	3.05	3.40	3.19	3.23	269
TAs ensure that pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work	1.94	1.98	1.89	2.16	2.22	2.22	2.07	2.08	269
TAs' interactions tend to focus on completing a task with pupils rather than encouraging independent learning (reversed)	2.23	2.47	2.52	2.29	2.42	2.49	2.37	2.41	270
TAs understand how to scaffold learning, for example by allowing pupils time to ask questions before providing help	2.00	2.02	2.04	2.08	2.25	2.24	2.16	2.13	270
Teachers deploy TAs during lessons to respond to 'real-time' needs of pupils	1.68	2.00	1.63	2.00	1.96	1.95	1.77	1.87	271
Teachers spend at least as much time working with lower-attaining pupils as other pupils (reversed)	3.84	3.87	4.19	3.92	3.75	3.88	4.00	3.90	271
Teachers and TAs have a precise and shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives	1.87	1.89	1.85	2.00	1.98	2.07	1.84	1.93	271

Source: SHU survey. All S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision. \* These labels have been reversed from the original survey to aid interpretation here.

In summary, there are several areas where the deployment of TAs is reported to be aligned with EEF recommendations 1, 2 and 3, but items which suggest that practice is less well-aligned seem to be concentrated around working with small groups of pupils, particularly those with SEND, eligible for FSM, or lower-attaining pupils. While there is also evidence of TAs reportedly helping to teach the whole class, the findings displayed here clearly show that among responding schools, TAs often engage with specific pupil groups.

### **Case study findings**

Most interviewees in the case study schools reported a higher level of change directed at aligning practices more closely with the EEF recommendations than is evident in the survey findings. As noted earlier this may be due to the selection of case studies.

By the end of the advocacy provision TAs in case study schools were reported to be working across the range of attainment in class with target children identified by the class teacher (CSA, CSB, CSC, CSG, CSH, CSI, CSM, CSO) and working with the higher-attaining children (CSF, CSJ, CSM).; However, there was one example of TAs still tending to work with lower-attaining children (CSL). In some cases, TAs were reported to be able to use initiative to work with children as they judged appropriate (CSB, CSI, CSL, CSM). A good example of this kind of change is described in CSK:

'I think prior to this project the TAs, most of them probably changed books, supported in the class, worked with SEN children the majority of the time. Since the project we've altered the use of the TAs. As you have seen this morning the TAs now do not work just with SEN children, but with other groups. They're not there to do their work for them – they're to give them that opportunity to show what they can do and their resilience etc. It's basically just the scaffolding, the questioning and they're becoming more independent if that makes sense.'

(CSK, senior leader)

Other examples of changing practice included:

- The TA taking the class while the teacher works in a focused way with specific children (CSC, CSO).
- The TA working with the same group but the composition of the group changes according to who will benefit from additional support (CSC).

Several schools outlined how TAs were expected to develop children's learning rather than focus on task completion (CSB, CSC; CSK, CSJ, CSM, CSO). For example:

'Some TAs had felt they needed to ensure task completion rather than valuing the learning that was taking place resulting in 'over support in the wrong way' but there has been a 'big mindshift' because they have 'taken a step back and ask each other questions now'.' (CSF, senior leader)

In some schools, there was a focus on the use of questions and how children can be encouraged to be independent learners (CSE, CSF, CSJ, CSM), as illustrated in Vignette 1:

#### **Vignette1: Encouraging children's independence - two examples**

One TA described a retreat from a previous culture whereby certain pupils had become passive in their own learning because they so were so routinely attached to a particular TA.

'Certain children I think are more independent because you would get the group that knew that they were working with you. At the start of the lesson the teacher will say, 'Such and such a group working with [the TA],' and I don't think they listen for the rest of the lesson, because they thought she'll explain it again, she sits with us, she's not going to move, she'll sit with us – it's alright, she'll do it for us, that sort of thing. Now the children have to learn that that might not happen just because they're the lower table. They might be the independent table that day, or the person who's working with them won't be staying there, won't be sitting down straight away and just regurgitating what the teacher said. ... it's made some of the children a lot more independent and thinking for themselves.'

(CSO, TA)

In a different school, a teacher referred to the positive impact their school's new marking

policy had on encouraging pupils to take greater ownership of their own learning.

‘A few years ago the children would ask the teacher for help and support and the teacher would say, ‘No, you can do this work by yourself.’ Their next port of call would be the teaching assistant, who would then go and sit down with that child and probably end up doing it for them. Whereas now with the new marking policy, verbal feedback in it, they’ll be making sure that the children are doing the thinking.’ (CSB, teacher)

A number of organisational changes had been made in case study schools to support effective TA deployment. TAs were sometimes paid overtime to attend whole-school CPD (CSB) and received specific training in some cases (CSJ, CSM). In others, contractual changes were made to explicitly allow time for communication between teachers and TAs and restructuring of timetable was undertaken to accommodate this (CSB, CSF, CSG, CSI, CSJ). In CSC it was noted:

‘In SLT we did pull everybody’s hours together and look at the best way of putting hours in. Most of our teaching assistants are only contracted the school day hours, but we did have a look at the gaps that we had and put some extra money in towards that. We also looked at one of the cover supervisors who does do extra hours, about making sure that they were on days we wanted.’ (CSC, teacher)

Two good examples of practice change are described in Vignettes 2 and 3:

#### **Vignette 2: Changes in deployment and TA roles**

In one school the deputy headteacher outlined a shift in responsibility and working practices for teachers and TAs. Most classes have TAs, some more than one:

‘At the first proper staff meeting with the staff [this year] I shared all the information from the project and all the feedback from the TA training with the teachers. We’d introduced a policy and the teaching assistant standards were up in the staffroom, so they were available to everybody. That was the point when I said to the teachers, ‘It’s your job to deploy your support staff.’ Since then the teachers have come to me and said, ‘Is it okay if I can...?’ and I say, ‘I’m right behind you.’ If they’re not doing what they’ve asked them to do, come to somebody more senior and I’ll tell them. That hadn’t happened before, so that was a good step in the right direction really.’ (CSA, deputy headteacher)

In the same school a TA stated:

‘I think we work less with just the lower ability children. I started, three or four years ago doing this and it was always, ... you just sat with them and that was it. It isn’t like that now.’ (CSA, TA)

Another TA from the same school added:

‘That has changed since last year and the year before. I worked a lot with the lower ability, ... but now we’re holding off a little bit to encourage independence. So middle, top groups, to bring them on, you’re focusing on them.’ (CSA, TA)

The practice in this school is now for the TAs to carry out much more direct teaching of small groups or whole class.

### **Vignette 3 - Changing the focus of TA work in the classroom**

The head teacher in one case study school explained that TAs were deployed to work more inter-changeably with pupils based on their learning needs in a given lesson, which they found aligned well with the adoption of a mastery approach:

'I think it's improved [how TAs are deployed] .... we've not had the Velcro effect we'd had in the past where somebody was the babysitter for a child who was significantly below. ...with mastery and knowing by the end of the lesson who's got a gap and who needs support, basically that TA... Because of the mastery ...we check we're all on task and then we move on, they are getting much more adept at getting different equipment out for children. I went in a lesson the other day and the TA was sat and as the teacher is modelling on the board, she's modelling on the whiteboard alongside a pupil and bringing resources in. So I think it's getting better. I don't think we're fully there yet, which is why we've identified that as our next step.' (CSJ, head teacher)

This was supported in the TA focus group:

'TAs rove a lot - marking as they go so can see who hasn't got it. They mostly work with pupils based on need on day and this is framed by the mastery approach. TAs do quite a bit of clarifying what the teacher is saying and work across ability levels - with slightly more emphasis on lower ability e.g. one sits with lower ability when teacher delivering then floats - but they recognise the need to work across attainment levels: Just making sure that it's not just the lower ability that are getting all the attention. Sometimes it can be the more able children that need that depth and that extra understanding.' (CSJ, TA)

And teachers backed this up:

'In Reception there is more emphasis on maintaining focus - working flexibly sometimes with individuals sometimes putting a group together. 'If it's a particular child that's having a difficulty, my TA will just move herself and go and help that child back on task and then come away again, as opposed to stay with that child for the lesson.' (CSJ, teacher 1)

'It's about the whole class. I say a lot of the time the people who need the special support are the children that need the teacher's support. It's almost inverse, like swapping the roles, where the TAs are more leading the rest of the class while you are able to work with the people who need it, either to stretch or to support.' (CSJ, teacher 2)

In some cases, these changes were supported by performance management/appraisal of TAs being linked to impact on children's progress and in some cases linked to teacher appraisal targets (CSB, CSC, CSE, CSF, CSI). In a few schools, school policy for TAs had been developed with clear roles and expectations defined (CSA, CSB, CSF, CSL).

### **TA/Teacher communication**

Findings on TA/teacher communication relate to EEF recommendation 7 and aspects of recommendation 4.

### **Survey findings**

Table 20 shows that **reported practices around TA/teacher communication in participating S&W Yorkshire schools became more aligned with these EEF recommendations over the campaign period.** In the follow-up survey, respondents were more likely to report that teachers had the

opportunity to brief TAs prior to lessons, that TAs regularly give feedback to teachers after lessons, and that there is always scheduled time for communication about interventions.

**Table 20: TA/Teacher communication, S&W Yorkshire participating schools, baseline vs post-campaign**

	N	Mean baseline	Mean post	Z	r
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons***</b>	185	2.73	2.35	-3.62	-0.19
<b>There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons**</b>	185	2.28	2.02	-3.42	-0.18
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions***</b>	169	2.92	2.47	-4.16	-0.23

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to both the baseline and post-campaign surveys, and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

Table 21 shows that there is no statistically significant variation between the S&W Yorkshire participants and comparison schools regarding communication between teachers and TAs on the four relevant survey items. One item has been excluded as it was changed for the follow-up survey.

**Table 21: TA/Teacher communication, S&W Yorkshire participating schools vs comparison sample**

	N	SWY mean	Comp. mean	Z	r
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>TAs are informed of the concepts, information and skills being taught by the teacher in lessons</b>	393	1.79	1.83	-0.03	0
<b>There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons</b>	391	2.40	2.39	-0.10	-0.01
<b>There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons</b>	393	2.08	1.99	-1.14	-0.06
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions</b>	365	2.49	2.69	-1.51	-0.08

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

Table 22 shows responses to survey questions on communication between TAs and teachers, broken down by advocacy provider. Again, this is based on data from the post-campaign survey. Respondents generally agree with the statement 'TAs are informed of the concepts, information and skills being taught by the teacher in lessons' (overall mean 1.79). Variation between providers is minimal on this statement, from 1.68 to 1.95. The qualitative data offer no obvious explanation to account for these variations.

There is some agreement that 'There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons' (overall mean 2.41). There was variation between advocacy providers/schools agreeing most with the statement (mean of 2.11) to less agreement (mean 2.74), although this still represents more agreement than disagreement.

Respondents overall agreed with the statement 'There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons' (overall mean = 2.08), but variation on this item was less pronounced. There was less agreement across the sample that 'There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions' (overall mean 2.50), but variation was wider, ranging from 2.16 to 2.88.

**Table 22: TA/Teacher communication, S&W Yorkshire participating schools, by advocacy provider (mean values)**

	AP1	AP2	AP3	AP4	AP5	AP6	AP8	All	N
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>									
<b>TAs are informed of the concepts, information and skills being taught by the teacher in lessons</b>	1.71	1.72	1.70	1.68	1.95	1.80	1.84	1.79	271
<b>There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons</b>	2.37	2.74	2.11	2.32	2.58	2.32	2.16	2.41	270
<b>There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons</b>	2.06	2.13	1.93	2.12	2.28	2.00	1.93	2.08	271
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>									
<b>There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions</b>	2.23	2.67	2.27	2.88	2.81	2.16	2.30	2.50	256

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision.

### Case study findings

The case study data indicated a general trajectory of improving communication between teachers and TAs. In several case study schools, TAs reportedly had time to talk with teachers during the day or before or after school (CSA, CSB, CSC, CSI, CSL, CSM, CSO). As noted above, in some cases contractual changes and restructuring of timetables were carried out to accommodate this (CSB, CSF, CSG, CSI, CSJ). The purpose of this communication included sharing planning before teaching (CSH, CSJ, CSL, CSO) and TAs feeding back to teachers about the progress of the children they had been working with through a feedback book (CSC, CSF CSH) and vice versa (CSO).

Other approaches to increase communication related to planning included sending plans to TAs on Sunday evening so they were prepared for the following day's/week's teaching activities and could ask for clarification (CSC), and sharing planning by email but not face-to-face (CSK). It is worth noting that in CSK, whilst teachers felt there was more communication and varied ways of working, TAs didn't feel teachers had engaged this way, emphasising the need for face-to-face time.

Changes in teacher/ TA communication are exemplified in Vignette 4:.

**Vignette 4 - Communication: changes in structures and expectations**

Teachers in one school explained the strategies they used to engage TAs in planning:

‘It’s now a part of the school system that TAs stay on Monday afternoons and that’s certainly when [the TA] and I sit down and talk through the week and what needs to be done and how we’re going to do it. So I meet with her all the time - officially in that capacity once a week.’ (CSB, teacher 1)

‘I know my assistant every Monday morning will sit down and read her planning for the week and ask me questions and write notes on the planning so that she understands where we’re going that week. They’re really good at that. I think any assistant I’ve worked with in this school is really good at working with the

planning and annotating on the planning kids' comments and things..... They don't rely on us.' (CSB, teacher 4)

The impact of the changes in planning practice was emphasised in the TA focus group:

'If we've got something to say we're allowed to say it, we've got a voice. Before it was more like you listened and you walked away and even if you didn't understand what was said and you went away and you did it wrong it was because you didn't ask. Actually you can communicate now, so if you don't understand something you can go to your teacher and say, 'I don't understand. Can you explain it to me in layman's terms so I can understand?' I can't deliver it to the children if I don't understand it myself.' (CSB, TA)

### Use of structured-evidence based interventions

Findings on the use of structured-evidence based interventions relate to the EEF recommendations 5 and 6.

#### Survey findings

Table 23 shows that **S&W Yorkshire respondents were more likely to agree that interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources after the campaign than at baseline.** On other survey items relating specifically to interventions, there was no statistically significant difference.

**Table 23: Use of interventions, S&W Yorkshire participating schools, baseline vs post-campaign**

	N	Mean baseline	Mean post	Z	r
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources**</b>	170	2.32	2.03	-3.15	-0.17
<b>Interventions occur regularly (around 3-5 times per week)</b>	170	1.88	1.86	-0.44	-0.02
<b>Interventions are sustained over time (around 8 to 20 weeks)</b>	169	1.89	1.83	-0.74	-0.04

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to both the baseline and post-campaign surveys, and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

Table 24 shows that S&W Yorkshire respondents were more likely than those from the comparison group to report that interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources. This may reflect the emphasis given to structured interventions as part of the promotion of the TA intervention RCTs as part of the campaign. On the other survey items relating specifically to interventions, there was no statistically significant difference.

**Table 24: Use of interventions, S&W Yorkshire participants vs comparison sample**

	N	SWY mean	Comp. mean	Z	r
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources***</b>	364	2.07	2.46	-3.41	-0.18
<b>Interventions occur regularly (around 3-5 times per week)</b>	366	1.86	1.84	-0.87	-0.05
<b>Interventions are sustained over time (around 8 to 20 weeks)</b>	364	1.87	1.87	-0.42	-0.02

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

Table 25 shows that post-campaign across advocacy providers respondents agree with the statement that 'Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources' more than they disagree (overall mean = 2.06). Mean values ranged from 1.91 to 2.24.

The survey sample on the whole showed agreement that interventions occur regularly (overall mean 1.87). Mean values ranged from 1.73 to 2.11). Similarly, respondents agreed that interventions are sustained over time (overall mean 1.88), with the range slightly wider (1.72, to 2.23).

**Table 25: Use of interventions, S&W Yorkshire participating schools, by advocacy provider (mean values)**

	AP1	AP2	AP3	AP4	AP5	AP6	AP8	All	N
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>									
<b>Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources</b>	2.00	2.11	2.15	2.13	1.91	2.24	2.00	2.06	255
<b>Interventions occur regularly (around 3-5 times per week)</b>	1.93	2.11	1.81	1.83	1.73	1.86	1.83	1.87	257
<b>Interventions are sustained over time (around 8 to 20 weeks)</b>	2.23	1.84	1.72	1.83	1.80	2.00	1.77	1.88	255

Source: SHU survey. All S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision.

### Case study findings

Although the survey findings indicate that the campaign may have had some effect on the uptake of structured evidence-based interventions, it was evident in case study schools that the term intervention was being used to describe a broad range of support activity. Figure 3 summaries the range of interventions reported in case study schools. Some of these interventions do not meet the criteria for effective interventions set out in the EEF recommendations. It is also important to note that some schools were adopting mastery approaches and were particularly focused on same-day intervention to ensure that all pupils could progress through the curriculum at the same pace.



**Figure 3: Types of intervention in case study schools**

<p><b>Mathematics:</b> 1stClass@Number (CSC, CSH, CSI, CSJ), and Catch Up Numeracy and Arithmetic Number Sense (CSH).</p> <p><b>English:</b> 1stClass@Writing (CSC, CSJ), Decoding Detective Work and Deep Sea Divers (Reading interventions) (CSG).</p> <p><b>Social skills:</b> Boxall, Mindfulness, Family Nurture (CSB), Confidence Building, Speech and Language, SEAL (CSC), Social and Emotional skills (CSJ).</p> <p><b>Basic skills:</b> handwriting, number bonds, tables, spelling (CSG).</p> <p><b>SATs interventions:</b> (CSC, CSH).</p> <p><b>Other targeted interventions:</b> Mop-Up (for children who have not grasped a concept) and Zap the Gap (for children who are identified through standardised scores) (CSG); interventions are tailor-made by the teacher (CSJ); and mastery-related interventions (CSB, CSG, CSJ).</p> <p><b>In-class interventions:</b> in schools where children were rarely out of class (CSL, CSO).</p>
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How interventions were chosen in case study schools varied. Interviewees in some cases, reported that choices were made by the teacher, including through dialogue with the TA and by looking at target sheets (CSF, CSG, CSI) supported by the SENCO (CSF). In other cases, decisions were made in pupil progress meetings (CSF, CSI, CSM) or by a guidance and support panel (CSB). In two schools, the TA was accountable for the intervention selected (CSA, CSM).

Pupil selection for interventions was also reported to vary across case study schools. Some used a mastery-type approach, focusing on immediate need in relation to gap-closing via same-day interventions in maths and English (CSB, CSG). In AP1, some interventions were given to all children in rotation (CSB); in others, the focus was on Pupil Premium children (CSC) or children with special educational needs (CSM).

Delivery of structured interventions was undertaken in most cases by the TA, although in one case study school (CSE) they were delivered by the teacher.

Vignette 5 illustrates how participation in the advocacy provision reaffirmed one school's commitment to using structured interventions and notes how implementation was further improved.

### **Vignette 5 - Implementation of structured interventions**

Involvement in the advocacy provision strengthened school CSC's commitment to using high quality, evidence based interventions and opened up the opportunity to become involved in one of the EEF trials (First Class at Number). The school already had an established record of using evidence based interventions and clearly valued their use. The headteacher commented that staff:

'...do specific training, come back and deliver a clean programme – time limited, accountable and they have entry data, exit data. It's clear and cleanly lined across that period of six weeks, fed back weekly to the class teacher and they have to make a difference'. (CSC, headteacher)

A further way the high status of interventions was showcased was through the school's early decision to create a change team to support the TA advocacy work composed of the deputy headteacher and the two teachers and TAs that were receiving training for the First Class at Writing and Project X Code interventions.

One of the first activities the change team did was to ask the TAs to fill in a survey 'so we could find out how they felt about their deployment, how they were being used within school and about their preparedness and time that they get for feedback' (CSC, deputy headteacher).

