



The International School Exchanges Programme

Pilot Report

April 2021

Alex Thornton, Rosie Giles, Emma McKay, Sheyi Ogunshakin,
Charis St. Clair Fisher, Charlotte Man

KANTAR



The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is an independent grant-making charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement, ensuring that children from all backgrounds can fulfil their potential and make the most of their talents.





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.

For more information about the EEF or this report please contact:

-  Jonathan Kay
Education Endowment Foundation
5th Floor, Millbank Tower
21–24 Millbank
SW1P 4QP
-  0207 802 1653
-  jonathan.kay@eefoundation.org.uk
-  www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk



Contents

About the evaluator.....	3
Executive summary.....	4
Introduction	6
Methods.....	10
Findings	16
Discussion	45
Conclusion.....	49
References	51
Appendix I – Programme Logic Model.....	52
Appendix II – Recruitment Materials	53
Appendix III – Research Materials	65

About the evaluator

The project was independently evaluated by a team at Kantar Public Division.

The Lead Evaluator was Alex Thornton.

Contact details:

Alex Thornton
Kantar
4 Millbank
Westminster
London
SW1P 3JA
Alex.Thornton@kantar.com

Executive summary

The project

The Department for Education (DfE) allocated £2.5 million to an International School Exchanges programme (ISEP) that aimed to enable pupils aged 11 to 19, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to take part in an international school exchange between May 2019 and May 2020. Delivered by the British Council, the ISEP was open to state-funded secondary schools and colleges in England that could demonstrate that the exchange would benefit disadvantaged pupils, that had a partner school abroad confirmed to visit, and had the support of the school headteacher.

Eligible schools and colleges ('schools') could apply for grants of up to £15,000 to cover international travel to any country (within Europe or elsewhere) for a minimum of four nights for pupils and accompanying teachers covering accommodation and subsistence, local transport, and administration costs. Applications were submitted to the British Council which assessed the design of each exchange and awarded funding. Priority was given to applications that showed the school—or the group of pupils involved in the visit—included significant levels of disadvantage and flexibility was offered to schools to identify eligible pupils. Schools could design the exchange around a curriculum or soft skill focus area; a focus on language learning was not essential. All exchanges required significant interactions or 'exchange' with pupils in another country and the British Council ran overseas seminars to support schools without an international partner school to find one.

The evaluation originally planned to look at international visits taking place between July 2019 and April 2020. In February 2020, the evaluation was extended to May 2020 to enable maximum data collection. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the delivery of the programme and the last international visit took place in March 2020. Overall, 42 out of 142 planned exchanges took place due to travel restrictions, which also limited the number of participants from which to collect data. School closures meant that teachers and pupils were harder to engage in research activities and the findings of the pilot are limited to those that took part in exchanges and the evaluation, both of which were significantly affected by the outbreak of COVID-19.

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, gathering evidence from in-depth qualitative interviews with 26 teachers and 21 pupils, pupil surveys from 21 schools, and administrative data from the British Council. Pre-exchange interviews were conducted with teachers, but the evaluation did not include pre-exchange interviews with pupils to reduce the burden on schools. From March 2020, qualitative feedback was collected online. Table 1 sets out an overview of the findings related to the evidence of promise, feasibility, and scalability of the pilot programme.

Table 1: Summary of pilot findings

Question	Comment
Is there evidence of promise?	Teachers and pupils reported increased intercultural outlook, confidence with, and tolerance of, other cultures, and pupil resilience. However, for high-quality causal evidence on pupils' non-cognitive outcomes a randomised controlled trial would need to be conducted.
Was the approach feasible?	The ISEP supported institutions to design and deliver an international experience through funding and support delivered by the British Council. There is evidence that the programme enabled institutions to give pupils, including the most disadvantaged, an international experience they may not have otherwise had. However, achieving anticipated numbers for the new programme was initially challenging and this was compounded by travel restrictions enforced by COVID-19.
Is the approach scalable?	There was demand for the programme to be repeated as many institutions felt they would be unable to offer the opportunity without the DfE grant, particularly to the most disadvantaged pupils. The programme could be trialled more widely when the impact of COVID-19 on travel reduces. Specific improvements that could support a greater number of eligible institutions to take part include more targeted marketing of the unique qualities of the programme to schools with higher proportions of disadvantaged pupils, increased support for less experienced schools, and faster responses to applications.

Additional findings

Overall, there is evidence to suggest that the predicted outcomes for pupils who participated in overseas visits were largely achieved. Teachers viewed exchanges as a valuable experience for their pupils, appreciated the flexibility to tailor exchanges, and perceived the unique elements of the programme—such as requiring exchanges to include a proportion of disadvantaged pupils, significant interaction with partner schools, and a curriculum focus of choice — positively.

Data from 38 exchanges that took place at the point of analysis shows that disadvantaged pupils made up 46% of the cohort of 489 pupils. While the opportunity was specifically open to disadvantaged pupils, there is evidence to suggest that schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils did not apply for funding due to barriers such as a lack of awareness of the new programme and a lack of confidence navigating the application process. However, it is also important to note the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic: these findings may not be reflective of the planned exchanges (by a total of 142 schools) that were not able to take place.