Although generally positive, a key issue fed back by TAs was the perceived lack of preparation time for interventions. Working in conjunction with the change team, the senior leadership team acted upon these concerns and ensured that dedicated blocks of time were protected for TAs to be able to prepare for interventions more comprehensively.

Connections between class teaching and interventions were highlighted in some schools. However, this often related to re-teaching (CSF) and same-day intervention - 'post-teaching' - (CSF, CSH, CSI, CSJ) rather than structured interventions. These interventions were put in place in response to the assessment of progress of children working either outside of class or identified during a previous lesson as not having grasped particular concepts (CSB, CSJ, CSG). In CSM, the teacher discussed these links:

'For example, if you think about my high ability reading group, because obviously our high ability children are a focus of ours this year, because they always seem to be left, I'll give them things like question key rings from guided reading, they just take them out and they'll listen to them read and focus on the specific questions that we've been talking about in class.' (CSM, teacher)

### **TA and teacher training**

Findings on TA and teacher training relate to the components of the EEF recommendations 4, 5 and 6 that are specific to training.

### **Survey findings**

**S&W Yorkshire survey respondents were more likely to report practice aligned with these EEF recommendations on all five survey items on training post-campaign** (see Table 26). The differences compared to baseline responses from the same participants were statistically significant in each case. Through signing their school up to an advocacy provider scheme campaign, senior leaders were tacitly signalling a level of importance to the role of the TA and commitment to try to improve their effectiveness. The qualitative data from case study visits revealed that in a number of

instances, involvement in the advocacy campaign had been a catalyst to creating structures/time for TAs to receive consistent training. Although it is not always clear how well-aligned to the EEF guidance this training was, there is certainly evidence that training and CPD was being delivered far more frequently than before.

Overall, it is interesting to note that there was stronger evidence of change over the campaign in relation to TA training than in relation to TA deployment, despite EEF providing a firm steer that changes in TA deployment were needed before increasing training for TAs. One possible explanation is that school leaders more readily recognised a need for providing training to their TAs than the potential need to alter fundamentally the way TAs were deployed. It may also have been easier to provide TA training than implement fundamental organisational changes.

There was feedback through certain advocacy providers that a number of schools were resistant to the EEF's proposed ordering of recommendations, claiming that their TAs needed more training before they could reasonably be deployed differently. As a result, certain providers put on additional training for teachers and TAs - particularly in instances where school leaders had confided they had reservations about how to train their TAs effectively.

**Table 26: Training, S&W Yorkshire participating schools, baseline vs post-campaign**

	N	Mean baseline	Mean post	Z	r
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/ development per intervention***</b>	170	2.93	2.52	-4.25	-0.23
<b>15. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work***</b>	185	3.01	2.40	-6.00	-0.31
<b>TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers (Reversed)***</b>	185	2.91	2.41	-4.66	-0.24
<b>TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with***</b>	184	2.29	1.99	-4.31	-0.22
<b>Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively (Reversed)***</b>	184	2.94	2.48	-4.08	-0.21

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to both the baseline and post-campaign surveys, and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\* p<.001, \*\* p<.01, \*p<.05

Table 27 shows that S&W Yorkshire respondents were more likely than those from the comparison group to report that TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/development per intervention. On the other survey items relating specifically to training, there was no statistically significant difference. Again, this may reflect the opportunity given to S&W Yorkshire schools to participate in TA intervention RCTs.

**Table 27: Training, S&W Yorkshire participants vs comparison sample**

	N	SWY mean	Comp. mean	Z	r
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/ development per intervention***</b>	364	2.58	2.95	-2.94	-0.15

<b>15. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>					
<b>Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work</b>	378	2.45	2.58	-0.88	-0.05
<b>TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers (Reversed)</b>	378	2.48	2.68	-1.42	-0.07
<b>TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with</b>	378	2.02	2.07	-0.59	-0.03
<b>Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively (Reversed)</b>	378	2.54	2.65	-0.75	-0.04

Source: SHU survey. All valid responses from S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to the post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision. \*\*\* p<.001, \*\* p<.01, \*p<.05

Table 28 shows that across advocacy providers there was some agreement that 'TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/development per intervention' (overall mean 2.57), with noteworthy variation between provider, from a mean 2.31 to a mean of 3. The qualitative data do not offer any further explanation for this variation. However, it is interesting to note that the regions where advocacy providers offered training for teachers or TAs did not account for any overall differences. This was the case whether the advocacy provider offered the training free at the point of access (AP3 and AP6) or where a fee was charged (AP2 and AP4).

Respondents agreed slightly more with the statement 'Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work' (overall mean 2.45), and the range of provider mean values was narrower, from 2.24 to 2.76.

Respondents agreed slightly less with the statement 'TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers' (overall mean 2.46). The range of provider mean values was somewhat wider, from 2.08 to 2.79. Please note that the scale for this item was reversed, so that lower values indicate closer alignment with EEF guidance.

Respondents agreed that 'TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with' (overall mean 2.02). Values ranged from 1.83 to 2.16.

Finally, respondents agreed less with the statement that 'Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively' (overall mean 2.55). Provider means varied from 2.04 to 2.81. Again, the scale for this item was reversed, so that lower values indicate closer alignment with EEF guidance. All figures are displayed in Table 28.

**Table 28: Training, S&W Yorkshire participating schools, by advocacy provider (mean values)**

	AP1	AP2	AP3	AP4	AP5	AP6	AP8	All	N
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>									
<b>TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/development per intervention</b>	2.50	2.71	2.42	2.38	2.31	3.00	2.64	2.57	255
<b>15. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>									
<b>Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work</b>	2.32	2.60	2.27	2.44	2.76	2.24	2.26	2.45	267
<b>TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers (Reversed)</b>	2.16	2.79	2.08	2.29	2.62	2.51	2.40	2.46	266
<b>TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with</b>	1.83	2.00	1.96	1.92	2.16	2.12	2.00	2.02	266
<b>Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively (reversed)</b>	2.35	2.62	2.81	2.04	2.80	2.51	2.43	2.55	266

Source: SHU survey. All S&W Yorkshire schools that responded to post-campaign survey and participated in the advocacy provision.

### Case study findings

The case study findings support the survey findings in that the provision of training was frequently mentioned in the case studies and in most case training was linked to positive outcomes as illustrated in Vignette 6:

#### **Vignette 6 - The impact of increased training for TAs**

Teachers from one school reflected how they felt more confident to relinquish some control within lessons, as they felt more reassured that their TAs were benefiting from exposure to training and CPD (internally and externally).

‘I’m a lot more relaxed about my assistant marking in books.... marking as in making comments and things, because she’s had all the training. So she uses the stamps, the verbal feedback stamp and comments, things like that, that I suppose initially I would have wanted more hands-on and been more in control, now I’m a lot more relaxed about her doing what she does.’ (CSB, teacher 1)

‘TAs are now doing a lot of training. I’m English lead in the school and I’m doing a course, a training course, on comprehension right through the years. So I’m doing constant training and [the specialist English TA]’s coming with me in January to do the session on how TAs can support comprehension learning in the school. I think for me the big one is the exposure to training that they’re having. When I first came to this school TAs would never go on any training courses and now they are. They’re being exposed to lots of stuff.’ (CSB, teacher 2)

In some case study schools there was explicit mention of training related to delivering interventions being provided to TAs, together with the provision of associated resources (CSG, CSI, CSH).

### **Impact of attendance at advocacy provider events on practice change outcomes**

Each of the campaign outcomes covered in this section has also been analysed in relation to the number of events attended by survey respondents. However, there is no discernible pattern emerging from these results. The full tables can be found in Appendix 10.

## Findings 4: Evidence of promise – Other outcomes

This section sets out case study participants' perceptions of intermediate outcomes for TAs, teachers and pupils, other school or cross-school outcomes and outcomes related to wider use of research to inform practice. As with the practice outcomes discussed in the previous section, caution is needed in attributing the outcomes solely to the scale-up campaign. Data on participation in, and interest expressed in, the structured TA-led RCTs promoted by the advocacy providers, are also presented.

### Key findings

- Case study interviewees made clear associations between in-school changes and perceived outcomes for TAs, teachers, and the whole school. However, the association with the advocacy provision was more tenuous. In some case study schools, outcomes were linked to work that had been undertaken prior to, as well as during, the campaign.
- All interviewees highlighted positive outcomes for TAs, spanning:
  - Confidence and self-efficacy.
  - Enhanced knowledge and pedagogic understanding.
  - Better understanding of role, clearer sense of purpose and more flexible approaches.
  - Feeling empowered, taking greater responsibility and using initiative.
  - Feeling valued and trusted.
- There was variation across the cases in the extent to which changes were perceived to have led to outcomes for teachers. The main outcomes reported were:
  - Better understanding of the TA role.
  - More positive attitudes towards TAs - recognising their capabilities, being more prepared to listen to TAs and to trust them to support pupils.
- Interviewees cited examples of pupil outcomes including improved attainment and accelerated progress as well as increases in pupils' engagement, self-esteem, confidence, independence and reliance.
- The most frequently mentioned whole-school outcomes were improved team ethic and effective team-working, professionalisation and enhanced professional and career development.
- There was no direct evidence in the case study schools that engagement in the advocacy provision led to engagement with other research evidence, and only limited evidence that it had increased awareness of, and motivation to engage with, research evidence. In some schools, but not all, this finding is expected as they were already proactive in using research to inform practice.
- Involvement with the advocacy provision was associated with an increased probability of participating in one of the four structured TA-led intervention RCTs promoted by advocacy providers. However, very limited confidence can be placed in this finding as the eligibility criteria for most of the RCTs meant that comparison schools did not have the same opportunity to participate as schools in S&W Yorkshire.
- There was variation in the extent to which schools participating in different advocacy provision were aware of the opportunity to participate in the structured TA-led interventions or were influenced by the advocacy provider to join a trial. This indicates variation in either the effectiveness of advocacy provider communication strategies or their commitment to promoting the RCTs.

## TA outcomes

**Enhanced TA confidence and self-efficacy was a dominant theme in interview responses across the case studies.** This was often expressed in general terms (CSA, CSB, CSE, CSF, CSG, CSH, CSJ, CSK, CSO): such as: 'I don't think any of us are nervous because we've become really confident' (CSG, TA). More specifically improved confidence was evident in the TAs' relationships with teachers (CSA, CSB, CSJ, CSM, CSO). Both TAs and teachers perceived that TAs were more willing to ask for help or clarification and to question the judgement of teachers. Increased confidence in supporting pupils' learning and self-efficacy (CSA, CSC, CSD, CSE, CSI, CSJ, CSK) was also reported directly by TAs and observed by other interviewees, as one TA explained:

'I feel I'm meeting the needs of the children more. I understand more myself. I think it's given me an opportunity to learn more what I'm capable of doing. It has pushed us, especially the interventions. ... it's not a case anymore of, 'Can you do a bit of this with them?' 'It's more specific..... You feel like you're confident to go and deliver it.' (CSJ, TA)

Other examples cited included gaining confidence to leave work unfinished and concentrate on children's understanding (CSD), in using resources (CSJ), leading classes (CSK), marking (CSB) and deciding which children to work with and what they need to do: as one teacher explained: 'Now they've got the confidence to stand back, have a look and think where do I need to be?' (CSJ, teacher)

**Improved knowledge and understanding** was also a common theme across the cases (CSC, CSD, CSF, CSG, CSH, CSI, CSJ, CSL, CSM), again often expressed in general terms such as: 'I feel like I know a lot more than I did. My knowledge and understanding of the lessons and the topics that we're teaching.' (CSM, TA). More specific improvements in pedagogic knowledge and understanding mentioned related to: planning, pedagogy, and different learning approaches individualised for each child's needs (CSC); facilitating learner independence, awareness of poor techniques (CSH); and children's needs and progress (CSI).

Senior leaders and teachers perceived that **TAs had developed a better understanding of their role, the need for change and flexibility and how their role fits into the school as a whole** (CSB, CSC, CSF, CSI, CSL, CSM). More specifically they reported that TAs had a clearer sense of purpose and of the expectations being placed on them, their place as part of the school team, and the influence they have on children's learning:

'It has made a massive difference... They feel that they have a much more professional role within our school ... I think they understand better how they fit into what we're trying to do for our children, ... as well they have a better understanding of why we have to change things so often as well, why we have to be flexible. That was certainly a bone of contention previously... ' (CSB, head teacher)

It is important to note that changing practice to align more closely with the EEF recommendations has required CSD significant change in attitudes for some TAs especially in relation to promoting pupil independence and autonomy, as one TA explained: 'It's hard, especially for the children we have, it's hard for them to not seek out that sort of mothering nature within you. There are a lot of children here who struggle who want that close personal relationship (CSD, TA).

All groups of staff participating in the case studies talked about **TAs taking responsibility, thinking more about what they are doing and taking the initiative in relation to pedagogical practice and their own development** (CSA, CSB, CSC, CSD, CSF, CSI, CSJ, CSL, CSM), as exemplified by one teacher:

'I think some TAs would have been more inclined to say, 'Oh just feed me back what I need to know from that training.' Whereas now a lot of TAs are saying, 'I'd really like to go on this training because I think it would really help with my understanding.' ... they're leading their own professional development a lot more ... they've now got the skill sets to say where they need to move forward and they're starting to identify their own areas for that.' (CSJ, teacher)

CSM TAs and teachers reported that TAs are also taking more responsibility for pupil outcomes - ensuring that objectives set by the teachers are met. CSB teachers and TAs emphasised the high degree of responsibility they carried in undertaking their work.

Some head teachers, other senior leaders and teachers felt that the campaign had a strong impact on **empowering TAs** (CSA, CSC, CSI, CSL, CSM - used the term 'empowered' explicitly), as one deputy headteacher explained:

'I think the impact in school was it's really empowered the teaching assistants. That is the biggest part of it for me. ... I think that celebration of their successes that really made a difference.' (CSA, deputy headteacher)

One senior leader linked increased empowerment to increased recognition of the need to be accountable, and the consequent culture shift this brought about:

'I think [the TAs] feel empowered .. and accountable. They want to report back about what they've done and what successes they have had, so I think we've moved the shift in culture a long way really.' (CSM, deputy headteacher)

All interviewee groups pointed to **TAs feeling more valued** (CSC, CSD, CSE, CSF, CSG, CSL, CSM). CSE In one school feeling valued was associated with being an essential part of the school team: 'I feel like I'm a necessary part of the team and I feel that I have got my place within the team, rather than it being a layered sort of structure ..' (CSC, TA). Some TAs and some teachers expressed this as feeling like an equal partner: 'I think understanding that we've got an equal role to play has helped us with developing the role of both of us together' (CSJ, teacher).

**Other TA outcomes** reported were improved well-being (CSB, SENCO), job satisfaction (CSO, deputy headteacher), increased motivation and ambition to progress (CSL, head teacher).

## Teacher outcomes

**There was variation across the cases in the extent to which the campaign was perceived to have led to outcomes related to teachers.** At one extreme, teachers in one school (CSA) recounted changes in TAs but did not recognise any changes in themselves, mirroring the emphasis on TAs rather than teachers during implementation within the school. However, in most cases some outcomes for teachers were identified. The two most frequently highlighted outcomes were teachers developing greater understanding of the role of the TAs and changed attitudes towards TAs.

**Improved understanding of the TA role** (CSH, CSI, CSJ, CSL, CSM, CSO) **was often articulated** by teachers in the case studies in relation to new understandings that TAs should play an active part in supporting the learning of all pupils in their class, for example:

'My understanding has got better because, ... in the past I have been guilty of saying, you've got this group of children, they are the ones that are below everyone else, will you just sit with them please? ... For me that has been a massive shift, using your TA in lots of different ways and actually being taught how to do it. Because actually that's not an easy natural thing to do, because actually you're going to have to predict yourself those next steps.' (CSI, teacher).

**Changes in teachers' attitudes towards TAs** (CSC, CSD, CSE, CSF, CSH, CSL, CSM, CSO) **were evident** in case study teachers' account of how they had come to recognise the capabilities of TAs and now trusted TAs to provide effective support for pupils, as one teacher exemplifies: 'It's about using the strengths of the TAs. Before I think .....I'd just use a TA for what I thought a TA did, rather than really finding out what the TA could do' (CSD, teacher).

These changed teacher attitudes were also noted by senior leaders: '[Teachers] are utilising their TAs much better and trusting them to do a role that perhaps they wouldn't have been trusted with eighteen months ago' (CSM, head teacher).



Changes in teachers attitudes were also evident in case study teachers accounts of being more prepared to listen to TAs and to involve them in planning, for example::

'Instead of giving them the work it's nice to sit down with them and listen to their perspective as well. ..., if they're doing the interventions, they will know when a child is ready to move on, so just involving them really in planning because they have really useful ideas. (CSD, teacher)

Senior leaders also **perceived that teachers were able to manage TAs more effectively** (CSE) and had **improved the feedback that they were giving to TAs** (CSH, CSI).

## Pupil outcomes

The impact of the campaign on pupil attainment is reported in the South and West Yorkshire Impact Evaluation report (Sibieta et al., 2018). Most case study interviewees perceived that there had been positive outcomes for pupils. These claims were based on school data, work scrutiny and/or informal observation. As noted elsewhere, attribution of positive outcomes is problematic given other changes taking place in the case study schools, and interviewees acknowledged this. Nonetheless, it is important to note that **interviewees were very positive about the outcomes for pupils**: 'It's made a massive difference to our children, so it was absolutely the right thing to do' (CSI, head teacher).

**Examples of improved attainment and/or accelerated pupil progress were reported in most case study schools** (CSA, CSB, CSC, CSD, CSE, CSF, CSG, CSI, CSJ, CSK, CSM, CSO). Schools CSA and CSG reported improved attainment in the progress of lower-achieving pupils. In school CSG, this was attributed to teachers working across all pupil groups:

'Working going round all the different groups, rather than just a TA being stuck with one group, that's where we noticed where the biggest improvement was, those lower ability children making that improvement.' (CSG, teacher)

In school CSF, the increase from 70% to 93% of Year 1 pupils achieving the phonics screening check was partially attributed to the focused work of TAs. Aligning with literature on the 'implementation dip' (Fullan, 2001) the head teacher in school CSB reported that attainment had dipped at the end of the campaign year, noting that this was a recurring pattern when major changes were implemented in the school and that pupil progress in the current year was already good: 'When the goalposts move we always dip that first year. The second year we go up a bit and by the third year we're above national across the board' (CSB, head teacher).

Accelerated progress was attributed to pre-teaching (CSD, CSE, CSI), precision teaching (CSI), same-day intervention<sup>5</sup> (CSD, CSE) and the use of structured interventions (CSK). Improved progress was evidenced in school CSK through comparison to a comparator group and in school CSI through pre- and post-testing without a counterfactual. Deeper understanding leading to better progress was attributed to changes in TA deployment and practice in the classroom in one school:

'Even the higher-attaining children are getting a deeper understanding because the TA is then going over and noticing that. ...so they've pushed their understanding deeper and then stretched their learning.' (CSJ, teacher)

In some case study schools (CSE, CSH, CSI, CSK), **interviewees perceived that pupils' self-esteem, confidence and independence had increased** and this was variously attributed to pre-teaching, precision teaching and interventions. In one school, the impacts were perceived to have extended to pupils' home life:

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<sup>5</sup> This appears to relate to mastery approaches rather than the use of structured interventions.

‘The children themselves, not only their standards went up, but it’s their self-confidence, resilience, self-esteem. ... the parents had been briefed that the children were doing this programme<sup>6</sup> and the parents ... have seen a huge difference at home.’ (CSK, senior leader)

**Increases in pupil engagement and resilience** (CSD, CSE, CSI, CSK) were partially attributed to the advocacy provision but other innovations within the schools that reported these outcomes, such as changes in behaviour policy, mastery approaches, particularly same-day intervention, and growth mindsets, were also important factors in leading to these outcomes.

**Other perceived pupil outcomes included increased independence and autonomy** (CSE, CSG, CSH). In one of these schools (CSG), improved pupil independence resulting from changes in how TAs are deployed in the classroom was also perceived to improve pupil confidence. **Greater respect for TAs** (CSH, CSI) and **improved behaviour** (CSB) were partially attributed to the advocacy provision.