While the pilot demonstrates that international exchanges were successfully delivered by schools that were awarded funding, the programme did not initially attract the anticipated numbers of applications, with many being received closer to the February 2020 deadline. As the programme opened to new applications, teachers reported several barriers to applying, including:

- lack of clarity regarding application instructions and examples of how to complete sections of the application;
- lengthy response times upon submission of their application;
- lack of confidence navigating the dedicated website and completing the application (mainly among schools and colleges with less experience of organising exchanges); and
- challenges supporting pupils with administrative activities required for international travel, including applying for passports and getting insurance.

Importantly, many of the qualitative interviews were conducted in the early stages of the ISEP funding being awarded to the British Council. In pre-exchange interviews with teachers, there was a noticeable improvement in perceptions of the response time as programme delivery continued and more information, including FAQs and model answers, were published on the British Council's website.

For schools, participating in the programme led to a reported increase in their capability to deliver international exchanges in the future (for example, by having an established relationship with a partner school) with the potential to increase appeal for prospective pupils. Teachers and pupils reported that they would be open to going on exchanges in the future. This was especially notable for teachers where additional work was involved in organising the exchange for pupils and therefore suggests that the value of the exchange outweighs the difficulties in organisation and logistics for some.

There was appetite for the programme to be repeated as many institutions felt unable to offer the opportunity without the DfE grant, particularly to the most disadvantaged pupils. A future programme should focus on targeted marketing about the unique qualities to attract a wider spread of institutions including those with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils. Other areas for improvement include reducing response times to applications at the early stages of programme delivery and increasing support for less experienced schools to apply. Additionally, providing schools with more time to plan their exchange around the school calendar could encourage further take-up of the programme.

Introduction

Intervention

The Department for Education (DfE) allocated £2.5 million to an International School Exchanges programme (ISEP) that aimed to enable disadvantaged pupils aged 11 to 19 in secondary schools and colleges ('schools') in England to take part in an international school exchange.¹ The programme was delivered by the British Council, which commenced recruitment for eligible schools and colleges in March 2019 for exchanges to take place between May 2019 and May 2020. The target number of schools was 70 although it was estimated that around 140 schools and colleges would receive grants. The deadline for applying to the programme was February 2020.

The International School Exchanges programme was open to state schools or colleges in England able to demonstrate that:

- the exchange would benefit disadvantaged pupils;
- they had a partner school abroad confirmed to visit; and
- they had the support of the school headteacher or college principal.

Grants of up to £10,000 for short haul (EU and wider Europe) and £15,000 for long haul (rest of the world) visits were available for each institution. Grants could cover international travel for pupils and accompanying teachers, accommodation and subsistence, local transport, administration costs, and a short teacher pre-visit to plan the exchange and conduct risk assessments (up to £500 for EU and wider Europe; up to £1000 for the rest of the world). Priority was given to applications that showed the school included disadvantaged pupils (as indicated by, for example, Pupil Premium, Opportunity Area, Index of Multiple Deprivation, Additional Needs, and so forth), however, not all pupils travelling were required to be eligible for Pupil Premium. Schools and colleges were able to establish their own definition of 'disadvantaged' although programme guidance outlined key measures of disadvantage to support teachers to explain the pupil profile and reasons for choosing them in applications.² The grants awarded through the programme needed to enable Pupil Premium pupils to take part without being required to pay anything. Independent schools were not eligible to apply for funding.

The programme was designed to include unique qualities and criteria in order to facilitate schools to apply for funding and include disadvantaged pupils in the opportunity. Unique programme qualities included:

- a flexible approach to exchange design: schools able to choose curriculum or skill area(s);
- the requirement to include specific activities related to the chosen curriculum or skill area(s);
- a focus on providing a foreign exchange experience to disadvantaged pupils;
- the requirement for significant engagement with pupils in another country;
- the amount of funding available (£10,000 to £15,000 depending on exchange location); and
- overseas seminars to support formation and development of partner school relationship for those schools without partner schools.

Visits could be to any country and were required to be for a minimum of four nights. The British Council ran five overseas seminars in France, Spain, and Germany and two in China in October and November 2019 with the aim of connecting schools that wished to participate but did not have a relationship with a partner school abroad.

¹ Although this programme is called International School Exchanges, the focus of this report includes an evaluation of outward international visits only.

² British Council School Exchange Grants Guidelines 2019
https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/programme_guidelines_isep_2019_v8_10_sep.pdf

It is important to note that, whilst the programme is entitled 'exchanges', the funding only covered visits for English schools to travel abroad. It did not include funding to enable a reciprocal visit to the U.K. by partner schools. The reciprocal visit was not a requirement or an expectation of the programme.

The British Council provided support to schools and colleges by:

- providing the programme infrastructure—including staffing and application guidance, which included guidance notes, FAQs, customer service support, access to school ambassadors to provide personalised advice on applications, feedback on applications, and the possibility to resubmit as many times as required to achieve success;
- publicising the programme and funding to schools;
- setting up and advertising the overseas seminars where schools could find a partner school, if required;
- providing feedback on applications and advice on how to improve them—this included the facility to re-submit updated applications in response to feedback; and
- assessing applications and awarded grants.

Overall, the programme aimed to enable young people who would otherwise not have the opportunity or means to have an international experience—especially including those from disadvantaged backgrounds—to benefit from the following outcomes:

- increased intercultural outlook;
- improved interest in, and understanding of, a relevant curriculum area including but not limited to modern foreign languages (MFL); and
- improved resilience and/or confidence / tolerance with other cultures.

For others, intended aims were:

- school leaders and teachers think that school exchanges are valuable and easy to arrange;
- school leaders have the resources and capabilities to repeat exchanges in the future; and
- teachers and pupils are interested in pursuing future international experiences.