### Whole-school outcomes

**The most frequently mentioned whole-school outcomes in the case studies were increased team ethic and professionalism** (CSA, CSB, CSD, CSF, CSJ). Interviewees reported that the shared aims and commitment to pupil outcomes across all staff groups, increased dialogue between TAs and between teachers and TAs, valuing TAs as equal partners in the classroom, which had been developed through engagement in the campaign, had created a stronger team ethic within the school. As the head teacher in school CSB explained, the campaign, together with other initiatives in the school in previous years, had created:

‘much more of a team ethic that staff, even though they’ll face challenges on a daily basis, they don’t feel as though they’re facing them alone, that actually there is always somebody that they can go to or somebody that they can talk to, or somebody that will say okay, we’ll sit down and have a look at this together.’ (CSB, head teacher)

The significance of this was emphasised CSF one school, ‘[TAs] feeling part of the school and wanting the best for school has changed dramatically’ (CSF, senior leader).

In turn, **it was perceived that** the enhanced team ethos has meant that in the **classroom teachers and TAs undertake roles based on who is the best person for the task**: ‘It used to be I’m in charge, you do this, do this, do this. It is more of a partnership now’ (CSJ, teacher).

**It was reported that the increased confidence of TAs that developed during the campaign activity has also led to more evidence-informed decisions in the classroom**, as exemplified by one teacher:

‘I think it’s made TAs have the confidence to speak up and say, ‘Ooh, have you thought about doing it this way?’ and sharing some of their knowledge and some of the training they’ve been on, particularly with guided reading. ... so having that confidence to say to the teacher, ‘Actually they have seen this and it’s working really well – would you be interested in trying that?’ (CSI, teacher)

In another school, increased professionalism was identified as an outcome which, in turn, impacted on staff relationships and was then mirrored in children’s relationships:

‘What’s changed throughout the school and it has been over time, but I think it’s been cemented with [the advocacy provision], is we understand that everybody here is a

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<sup>6</sup> In this case the school focused on the EEF recommendations on interventions.

professional and that, as a professional, there will be times when you don't see eye-to-eye, but ... you can have that professional dialogue and .. discussion ... but the relationship that you have with that person as a professional doesn't change and you can still carry on and move on. .. that's actually had quite a positive impact on the children because they see us having these dialogues and being prepared to work to each other .... You can sometimes hear the children having ... similar conversations.' (CSB, head teacher)

**Enhanced professional and career development across the school was reported as an outcome in a few schools** (CSB, CSF, CSK). In addition to the professional development outcomes for TAs and teachers reported above, a new career structure for TAs had been implemented one school (CSB). Middle and senior leaders had also benefited from involvement in the campaign. In one school, the deputy head teacher (CSF) had used their involvement in the campaign to support their achievement of their NPQSL, and in another the lead felt they had gained leadership skills and motivation for career progression:

'.. it made me a better leader. I have learned a lot, I've gained skills ... Before I hadn't really led meetings, ... been responsible for groups, dealing with challenging staff, as I said, some TAs who were a bit set in their own ways. I have learned from that and developed my own resilience ..and my own skills as a leader. It's making me think yes, I want more and I want to do more, to move on within my own career.' (CSK)

Other reported outcomes included: school leaders being more thoughtful about appointments and job descriptions, informed by discussions with TAs as to where the need is located (CSL), enabling senior leaders to see TAs' full potential and value (CSE); calmer lunchtimes since the contractual changes meant that the same TAs were present across the school day and lunchtimes (CSB); and addressing budgetary constraints through upskilling TAs to cover classes (CSD).

## Impact on other schools

**There was only evidence in two case study schools** (CSI, CSL) **of wider impact**. The head teacher and SENCO in school CSI have, through their respective roles as locality lead and locality SENCO and SLE, shared their knowledge and experiences more widely through visits to other schools and peer review:

'If I go into a school as a SENCO and I talk about the kind of support that they need to put in, [the 15mins pre school preparedness that they learned about at advocacy provider meetings] is the first thing I talk about.' (CSI, SENCO)

School CSK has run a conference for their locality cluster and is working with these schools to disseminate information and training.

## Use of research evidence

**There was no direct evidence in the cases that engagement in the advocacy provision led to engagement with other research evidence and only limited indications that it had increased awareness of evidence and motivation to engage with research evidence**. The head teacher in school CSA reported that they had been made aware by their advocacy provider of the EEF KS1 literacy guidance. Although they had not yet read the literacy guidance, the head teacher was very positive about the use of research to convince governors, staff and parents. Similarly, the leadership team in school CSE had become aware of the EEF Toolkit and although they 'probably don't read or use or engage with it as much as we could' (CSE, head teacher) they had become more committed to seeking out opportunities to be involved in future EEF campaigns and RCTs.

The limited evidence may be attributable in part to some case study schools (CSC, CSD, CSJ) already being proactive in using research to inform practice. For example, both the current and previous head teachers in school CSC were engaged in Masters level study and actively undertaking as well as using research:

'I'm quite involved in research and it is something that I believe in. ...We're quite good at doing our own little research projects in school and trying things and doing things and changing things.' (CSC, head teacher)

The head teacher in the same school also reported that they use the EEF's and other websites 'constantly' to support practice, and if research does not support what they are doing they find alternative programmes, interventions or means of practice which are evidence-based. However, in contrast in some case study schools (CSG, CSI CSM) evidence-informed practices appear to be less well-embedded across the whole school.

### Participation in structured TA-led intervention RCTs

**Involvement with the advocacy provision appears to be associated with an increased probability of participating in one of the four structured TA-led interventions promoted by advocacy providers.** Table 29 shows that within S&W Yorkshire, 32% of schools engaged in the advocacy provision participated in one or more of the four RCTs, compared with 12% of non-advocacy S&W Yorkshire schools. Outside S&W Yorkshire, this compares with 2% of schools in the comparison group being involved in one of the four RCTs (please note that this comparison sample includes all schools that were identified through the propensity score matching process, and is not limited to those who responded to the survey). However, very limited confidence can be placed in the comparison group finding as the eligibility criteria for most of the RCTs meant that comparison schools did not have the same opportunity to participate as did schools in S&W Yorkshire. A fuller explanation of the limitations is set out in the Methodology section.

**Table 29: Participation in structured TA-led intervention RCTs, by number of RCTs accessed**

	All schools involved in a trial		S&W Yorkshire primary schools enrolled in TA advocacy campaign		S&W Yorkshire primary schools not participating in TA advocacy campaign		Matched comparison group	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>None</b>	0		321	68.20	580	88.00	2,258	98.10
<b>1</b>	467		104	22.10	71	10.80	43	1.90
<b>2</b>	57		42	8.90	8	1.20	0	0
<b>3</b>	4		4	0.80	0	0	0	0
<b>4</b>	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	528		471	100	659	100	2,301	100

Source: monitoring data. As noted previously, 9 of the 480 schools did not have a URN or LAESTAB identification number, meaning that only 471 of the 480 schools could be attached to other data.

Table 30 shows that 41% of survey respondents said that participation in the advocacy provision led them to express interest in, or participate in, a structured TA-led trial. There is variation by provider, the percentage ranging from 23% (AP6) to 65% (AP1). Taken together with the variation by provider in survey respondents who were unaware of the opportunity to participate in a trial, which ranges from 0% (AP4) to 20% (AP6), this indicates either that some advocacy providers were less proactive in promoting trial participation and/or they deployed less effective communication strategies.

**Table 30: Impact of the advocacy provision on interest/participation in the structured TA-led interventions promoted during the campaign**

<b>Q21</b>	<b>AP1 %</b>	<b>AP2 %</b>	<b>AP3 %</b>	<b>AP4 %</b>	<b>AP5 %</b>	<b>AP6 %</b>	<b>AP8 %</b>	<b>All %</b>
<b>Participation in the programme led me to apply for a trial</b>	64.5	38.3	40.7	52.2	43.9	22.5	33.3	40.8
<b>We applied for a trial but the programme had little influence on our decision</b>	3.2	2.1	0.0	8.7	3.5	2.5	11.9	4.5
<b>We were aware of the opportunity but did not apply</b>	22.6	27.7	37.0	13.0	22.8	37.5	33.3	28.1
<b>I was unaware of the opportunity to apply for a trial</b>	3.2	12.8	11.1	0.0	14.0	20.0	14.3	12.0
<b>Unsure/NA</b>	6.5	19.1	11.1	26.1	15.8	17.5	7.1	14.6
<b>N</b>	31	47	27	23	57	40	42	267

Source: SHU survey, all post-campaign survey respondents that participated in the advocacy. Chi-square = 36.253, df = 24, ns. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

## Findings 5: Feasibility

This section presents findings on the perceived feasibility and effectiveness of EEF's implementation of the commissioned model of scale-up and illuminates the campaign theory of change. It includes: analysis of the enablers and barriers related to the EEF's activity; the perceived quality of advocacy provision; enablers and barriers related to advocacy provision; the change processes implemented in case study schools; enablers and barriers at the school-level; and policy related enablers and barriers.

### Key findings

#### *EEF*

- Enabling factors attributed to the EEF were: the high-quality, evidence-based and user-friendly format of the EEF guidance; reputation and brand; presentations at advocacy provider workshops; resources, particularly the MITA audit tools; working practices that were flexible and responsive; and brokerage activity, as well as funding for the advocacy provision. Advocacy providers also valued the opportunity to share practice with other advocacy providers at EEF facilitated advocacy provider meetings.
- Although advocacy providers were generally very positive about EEF support, they encountered issues related to organisational efficiency - such as delays in contracting and releasing resources; and perceived that there was a lack of clarity of expectations and transparency, and some reluctance from the EEF to relinquish control.
- Advocacy providers would have welcomed more opportunities to share practice and more communication with the EEF implementation team

#### *Advocacy Providers*

- Overall, the quality of the advocacy provision was highly rated by survey respondents and case study school interviewees, although there was some variation between advocacy providers. Most survey respondents perceived that the advocacy provision was impacting positively on their schools
- The most important enabling mechanisms related to the advocacy provision identified from case study and survey respondents were:
  - The focus and structure it provided for change in schools, including articulating the EEF recommendations and using them to structure workshops, input on change management processes and support for planning based on the recommendations, supplemented by school visits
  - Practical workshops led by knowledgeable professionals with 'real-world' experience
  - The provision of resources, particularly auditing tools and school case studies.
  - Advice and support between workshops.
  - Opportunity for sharing practice, collaboration and networking through workshops and school visits
  - Where offered, training for TAs
  - The pattern of provision over time that enabled schools to sequence change and implement manageable steps.
- Barriers related to the advocacy provision were perceived by survey and case study respondents to be workshops that were poor quality, lacked relevance or, for schools already engaged with the EEF guidance, failed to build on their knowledge and practices. Distance to travel, time involved and timing of workshops were problematic for some schools. Some school visits were not productive.
- While not expressed directly by interviewees, evaluators' observations of the data indicate

the need for advocacy providers to offer challenge as well as support, particularly in relation to schools' understanding of how closely their existing practices align with the EEF recommendations.

**Schools**

- All case study schools broadly sequenced change through the following steps: recognition of problem and need for change; data gathering; project design and planning; implementation; and review.
- There was variation between schools in the scale and scope of changes. Some initiated whole-school changes, whereas others piloted change, for example, within one year group or only focused on one or two of the EEF recommendations.
- The key change agent varied across schools, although it was most often a deputy or assistant head teacher rather than the head teacher. Some schools adopted a change team approach.
- Enabling mechanisms at school level included:
  - Leadership factors, particularly the time and commitment of the key agent, and senior leadership team support for implementing, resourcing and sustaining change
  - School culture characterised by the commitment to enable all staff to support outcomes for all pupils
  - Motivated teachers and TAs, effective communication between TAs and teachers, and teachers trusting TAs to support pupils
  - Support from other schools
- Barriers to implementation at the school level were: time, the scale of change and consequent time span it required for implementation; competing priorities; lack of budgetary resource; lack of senior leadership commitment and support which in turn limited time and resources made available; lack of confidence in TAs and of trust between teachers and TAs; and pupils used to high levels of TA support resisting change.

**Policy**

- OFSTED's focus on effective deployment of TAs and the national focus on Pupil Premium were perceived to be policy-level enablers.

**EEF activity**

The enablers and barriers related to EEF's activity in commissioning and providing ongoing support to the South and West Yorkshire scale-up campaign reported in the qualitative data are summarised in Table 31 and discussed further below.

**Table 31: EEF activity: enablers and barriers**

<b>Enablers</b>	High quality, evidence-based and user-friendly EEF guidance document
	Trusted brand and reputation
	Responsiveness, flexibility and adaptability
	Other EEF resources (particularly the MITA survey)
	Brokerage activity including direct support to advocacy providers for the recruitment of schools
	Financial support for delivery of the campaign over a full academic year.
	EEF facilitated advocacy provider meetings

<b>Barriers</b>	Issues related to administrative processes including delays in contracting and making payments.
	Lack of transparency on recruitment requirements
	Lack of clarity on advocacy providers' budgets
	Changing expectations not communicated effectively to advocacy providers
	Some reluctance to relinquish control

### Enablers

**The majority of feedback from advocacy providers in relation to the EEF was overwhelmingly positive.** As previously indicated, the reputation of the EEF brand was a key factor in many advocacy provider leads wanting to become involved in the scale-up campaign. The following quotation encapsulates the level of respect that advocacy providers felt for the EEF and their enthusiasm for working with them throughout the course of the project:

'They've just been very genuine about what they're doing – they're not very corporate, they are genuine educationalists who we feel that we can trust.'

Key features of working with the EEF that were particularly valued by advocacy provider were:

- The quality and user-friendly format of the EEF guidance document:.. advocacy provider leads frequently referred to how the EEF recommendations chimed with their own views of what good practice should look like which were shaped through their own professional experiences.
- The resources provided through EEF: particularly the MITA audit, which were perceived to help reduce workload.
- The approachable and responsiveness to queries, for example if an advocacy provider emailed the EEF team they would invariably telephone back.
- Assistance with boosting recruitment. This played out in various ways including presenting at launch events and in a few instances fulfilling a brokering role to encourage LAs to promote the offer.
- The flexible and adaptable approach. Some advocacy providers reported that they negotiated with EEF a relaxation in eligibility criteria, for example. expanding geographical boundaries, allowing secondary schools and reducing target numbers.
- The two EEF facilitated meetings that provided the opportunities for advocacy providers to share practice and to communicate with EEF implementation team were highly valued, and number of leads expressed a desire for these to be more frequent (e.g. once a term)

Case study school interviewees also respected and trusted the EEF brand and perceived the EEF guidance document and EEF resources to be of high quality and which they felt, in turn, provided an excellent framework for improving the use of TAs., The EEF guidance was used strategically as in case study CSD to support change:

'Certainly the research played a massive part in terms of the restructure, because I was able to present that to governors, but also to staff as well, and say, 'Look, this is what the research is telling us.' (CSC, head teacher)

As well as directly to structure implementation action plans:

'Concise and easy to follow action plans could be written. Seven very clear bits of guidance enabled the school to be focused on what they needed to do for each of them. It gave clear advice - it was easy to know exactly what to do and what needed to happen



so we just put those things in place. Our action plan from the beginning was easy to follow. We met it early on and were able to put those structures in place early on.' (CSD, head teacher)

Case study school interviews also valued the 'Plain English' of the EEF guidance text, which made it accessible to all staff.

Case study schools also valued the funding that EEF had made available for the campaign which had enabled support over time.

### **Barriers**

While the most of feedback in relation to EEF activity was overwhelmingly positive, advocacy provider leads also highlighted some instances where things had not worked as well and where lessons could be learned for the future. These included:

- Administrative procedures: advocacy providers reported delays in signing contracts and releasing resources at the start of the programme, and there were reports of insufficient notice being given ahead of meetings involving EEF.
- Lack of transparency in relation to recruitment: While some advocacy providers welcomed the EEF's flexible approach to school recruitment, it was not clear to what extent the EEF communicated the possibility of relaxing the original criteria for recruitment to all advocacy providers.
- Lack of clarity about advocacy provider budgets: there was perceived ambiguity about whether funding was to be allocated on the basis of the number of school recruited or the number of schools completing the programme.. There were additional uncertainties raised about whether payment would be made if an insufficient number of schools submitted their evaluation surveys, something that was claimed by advocacy providers to be beyond their control. One advocacy provider reported being particularly anxious about whether funding would be provided in time for them to honour payments to participating schools that they had committed to deliver, expressing to concern that failure to make the payments would put 'their reputation on the line'.
- Changing expectations that were not effectively communicated: A small number of advocacy provider leads conveyed a belief that EEF's thinking about how they wanted the advocacy offer to work had evolved throughout the project and that these preferences were not always explicitly shared. One advocacy provider reflected that aside from the early phase of the project, they had a fairly 'distant relationship' with the EEF implementation team. Another expressed disappointment that despite the EEF initially welcoming and signing off their model, they perceived a cooling of enthusiasm for their approach as the project progressed, without an explanation as to why, leaving them feeling that they 'weren't doing a good enough job'.
- Reluctance to relinquish control: there was a minority view that EEF was overly prescriptive and unwilling to put sufficient trust in schools to run with what they felt was most appropriate. Connected to this was the view that greater emphasis needed to be placed on direct provision of TA training.

### **Advocacy provision**

#### **Perceived quality**

**Overall, the quality of the advocacy provision was highly rated by participating schools in the post-campaign survey, although there was some variation between advocacy providers.**

The quality of the launch event was rated positively by survey respondents overall, with 88% saying the quality was either 'very high' or 'high'. This varied between advocacy providers; all AP4 schools

rated the launch event as 'very high' or 'high' quality, compared to only 63% of AP5 schools (see Table 32).

**Table 32: Quality of the launch event as rated by participating schools**

Q19	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
<b>Very high</b>	19.4	20.5	42.3	22.7	14.3	16.7	45.2	25.2
<b>High</b>	71.0	65.9	53.8	77.3	49.0	72.2	52.4	61.6
<b>Unsure</b>	9.7	9.1	0.0	0.0	14.3	8.3	2.4	7.2
<b>Low</b>	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	10.2	2.8	0.0	2.8
<b>Very low</b>	0.0	2.3	3.8	0.0	12.2	0.0	0.0	3.2
<b>N</b>	31	44	26	22	49	36	42	250

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire post-campaign survey respondents indicating that they did participate. Chi-square = 56.817, df=24, p<.001. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

Table 33 shows that the quality of workshops was also rated positively by respondents overall. 86% said the quality was either 'very high' or 'high'. Again, this varied between providers, with AP6 schools less positive about the workshops than all others.

**Table 33: Quality of the workshop as rated by participating schools**

Q19	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
<b>Very high</b>	32.3	14.0	34.6	4.2	24.5	13.9	41.5	24.0
<b>High</b>	51.6	76.7	53.8	87.5	56.6	61.1	53.7	62.2
<b>Unsure</b>	16.1	4.7	7.7	8.3	9.4	22.2	4.9	10.2
<b>Low</b>	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	9.4	2.8	0.0	2.8
<b>Very low</b>	0.0	2.3	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.8
<b>N</b>	31	43	26	24	53	36	41	254

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire post-campaign survey respondents indicating that they did participate. Chi-square = 46.773, df=24, p<.01. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

The final conference was well received, with 70% of respondents overall rating it as 'very high' or 'high' quality, as shown in Table 34. Almost one in four were 'unsure', while 6% said the quality was 'low' or 'very low'. Some variation by provider was found; again, AP6 schools were the least positive, with fewer than half of them rating the quality as 'very high' or 'high', compared to 89% of AP3 schools.

**Table 34: Quality of the final events as rated by participating schools**

Q19	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
<b>Very high</b>	22.2	17.1	42.1	0.0	13.0	8.3	46.7	22.0
<b>High</b>	44.4	57.1	47.4	78.9	39.1	41.7	33.3	48.2
<b>Unsure</b>	33.3	20.0	5.3	21.1	34.8	41.7	13.3	23.8
<b>Low</b>	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.0	13.0	8.3	6.7	4.8
<b>Very low</b>	0.0	2.9	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2

<b>N</b>	18	35	19	19	23	24	30	168
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Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire post-campaign survey respondents indicating that they did participate. Chi-square = 46.944, df=24, p<.01. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

In terms of respondents' perceptions of the other activities and support, there was some variation by provider but overall more than three-quarters of respondents rated the quality of other activities/support as either 'very high' or 'high' (see Table 35). Half of AP5 schools were unsure about this, with only 40% of them giving a positive rating, against an overall average of 74%. This might be expected as this advocacy provider provided less support beyond the core activities than most other advocacy providers, other than to a few struggling schools. Several providers (AP1, AP2, AP3, AP4, AP8) saw at least 80% of their schools give a positive response to this question.

**Table 35: Quality of the other activities/support as rated by participating schools**

Q19	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
<b>Very high</b>	25.0	6.7	30.4	4.8	9.4	8.3	34.3	17.6
<b>High</b>	60.7	73.3	52.2	76.2	31.3	54.2	54.3	56.5
<b>Unsure</b>	14.3	16.7	13.0	19.0	50.0	29.2	8.6	21.8
<b>Low</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.4	8.3	2.9	3.1
<b>Very low</b>	0.0	3.3	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
<b>N</b>	28	30	23	21	32	24	35	193

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire post-campaign survey respondents indicating that they did participate. Chi-square = 53.548, df=24, p<.001. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

Overall, more than three-quarters of respondents rated the quality of the resources provided as either 'very high' or 'high'. Again, there was some variation by provider, as seen in Table 36. For example, 90% of AP1 schools rated the resources' quality as 'very high' or 'high' compared to only 63% of AP6 schools.

**Table 36: Quality of the resources as rated by participating schools**

Q19	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
<b>Very high</b>	29.0	8.3	45.8	8.7	15.9	12.5	33.3	21.4
<b>High</b>	61.3	69.4	37.5	82.6	52.3	50.0	59.0	58.5
<b>Unsure</b>	9.7	11.1	12.5	8.7	20.5	25.0	7.7	14.0
<b>Low</b>	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	11.4	12.5	0.0	5.7
<b>Very low</b>	0.0	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
<b>N</b>	31	36	24	23	44	32	39	229

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire post-campaign survey respondents indicating that they did participate. Chi-square = 50.619, df=24, p<.01. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

**Overall, responses to open questions in the survey indicate that respondents were largely positive about the advocacy provision and felt that it was impacting positively on their school, as illustrated below:**

'I feel that involvement in the project is having a huge impact on not just outcomes for the children but also the staff. The restructuring process which we undertook last year for Sept 2016 has enabled support staff to see their own potential and some staff are now looking to undertake a route into teaching.' (Participating school, survey respondent)

### Enablers and barriers overview

The main enabling mechanisms and barrier related to advocacy provision are summarised in Table 37 and supporting evidence presented in the following sub-sections. This draws together data presented in the section above on the quality of provision from the closed questions in the survey and the more detailed insights below from analyses of the case study and survey open question data.

**Table 37: Advocacy provision: enablers and barriers**

<b>Enablers</b>	Provision of focus and structure for the change in schools, including articulating the EEF recommendations and using them to structure workshops, input on change management processes and support for writing action plans (again using the EEF recommendations). Further supported by school visits.
	Practical workshops led by knowledgeable professionals with 'real-world' experience
	Provision of resources (EEF and advocacy provider created), particularly auditing tools and school case studies
	Advice and support between workshops
	Opportunity for sharing practice, collaboration and networking - in workshops and school visits -and the time the advocacy provision enabled for this
	Provision of additional (optional) training for TAs
	Pattern of provision over time that enabled schools to sequence change and implement manageable steps
<b>Barriers</b>	Workshops that: lack relevance or usefulness; are of poor quality; repeat the same content; and/or delivered at a slow pace
	Failure to tailor launch events and workshops to take account of participants prior knowledge
	School visits that were not helpful; did not lead to sharing of resources and were difficult to arrange
	Distance and time to travel and timing of workshops (for some schools)

### *Enabling mechanisms*

**The most important enabling mechanisms relating to the advocacy provision identified by interviewees in case study schools were: the focus and structure it provided for change; the provision of resources; advice and support between workshops; and the opportunity to discuss issues with other schools.** In several cases, these factors were felt to lead to more rapid implementation of positive change than would have occurred if they had not participated in the advocacy provision.

Overall, in most schools the advocacy provision provided a clear focus and a structure for the change in schools as illustrated in school CSA:

'I think what the programme did for us was it just kind of focused everything in and helped me to think about how I could do this whole school. It helped with the strategic planning ....

Because when you're just left with this as a target and you think okay, this is what I've got, what do I do? (CSA, deputy headteacher)

Focus and structuring was reported to be supported by the use of EEF recommendations to frame workshops, the opportunity to develop action plans linked to the recommendations. In addition, in a number of schools (CSA, CSE, CSF, CSG, CSM) the advocacy provider's support for a structured change process enabled change to happen more rapidly:

'I think we were already aware as leaders that things needed improving and we were on it, but we wouldn't have done it in the speed of the project. We wouldn't have had the change team and we wouldn't have done any of that.' (CSE, head teacher)

In some case study schools the advocacy provision was providing a sharper focus for change already underway, but in a few of the schools it was the trigger for a new focus on TAs, for example in school CSE the deputy head teachers observed that:

'Without participating in the research project I actually don't know whether we would have focused as much on the use of teaching assistants in school. It wasn't a focus in the school development plan. Certainly changes would not have happened as quickly.' (CSE, deputy headteacher)

More generally the content of the workshops was noted as important, including particularly the idea of pre-teaching, which does not appear in the EEF guidance but was shared widely amongst participants. Resources, either created by EEF or the advocacy providers, that were provided through the advocacy workshops were also perceived by some schools to be an important component. A teacher in school CSJ explained the impact of the using the audit tool and other resources that had been provided directly to the school as a result of the advocacy provision:

'We did a questionnaire in a CPD and that led on to us having lots of training during staff meeting time. We looked at lots of research on the effectiveness of TAs and how to use those TAs and that how we had been using them wasn't quite as effective as it could be.' (CSJ, teacher)

The two AP8 schools both valued the case studies shared via the advocacy provider lead, which described how other schools had implemented more effective deployment of TAs.

Advice and support in decision-making between workshops was perceived to help move the change process forwards, for example in CSB:

'Particularly when you're going through something like the restructuring, particularly with [one advocacy provider lead] because she was a very experienced Head, ... I was able to email her and ask her questions about things. I just felt having that support was invaluable.' (CSB, head teacher)

Most schools welcomed the opportunities to discuss issues face-to-face with other schools, for example:

'there was one school that's in a much more deprived area than we are that does a lot of social and emotional things brilliantly. I know now that I've got that contact that as we begin that work this year I can give her a call and say, 'Can I come and look?' And to hear what's going on, because actually you don't have time sometimes to hear what's happening in other schools. That was a really useful tool.' (CSJ, head teacher)

**There is a strong resonance between the case study findings and the key findings from a thematic analysis of the open survey question 'Which aspects of the programme did you find**

**most helpful and why? Additional emphasis in the open question responses was placed on the role of workshops and school visits, the practical nature of workshops that were run by knowledgeable professionals with 'real-world' experience and the time made available to discuss practice.** The key findings are summarised below:

- The opportunity for sharing practice, collaboration and networking was the most highly valued aspect of the advocacy provision. This included the exchange of practical ideas and strategies, as well as discussing common barriers and issues experienced around the deployment and best use of TAs.
- Workshops and school visits were highlighted as being an important opportunity to share effective practices and research evidence, as well as see what other schools were implementing and the impact of interventions.
- The practical character of the workshops was mentioned consistently, along with the quality of the 'knowledgeable and supportive' speakers, who had real-world experience to share.
- The time and opportunity to 'reflect, discuss and evaluate practice' was also welcomed by respondents.
- The resources provided at the workshops were viewed very positively in terms of use in the school context, both to support changes in TA deployment and TA training.
- Support for planning and writing action plans for strategic and effective utilisation of TAs in school was also perceived to be useful.
- The training for TAs, provided by some advocacy providers as an additional element, was rated highly in terms of quality and impact.

### **Barriers**

Key themes emerging in response to the open survey question 'Which aspects of the programme did you find least helpful and why?' were:

- Workshops that were perceived to lack relevance or usefulness or were perceived to be poor quality. Instances cited were repetition of content delivered at previous events or even within the same day, slow pace, and speakers over-running. Some respondents who had read the EEF guidance, and particularly those who had already implemented some changes, felt that the workshops did not build on what they already knew or on current practices. Launch events received particular criticism in this regard.
- Distance to travel and the time needed to attend the workshops, as well as the timing of events, were perceived to be problematic and some respondents found it difficult to attend due to conflicts with school obligations and working patterns.
- The school visits were also problematic for some, either because the visits were not helpful, difficult to arrange or resources were not shared as expected.

These findings were echoed in the case study data.

## **School-level change**

### **School-level change processes**

This sub-section draws on case study analyses to provide in-depth insights into change processes in schools. **All schools faced an issue of sequencing of change processes.** In all cases, the process more or less followed these steps:

- Recognition of problem and need for change.
- Data gathering – use of observation, data, audit.
- Project design and planning.
- Implementation.
- Review.

**Although the staging varied, this type of staged school improvement process that was fostered through the pattern of advocacy provision activity was seen positively.** For example, the head teacher in CSJ noted: 'I think also that by the project being delivered in stages it's not been everything at once, so you would come back and you'd got a good term to work on something and be clear that this is what we're doing for this period of time, we'll review that and then we can move on to something else. I think the manageability of what was expected was a big enabling factor.'

In all cases, **the audit was a crucial driver of the changes taking place** subsequently, as illustrated in Vignette 7:

#### **Vignette 7: Using the MITA-audit tool to drive change**

In CSO, the audit was run across all staff within school: 'it was very positive, very consistent across teachers, phases, LSAs [Learning support assistants], senior leaders'. (CSO, deputy head teacher).

The survey and subsequent discussions helped to reveal that TAs asked mainly closed questions, 'but we realised that they didn't understand, in a discussion with them, the difference between open and closed questions'. (CSO, teacher)

Following the survey, informal discussions across staff led to an open invitation to join a 'working group' 'which crystallised' as including the head teacher, deputy head teacher, three learning support assistants (Foundation, KS1, KS2) and a KS2 teacher. They met and agreed they wanted to use an action plan and based this on one of the advocacy provider's case study school's action plans that had been presented.

'When the action plan had been done and we felt confident that we understood the characteristics and were familiar with all the documents and our action plan I then did a staff meeting for teachers and we went into more depth.' (CSO, deputy head teacher)

There were differences, however. Some schools mirrored the approach of sequencing changes in line with the ordering of recommendations, working first on changes to deployment and classroom practice, followed by a focus on interventions. Others (e.g. CSK) focused purely on one or the other. This is of note since the EEF implementation team provided a strong steer in their presentation to advocacy providers to sequence change, starting with recommendations 1 and 2. Some schools had addressed recommendations 1 and 2 at least to some extent, prior to the campaign, however it appeared to the evaluators that a few of the case study schools over-estimated the extent to which they were aligning their practice with these recommendations. This highlights the **need for advocacy provision to challenge as well as support audit.**

An approach adopted by some schools (CSA, CSE, CSK) was to work with a smaller group during the period of advocacy provision - a kind of piloting, with the aim of rolling out change across the school subsequently. This approach included:

- Working primarily with a single TA/teacher pair (CSA, CSE).
- Working with a group of specific TAs (CSK).

#### **Vignette 8: A targeted pilot approach to change**

In school CSK, the project lead focused both on a small number of the recommendations and on a group of TAs:

'I decided to trial an intervention programme – rather than doing it whole school I thought I'll do it with the Level 6s first and then cascade it to the rest of them.... The Level 6 teaching assistants delivered high quality interventions outside the classroom.'

The focus came about by considering the audit and school priorities:

'We did the audit, and on the basis of the results, following discussion with SLT, focused on changing timetable and developing the intervention as the main activity.'

The school didn't focus on other recommendations as they felt these were already in place:

'The reason why I've done that, rather than just starting with changes, we didn't have as much change to do... because the TAs were already doing the recommendations. Some of them I kind of ticked.' (CSK, senior leader)

In targeted paired TA/teacher projects, the careful selection of the pair was highlighted as important in both cases, in ensuring they had a strong relationship and commitment to change. **These approaches also required expertise in change management** to ensure the pilot process was to be continued.

The **whole-school change process varied** too, with **different approaches to when and how teachers and TAs were introduced**. Almost invariably, schools used the audit tools provided at an early stage, and the responses to this, alongside input via shared reading or workshops regarding the recommendations in the EEF guidance, then set the course for the programme. Vignette 9 below indicates a whole-school approach:

#### **Vignette 9: A whole-school change approach to change**

The head teacher and assistant head/SENCO had worked together to consider the changes needed at the very start of the process:

'So initially what we looked at was making sure that the hours were roughly the same and things like that. However, once we started on the training [workshops], that made us think much bigger picture. So it was then really going back down to basics and saying right, what we need to do is look at the teachers' understanding of the role of the TA and we need to look at the TAs' understanding of what their role is.' (CSI, SENCO)

The audit tool was used, identifying that teachers and TAs needed time to reflect on their practice, and the need to change contracts to shift their roles and responsibilities and come in earlier for teacher briefings and stay after school to provide feedback. They were also expected to access and read planning notes emailed to them (there were some issues re: ICT literacy and access to IT at home to be addressed). Later in the process, a teacher questionnaire was used: 'Without exception every teacher said the preparedness, that fifteen minutes, was beneficial'. (CSI, SENCO)

Training was then undertaken with teachers and TAs together and then separately - the first time TAs had received bespoke training, based on the EEF guidance, with a strong emphasis on the preparedness of TAs which could then be driven forward through contract change and subsequent training for teachers and TAs.

This led to a range of further classroom practice changes and subsequent positive perceived outcomes for TAs, teachers and pupils (although there was no high-quality impact evidence at the time of the case study visit).

**The role of the key change agent** was of interest. The roles **differed** - they included the head teacher in only two cases (CSB, CSJ), the deputy head teacher (CSA, CSF, CSG, CSH, CSL, CSM, CSO) or assistant head (CSK, CSE, CSC, CSI). The assistant head in CSI was also the SENCO. CSJ was led by the head teacher, but working closely with the SENCO and an assistant head. Through analysis of interview transcripts, the key characteristics of change agents appeared to be (note that not all change agents exhibited all of these characteristics):

- **Power** - ability to exercise and influence school-level change. This was apparent in those in roles of deputy headteacher or above.



- **Expertise** - experience in effectively planning and managing change processes. This was apparent in more experienced leaders, in different roles.
- **Enthusiasm and dynamism**. This was apparent across all roles.

In addition, in some cases (e.g. CSF, CSK), the change agent was undertaking a leadership qualification associated with the change programme.

**In some (CSC, CSE, CSF, CSH, CSJ) but not all schools, a change team was in place.** This had been a strategy encouraged by some advocacy providers, and an integral part of the programme for AP3:

**Vignette 10: The use of a change team**

The design of the change team was described by the assistant head:

'We already had good practice but we wanted to evolve it to get even better. We came back to school and thought about developing the change team in school. Two teachers were taking part in 1stClass@Writing and Code reading interventions. They became the change team along with two TAs who also became part of the training with the KI. This worked really well.' (CSC, assistant head teacher)

**School-level enablers and barriers overview**

Table 38 summarises the reported school-level enablers and barriers. The main findings are discussed in the following sub-sections, drawing from the case study data and advocacy provider perceptions. It is important to note in relation to barriers - particularly those related to TA or teacher factors or making HR and contractual changes, that overcoming these barriers was a direct focus of the advocacy provision and in the majority case study schools these barriers were significantly reduced by the end of the campaign.

**Table 38: School level enablers and barriers**

<b>Enablers</b>	A change agent that has high status in the school, is committed to the change and is given dedicated time to work on implementation over an extended period of time
	Support from the whole senior leadership team, including the provision of resources commitment to future action to sustain change
	A school culture that is underpinned by a commitment to enabling <u>all</u> staff to support outcomes for <u>all</u> children
	Motivated teachers and TAs, effective communications between teachers and TAs and teachers trusting TAs to support pupils
	Support from other schools
<b>Barriers</b>	The availability of time and competing priorities, as well as the long time period required for effective implementation
	Funding issues imping on time
	Lack of senior leadership commitment and associated limits on the changes the change agent is allowed to make, and limited allocation of time and resources.
	TA related factors including: availability - due to working patterns or other school demands and lack of confidence*
	Teacher related factors: lack of trust and confidence in TAs*

	Pupil resistance to change*
	'Hurdle' of HR and contractual changes*
	Changes in school leadership and/or staff absence
	Lack of commitment to the advocacy provision by some schools impacting negatively on committed schools
*Note: these factors were a direct focus of the advocacy campaign and in most case study schools diminished, at least to some extent, over the campaign period	

### **Enablers**

Key leadership factors that were perceived by case study school interviewees to enable change at the school level included dedicated time for the key change agent to facilitate change over an extended period of time. This was identified as an enabler in at least four schools (CSE, CSK; CSE, CSL), for example:

'The time to be able to do it, so you've had a year-long project. It's not been a one-off training course. You've actually had a year to really see the impact of it first, try it out with a small team, see if it's actually something you want to invest in.' (CSL, senior leader)

Also important was the commitment and status of the key change agent. This was recognised in most schools, as articulated by the head teacher in school CSC:

'In terms of an enabler you'd need a willing person on SLT. It needs leadership, just like anything, it needs bold leadership. The leadership needs to be at a senior level who can influence.' (CSC, head teacher)

Support from the wider SLT was identified as crucial in at least six schools (CSI, CSK, CSJ, CSO, CSC CSG), especially in one case where implementation included modelling by the head teacher:

'You've got to have your senior leadership plus everything else, and it's your team, right we're in this together and we're all going to make it work. If you haven't got that, I can see that that would be a huge barrier.' (CSI, SENCO)

Linked to this, commitment to future action was regarded as important to sustain change:

'The only thing I can say is that probably I don't want it to die off and go back to our old ways.' (CSK, assistant head)

The school culture, in relation to a commitment to enabling all staff to support the outcomes for all children, was cited in around half of the case study schools as a key enabler. In CSA this was cast as 'no fear of failure', and in CSH as 'creating an ethos conducive to reflecting and refining practice without punitive action'.

Motivation of both TAs and teachers was perceived to be an important enabler. The motivation of TAs was mentioned by six schools (CSI, CSG, CSJ, CSE, CSA, CSC). As a senior leader in school CSC explained:

'We're blessed that we've got TAs that are willing to train and are willing to learn and want to do their best. They want to be recognised for the impact that they have on the children and they want the children to do well.' (CSC, senior leader)

The motivation of teachers to be involved was perceived to have an enabling effect in at least four cases.

Communication between teachers and TAs 'all working together' (CSI) as well as the trust and confidence of teachers in the TAs (CSM, CSO) were also seen as enabling mechanisms, as were support factors, including support from other schools and training (CSI and 5B).

It is interesting to note that a number of the enabling factors cited by the case study interviewees, for example the motivation of TAs and communication between teachers and TAs, have also been identified as outcomes of participation in the campaign. This perhaps indicates a reinforcing mechanism, whereby making some changes stimulated further change.