Background evidence

Evidence suggests that businesses are increasingly looking for employees with international experience and language skills.^{3 4} A 2014 British Council literature review on the nature and scale of opportunities for international experience in the U.K., and comparison with the U.S. and Germany, found that there was a lack of consistent high quality evidence about the benefits of international experience in the U.K.⁵ This was attributed to a lack of research and data collection at both national and international levels and the fact that not all information was publicly available.

A school exchange programme may have the potential to boost pupil's confidence, their engagement with the curriculum, and to expand their intercultural awareness. However, fewer schools are participating in exchanges, reflecting a general decline in foreign language study amidst concerns from families about safeguarding risks and financial and practical barriers affecting schools' ability to offer exchanges.⁶ Moreover, a 2014 British Council

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/25-million-to-boost-international-exchanges-for-schools>

⁴ https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research_and_analysis_on_the_benefits_of_international_opportunities_cfe_research_and_lse_enterprise_report_0.pdf

⁵ https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/literature_review_on_opportunities_for_international_experience_cfe_research_and_lse_enterprise_0.pdf

⁶ The British Council Language Trends Survey 2018

survey found that almost two-thirds of university language pupils said that an international exchange helped inspire them to choose their degree course.⁷ The International School Exchanges programme builds on the government's work to encourage more pupils to study a foreign language or gain international skills, and the programme specifically focuses on ensuring that disadvantaged young people do not miss out on the academic opportunities and life-changing experiences presented by overseas visits.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) funded the evaluation of the programme, which was conducted by Kantar's Public Division. The evaluation was due to cover international exchanges taking place between July 2019 and April 2020. In February 2020, the decision was taken to extend the evaluation to include exchanges taking place until the end of May 2020 due to lower than expected numbers of schools taking part to enable maximum data collection. Due to travel restrictions enforced by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the final international visit included in the evaluation took place in early March 2020.

Research questions

Overall, the evaluation aimed to assess the extent to which the International School Exchanges programme enabled secondary-school and college pupils in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to take part in an international school exchange. The research aimed to answer the following research questions:

Promise

1. What are pupil and teacher attitudes towards the curriculum area of focus on their exchange, their confidence in a new context, their global outlook, and perceptions of the ease or value of exchanges before and after the exchange?
2. How does the programme differentiate or add value over and above support already available to in-scope schools?

Feasibility

3. What are the barriers and facilitators schools and pupils experience in the programme, at the application, pre-exchange, and post-exchange stages?
4. Did the programme deliver the desired output: inclusion of schools that would not otherwise run an exchange and/or do not have an international partner school?
5. Did the programme deliver the desired output: inclusion of disadvantaged pupils?

Scalability

6. What are the principles and features that support uptake and effective delivery of international exchanges and who is best placed to take these forward (the DfE, the British Council, teachers, etc)?
7. How likely are schools to conduct exchanges in the future and what information, resources, and support do they need for sustainability?
8. How, if at all, are schools learning from their experience and sharing that within and beyond their school?

Ethical review

On all research projects, Kantar adheres to the following national and international quality standards and management systems:

- MRS and ESOMAR professional codes of conduct.
- ISO 20252: international market research quality standard.
- ISO 9001: international standard for quality management systems.
- ISO 27001: international standard for information security management systems.

⁷ <https://www.britishcouncil.org/contact/press/british-council-says-bring-back-school-exchanges>

- The UK Data Protection Act 2018.
- All researchers are DBS checked.

An internal ethical review was conducted by the research team at Kantar to determine the consent processes for each strand of data collection. The British Council sent a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to all schools and colleges with successful grant applications inviting them to participate in the evaluation. Kantar only had access to the contact details of schools and colleges that had signed and returned an MOU. All schools that took part in surveys or qualitative interviews were provided with written information sheets for both the school and the parents or guardians of pupils involved in exchanges. Informed consent was sought from all interview and survey participants prior to data collection. For interviews with school and college staff, verbal consent was sought prior to interview. For focus groups with pupils, signed consent forms were sought from the parents and guardians of pupils under 16 and from pupils themselves if they were aged 16 or over. No personal data was collected from the pupil survey.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, all research activities with pupils aged 11 to 19 took place on school or college premises in accordance with each institution's safeguarding policy. Focus groups that took place after March 2020 were conducted remotely by phone or online platform (Civicom or Zoom).

See Appendix II for the school information sheet, parent/guardian information sheet, school MOU, parent/guardian consent form, and pupil (aged 16+) consent form.

Project team

The delivery of the programme involved the client (the Department for Education), the delivery organisation (the British Council), participating schools in England, and participating schools in host countries. The team at the British Council included:

- Shannon West, Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): accountable for effective delivery of the programme;
- Vicky Gough, Senior Consultant: implementation team lead;
- Susie Nicodemi, Rachel Salmon, Tim Stobbs, Ellie Beikzadeh, Philip Harding-Esch: project managers, day-to-day management; and
- Rachel O'Riordan: marketing and communications manager.

The evaluation was delivered by the following staff in Kantar's Public Division:

- Alex Thornton, Director;
- Rosie Giles, Associate Director;
- Emma McKay, Associate Director;
- Sheyi Ogunshakin, Senior Research Executive;
- Charis St. Clair Fisher, Senior Research Executive
- Charlotte Man, Research Graduate;
- George Spedding, Research Graduate; and
- Anastasia Duncan and Paul Vousden, Project Coordinators.