### **Barriers**

The availability of time and the ways in which competing priorities impacted on time available were perceived as a barrier by survey respondents, advocacy providers and in at least two case study schools (CSJ, CSA) :

'The thing that gets in the way in primary schools is always time. You want to do so much, but then you've got other things that you need to do. Sometimes it just has to go on the back burner.' (CSA, deputy head teacher)

Lack of funding and the consequent impact on time, was mentioned as a barrier by survey respondents and interviewees in four case study schools (CSH, CSI, CSL, CSO):

'We would love to pay them to come to extra staff meetings. We'd love to pay them for all training days. We'd love to pay them an hour extra to communicate, but that can't be there.' (CSO, senior leader)

Advocacy providers linked the issue of insufficient time being made available to a lack of commitment by the senior leadership to the campaign in some schools. This lack of commitment was also perceived to result in not allocating sufficient resource and not giving the change agent permission to fully implement the recommendations.

Advocacy providers and survey respondents both emphasised that the TA project was a significant change for schools and it took time to embed the recommendations. As one survey respondent noted: 'changing culture takes time!'

A range of TA-related factors were identified as barriers. TA availability was mentioned as a problem in ensuring consistent implementation of new practices, for example: 'Sometimes the Level 6 TAs were required to teach elsewhere, so therefore the interventions didn't take place' (CSK). Linked issues were cited in three other schools: a senior leader in school CSI explained that 'Not all TAs can start at 8.15 or stay later due to childcare issues - so there is inconsistency in who gets prep'. School CSJ had similar issues due to TAs working part-time and another school struggled with the turnover of TAs. Two schools both mentioned a lack of confidence on the part of TAs as a barrier.

A lack of trust and confidence by some teachers in their TAs was explicitly identified as a barrier remaining in a very small minority of case study schools. As with the TA related barriers outlined above, addressing these barriers were also the focus of the scale-up campaign and in most schools barriers such as teachers being reluctant to relinquish control in the classroom diminished over the implementation period.

A further barrier that was identified by advocacy provider that also diminished over time was 'the hurdle' of having to make human resources and contractual changes

In two schools (CSH, CSJ), certain pupils had found it difficult to adapt to the new TA practices, which slowed implementation:

'This boy is finding it difficult that my teaching assistant isn't his personal assistant anymore.

In the old way that we used to work he would be sat next to her and everything would be done and everything would be stick this in, do this, and do this. He struggles a lot with the fact that she can't sit next to him anymore and be his personal assistant.' (CSJ, teacher)

There was some limited evidence that there were stronger barriers to change in some small schools. Advocacy providers reported that long-established practices in small schools with few TAs were difficult to shift. Practical limitations and the amplified effects of competing priorities were reported by a few small schools to create particular problems as one case study interviewee observed: 'because we're a small school, if a teacher is off or a TA is off we need to cover that.' (CSC, deputy headteacher).

Some survey respondents reported that circumstances such as in illness and changes in roles/leadership had slowed implementation in their schools.

Advocacy providers also highlighted the negative impact on the programme more widely created by those schools that did not fully commit to participating in the advocacy provision, for example by failing to arrange peer visits or not sharing action plans. This was also reported as an issue by some case study schools. Advocacy providers reported school engagement was particularly problematic during the summer term.

### **Policy**

Two important policy-level enablers cited by advocacy providers and case study interviewees were OFSTED's focus on effective deployment of TAs, and the national focus on Pupil Premium. Barriers reported at school-level, such as the lack of funding, time and competing priorities can also be linked to the wider policy context.

## Findings 6: Scalability

In this section summary findings are presented on the potential for scale-up, sustainability and cost.

### Key findings

- The commissioned approach to scale-up using advocacy providers was an effective approach to engaging a large number of schools within an area, which potentially could be applied across other areas of England.
- There was an ongoing commitment by participating schools to continue to implement changes in relation to the EEF recommendations after the end of the campaign.
- The extent to which the advocacy providers intend to deliver further programmes related to 'Making the best use of TAs' or other research-use programmes varied. Future plans for supporting schools who participated in the research were largely reliant on encouraging schools to support each other.
- Future scale-up campaigns will need mechanisms for ensuring value for money as well as taking account of the trade-off between high-cost, intensive advocacy provision, which appears to have some but only moderately higher impact than less intensive, lower-cost provision that has the potential to engage more schools.
- There appears to be opportunity for EEF scale-up funding to leverage additional funding from other sources.

### Scalability

As evidence presented in Findings 2 has substantiated the use of a commissioned approach to scale-up, which involves recruiting and then using advocacy providers to recruit and support schools is an effective means of engaging a large number of schools within an area. There are no indications in the data that there are significant factors within South and West Yorkshire that make this approach likely to be any more or less likely to succeed in other areas of England.

In any further scale-up it would be important to take account of findings presented in Findings 1 and 5 which identified a set of attributes and key characteristics of advocacy providers that appear to enhance their ability to both recruit and continue to engage schools. The conclusion provides further elucidation of these factors.

### Sustainability

Plans for continuing similar research advocacy provision were still being developed at the time of our final interview with advocacy providers in July 2016. At that time, **there was notable variation between the advocacy providers in their future plans for scale-up work**. One advocacy provider (AP1) had already secured LA funding to run a second cohort of 'Making the best use of TAs':

'We're still going to do it through the local authority because we feel there's such merit in carrying on with the project.' (AP1 co-lead)

Most advocacy providers had some intentions to continue providing training in the use of TAs, usually by it becoming part of their organisations' training offer that schools could buy into. Two of these advocacy providers (AP2, AP6) were intending to focus more strongly on training for TAs, as they perceived that there was a strong need and demand for this type of training. One advocacy provider (AP4) had decided not to continue to provide support related to the use of TAs, explaining that:

'We've got a limited number of personnel in the team and we've got other priorities for this year.' (AP4 lead)

**Some advocacy providers expressed interest in leading other research use programmes but specific plans had yet to be developed.** As the following example from AP6 illustrates, the campaign has developed support within the LA for further scale-up activity:

'The [LA] authority came to me and said we have something that pulls all of the schools together, what might we do? How might we use this for other things? We want those things to be evidence based. We're definitely doing that at a secondary level, so the secondary group of schools got together last week and they want to look at working memory and regular testing to support working memory. So they're really keen to do something with that, so yes, we have plans to try and do scale-ups – probably separate scale-ups for primary and secondary, but we're not sure yet.' (AP6 lead)

**Few advocacy providers had plans for ongoing work with the 2015/16 cohort of schools.** Only AP1 had a formal plan for continued engagement, intending to engage schools in the launch event for their cohort 2. A few other advocacy providers mentioned some low-key ongoing engagement, primarily focused on encouraging the schools to support each other, for example by maintaining the links they had developed with partner schools during the campaign:

'We're also looking at encouraging schools to partner up more, to look at peer-to-peer support and challenge.' (AP8 head teacher)

It is important to note that **the campaign also had a wider impact in terms of supporting scale-up beyond S&W Yorkshire.** One of the advocacy provider leads has subsequently supported organisations beyond S&W Yorkshire to run similar programmes, and EEF have facilitated the sharing of resources produced by advocacy providers more widely.

**All the case study schools had plans for either implementing aspects of the EEF recommendations they had not addressed or further embedding and refining practices aligned with the EEF guidance.** The specific nature of the changes varied according to each school's stage on the journey of implementing the recommendations, but broadly fell into two categories -changes specifically related to TAs and broader whole-school changes. Planned changes specifically related to TAs spanned:

- Changed expectations about the work they should do and the approaches they should take (CSB, CSF, CSH, CSJ).
- Professional development including further training (CSA, CSB, CSG, CSH, CSI, CSJ), involving TAs in research (CSI, CSK), more peer observation (CSE, CSI), and supporting TAs to gain academic qualifications.
- Contractual changes (CSE, CSI) and increased monitoring of TAs (CSF).

One school (CSK) planned to repeat the TA skills audit for TAs to sharpen their working practices and identify training requirements.

Planned school-wide changes that the case study schools perceived would help them make better use of TAs included:

- Maintaining, reflecting on and refining new practices (CSG, CSJ), ensuring that they have been implemented effectively (CSE) and, in schools that had taken a pilot approach in 2015/16, rolling out practice across the school (CSA).
- Introducing same-day intervention (CSE, CSF) and a fluid approach to which pupils receive interventions (CSB).
- Further exploration of structured interventions (CSE), trialling of interventions to see what works in the school and further development of the inclusion team (CSB).

- Integrating TA work and development into the school action plan (CSL) and scheduling time for communication (CSM).

However, as one school (CSI) pointed out, funding restraints will impact on what is possible to develop.

### **Costs**

The Institute for Fiscal Studies conducted a cost assessment for the advocacy provision. See Sibieta et al., 2019 for details of method and detailed findings. In summary, the IFS report states that the average cost per school involved was relatively cheap at around £392 per school. These figures are then even smaller when presented over a three-year horizon, as used across other EEF evaluations: about £131 per school over three years. These are presented from the perspective of a policymaker deciding whether or not to organise such a campaign across a large geographic area. Cost data was only supplied for four of the seven providers involved and the cost estimate therefore focussed on average figures

Two observations about costs are pertinent to this evaluation. Firstly, in the longer term, EEF will need to consider the balance between lower-cost, less intensive advocacy provision that reaches more schools, and higher-cost, more intensive advocacy provision that reaches fewer schools. Indicative evidence has been presented earlier in the report that suggests that higher-intensity provision has a stronger impact on changing school practices. However, it will also be important to take account of the relatively small difference found post-campaign between advocacy providers in the alignment of their participating schools' practices with the EEF recommendations. This consideration will be important whether EEF continues to fund scale-up campaign or advocacy provision is paid for by schools.

Secondly, it is important to note that some advocacy providers were able to leverage in additional resources to support campaign activities and EEF may wish to explore the potential for this when recruiting advocacy providers in the future.

## Conclusion

### Formative findings

The key findings from the evaluation were:

#### Evidence of promise

The campaign was successful in recruiting advocacy providers in seven of the nine LA areas in S&W Yorkshire. A total of 480 schools (42% of primary schools) in S&W Yorkshire were recruited by these advocacy providers, of which 432 attended one or more of the core advocacy events. The campaign as a whole has not been successful in targeting underperforming schools or schools with the most disadvantaged pupils. Recruitment was significantly aided by LA support and impeded by negative perceptions of an advocacy provider's brand or a lack of local credibility. Attendance at advocacy events was generally high, but varied between providers. There was significant variation between advocacy providers in the numbers of schools recruited and attendance at core advocacy events.

There was some self-reported evidence that practices in S&W Yorkshire schools that participated in the advocacy provision were more closely aligned to the EEF recommendations at the end of the campaign than the beginning. The differences between practices pre- and post-campaign were statistically significant for survey items related to communication between TAs and teachers, which relates to aspects of EEF recommendations 4 and 7, and for items about training for teachers and TAs which relate to the components regarding training in recommendations 4, 5 and 6. There was also closer alignment in participating schools post-campaign in relation to some aspects of recommendations 5 and 6; specifically there was a statistically significant difference in the use of interventions that were supported by structured lesson plans and resources pre- and post-campaign. However, there was little change in the use of interventions in participating schools that were sustained over time or used regularly. After the campaign, reported practice was more aligned with EEF recommendations on TA deployment and classroom practices, which relate to recommendations 1, 2 and 3, on several, but not all, survey items. TAs were more likely to report being engaged in leading the teaching of the whole class and supporting the teacher in whole-class teaching post-campaign and less likely to be deployed in teaching specific groups of pupils. However, the change in reported TA awareness of the learning needs of all pupils in the class was not statistically significant.

As has been described above, the reported practices in schools were in some respects more closely aligned with the EEF recommendations at the end of the campaign than the beginning. However, at the end of the campaign there was very little evidence to indicate any difference between the reported practices of participating schools in S&W Yorkshire and the comparison group schools. The lack of a pre-campaign survey means that it is not possible to ascertain whether the degree of alignment of practices in participating schools was similar to the degree of alignment in comparison schools at the beginning of the campaign. If practices had been similar this would indicate that the campaign had had limited impact and the changes observed in S&W Yorkshire would have occurred anyway. It is also important to note that the active comparison group conditions included a high level of national and regional promotion of the EEF guidance, which may have led comparison schools to align their practices more closely with the guidance. The constraints of the research scope and design mean that it is not possible to draw any conclusions as to relative effectiveness of the national and regional promotion compared to the advocacy provision.

There was some variation between advocacy providers in the reported practice measures examined post-campaign but generally practice in participating schools was fairly similar across the seven providers. There was insufficient data to analyse the degree of pre- and post-campaign change in reported practices by advocacy provider. There is some evidence that the advocacy provision was



more impactful when it included a strong focus on how to implement change within schools and when high levels of support to implement change were provided between advocacy events.

Involvement with the advocacy provision was associated with an increased probability of participating in one of the four structured TA-led interventions promoted by advocacy providers, compared to other schools in S&W Yorkshire and comparison schools. Limited confidence can be placed in this finding as comparison schools did not have the same opportunity to participate as schools in S&W Yorkshire.

Other outcomes reported in participating schools related to the reported knowledge, understanding, confidence, motivation, beliefs and attitudes of TAs, and to a lesser extent of teachers. Improved team ethic, effective team-working, professionalisation and enhanced professional and career development were also reported. There were few indications that participating in the advocacy programme had motivated schools to increase research use more generally.

### **Feasibility**

Overall, participating schools were positive about the quality and usefulness of the advocacy provision and perceived that the campaign was impacting positively on their school. There was some variation in quality and usefulness ratings by advocacy provider.

The most useful aspects of the advocacy provision were perceived to be: the opportunity it provided to share practice, network, reflect, discuss and evaluate practice; practical workshops that were led by knowledgeable and supportive facilitators with real-world school experience; visits to other schools; support for planning; and the resources provided.

Participating schools found some workshops were of a poor quality and/or lacked relevance, and a few school visits were unproductive. A lack of commitment by some schools, for example to sharing plans or setting up school visits, also inhibited realising the full potential of the advocacy provision. Distance to travel, time required for participation and timing of workshops were also cited as barriers.

Implementing the EEF recommendations was perceived to be a substantive change and was subject to the barriers that can impede any school-level change, such as time, senior leadership support, competing priorities and resource constraints.

Enabling factors attributed to the EEF were: the high-quality, evidence-based and user-friendly format of the EEF guidance; reputation and brand; presentations at advocacy provider workshops; resources, particularly the MITA audit tools; working practices that were flexible and responsive; and brokerage activity, as well as funding for the advocacy provision. Advocacy providers were generally very positive about their relationship with the EEF implementation team and the support they received. Issues encountered related primarily to a lack of clarity of expectations and transparency and organisation efficiency, such as delays in contracting and releasing resources. More opportunities to share practice with other advocacy providers and more communication with the EEF implementation team would have been welcomed.

The main reasons why schools did not participate were lack of awareness of the campaign, a perception that their TAs were already effectively deployed, small numbers of TAs on staff, pressing accountability issues and choosing not to work with local schools.

### **Scalability**

The commissioned approach to scale-up using advocacy providers was an effective approach to engaging a large number of schools within an area, which potentially could be applied across other areas of England. A key issue for further scale-up would be consideration of the trade-off between higher-cost, more intensive advocacy provision which appears to have some, but only moderately, higher impact, and less intensive provision that costs less and potentially can engage more schools.

It is too early to assess sustainability. There is evidence that some, but not all, of the advocacy providers intend to run further scale-up activity related to the TA campaign or other research evidence and indications that schools are intending to continue embedding the EERF recommendations .

### **Limitations**

While some evidence of positive effects associated with the campaign have been discovered, findings are likely to be subject to response bias given the low response rate among schools in the matched comparison sample. This could potentially reduce differences with participating schools. There are concerns over the use of multiple significance tests in the analysis of survey data. The survey was completed by school leaders, who can talk authoritatively about whole change and policy at the school level, but are possibly less engaged with daily classroom activity. The lack of baseline data for the matched comparison group means that differences in both samples over the evaluation period cannot be compared.

Only limited confidence can be placed in the findings on the uptake of TA-lead intervention trials as not all trials were potentially available to all schools.

It is also important to note that the active comparison group conditions included a high level of national and regional promotion of the EEF guidance, which may have led comparison schools to align their practices more closely with the guidance. The constraints of the research scope and design mean that it is not possible to draw any conclusions as to relative effectiveness of the national and regional promotion compared to the advocacy provision.

There is some discrepancy between the survey findings which overall show more limited change in practice and the qualitative findings which indicate greater engagement in aligning practices more closely with the EEF recommendations. This discrepancy may be due to bias in the interview sample and/or reflect the different perspectives of advocacy participants and wider school staff who were interviewed and the head teachers who completed the survey (although in some schools head teachers were the advocacy participants).

### **Interpretation**

The evidence of promise findings presented above suggest that using advocacy providers to promote and support the scale-up of research evidence is likely to lead to changes in school practices, so that they align more closely with the evidence. It therefore appears to be a strategy that can support EEF's remit to increase research use. There is, however, mixed evidence on whether the changes would have occurred anyway, particularly in the context of a high level of EEF activity that is likely to have impacted on comparison schools. The impact evaluation of the S&W Yorkshire campaign (Sibieta, 2019) provides some further support for evidence of promise. The analysis of KS2 test scores found an improvement of 0.03 standard in English in South and West Yorkshire as compared with a synthetic control group, but there is no evidence of an impact on maths scores. The new KS2 tests and curriculum implemented from 2016 could be biasing these results and the size and direction of any bias is uncertain.

Evidence from this evaluation broadly supports the assumed causal chain set out in the initial project logic model outlined in Figure 2. The findings also provide deeper insights into the change processes, enabling mechanisms and moderating factors associated with this causal chain. Implementation of the recommendations at the school level broadly followed a sequence of recognition of problem and need for change, data gathering, project design and planning, implementation and review. The success or otherwise of the implementation of the recommendations at school level was found to be dependent on factors related to the school, advocacy provision, EEF and the wider policy environment and importantly the interaction of factors operating at these different levels. Here, we focus particularly on how advocacy provision can act to support research use.

Effective advocacy-based research use has three key and inter-related components:

- The research object being used – in this case the EEF guidance and recommendations.
- Advocacy providers and the advocacy provision.
- The school.

A key learning point from this evaluation is that there are sets of enabling characteristics that need to be in place in all three components for effective advocacy to occur. This indicates that attention needs to be paid not just to the research object and the provision itself, but to the engagement and characteristics of schools. This study indicates that the following characteristics are associated with effective advocacy approaches:

#### **Characteristics of the research object**

- Provided by a trusted provider - EEF's reputation and brand was highly influential.
- High quality and user-friendly format of the EEF guidance based on robust research.
- Related tools and resources, particularly the MITA audit tools.

#### **Characteristics of the advocacy provision**

##### *Provider characteristics:*

- Professionally credible, knowledgeable and supportive with real-world experience of schools and able to share their own experiences and resources.
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills<sup>7</sup>.
- Established linkages with schools and reputation as a trusted brand.
- Able to provide challenge as well as support.
- Effective adult learning facilitators able to design engaging and interactive workshops.

##### *Characteristics of the provision process and structure:*

- The focus and structure of the advocacy provision and the pattern of provision over time - which enabled schools to sequence change and implement manageable steps.
- The use and articulation of the EEF recommendations in advocacy events - which provided the opportunity to contextualise the research.
- Activities that provided time to reflect, discuss and evaluate practice.
- The opportunity to discuss issues with other schools, for example in workshops and school visits and the sharing of ideas and resources.
- The provision of resources, particularly auditing tools and school case studies.
- A focus in the programme on how to implement change and specific support in planning change – enabling account to be taken of organisational barriers to evidence-informed change.
- Advice and support between workshops to support implementation.
- Role of EEF in hands-on engagement in advocacy provision, brokerage activity and working practices that are flexible and responsive.

#### **Characteristics of Schools**

- Leadership characteristics, particularly the time and commitment of the key change agent and senior leadership support for implementing and sustaining evidence-based change.
- A school culture in relation to a commitment to enabling all staff to support the outcomes for all children and a 'no fear of failure' ethos.
- Staff characteristics, attitudes and motivations - in this evaluation, evidence-based change was enabled when teachers and TAs were motivated, there was effective communication between teachers and TAs, and teachers trusted TAs to support pupils.