DfE contacts included:

- Emma Shovlin: SRO; and
- James Davison: evaluation team.

Methods

Recruitment

Initially, the intervention estimated it would award grants to approximately 140 schools. The evaluation planned to invite all to participate in the pupil and teacher surveys with a smaller subset being selected for interviews. Kantar developed an MOU that participating schools and colleges were asked to sign by way of agreement to take part in the evaluation and to consent to relevant data-sharing requirements between themselves, Kantar, and the British Council. This was sent to all participating schools and colleges awarded a grant by the British Council along with additional information to explain more about the evaluation, including a school 'information sheet' and a privacy notice. Once schools had agreed to participate in the evaluation, the British Council passed on their information to Kantar. The findings section of the report outlines the target numbers participating in the intervention and evaluation against the achieved numbers, including how COVID-19 affected these.

Lead teachers at all schools that returned a signed MOU were contacted with an introductory evaluation pack with information about the research and survey links. A copy of the pack is included in Appendix II. Packs were sent out both by email and by post. Each pack contained the following:

- information sheets for pupils, parents, and guardians taking part in the research;
- school and teacher information sheets for those taking part in the research;
- a copy of the privacy notice explaining what data was being collected and how it would be processed, stored, and used;
- a copy of the pre- and post-exchange questionnaire for pupils;
- instructions for teachers on how to administer the pupil survey;
- a withdrawal form for parents or guardians wanting to opt their child out of completing the survey;
- a paper version of the lead teacher's questionnaire, to be completed three months after the school exchange;
- a pre-paid envelope to return the teacher's questionnaire; and
- copies of the schools' unique web links to complete the surveys online.

By 31 March 2020, a total of 211 schools had engaged with the ISE programme. Of these, 142 were successful in their applications and were awarded grant agreements with 48 of these schools set to participate in the evaluation. One hundred out of the 142 schools ended up not travelling; 27 of these would have been part of the evaluation. Of the 42 remaining schools that went on their trips, 21 were able to participate in the evaluation. These were schools that had signed the MOU agreeing to participate and whose trip dates fell within the evaluation period.

For the qualitative case study research, criteria were developed to ensure a variety of schools took part and findings reflected a range of exchange experiences. Criteria included the following:

- Delivery variations:
 - type of visit (seminar or exchange; with or without home stay);
 - destination (Europe or further afield);
 - duration of visit;
 - year group; and
 - primary curriculum purpose (for example, language, history).
- School variations:
 - proportion of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium;
 - history of exchanges; and
 - location (geographical spread, urban/rural split).

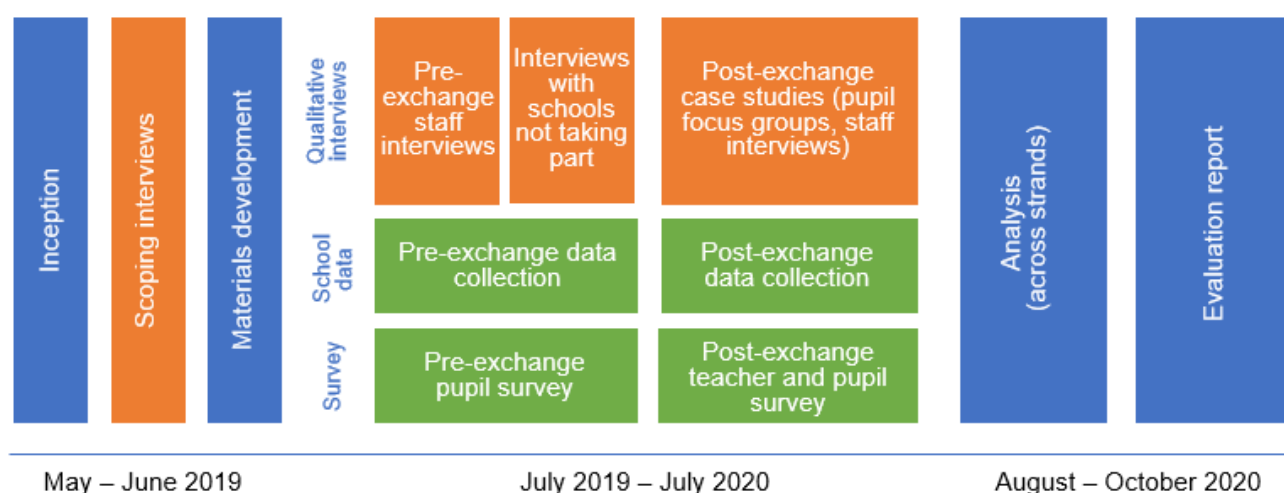
In schools and colleges selected for case study research, pupils were recruited through their schools by the lead teacher. Kantar developed consent forms for schools and colleges to send to parents and guardians of pupils under 16 years; pupils aged 16 or older signed their own consent forms.

Five telephone interviews (lasting 30 minutes) with schools that registered an interest in the programme with the British Council but did not subsequently complete an application were also included to explore barriers to engagement from a broader perspective. The British Council sent an email to schools that fitted this description inviting them to take part in an interview with Kantar as part of the evaluation and passed on details of teachers who agreed.