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<sup>7</sup> Drawing on emerging research, rather than direct evidence from the evaluation (Cooper, 2010 & 2014; Lavis et al., 2006; Lomas, 2007; Sin, 2008).

## **Implications**

Future advocacy provision needs to promote and support the key enabling characteristics identified above relating to the research object, the advocacy providers and provision and schools. The enabling characteristics for advocacy providers can be used to support the selection of providers in future scale-up campaigns. The characteristics of provision processes and structures can be used to steer the design of advocacy programmes. Ensuring that the necessary enabling characteristics are present in schools is a much greater challenge, requiring significant cultural shifts in schools that are less committed to research use. The challenge is further amplified due to the competing demands placed on schools by the wider policy environment. The wider work of EEF in changing attitudes towards research use could helpfully be supported by future advocacy provision paying greater attention to engendering enabling characteristics in schools.

## **Future research and publications**

The final evaluation report will be published in July 2019. This will be published alongside an assessment of impact on pupil attainment and compare the commissioning of the advocacy providers scale-up approach adopted in S&W Yorkshire to a later TA-focused scale-up campaign in Lincolnshire that sought to embed scale-up within county-wide school improvement structures. All of the papers can be found [here](#).

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## Appendix 1. Details of advocacy programme by provider

### Advocacy Provider 1

#### Team composition: Background/role

The provision was jointly led by the local authority (LA), school improvement team consultant and a current head teacher who was well-networked in terms of clusters and family of schools across the region. The programme was marketed under the LA school improvement team banner. Wider support was provided by the manager of the school improvement team consultant, with some marketing and administrative support from the LA.

#### Recruitment strategies

There were initial concerns about the level of existing commitments schools had to other EEF research/RCTs and other research projects being run by teaching schools. Recruitment strategies included letters to every head teacher in the region, a presentation at an existing head teacher conference and more informally through the various networks of each member of the delivery team. Secondary schools were also invited to participate.

#### Target participants

Core workshops focused on the member of staff responsible for leading TA intervention work - typically an intervention manager or SENCO but in some cases the head teacher or deputy. However, there was clear instruction for schools to establish a wider change team (suggested composition being an inclusion manager, two senior/skilled/experienced TAs and their linked teachers) within the school to facilitate change.

#### Overview of provision

- Content mainly delivered through three half-day regionally delivered interactive workshops (each run at three different locations).
- At the launch event, advocacy leads purposely paired schools together and set the task of arranging a reciprocal visit - providing a pro-forma to inform a learning walk.
- Best practice from schools was consciously incorporated into the model. Current head teacher was part of the delivery team which was said to add 'authenticity'.
- Further examples of best practice (in relation to at least one of the recommendations) were identified through various means including existing delivery team's knowledge of other schools in the region, analysis of school action plans and small group discussions within workshops. Members of the delivery team visited potential 'best practice' schools to explore their work in more detail and then an invitation was made to present at specific regional workshops with broad messages/resources then shared across all schools.
- Clear recommendations around next steps at each of the workshops were linked to the overall EEF recommendations.
- Conference day was designed to share and celebrate good practice with schools presenting three-minute showcases, and there was opportunity for new schools to sign up as cohort 2.

#### Rationale for design



Regional groups felt it best to encourage a 'collegiate' approach throughout. Having an acting head teacher, whose school was also participating in the project, was also seen as being a key strength. Having significant time factored into workshops so that attendees could have time to talk, think and undertake work on action plans, was a welcomed feature that ensured the project progressed.

### **Changes to core design and delivery model**

Nothing significant reported.

### **Resources utilised**

Every school was provided with a copy of the EEF guidance booklet. Throughout the advocacy programme a mixture of bespoke resources and those provided by the EEF were used. Advocacy provider leads also bought the following books: *Teaching Assistant Guide to Effective Interaction* and *Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants Guidance for school leaders and teachers*. Despite an initial delay with access, the EEF RAG audit was used with schools. The acting head teacher lead also shared 'a whole range of resources' based on what they use 'in-house' e.g. resources around timetabling, a simple action plan and a proforma for a learning walk (for enquiry visits). In addition, other participating schools brought resources e.g. materials on effective questioning and a proforma for monitoring the quality of contact between teachers and TAs; advocacy provider leads utilised quality materials within sessions and then shared them more widely across schools.

## Advocacy Provider 2

### Team composition: Background/role

The team is described as being 'collaborative' with a 'project board'. Leading the board was a National Leader for Education (NLE) who is also a school improvement partner, executive head teacher and OFSTED inspector. Their role was to retain a strategic overview, monitor and quality-assure the programme (they did not do any direct delivery with schools). Other members of the board included:

An LA-based learning consultant experienced in delivering school training. Led on workshop delivery.

A NLE. Co-delivered certain workshop sessions with the Learning Consultant.

A senior strategic representative from the LA education services. Presented at the launch conference but their main role was awareness-raising across the authority.

Two teaching school alliances (TSA) were represented across project board members. In addition to the project board members, other Specialist Leaders of Education (SLE) and Local Leaders of Education (LLE) were linked to the project. The learning consultant delivered at every workshop along with one other SLE or LLE.

### Recruitment strategies

The provider adopted a universal approach to recruitment. Intensive efforts were made to make all schools in the area aware of the offer. Examples included emails to all head teachers and proactively ensuring the invitation to be involved was included on various existing meeting agenda items such as head teacher briefings and SENCO networks.

### Target participants

Schools were advised to send two members of staff to each workshop - a senior leader who would be able to 'drive that project forward into school' and a 'key TA well-respected by the other TAs' and who was capable of working 'through the change team' to impact on the other TAs within the school.

### Overview of provision

- Schools were allocated to one of four regional cluster groups for the project.
- The main content of the project was delivered through three half-day hubs.
- Launch event included EEF academic consultant as the keynote speaker.
- Incentive of remuneration if participating schools sent representatives to all the core half-day events and handed in an action plan.
- Seven optional bolt-on training workshops were offered, based around the seven recommendations, that schools could pay to take up. In addition, schools were offered the option to buy in additional training tailored to their own school's circumstances.

### Rationale for design

A relatively contained, core-offer model that was 'manageable' for all schools to engage in. The wider offer of paid workshops provided flexibility for schools unable to release staff and/or that required more intensive or tailored input. The overall design was said to benefit from the quality of the team put together which combined expertise from across teaching schools and the LA.

### Changes to core design and delivery model

Nothing significant reported.

### Resources utilised

A copy of the EEF guidance report was provided to schools at the launch. Schools were provided with a combination of resources throughout the programme, some devised by the advocacy provider and others shared by the EEF. The MITA audit was a key focus of one of the workshop sessions.

### **Advocacy Provider 3**

#### **Team composition: Background/role**

A director of a TSA was the overall project lead, responsible for strategic direction of the project and quality assurance, and said to have 'guarded the evidence'. They worked closely with three head teachers (facilitators) to 'upskill them as facilitators', design the programme, and lead on evaluation.

All three head teachers involved in the programme as facilitators were LLEs/system leaders (not directly linked to the TSA of the project lead) and also led on the TA work within their own school. The lead facilitator was involved in all the face-to-face sessions (supported by one of the other two at each session) and also acted as a best-practice case study school for EEF outside of the project.

Administration support was provided from within the TSA throughout. Two SLEs from the Maths Hub ran two additional sessions for teachers/TAs working together to develop mastery in maths but were not part of the core planning team. The programme was advertised as being run at an institute level as opposed to a teaching school level.

#### **Recruitment strategies**

An open offer was made to all head teachers within the region but the advocacy provider lead was 'not 100% convinced that all' received the information. The LA refused to market the advocacy provision to schools. The advocacy provider was unconvinced about targeting 'poorly performing schools' and had a preference to recruit schools that 'really want to work with this'. Schools were targeted through partner schools of the TSA by emails, Twitter, phone calls and word of mouth, etc. Significantly smaller numbers were recruited than for other models and half were from outside region.

#### **Target participants**

At an early stage, schools were asked to create a 'change team' with a typical composition of a senior leader, teacher, HLTA and a TA. The advocacy provider leads suggested which members of staff attended each of the key sessions run through the programme but schools ultimately decided who they sent to each. Head teachers were also invited to the launch event.

#### **Overview of provision**

- Each school involved recruited a change team of four at the launch event. Typically this consisted of a senior lead, teacher, HLTA and TA. Different combinations of this group were subsequently invited to different components of the programme offer.
- Main feature of offer centred on three full workshop days.
- Two optional twilight sessions; one following on from workshop one on TAs in everyday contexts and the other specifically around interventions.
- Advocacy provider programme augmented by two optional maths mastery sessions (focused on questioning, differentiation, variation, interventions, bar modelling, and a lot of work on questioning) funded through Maths Hub.
- Heavily informed by change management processes - The Bridge Model (Bridges, 1999) was used throughout. Language of 'recruiting a team from each school' also frequently used.
- Schools were asked to form triads for enquiry visits - one school would host and the other two schools would visit. Typically, around eight staff, including TAs, would be part of the visit. In advance, visiting schools developed a question of enquiry.

#### **Rationale for design**

The provision was created as a leadership programme, with a focus on having head teacher and senior leadership endorsement alongside the creation of a wider 'change team' that could lead

change back at school. It used the Bridge model for change all the way through to give 'a shared language about how you implement change successfully'. In addition to the evidence, schools needed the 'processes, the activities, the resources, the systems, the CPD that they could take back and then use with their teachers in school'.

Head teacher facilitators were carefully selected in order to be 'active participants' and 'co-creators'. For example, facilitators conducted audit investigations in their own schools. Schools attending from different regions were seen as a benefit in terms of diversity.

### **Changes to core design and delivery model**

The provider adapted training day two to focus more on what 'great CPD looks like' - activities such as developing lesson study, joint practice development, enquiry-based learning, designing a session to engage all different types of adults. After the launch event and training day one, it was apparent that schools needed assistance on how to 'design and deliver adult learning'.

### **Resources utilised**

The head teacher facilitators trialled various approaches to auditing within their own schools. For example, one head teacher devised questionnaires for TAs/teachers and ran some observations based on the MITA books. A different head teacher facilitator adopted a learning walk process. These approaches were then shared with participating schools. There was initially a delay with accessing the MITA audit (although this was ultimately shared and was a valuable resource).

The programme throughout was heavily informed by the Bridge model and other adult learning processes such as 'buddy group check-ins, world café activities, sorting activities, synthesising activities and sorting walls'. In addition, other collaborative learning activities were utilised where schools could take away a 'process' as well as just materials - examples of this included an experiential learning cycle, the Teacher Development Trust research around CPD and Guskey's model for evaluation of CPD.

## **Advocacy Provider 4**

### **Team composition: Background/role**

Led by a head teacher (formerly a primary education strategy manager for an LA and school improvement partner) and a Higher Education provider outside of the region that provides interventions, training and professional development for schools. They were closely supported by an accredited trainer of the scheme who is also deputy headteacher of a school within the region and who helped design materials and deliver sessions.

In addition, a leader from the learning support service of the LA helped with recruitment, attended all the training sessions and provided some input at the launch event and one of the workshops. An OFSTED-trained independent consultant provided some input on OFSTED and the SEND Code of Practice. Administrative support was provided through the university.

### **Recruitment strategies**

Recruitment was described as being 'very difficult' and this was largely attributed to the lead organisation being from outside the region. Initially the LA was not part of the programme, as they were submitting a different bid to run the same programme, so the relationship was initially difficult. Nevertheless, the advocacy provider lead worked with the LA to get emails sent out to schools with the offer 'flyer'. Additional strategies employed included an email sent out to schools through NCETM and the Maths Hubs and an email sent to all schools that had previously taken up any of the interventions offered through the university. Finally, the criteria for entry were relaxed to allow schools from outside the region to apply.

### **Target participants**

Sessions were aimed at the head teacher and one other person from the senior leadership team. There was no direct mention of a 'change team' being encouraged within school.

### **Overview of provision**

- EEF academic consultant presented at conference launch.
- Main content of the project delivered through three half-day geographically located cluster workshops (each ran at two locations).
- Ran a Review, Evaluate, Discuss and Share (REDS) session at the start of each cluster workshop.
- School leads were allocated a matched learning partner and encouraged to work with that school and to undertake a reciprocal visit.
- Close consultation with schools throughout helped inform programme content particularly the final workshop.
- Based on feedback from schools, extra training was provided for TAs (for an additional cost) as some schools reported they 'didn't feel confident' to do so themselves.

### **Rationale for design**

Review sessions at the beginning of each workshop gave schools an opportunity to share ideas and to reflect. The 'flexible' nature of the programme avoided being overly prescriptive and instead put the head teacher at the forefront of decision-making. There were opportunities for school leaders to shape the emphasis of later sessions and finally the provision of professional development that schools could use back at school.

### **Changes to core design and delivery model**

The intention was to run four cluster groups, but because a lower number of schools was recruited this was revised down to just two cluster groups.

### **Resources utilised**

Utilised a combination of EEF resources and ones made themselves.

The EEF guidance booklet was described as a 'fundamental part of the course'. The RAG audit rating self-evaluation grids were widely used. The advocacy provider team drew heavily on the two books that emerged from the MITA study in the training. Resources designed by the advocacy provider team included a diamond ranking activity around choosing interventions for their own schools, and an 'interventions health check' concerning what to do before the intervention.

## **Advocacy Provider 5**

### **Team composition: Background/role**

The executive head of a TSA within the region with other relevant roles such as being an NLE and OFSTED inspector was the strategic lead for the project. They led on quality assurance providing some 'challenge to facilitators', ensured milestones were delivered on time and monitored engagement with the programme. They did not do any direct delivery at the workshops.

Three facilitators, all working in wider SEN roles throughout the region, planned and facilitated the workshops.

An LA school improvement advisor was part of wider team and helped to raise awareness and engagement across the region and attended planning meetings. Administrative support (day-to-day communication with schools, booking and monitoring) was provided through the TSA.

### **Recruitment strategies**

Distinctive opt-out approach aimed at recruiting all schools in the region. The offer was pitched as 'why wouldn't you want to be involved in something evidence-based'. Close working with LA helped – it allowed the advocacy provider lead to introduce at a head teachers' briefing and for the offer to be circulated through their email list. A further powerful means of recruiting schools was to work with the seven locality leads who directly set about encouraging schools in their locality to get involved. The overall strategy of recruitment was said to have worked well apart from reaching those schools that were not part of existing locality structures.

### **Target participants**

Workshops sessions were aimed at the head teacher and one other person from the senior leadership team. No direct mention of a 'change team' being encouraged within school although the advocacy provider lead did state that participants in the project 'would be leading...change management or doing some training with their teachers or TAs'.

### **Overview of provision**

- The EEF academic consultant and other members of the EEF team presented at the launch event.
- Opt-out approach adopted towards recruitment.
- Locality leads assisted with promoting the offer.
- Programme predominantly delivered by two facilitators with SEN backgrounds at three half-day interactive workshops based on existing locality groups (each half-day workshop delivered to seven localities).
- An allocation of funds was reserved to allow the delivery team to respond and provide additional support to schools 'struggling' to implement changes throughout course of the programme.

### **Rationale for/strengths of design**

The scale at which the advocacy was offered was seen as a strength because it meant that it was quite wide-reaching and that if somebody was unable to attend a session on a given day they could book onto a different workshop as each was repeated seven times.

The programme used facilitators with existing credibility that people recognised, who were actually working in SEN roles within the region, because people were used to engaging with them and they had an established track record and trust among participants.



Finally, having two facilitators for each of the workshops was perceived to be important, as was consciously keeping the workshops rooted in the EEF guidance report and the recommendations because it was 'so good anyway in the way that it was presented'.

### **Changes to core design and delivery model**

Intended enquiry visits (facilitators visiting schools to inform delivery) did not take place. This was partly due to financial limitations resulting from not recruiting quite as many schools as anticipated (programme delivery costs remained the same) and also because of the additional time facilitators needed for planning, responding to issues arising from the first round of workshops and to focus extra time on particular schools 'struggling' to engage.

### **Resources utilised**

The provision made use of key resources that EEF made available (the audit was not available for the first session but was subsequently shared). Facilitators adapted materials, brought in materials from their day jobs (e.g. a grid for different SEN categories of need and provision) and 'created various things just to get people to think really'. Participating schools were also encouraged to share their own materials and resources, for example one school provided a 'really good spreadsheet for tracking interventions'. Post-session, all resources were shared on Google Drive.

## Advocacy Provider 6

### Team composition: Background/role

The programme was led through a TSA based within the region and was co-ordinated by the head of the teaching school. The TSA was responsible for training School Effectiveness Officers (SEOs) on TA facilitation work. SEOs then delivered a TA-specific component as part of pre-existing, half-termly primary regional cluster meetings delivered through the LA education service. SEOs and the TSA worked together to offer an optional primary-focused action planning meeting. Certain headteachers from within the TSA also did some specific work with 'vulnerable schools' to try to keep them engaged throughout the programme.

In the absence of a pre-existing regional cluster meeting structure, the head of the teaching school ran TA-focused secondary cluster meetings. The Regional Excellence Partnership (previously involved in EEF RCTs) fulfilled an advisory role throughout the course of the programme.

Finally, project steering group meetings were scheduled across the duration of the programme and were attended by all key stakeholders to ensure the project was 'kept on track'. The steering group also worked together to apply for additional funding from the LA, to enable the advocacy provider to extend their offer to include optional training.

### Recruitment strategies

Various approaches were employed. The advocacy provider lead, as the head of a well networked TSA, worked with the LA to 'get the message out' in various ways including through cluster meetings and the primary heads association. A financial incentive (£175) was offered for schools to attend the launch event which was part of an existing event (primary heads conference). The Excellence Partnership also sent emails encouraging schools to sign up.

### Target participants

The main programme was aimed at senior leaders (primarily head teachers and SENCOs) but the training offer was aimed at HLTAs/TAs and a teacher. No direct mention of 'change teams' being recommended.

### Overview of provision

- Key feature of the provision was to link the advocacy into pre-existing structures as much as possible.
- Largely devolved model for running the advocacy, run primarily through five pre-existing regionally operating half-termly primary cluster meetings run by School Effectiveness Officers (SEO). TA-related content from the project was then included within the agenda each time.
- No existing secondary school cluster system equivalent so the advocacy provider lead delivered TA-specific sessions.
- SEOs received half-day training by advocacy provider lead focused on the research and EEF recommendations.
- £175 offered to each school that attended an existing teacher conference, where the TA-specific project was launched, to incentivise attendance.
- Advocacy provider lead/SEOs ran optional action-planning workshop for primary schools.
- Additional funds set aside to allow mixture of heads within the TSA and advocacy provider lead/SEOs to do some targeted work with a small number of schools for which difficulties emerged during the course of the project and that were at risk of not being able to remain engaged with the project and meet the needs of disadvantaged children.

- Through consultation and analysis of school action plans, it was clear that TAs required more 'training to support them being more effective in the classroom'. The advocacy provider response to this was to work with the cluster groups to submit an application for additional funding to the regional partnership board. This was successful and permitted the advocacy provider to run the three courses - one that covered pedagogical training/ building independence skills, aimed at TAs and teachers, and then two others based on English and maths subject knowledge, aimed just at TAs.
- Identified three champion schools (with excellent Pupil Premium data) judged to be displaying effective practice with their TAs. A total of seven days were put on, with participant schools invited to send a head teacher and a HLTA.

### Rationale for/strengths of design

Being run through the teaching school meant that the advocacy provider lead had dedicated time to protect for the work, without needing to 'teach classes', thus allowing them to be responsive to participants' needs. The model benefited from not having an additional layer of meetings. Mapping on to existing structures boosted attendance as did offering schools a financial incentive for attending the launch event.

### Changes to core design and delivery model

Nothing significant reported.

### Resources utilised

Resources were all sent out to SEOs before EEF disseminated all their central materials. There was disappointment that the online audit not ready in time. The advocacy provider lead bought one of the books from the MITA study, and used the paper-based audit and action plan in the back of that. Schools shared a lot of materials. The advocacy provider lead sought out subject-specific teaching materials from sources such as NCETM.

## **Advocacy Provider 8**

### **Team composition: Background/role**

Provision was jointly run through a regionally based TSA and the LA. The core team comprised three head teachers all of whom were also LLEs and a lead for SEND and vulnerable pupils from the LA. One of the head teachers was also a lead facilitator on the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL) for the TSA. The business manager from the teaching school fulfilled the role of project manager.

The head teacher nominated to lead the programme was mainly selected due to also being a senior school improvement officer part-time within the LA, meaning they were best placed to fulfil 'a bridging role' between the TSA and LA. Aside from the project manager, all core members of the advocacy provider team were involved in every face-to-face workshop but certain individuals led on each EEF recommendation.

### **Recruitment strategies**

The provider initially adopted a universal offer inviting all schools in the region to be involved via email/letter which was also presented at the regional leadership conference (most schools signed up there). In addition, the LA and school improvement partners targeted particular schools and encouraged them to sign up.

### **Target participants**

The programme was aimed at head teachers and the member of staff with strategic responsibility for TA deployment and development. Schools were directly encouraged to set up a 'change team' back at their own school, to include a strategic lead for TAs, teacher and support staff.

### **Overview of provision**

- Model of delivery was heavily informed by advocacy provider 3 – with a big emphasis on change management processes.
- Main delivery was in the form of three full-day workshop events.
- Head teachers from the delivery team also led on the project back in their own schools which meant they could draw upon their own experiences also.
- Significant involvement within the workshop events from participating schools invited to deliver showcases of 'pockets of expertise'.

### **Rationale for/strengths of design**

Credibility of the delivery team assembled from across the TA and LA was perceived to be a significant strength. An additionally strong feature was that head teacher members of the advocacy provider team involved in planning and facilitation were also taking part in the project with their own schools - something that gave the programme added credibility.

The advocacy provider team sought other senior leaders from participating schools to share examples of good practice formally by way of case study presentations at different workshops.

The scale of buy-in from schools helped to facilitate sharing of good practice and networking. Only one primary teaching school in region with very high membership (many buy in as associate members) helped this sense of collegiality. Emphasis throughout was placed on change leadership process development training, 'within the context of making best use of teaching assistants, not the other way round'.

**Changes to core design and delivery model**

Nothing significant reported.

**Resources utilised**

Owing to this advocacy provider starting their programme later than others, all EEF materials were available. The MITA audit was used, and various templates as well as the RAG rating resource. The provider bought other publications and books recommended by EEF to inform thinking, such as the MITA books.

EEF resources were complemented by material used in other training the advocacy provider leads had run, for example various leadership tools.

## Appendix 2: Interview foci

### Advocacy provider interviews

The initial interviews focused on:

- The key features of the proposed advocacy model and the underpinning rationale.
- Supporting resources.
- Composition, organisation and motivations of the advocacy delivery team.
- The team's experiences of being recruited to the campaign.
- Strategies for recruiting schools and target participants.
- Intended outcomes.
- Expected enablers and barriers.
- Plans for monitoring and evaluation.
- Early experiences of working with EEF.

The end-of-campaign interviews explored:

- How the advocacy activity had been implemented.
- Any changes to initial plans or the delivery team and reasons for those changes.
- Use of the EEF guidance and other resources.
- Perceptions of outcomes and any evidence to support these claims.
- Enablers and barriers to achieving successful outcomes.
- Support from, and relationship with, EEF.
- Reflections on the effectiveness of the recruitment strategies and the model and strategies adopted.
- Future plans for further scale-up advocacy.

## Appendix 3: Information sheet and consent forms

**Sheffield  
Hallam  
University**

**Sheffield  
Institute  
of Education**



Education  
Endowment  
Foundation

### Information Sheet: Scale-up campaign: Improving the impact of teaching assistants (TAs)

#### Background

The Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) has launched a campaign to engage schools with research evidence on the most effective ways of deploying TAs. The evaluation, being conducted by the Sheffield Institute of Education (SIOE) at Sheffield Hallam University and the Institute for Fiscal Studies, will measure the effectiveness of the campaign and explore the mechanisms that lead to schools using the evidence to improve outcomes for pupils.

#### The EEF Scale-up Campaign

There are three components:

1. A guidance report summarising the research evidence and offering guidance on TA deployment, training and integration with classroom teaching, which has been sent to all schools in England.
2. Advocacy support, such as events, workshops and school to school support, offered to primary schools across South and West Yorkshire. This focuses on enabling schools to implement the guidance.
3. Trials of interventions in schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils within South and West Yorkshire and elsewhere.

#### The impact evaluation

Experimental methods will be used to assess the impact of offering different kinds of small-scale incentives on schools' engagement with the guidance information. A non-experimental synthetic control analysis will be used to evaluate the impact on pupil attainment of the advocacy support provided to primary schools in South and West Yorkshire.

The cost-effectiveness of the campaign will also be assessed.

#### The implementation and process evaluation

The implementation and process evaluation focuses on the campaign in South and West Yorkshire, examining how the campaign interventions, particularly the advocacy support, lead to changes in the deployment of TAs and the factors that enable and/or inhibit these changes. Data will be collected through:

- **Pre- and post-campaign surveys** of head teachers in all primary schools in South and West Yorkshire and a post-test survey of a control group matched to the schools that participated in the advocacy offer, from outside of South and West Yorkshire. The surveys will particularly focus on how schools are deploying and training TAs and the views of the advocacy provision from schools that engaged with the offer.

- **Analysis of monitoring data** collected by advocacy providers will be undertaken to measure reach and engagement with the advocacy provision.
- **School case studies** will be undertaken in fifteen schools to gain an in depth understanding of how the campaign interventions operate in practice, and the factors that influence whether or not the campaign leads to changes in the deployment of TAs, their training and integration of their work with classroom teaching. The case studies will comprise interviews with school leaders, teachers and TAs and analysis of school documents.
- **Telephone interviews with advocacy providers** will be conducted at the beginning of the campaign to identify the approaches being taken to engage schools and mobilise evidence on TA deployment. Follow up interviews, in the Autumn term 2016 will focus on school engagement and how the advocacy intervention operated in practice.

### **Research outputs**

The evaluation report will be published on the EEF website and the findings may also be disseminated at educational research conferences and in academic or professional journals. No individuals or schools will be named in reporting, however organisations providing advocacy may be named.

### **Data protection**

All data is held securely and in accordance with data protection legislation. Fully anonymised data sets may be made available to other researchers through secure data repositories.

For more information about the project please refer to the full research protocol. [https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Campaigns/Campaigns\\_TA\\_Campaign\\_Protocol\\_FINAL.pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Campaigns/Campaigns_TA_Campaign_Protocol_FINAL.pdf)

### **If you require any further information please contact:**

Ben Willis (Project Manager) Email: [b.willis@shu.ac.uk](mailto:b.willis@shu.ac.uk)  
Sheffield Institute of Education  
Sheffield Hallam University  
Centre for Development and Research in Education (CDARE)  
Arundel 10101  
Sheffield S1 1WB  
Tel: 0114 225 6059



**Participant consent form**

**Sheffield  
Hallam  
University**

Centre for  
Education and  
Inclusion Research



Education  
Endowment  
Foundation

**Research project: EEF Scale-up Campaign: Improving the impact of teaching assistants**

**To be completed by the participant:**

Have you received information on the study? **Yes/No**

Have you been able to ask questions about this study? **Yes/No**

Have you received answers to all your questions? **Yes/No**

I understand that I will be required to provide monitoring data to for the evaluation **Yes/No**

I understand that individual names will be anonymised in any reports/publications but the name of advocacy delivery partners may be used in reporting **Yes/No**

I understand that fully anonymised data may be shared with other researchers using secure data repositories **Yes/No**

Do you agree to take part in this study? **Yes/No**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Name (Block Letters):**

**Name of advocacy group represented:**

**Name of researcher taking consent:**

## Headteacher (opt-out) consent form



### Improving the impact of teaching assistants evaluation: Permission to receive routine monitoring data

Dear Headteacher/senior leader,

The Centre for Education and Inclusion Research at Sheffield Hallam University has been commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to evaluate their campaign to improve the deployment of Teaching Assistants (TAs). We are writing to you to request permission for the EEF and/or the Advocacy Provider your school is working with, to share with us, basic monitoring data that they will be collecting from you during the project.

#### **What monitoring data would we like to receive?**

Specifically, we would like to be provided with attendance data including full names and job titles for any events/sessions run through the advocacy provider that you, or a member of your staff attends, (i.e. inception meetings, workshops, training events, plenary sessions etc). In addition we would like to receive the names/job titles of any individuals formally assigned to the advocacy programme - the exact nature of this will vary by region, but may include things like the composition of any change teams or project leads etc.

#### **Why are we requesting this information?**

By receiving accurate monitoring data we can begin to develop a more thorough understanding of the effectiveness of the advocacy campaign. We are requesting the names and roles of participants so that we can track engagement over time.

We will also use the data to help us identify a range of schools to include in our case study visits in the Autumn term 2016. If you are selected we will contact you then to ask if you are willing for your school to participate in the case study research.

#### **How would this information be used?**

The data collected in this project will be used to inform reports and publications about the project. No individual or school will be identified and all data would be stored securely to ensure compliance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. We will be looking for patterns in the data and not examining attendance at an individual school level.

#### **How can I get more information about this evaluation?**

In the first instance please refer to both the attached overview of the process and implementation evaluation and the full research protocol. In addition please feel free to contact me directly.

#### **What do I do now?**

If you are happy for EEF and/or the advocacy provider your school is working with to provide us with attendance data as described above you do not need to do anything - we will take this to mean you have consented to having the data shared. If however, you do not wish to provide your consent, please can you sign and return the **Opt-Out** consent form (see below) and return to the address specified by **Wednesday 10th February 2016**.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Kind regards

Ben

Ben Willis

Research Fellow

Centre for Education and Inclusion Research

Sheffield Hallam University

Unit 7 Science Park Howard Street

Sheffield S1 1WB

Tel: 0114 2256059

Email: b.willis@shu.ac.uk

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**Please return this slip to the following postal address: FAO Ben Willis: Centre for Education and Inclusion Research, Sheffield Hallam University, Unit 7 Science Park Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WB**

**I do not give** my permission for the EEF and/or the advocacy provider my school is working with to share data on my school's attendance in the project with Sheffield Hallam University.

Headteacher/senior leader: .....

School name: .....


Signed: .....

Date: .....

## Appendix 4: Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants: Seven recommendations summary

### Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants – Recommendations Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN EVERYDAY CLASSROOM CONTEXTS				RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN DELIVERING STRUCTURED INTERVENTIONS OUT OF CLASS		RECOMMENDATIONS ON LINKING LEARNING FROM WORK LED BY TEACHERS AND TAs
<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>VII</b>
<p><b>TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low-attaining pupils</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Schools should try and organise staff so that the pupils who struggle most have as much time with the teacher as others. Breaking away from a model of deployment where TAs are assigned to specific pupils for long periods requires more strategic approaches to classroom organisation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Creativity 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.</p> <p>During lesson preparation time ensure TAs have the essential 'need to know's':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concepts, facts, information being taught</li> <li>• Skills to be learned, applied, practised or extended</li> <li>• Intended learning outcomes</li> <li>• Expected/required feedback.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Use TAs to deliver high-quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction</b></p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sessions are often brief (20–50mins), 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</li> <li>• TAs receive extensive training from experienced trainers and/or teachers (5–30 hours per intervention)</li> <li>• The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear objectives</li> <li>• TAs closely follow the plan and structure of the intervention</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Connections are made between the out-of-class learning in the intervention and classroom teaching (see Recommendation vii).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions</b></p> <p>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.</p>



## Appendix 5: Additional EEF activity to promote the Guidance

The EEF Guidance on Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants was widely promoted nationally during the period that the campaign in S&W Yorkshire was being delivered. Key activities and outcomes were:

### Communications to schools and stakeholders

Hard copies to all schools nationally (using Raise Online database). 3000 extra printed due to demand – June 15.

An email from the Chief Executive of EEF to schools nationally – July 15.

Letter from Chief Executive of EEF to all Local Authorities – June 15.

Letter from Chief Executive of EEF to key EEF contacts and national stakeholders – June 15.

Strategic lead - blog on TA-led interventions – Mar 16.

A range of organisations publicised the EEF guidance to their schools and associates, including: Challenge Partners, Achievement for All, The Key, Unison, National Education Trust, Cornwall LA, Berkshire LA (hard copies to all SENCOs) – Summer/Autumn 15.

50+ presentations by the strategic lead, academic consultant and other EEF colleagues at events for schools (e.g. EEF events, The Key, Optimus, Osiris, Derbyshire LA, Suffolk LA, MITA events) – ongoing.

~ 500 schools signed up for the MBUTA online course with the TES.

International policy presentations - OECD, EU, What Works Global Summit, Australia federal and state.

NFER Omnibus Survey data suggests ~70% heads were aware of the EEF guidance (~40% read it, ~15% acted on it) – Nov 15.

Dedicated campaign web pages on EEF website: 94580 unique page views of the EEF guidance report since it was launched, and 38851 between Feb 15 and Dec 16.

### Press/media

Press release for the publication of the EEF guidance report – Mar 15.

Press releases for publication of evaluation reports for TA-led interventions (e.g. ABRA, Catch Up) – ongoing through 15/16.

Articles on the TA guidance, including: TES (twice – one article accessed 6000 times on first day), The Economist, Radio 4 Today Programme, Education Business, National Governors' Association magazine – ongoing through 15/16.

### Policy

Reference in National Audit Office review on Pupil Premium spending – June 15.

Reference in policy briefings to No.10 and HM Treasury.

Reference in Unison materials – Summer 16.

New Zealand government using the EEF guidance in their support for schools. <http://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/teacher-aide-practice/>

## Appendix 6 Survey school characteristics

Participants were mostly maintained schools (79%), which is above the average for both S&W Yorkshire population (72%) and England overall (67%) (Table 39). There was some variation between providers with regard to school type, for example 30% of the schools engaged by AP5 are academies, compared to only 6% for AP2.

**Table 39: School type by advocacy provider**

Type of school/ college	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All Sample %	England	S&W Yorkshire
Missing data	0	2.1	0	3.8	0	0	0	7		0.8
Academy	9.7	6.4	25.9	19.2	29.8	29.3	18.6	20.2	20.9	27.0
Maintained school	90.3	89.4	74.1	76.9	70.2	70.7	81.4	78.7	67.2	72.2
Special school	0	2.1	0	0	0	0	0	4	4.7	0.0
<b>N</b>	31	47	27	26	57	41	43	272	20893	1139

Source: SHU survey/DfE school comparison data, primary schools only. Some of the S&W Yorkshire schools did not have data available in the DfE schools comparison dataset. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider

Participating schools were larger (mean = 335 pupils) than the regional (327 pupils) and national (275 pupils) averages. The sample had slightly fewer children with SEN support, and EAL. The percentage of pupils eligible for FSM in the past six years is consistent with the regional population average but slightly lower than for England overall. The OFSTED ratings of schools in the achieved sample were very similar to averages from S&W Yorkshire and England overall (1 = outstanding, 2 = good, 3 = requires improvement, 4 = inadequate) (Table 40)..

AP1 engaged larger schools than other providers, with the mean number of pupils being 407 compared with 281 for AP6.

There was also variation in terms of the percentage of pupils eligible for SEN support, ranging from 9% (AP2) to 13% (AP4, AP5, AP6). It is perhaps more noteworthy that all non-participating schools had a slightly higher percentage of SEN pupils than all advocacy providers (14%). While this is above the S&W Yorkshire population mean (12%), it is consistent with England overall (also 14%).

Advocacy providers also engaged schools with varying proportions of pupils who speak English not as their first language. For AP6 schools, only 10% of pupils on average were EAL (well below regional and national averages), compared with 24% for AP2 (higher than the population mean for both S&W Yorkshire and England).

The sample of participating schools had the same sample overall mean percentage of pupils eligible for FSM in the past six years as both the overall mean for non-participating schools and the regional average (28%), which is lower than the national average (32%). Variation between providers on this measure should also be acknowledged. Schools engaged with AP4 and AP8 both have 34% of pupils eligible for FSM in the past six years, whereas for AP2 and AP3 the figure is only 24%.

**Table 40: School characteristics by advocacy provider**

<b>Advocacy provider</b>	<b>Total number of pupils (including part-time pupils)</b>	<b>% eligible pupils with SEN support</b>	<b>% pupils English not as first language</b>	<b>% pupils eligible for FSM past 6 years</b>	<b>OFSTED rating</b>
<b>AP1</b>	406.8	12.0	17.0	32.2	1.94
<b>AP2</b>	335.6	8.7	24.1	23.7	1.91
<b>AP3</b>	303.1	9.9	10.9	24.3	2
<b>AP4</b>	344.5	13.4	21.4	33.8	2
<b>AP5</b>	366.4	13.2	19.0	26.6	1.98
<b>AP6</b>	281.7	13.4	9.9	26.2	1.85
<b>AP8</b>	306.9	11.4	13.0	33.7	2
<b>Sample total</b>	335.5	11.7	16.7	28.3	1.95
<b>Non-participants</b>	324.6	14.0	15.5	28.1	2.02
<b>S&amp;W Yorkshire population</b>	327.0	12.4	17.8	28.3	1.97
<b>England</b>	275.0	14.0	19.0	32.0	1.91

Source: DfE school comparison data, OFSTED data

Table 41 shows school attainment. KS1 average points scores vary slightly between advocacy providers but are broadly in line with regional average and only marginally below the national figure.

The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading for schools in the achieved sample (48%) is just below S&W Yorkshire population mean (50%) but considerably lower than England overall (66%). The mean for AP1, 42%, is ten percentage points lower than for AP5, demonstrating variation between providers.

For spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG), the sample performs slightly less well than S&W Yorkshire overall (68% of pupils attaining expected standard, compared to 70%), which is in turn slightly below national average (73% of pupils reaching expected standard). This pattern is replicated across the other two areas of attainment presented here: maths and writing. There is variation between providers on these measures. For instance, AP1 performs below average on all four areas.

**Table 41: School attainment by advocacy provider**

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Cohort level KS1 average points score</b>	<b>% pupils reaching expected standard in reading</b>	<b>% pupils reaching expected standard in SPAG</b>	<b>% pupils reaching expected standard in maths</b>	<b>% pupils reaching expected standard in writing</b>
<b>AP1</b>	14.92	42	67	63	67
<b>AP2</b>	15.26	48	66	65	68
<b>AP3</b>	15.48	51	68	67	74
<b>AP4</b>	14.85	49	72	72	77
<b>AP5</b>	15.16	52	70	70	74
<b>AP6</b>	15.71	47	68	65	59
<b>AP8</b>	15.23	45	65	63	72
<b>Participants</b>	15.25	48	68	66	70
<b>Non-participants</b>	15.01	49	67	65	70
<b>S&amp;W Yorkshire population</b>	15.20	50	70	68	72
<b>England</b>	15.60	66	73	70	74

Source: DfE school comparison data, OFSTED data



## Appendix 7: Propensity score matching

Table 42: School-level comparison of two TA samples - sample on survey respondent profile data file

	126 matched contrast comparison schools	231 S&W Yorkshire Schools
	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)
% eligible girls on school roll at time of tests 1415	49.0 (8.57)	49.4 (9.04)
Percentage of key stage 2 disadvantaged 1415	36.8 (21.59)	31.7 (20.31)
% eligible pupils with English not as first language 1415	16.2 (24.96)	13.5 (18.06)
% eligible pupils classified as non-mobile 1415	93.3 (5.36)	92.9 (7.24)
% eligible pupils with SEN (Special Educational Needs) statements 1415	2.0 (2.93)	2.4 (3.6)
% pupils achieving level 5 or above in GPS test 1314&1415	50.5 (13.12)	51.0 (14.71)
% pupils achieving level 5 or above in maths test 1314&1415	39.5 (13.79)	38.9 (13.25)
Average point score 1314&1415	28.5 (1.52)	28.7 (1.48)
Cohort level key stage 1 average points score 1314&1415	14.9 (1.26)	15.2 (1.08)

Source: DfE school comparison data.