Data collection

Figure 1 outlines the different data collection methods as planned and executed. Although COVID-19 significantly impacted the number of participants able to take part in research activities, data collection strands remained the same as planned in the Evaluation Plan. The surveys and management information is represented in green and qualitative research in orange. Timings were flexible depending on school availability, but pre-exchange data collection was typically in the four weeks before the start of the exchange; post exchange it took place two to three months after the end of the exchange.

Figure 1: Overview of data collection methods throughout the evaluation



Building on the British Council’s theory of change, background research, and the Kantar research team’s knowledge of the sector, Kantar developed a draft programme logic model. Kantar then held an Intervention Delivery and Evaluation Analysis (IDEA) workshop with the DfE and the British Council to refine the logic model to accurately depict the aims, processes, assumptions, and outcomes and impacts. Kantar also used scoping interviews with staff at the DfE and the British Council to clarify gaps in the model and refine it further. A visual representation of the model is included in Appendix I.

All research tools (questionnaires and topic guides) informed participants of the independent nature of Kantar, the purpose of data collection, how their information would be used and reported, and confirmed that all their views would be anonymised and confidential, meaning no one outside of the research team would know who has said what. Copies of research materials are included in Appendix III. The British Council collected some Management Information (MI) as part of the application process, including information on the number and age of participating pupils, location and date of the exchange, and the number of disadvantaged pupils. This was shared with Kantar at regular intervals (subject to a data sharing agreement).

For the interviews, lead teachers (identified as those who were involved in the application and exchange planning) were contacted and asked to participate in a 45-minute telephone interview two to three weeks before the exchange. After the exchange Kantar conducted another 45-minute telephone interview with either the lead teacher or a teacher who delivered the exchange (if the lead teacher did not travel). Teachers at these schools

selected disadvantaged pupils who went on the exchange to take part in a focus group at their school setting. Due to COVID-19, some of the interviews with pupils were online.

For the survey, a week prior to the schools going on their exchange, lead teachers were sent a reminder email with the web links to the pupil's pre-exchange survey to be completed online. Teachers were asked to ensure pupils had completed the survey prior to going on the exchange. The pre-exchange pupil survey collected information about:

- pupils' attitudes towards learning modern foreign languages (Q11);
- opinions about different countries and cultures—measuring global outlook, tolerance towards other cultures and interest in international travel (Q13);
- confidence in what they could do and achieve in different areas of their life (Q12);
- pupils' character and resilience—measured through their beliefs about their abilities, tenacity, and responses to problems or difficult situations (Q14);
- pupils' aspirations and expectations for the future (Q15); and
- pupils' gender, year group, and the number of times they had been abroad prior to the exchange (Q1, 2, and 3).

Three months after completing their exchanges, lead teachers were sent a follow-up email with the web links to a post-exchange survey for the pupils and a post-exchange teacher survey to complete. Both could be completed online with teachers also having the option of completing the survey using the paper version they received in their evaluation pack and posting it back using a pre-paid envelope. The post-exchange pupil survey collected the same information as the pre-exchange pupil survey, with additional questions covering:

- number of days away on the exchange (Q4);
- number of pupils that went on the trip (Q7);
- whether they slept at the home of a family (Q5);
- whether they were asked to speak a foreign language for long periods of time (Q6);
- the subjects the trip helped them to learn about and the subject they learnt most about (Q8 and Q9); and
- whether they looked forward more to lessons in the subject they learned most about, whether they were more interested in it and passing exams in it, and more confident they could do well in the subject (Q10).

The post-exchange teacher survey collected information about:

- the number of students who participated that were eligible for Pupil Premium (PP) funding;
- the number of students who participated that were from a disadvantaged background (regardless of eligibility for PP);
- the planning and management of the exchange visit;
- the organisation and administration of the international exchange programme;
- the teachers' views about international school exchanges; and
- the perceived impact on the pupils who took part in the school exchanges.

While Kantar had hoped to collect as many teacher responses as there were schools in the evaluation (140 targeted originally), the results of the teacher survey are not included in this report due to the low numbers of teachers who responded. Kantar sent out multiple communications to engage teachers throughout the evaluation and encourage participation in the survey. This included the evaluation packs sent out via post and email, and emails inviting them to do the survey three months after the school exchange. Up to three follow-up emails were sent to teachers who had not responded, or whose school had low numbers of survey responses. Of the 21 schools that agreed to participate in the survey, 14 teachers responded—a response rate of 64%. This does not include schools that were invited to participate but responded to say that their school exchange had not taken place due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The low numbers made it impossible to draw valid conclusions from this data. The low number of responses may have been due to the low numbers of school exchanges that took place because of the COVID-19 restrictions. Only one teacher from each school exchange (the exchange lead) was asked to complete the survey, also limiting the number of teachers that could have participated.

Copies of the pre- and post-exchange pupil surveys are included in Appendix III. The survey questions were developed by Kantar drawing on other relevant, established research including the DCMS National Citizen Service evaluation, the DfE Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England, and Council of Europe definitions of 'openness to cultural otherness'.⁸ Relevant to the DfE policy, leads also advised on questionnaire content and priorities during stakeholder interviews and through the survey drafting process. During this consultation, the definition of 'character' that the DfE were then using publicly forms the basis for the measurement of character and resilience, meaning that the question statements were tested for the first time in this research.⁹

Schools were asked to complete management information report forms after participating in the international exchange (see Table 4) and return them to the British Council within four weeks of returning from the exchange visit. These forms asked the schools to provide the following information:

- details of the school and participants;
- details of activities completed:
 - as part of the preparatory visit,
 - during the school exchange with students,
 - a personal evaluation from a student that participated, and
 - an evaluation by the headteacher or other senior leader;
- financial report and balance payment requested; and
- data protection statements and signatures.