Logistic Regression model used to match 231 S&W Yorkshire primary schools to 10 other schools.

SPSS SYNTAX used:

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION pctread5 with PGELIG.1415 PTFSMCLA.1415 PTEALGRP2.1415
PTMOBN.1415 PSENELST.1415
PTGPSAX PTMATAX TAPS TKS1APS
/SAVE BaselineD
/PRINT=ITER(1) CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

## Appendix 8: Data tables on school TA guidance and appraisal policy

**Table 43: Does your school have written and up-to-date guidance or a policy on TA deployment? S&W Yorkshire baseline vs post-campaign**

Q3	Baseline %	Post-campaign %
Yes	25.1	54.5
No	74.9	45.5
N	191	191

Source: SHU S&W Yorkshire pre- and post-campaign surveys. Base: all S&W Yorkshire respondents that self-reported that they participated in the advocacy. Chi-square = 34.266, df = 1, p<.001.

**Table 44: Do TAs receive appraisal or review as part of the annual performance management cycle? S&W Yorkshire baseline vs post-campaign**

Q6	Baseline %	Post-campaign %
Yes for all	84.6	90.1
Yes for some	8.7	5.7
No	6.7	4.2
N	195	192

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire survey respondents. Chi-square = 2.642, df = 2, ns

**Table 45: TAs appraisal, S&W Yorkshire participating schools vs comparison sample**

Q6	S&W Yorkshire %	Comparison %
Yes for all	88.1	95.8
Yes for some	7.0	2.5
No	4.8	1.7
N	270	120

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire respondents that self-reported that they participated in the advocacy and comparison schools. Chi-square = 55.714, df = 2, ns

**Table 46: TAs appraisal by advocacy provider**

Q6	AP1 %	AP2 %	AP3 %	AP4 %	AP5 %	AP6 %	AP8 %	All %
Yes for all	96.8	91.5	81.5	88.0	86.0	90.0	83.7	88.1
Yes for some	0.0	4.3	11.1	8.0	7.0	7.5	11.6	7.0
No	3.2	4.3	7.4	4.0	7.0	2.5	4.7	4.8
N	31	47	27	25	57	40	43	270

Source: SHU survey. Base: all S&W Yorkshire survey respondents that self-reported that they participated in the advocacy. Chi-square = 6.894, df = 12, ns. Column percentages relate to the percentage of schools engaged with each advocacy provider.

## Appendix 9: Post-campaign survey



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### Evaluation of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching Assistant campaign in South and West Yorkshire: Headteacher/Senior Leader Survey

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In September 2015 your school received a questionnaire on the deployment of Teaching Assistants. This follow up survey aims to understand if your deployment of TAs has changed over the last year.

You may be aware that over the past year the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) working with regionally based partners launched a campaign across South and West Yorkshire to help schools implement evidence-based guidance on deploying TAs. Schools will have been involved with this campaign to varying extents but we are very keen that all schools respond to the survey. By filling in this survey you will be giving us a valuable picture of how TAs are currently being used in primary schools.

For the surveys, we use the term Teaching Assistant (TA) to include any staff whose main role is to directly support students' learning in classroom settings and/or outside the classroom.

The study is being undertaken by the Sheffield Institute of Education at Sheffield Hallam University and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. By completing the survey, you are giving your consent for us to use the data for research purposes. All data will be treated confidentially and will be fully anonymised in any publication arising from the research. All data will be stored securely on a password protected server at Sheffield Hallam University. No individual or school will be identifiable in any publication.

The survey should take around 15 minutes to complete. We would be grateful if you could complete this by **21st October 2016**. **It is very important to note** that the survey should be completed by the **Head teacher** or designated **Senior Leader** (Deputy or Assistant Head teacher) responsible for TA deployment in the school.

Alternatively you can complete the survey online via the following link:  
<http://research.shu.ac.uk/ceir/ta.html>

If you have any questions about this survey, or about the wider project, please direct them to:

Ben Willis, Project Manager Email: [dsteachingassistants@shu.ac.uk](mailto:dsteachingassistants@shu.ac.uk)

A. About you and your school

1. Please let us know the name and postcode of your school so that we can target any survey reminders. Responses will be analysed collectively and no individual or school will be identifiable in any publication.

1a. School name

1b. School postcode

2. Your role in the school:

- Head teacher
- Other senior leader
- Other (please pass this on to the Head teacher or Senior leader for completion)

B. Strategic leadership of TAs in your school

3. Does your school have written and up-to-date guidance or a policy on TA deployment?

- Yes
- No

4. Who leads the strategy for deployment of TAs in your school? (please tick one answer only)

- Head teacher
- SENCO
- Other senior leader
- Other (please specify)

5. Has the school reviewed its deployment of TAs within the last two years? (please tick one answer only)

- Yes, being undertaken currently
- Yes, in the past 6 months
- Yes between 6 months and 2 years ago

- No, but we intend to do so in the next academic year
- No we have no immediate intentions to do so

6. Do TAs receive appraisal or review as part of the annual performance management cycle? (please tick one answer only)

- Yes for all
- Yes for some
- No

7. How many TAs do each of the following staff line manage in your school? (please place a tick in each row)

	All TAs	Some TAs	No TAs
Head teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other senior leader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SENCO	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HLTA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input style="width: 400px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>			

C. TA deployment in the classroom

8. When TAs are providing direct teaching support in the classroom, how often, on average, do they work in the following roles:

	Very frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost never	Never	Don't know
Leading the teaching of the whole class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the teacher in their whole class delivery e.g. at whiteboard, demonstrating using equipment, roving round the class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching specific pupils or small groups of pupils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. When your TAs are working in the classroom with pupils in a direct teaching role, how often, on average, do they work with the following pupil groups?

	Very frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost never	Never	Don't know
Pupils with SEND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lower attaining pupils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Higher attaining pupils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Average attaining pupils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pupils eligible for Free School Meals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other pupils (i.e. those not in the groups above)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text"/>						

10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs are informed of the concepts, information and skills being taught by the teacher in lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs often teach specific pupils different content from the rest of the class during lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs ensure that pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers deploy TAs during lessons to respond to 'real-time' needs of pupils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers spend at least as much time working with lower-attaining pupils as other pupils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers and TAs have a precise and shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs interactions tend to focus on completing a task with pupils rather than encouraging independent learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs understand how to scaffold learning, for example by allowing pupils time to ask questions before providing help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

D. TAs delivering interventions in your school

By interventions we refer to targeted, structured interventions delivered by TAs outside of class lessons, with pupils in one to one or small group sessions.

11. Do TAs deliver such interventions in your school?

- Yes
- No (please go to Q15)

12. Please name up to 3 interventions delivered by your TAs, (e.g. "First Class at Number", "Read It Write It")

13. Tick which member of staff has overall responsibility for the following tasks in relation to interventions (please tick all that apply):

	Head teacher/ Senior leader	SENCO	Middle leader	Teacher	TA	Someone else	Don't know
Who chooses the intervention programme?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Who plans and prepares the intervention sessions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Who assesses the work completed in intervention sessions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/ development per intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interventions occur regularly (around 3-5 times per week)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interventions are sustained over time (around 8 to 20 weeks)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



E. Training

15. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

F. Support with implementation

16. Did your school participate in any events and/or support designed to help you implement the EEF guidance 'Making Best Use of TAs' run by any of the following organisations? If yes please indicate which organisation below, if no please select the final option below:

AP1 <sup>8</sup> (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
AP2 (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
AP3 (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
AP4 (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
AP5 (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
AP6 (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
AP8 (please go to q17)	<input type="radio"/>
Our school did not participate in any such events/support (please go to q22)	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>8</sup> Advocacy provider names have been removed in this question to protect anonymity

17. To what extent did your school (i.e. at least one representative) attend the events (e.g. training days/workshops/final conference) on offer?

Attended launch event only

Attended some of the events on offer

Attended most of the events on offer

Attended all of the events on offer

18. To what extent, if any, did participation in the events and/or support lead to your school making changes to how you deploy TAs?

The changes we made to TA deployment were entirely or mostly due to our participation

The changes we made to TA deployment were somewhat influenced by our participation

The changes we made to TA deployment this year would have happened anyway

We did not make any changes to TA deployment

19. Overall how would you rate the quality of:

	Very high	High	Unsure	Low	Very low	NA
The launch event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The workshops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The final conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other activities/support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20a. Which aspects of the programme did you find most helpful and why?

20b. Which aspects of the programme did you find least helpful and why?

21. Did participating in this programme lead your school to apply to take part in one or more of the following EEF RCTs of TA led interventions (Catch Up Numeracy, 1stClass@Number, Switch-on Reading, Improving Working Memory)? (please go to q26 after you have answered this question)

Participation in the programme led me to apply for a trial

We applied for a trial but the programme had little influence on our decision

We were aware of the opportunity but did not apply

I was unaware of the opportunity to apply for a trial

Unsure/NA

22. Please indicate why you did not participate in any events and/or support:

Was not aware

Not a school priority

Already effectively deploy TAs

No capacity to release staff to take part

Other (Please specify)

F. Finally...

23. Have you read the Education Endowment Foundation report 'Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants'?

- Yes, read the guidance
- Aware of the guidance but have not read it
- Not aware of the guidance

24. Has the guidance report or any other research evidence led you to make changes in the way you deploy TAs?

- Yes  No

25. If yes, what changes did you make?

26. Do you have any final comments to make?

## Appendix 10: Attendance data by outcomes

Table 47: TA deployment and practice, by campaign activity attendance

	Low (<25%)	Medium (25-74%)	High (75%+)	All
<b>8. When TAs are providing direct teaching support in the classroom, how often, on average, do they work in the following roles? (1 = Very frequently, 5 = Never)</b>				
Leading the teaching of the whole class	3.54	3.14	3.30	3.31
Supporting the teacher in their whole class delivery e.g. at whiteboard, demonstrating using equipment, roving round the class	2.04	1.82	1.98	1.97
Teaching specific pupils or small groups of pupils (reversed)	4.44	4.50	4.50	4.49
<b>9. When your TAs are working in the classroom with pupils in a direct teaching role, how often, on average, do they work with the following pupil groups? (1 = Never, 5=Very frequently)*</b>				
Pupils with SEND (reversed)	3.85	4.16	4.08	3.85
Lower attaining pupils (reversed)	3.85	4.00	3.99	3.85
Higher attaining pupils (reversed)	3.70	3.56	3.63	3.70
Average attaining pupils (reversed)	3.60	3.67	3.67	3.60
Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (reversed)	3.75	4.05	3.92	3.75
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>				
TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class	1.96	1.68	1.82	1.82
TAs often teach specific pupils different content from the rest of the class during lessons	3.12	3.14	3.22	3.20
TAs ensure that pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work	1.83	2.14	2.11	2.09
TAs interactions tend to focus on completing a task with pupils rather than encouraging independent learning	2.32	2.32	2.38	2.37
TAs understand how to scaffold learning, for example by allowing pupils time to ask questions before providing help	1.96	1.91	2.15	2.11
Teachers deploy TAs during lessons to respond to 'real-time' needs of pupils	1.68	1.95	1.90	1.88
Teachers spend at least as much time working with lower-attaining pupils as other pupils	4.04	3.77	3.89	3.89
Teachers and TAs have a precise and shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives	2.08	1.95	1.93	1.95

Source: SHU survey/ advocacy provider attendance data. . \* These labels have been reversed from the original survey to aid interpretation here.

Table 48: TA/teacher communication, by campaign activity attendance

	Low (<25%)	Medium (25-74%)	High (75%+)	All
<b>10. For each of the areas below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about TAs and teachers in your school: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>				
TAs are informed of the concepts, information and skills being taught by the teacher in lessons	2.00	1.50	1.82	1.81
There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons	2.56	2.36	2.42	2.43
There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons	1.88	2.23	2.11	2.10
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>				
There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions	2.28	2.65	2.61	2.58

Source: SHU survey/ advocacy provider attendance data

Table 49: Interventions, by campaign activity attendance

	Low (<25%)	Medium (25-74%)	High (75%+)	All
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>				
Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources	2.24	2.00	2.02	2.04
Interventions are sustained over time (around 8 to 20 weeks)	1.84	2.00	1.84	1.85
Interventions occur regularly (around 3-5 times per week)	1.88	2.16	1.81	1.84

Source: SHU survey/ advocacy provider attendance data

Table 50: Training, by campaign activity attendance

	Low (<25%)	Medium (25-74%)	High (75%+)	All
<b>14. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>				
TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/ development per intervention	2.36	2.55	2.53	2.51
<b>15. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)</b>				
Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work	2.29	2.62	2.51	2.50
TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers (reversed)	2.42	2.86	2.39	2.43
TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with	2.08	2.00	2.03	2.03
Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively (reversed)	2.71	2.71	2.55	2.58

Source: SHU survey/ advocacy provider attendance data

## Appendix 11: Factor analysis of post-campaign outcomes

Exploratory factor analysis was performed in SPSS using the 26 survey items in Findings section 3. Principal Axis Factoring was used, as opposed to Principal Components Analysis, which strictly speaking is not factor analysis (Costello and Osbourne, 2005). The post-campaign sample was used, as the survey content was amended slightly following feedback on the baseline version. This sample includes respondents from the comparison group, to increase sample size.

The value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test for sampling adequacy (.875) from this first factor analysis was well above the acceptable threshold of 0.5 (Kaiser, 1974; Childs, 1970), but the determinant score of the correlation matrix was zero, indicating multicollinearity. The solution is to remove one or more variables that correlate highly with other variables, and variables with many correlations where significance is below 0.05 should be dropped.

Removing three of the four variables which relate to TAs spending their time with particular pupil groups (Q9\_1, Q9\_2, Q9\_5, which refer to low-attaining, SEND and FSM pupils) but retaining Q8\_3, 'How often do TAs teach specific pupils or small groups of pupils' raised the determinant value above the 'acceptable' 0.0001 level. We therefore excluded those three variables from the analyses.

Running the analysis again produced a more muddled picture when interpreting the pattern matrix, which, applying the threshold of .32, contained two factors comprising only two variables each, and one factor with nine variables (see Table 68 below). There are six factors with eigenvalues of one or above (Kaiser's criterion for retaining factors, see Figure 4 below), but the pattern matrix does not make sense in relation to all of the six recommendation scales.

We began by using oblique (specifically, oblimin) rotation on the assumption that a single latent variable of 'good practice' may exist, and that as a result the factors extracted could be expected to correlate. We also repeated the analysis using orthogonal (varimax) rotation. The logic of using an orthogonal approach would be that the recommendation scales are distinct from one another. In general, it makes little difference with analyses incorporating enough variables and stable factors with relatively high loadings (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1983, p.404), but for this data it seemed to be worth trying both.

The factor analysis was run without specifying a set number of factors to extract and still yielded six factors with eigenvalues of one or above. This of course makes sense given that we are using six scales based on the seven EEF recommendations. However, the difference in eigenvalues between the first (6.717, 29% of variance explained) and second largest (1.652, 7% of variance explained) suggests that six factors may not be the optimum solution.

A further problem with this six factor solution is that the six extracted here do not correspond with the six scales that were previously being used. This led us to look for other solutions that might make sense empirically or theoretically.

Figure 4: Scree plot, first exploratory factor analysis, number of factors unspecified

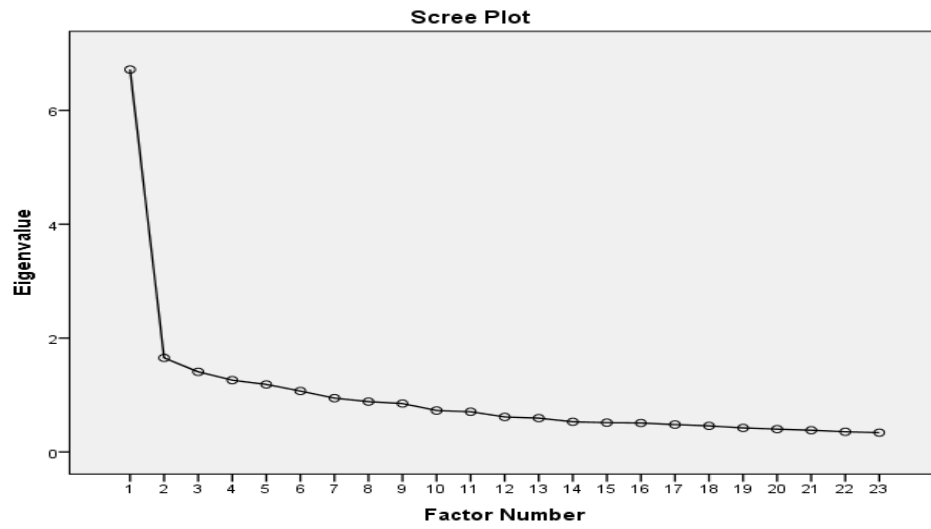




Table 51: Factor analysis, item loadings

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.TAs ensure that pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work	0.74					
10.TAs understand how to scaffold learning, for example by allowing pupils time to ask questions before providing help	0.70					
10. Teachers and TAs have a precise and shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives	0.64					
10. Teachers spend at least as much time working with lower-attaining pupils as other pupils (Reversed)	-0.54					
10. Teachers deploy TAs during lessons to respond to 'real-time' needs of pupils	0.52					
10. TAs interactions tend to focus on completing a task with pupils rather than encouraging independent learning (Reversed)	0.50					
10. TAs are aware of the learning needs of all pupils in the class	0.46					
15. TAs are well trained to support the pupils they spend most time with	0.39		0.33			
10. TAs are informed of the concepts, information and skills being taught by the teacher in lessons	0.39			0.33		
14. Interventions are sustained over time (around 8 to 20 weeks)		0.76				
14. Interventions occur regularly (around 3-5 times per week)		0.57				
15. TAs receive little training on how to work effectively with teachers) (Reversed)			0.7			
15. Staff who manage TAs rarely receive training on how to deploy TAs effectively (Reversed)			0.63			
15. Teachers receive appropriate and comprehensive training on how to use TAs to supplement their work			0.62			
10. There are sufficient opportunities for teachers to brief TAs prior to lessons				0.75		
14. There is always scheduled time each week for teachers and TAs to communicate about interventions				0.54		
10. There is regular feedback from TAs to teachers after lessons				0.47		
10. TAs often teach specific pupils different content from the rest of the class during lessons (Reversed)						
8. Supporting the teacher in their whole class delivery					0.71	
8. Leading the teaching of the whole class					0.32	
8. Teaching specific pupils or small groups of pupils (Reversed)						
14.Interventions are always supported by structured lesson plans and resources						0.77
14. TAs usually receive in the region of 5-30 hours training/development per intervention						0.39

## Appendix 12: Non-parametric tests of post-campaign outcomes

Mann Whitney U test: calculates sum of ranks for both independent groups - the smaller value is  $U$ .  $Z$  scores are then calculated by SPSS using the following formula,

$$Z = \frac{U - (n_x n_y) / 2}{\sqrt{n_x n_y (N + 1) / 12}}$$

where  $n_x$  is the sample size for one group, and  $n_y$  is the other.

Wilcoxon signed rank test: finds absolute difference between each pair of pre/post values, ignoring all ties. Differences in size are then ranked, ignoring the sign (- or +) of the difference. Positive differences and negative differences are totalled separately.  $T$  is the smaller value of the two.

To calculate the  $Z$  statistic, the mean must be calculated first, using the sample size,

$$\mu = \frac{N(N + 1)}{4}$$

where  $N$  = total observations in both pre + post samples. Next, the standard deviation is calculated, again using sample size,

$$\sigma = \sqrt{(N(N + 1)(2N + 1) / 24)}$$

followed by the  $Z$  statistic.

$$Z = \frac{T - \mu}{\sigma}$$

For both the Mann-Whitney U test and the Wilcoxon signed rank test, effect sizes have been calculated using this equation:

$$r = Z / \sqrt{N}$$

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