Table 4: Research methods

	Data collection methods	Participants / data sources			Data analysis methods	Research question
		Type	Original target number ¹⁰	Number achieved		
Management information (British Council)	Self-completed pro-formas (data provided by British Council)	Lead teachers	Up to 140	38 reports ¹¹	Descriptive statistics	RQ5
Lead teacher surveys (Post)	Self-completion questionnaires	Lead teachers ¹²	Up to 140	14 teachers	Frequency counts; descriptive statistics	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
Pupil surveys (pre / post)	Online questionnaires	Pupils who have participated in an exchange	Up to 140 schools; estimated up to c. 3,000 invited	21 schools: 231 pupils (pre) 165 pupils (post)	Frequency counts; descriptive statistics	RQ1, 3
Scoping interviews	In-depth interviews (phone and face to face)	Key stakeholders at the DfE and British Council	6 interviews	6 interviews	Thematic analysis	RQ2, 3, 6
Case studies	In-depth interviews (pre-visit, phone)	Lead teachers	Up to 20	11 interviews	Inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
	In-depth interviews (post-visit, face to face) ¹³	Teachers involved in school exchange ¹⁴	Up to 24: 2 per 12 schools	10 interviews	Inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

⁸ Competences for democratic culture: Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies (Council of Europe, 2016).

⁹ Education Secretary: 'Character and resilience are key to social mobility' (27 May 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-character-and-resilience-are-key-to-social-mobility>

¹⁰ This refers to the number in the original evaluation design, prior to the number of applications being known and the impact of the pandemic.
¹¹ Schools were only invited to complete MI reports and teacher and pupil surveys if they had completed their trips. Therefore, only 42 schools were invited to take part and at the time of reporting; 38 MI reports were completed, with British Council receiving the remaining reports since then. Similarly, of the 42 schools invited, 14 completed a teacher survey and 21 participated in the pupil surveys.

¹² Lead teachers are defined as teachers who completed the application and set up the exchange.

¹³ Post-exchange depth interviews with teachers took place via telephone from March 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

¹⁴ Teachers involved in the exchange are defined as teachers who delivered the exchange. In some cases, lead teachers did not deliver the exchange.

	Focus groups (face to face) ¹⁵	Pupils who participated in an exchange	Up to 24 groups of 4–6 pupils: 2 per 12 schools	5 focus groups (21 pupils in total)	Inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 3
Interviews with schools that did not take part in ISEP	In-depth interviews (phone)	Teachers in schools that did not apply for funding	5 interviews	5 interviews	Inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Analysis

Qualitative analysis

For the case study data, we used a content analysis method known as framework analysis, a highly-respected analytical process that is both flexible and systematic. This process involved constructing a framework of themes based on patterns that emerged across the pre- and post-exchange depth interviews with teachers and focus groups with pupils. Data was mapped against the research questions to identify defining features of exchange experiences and create typologies based on these. Due to the rolling nature of intervention delivery, this analysis process was iterative, involving all members of the core project team. This enabled us to develop, test, and refine hypotheses as the project progressed by drawing on insight from each strand of the evaluation as it happened. By triangulating the data—speaking to different parties involved (stakeholders, teachers, and pupils)—we were able to build a holistic picture to minimise bias.

Pupil survey data

Analysis of pupil survey data mainly consisted of descriptive statistics, frequency counts, and wave on wave comparisons. The resulting data was not weighted before analysis, however, some coding was necessary for a small number of open-ended responses (questions 8 and 9). Coding was conducted manually and reviewed within the research team. Code frames are included in Appendix IV.

To test for statistical significance in differences between variables we applied a two-tailed independent samples t-test for proportions, at $p < 0.05$. Differences were analysed at aggregate level across waves and subgroups, for example, MFL students and non-MFL students rather than between individual respondents: while pupils were invited to take part in the survey at both pre- and post-exchange waves, not all did so and the method was not designed to track responses between individual pupils. There are some caveats to note from our approach:

- The pilot used a convenience (non-probability) sample rather than a sample drawn through random probability, while the accuracy of significance testing assumes a probability sample.
- Although pupil demographics between waves were similar, differences observed could result from differences in sample rather than true change.
- The pilot did not include a counterfactual group against which to compare pre- and post-exchange differences. It is possible that any observed change between the two surveys is due to factors other than the intervention itself, such as the natural change that would have happened without the intervention, or reversion to the mean (if the first measurement is an over- or underestimate, the second measurement is likely to be closer to the true average).
- In analysing the data, we have conducted a number of significance tests to identify significant differences ($p < 0.05$). It should be noted that when conducting multiple comparisons there is an increased risk of Type I errors (false positives). As the number of comparisons carried out with the same dataset increases, it becomes more likely that the groups being compared will be found to differ in some way. To illustrate this point, if the exchange has actually had no effect and we conducted 100 significance tests we'd expect to observe around five false positives (statistically significant results at the $p < 0.05$ level).

¹⁵ Post-exchange focus groups with pupils took place via telephone or online from March 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The caveats indicate that any findings that state statistical significance in this report should be treated with caution. Specifically, the sample was not intended to be representative of the target pupil population and was not randomised into treatment and control groups, reducing the accuracy of any significance testing estimating the impact of the school exchanges. More generally, significance testing provides an incomplete and uncertain picture and should not be used alone to assess the impact of the programme.

We conducted some bivariate analysis to explore differences in experiences and perceptions, pupil characteristics such as gender, and the focus of the school exchange but small subgroup base sizes limited this for most variables.

Management information

The British Council analysed the numerical information that schools had included in their report form post-exchange such as number of pupils who had attended the exchanges and length of exchange. It provided Kantar with a summary, in Excel format, of this data. However, to analyse the verbatim responses in the report forms, Kantar collected the individual school report forms returned by schools along with their signed MOUs from the British Council. We then entered key points and quotations from the forms into a framework to draw out themes and patterns across the schools in the same manner as we did with the qualitative data.

Timeline

The British Council commenced recruitment for eligible schools and colleges in March 2019 for exchanges to take place between May 2019 and May 2020. The evaluation was due to include international exchanges taking place between July 2019 and April 2020, however in February 2020 this was extended to May 2020 due to a lower than expected number of schools taking part in the evaluation by that point to facilitate maximum data collection. Due to COVID travel restrictions, the final international visit included in the evaluation took place in early March 2020. All subsequent qualitative fieldwork was conducted online and by telephone.

Table 5: Timeline

Date	Activity
May 2019	Evaluation set-up
June 2019	Stakeholder interviews
July 2019	Development of recruitment documents and research materials
June 2019–July 2020	Recruitment for quantitative and qualitative fieldwork
June 2019–July 2020	Quantitative and qualitative fieldwork
July–October 2020	Analysis and reporting

Findings

Participants

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions preventing some exchanges from taking place, evaluation findings reflect only those who travelled between July 2019 and March 2020. Fieldwork was conducted with schools and colleges that submitted their application earlier in the funding window, therefore it is possible that not all experiences of the programme are represented in the data. Note that none of the participants in the qualitative research attended the overseas seminars delivered by the British Council so experiences of these events are not captured.

Qualitative research

Table 6 summarises the key demographics and characteristics of the schools and colleges that took part in the pre-exchange telephone depth interviews with teachers prior to exchanges and the post-exchange case study research (depth interviews with teachers and focus groups with pupils). Due to the restrictions COVID-19 presented in terms of the timings of the research, fewer pre-exchange interviews took place (11 instead of 20 planned), which also affected the number of post-exchange case studies that could be conducted (9 instead of 12 planned) as many exchanges were cancelled in line with government guidelines. Therefore, findings reflect some of those who travelled between July 2019 and March 2020 rather than the full intended evaluation period covering exchanges until the end of May 2020. The reasons for fewer schools than intended are discussed in section 1:1.

Table 6: Summary of characteristics of participants in qualitative research*

		Number of schools	
		Pre-Exchange	Post-exchange
Total		11	9 ¹⁶ (6 full, 3 partial) ¹⁷
Number of pupils on the exchange	1–10	7	5
	11–20	3	4
	21+	1	0
Number of disadvantaged pupils on the exchange ¹⁸	1–10	10	8
	11–20	1	1
	21+	0	0
Type of disadvantage	Pupil Premium	6	4
	FSM	0	0
	Other	1	1
	Self-defined	4	4
Year group	Year 7–9	0	0
	Year 10–11	3	3
	Year 12–13	4	2
	Mix	4	4
Destination	Europe	3	2
	Middle East and Africa	2	1
	Asia-Pacific	4	4
	Americas	2	2
Length of visit	1–3 days	1	0
	4–6 days	6	5
	1 week or more	4	4
Curriculum focus area	One curriculum focus	6	3
	Multiple curriculum foci	4	6
Language focus	MFL	1	1
Experience of running an exchange	Yes	9	5

¹⁶ Three were conducted face-to-face prior to March 2020 and six were conducted remotely after March 2020.

¹⁷ Full case studies involved a 45-minute telephone depth interview with a teacher and a 45-minute focus group with two to six pupils. Due to COVID-19 restrictions at the time of fieldwork—with some pupils attending schools and others participating in distance learning from home—some teachers experienced challenges scheduling online pupil focus groups. In these cases, partial case studies were conducted involving only a 45-minute teacher telephone depth interview.

¹⁸ Schools used a range of criteria to classify disadvantaged pupils including Pupil Premium, free school meals, and self-definition.

	No	2	4
Location of school	Urban	4	2
	Semi-rural	5	5
	Rural	2	2
School region	North East	0	0
	North West	1	1
	Yorkshire and the Humber	0	0
	East Midlands	1	1
	West Midlands	3	3
	East of England	1	0
	South East excluding London	2	2
	London	3	2
Paired experience (foreign pupils visiting England) ¹⁹	Yes	7	4
	No	4	5
School partnership from attending seminar	Yes	0	0
	No	11	9

*Please note that two different exchanges were delivered by one school.

Quantitative research

Table 7 summarises the key demographics and characteristics of the pupils who took part in the pre-exchange and post-exchange survey. Pupils from 48 schools agreed to participate in the evaluation and 41 of these schools had received evaluation packs and invitations to complete their pupil surveys, based on the timing of their exchange visits. However, due to lower than expected numbers of applicants early in the programme and the timing of COVID-19 restrictions, pupils from only 21 schools participated in one or both surveys. The low sample sizes mean there may be limitations in what can be drawn from the results of these two surveys and caution should be taken when citing these figures.

Table 7: Summary of characteristics of participants in quantitative research

		Pre-exchange		Post-exchange	
		N		N	
Number of participants		231		165	
Number of schools		17		18	
		N	Percentage (%)	N	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	96	42%	61	37%
	Female	131	57%	100	61%
	I don't identify as either	0	0%	1	1%
Year group	Year 7–9	72	31%	42	25%
	Year 10–11	100	43%	77	47%
	Year 12–13	59	26%	46	28%
Number of times been abroad before exchange	0	20	9%	7	4%
	1–5	89	39%	62	38%
	6–10	61	26%	55	33%
	11–15	32	14%	19	12%
	16–20	11	5%	10	6%
	21+	18	8%	12	7%
Length of visit*	1–5 days	N/A	N/A	40	24%
	6–10 days	N/A	N/A	83	50%
	11–15 days	N/A	N/A	42	25%
Subject learnt most about on exchange*	Foreign languages	N/A	N/A	59	55%
	Any other subject	N/A	N/A	49	45%

**Only asked at post-exchange survey.

¹⁹ Inbound visits from international pupils visiting England were not included in the evaluation of this programme.

Management Information

Table 8 and Table 9 show the numerical information included in the summary provided to Kantar of the British Council's analysis. This covers all schools that went on exchanges and provided MI reports, even if they hadn't participated in Kantar's evaluation. Table 8 summarises the key demographics and characteristics of the pupils and teachers from schools and colleges that provided MI about their exchange. This MI took the form of report forms that schools completed and returned to the British Council after they had completed their exchanges. Table 9 presents the profile of the disadvantaged pupils who went on the exchange visits, also drawing on the MI. The MI shows a total of 489 pupils across 38 schools participated in an international exchange at the time of this analysis, with 46% of these pupils classified by their school as disadvantaged. Institutions could use their own definition of disadvantage, with the majority (71%) choosing to use Pupil Premium as an indicator of disadvantage.

Table 8: Summary of characteristics of programme participants from Management Information (school report forms)

		N	
Total number of Management Information reports		38	
Total pupils (from England)		489	
Total teachers (from England)		108	
		N	Percentage (%)
Pupil gender (from England)	Male pupils	192	39
	Female pupils	297	61
Pupil gender (host country)	Male pupils	1148	51
	Female pupils	1109	49
Teacher gender (England)	Male teachers	32	30
	Female teachers	76	70
Teacher gender (host country)	Male teachers	116	39
	Female teachers	182	61
Number of disadvantaged pupils	Disadvantaged	224	46
	Not disadvantaged	265	54
Length of visit (per school trip)	1–5 days	11	29
	6–10 days	23	61
	11–15 days	4	11
Destination (per exchange trip)	Europe	16	42
	Asia-Pacific	14	37
	Middle East and Africa	5	13
	Americas	3	8

Table 9: Profile of disadvantaged pupils on school exchange visits

		N	Percentage (%)
Total number of disadvantaged pupils		224	
Gender	Male	103	46
	Female	121	54
Definition of Disadvantage used (per school)	Pupil Premium	27	71
	FSM	9	24
	Special educational needs and disability (SEND)	9	24
	Index of Multiple Deprivation	7	18
	Children looked after (CLA)	2	5
	Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan	1	3

Evidence to address the research questions

The following sections outline the implementation of the ISEP. This includes how schools and colleges learnt about the programme, experiences at the application stage, facilitators and barriers to applying, pre-exchange activities, and future support needs at the application stage. Sections also describe activities the British Council completed to facilitate the application process for schools and colleges, methods teachers used to select pupils to go on the exchange, and outcomes and impacts.

1 Knowledge of the programme and understanding of the application process

This section discusses schools' experiences of finding out about ISEP, perceptions of the programme's unique qualities that differentiated it from others, and perceptions of the value it added (RQ2). It also suggests ways the British Council could reach a wider audience in future to ensure scalability and inclusion of the most disadvantaged pupils (RQ6).

1.1 How did schools/colleges learn about the programme?

Administrative data from the British Council showed that applications from schools and colleges were skewed towards exchanges taking place later in the programme timeline. Based on planning assumptions prior to the application process opening, the target was for 70 schools and colleges to receive grants, although up to 140 might participate in the programme. By 31 March 2020, 142 schools had been awarded grants, but only 42 had travelled. The remaining 100 had planned to travel between April and July 2020, which meant that visits were postponed or cancelled once COVID-19 travel restrictions were put in place.²⁰

The British Council promoted the ISEP in various ways including hosting a web page, publishing a ministerial press release, and using marketing platforms like Tes, third-party email providers, and social media. Interviews with teachers revealed that schools learnt about the ISEP from various sources:

- direct emails from the British Council inviting them to apply;
- pages on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter;
- emails passed on to them by other staff;
- information at language-related events, for example, teachers attended events where they were approached by British Council staff and encouraged to apply;
- radio, for example, Radio 4; and
- their own research, for example schools actively looking for opportunities.

While teachers were positive about how they learned about the programme, some felt they had heard about it by chance and could otherwise have missed the opportunity, for example, if they had not been looking or engaged with social media pages. Additionally, some teachers found the ISEP website difficult to navigate and this led to barriers to application completion.

'To initiate the process via the webpage was quite cumbersome. The set up on the British Council website was not quite straightforward. I started the application but didn't continue' (teacher, did not apply).

Evidence from MI data in February 2020 showed that there had been a lower number of applications from schools and colleges than expected for that point in the funding window. This could be attributed to lack of awareness, particularly by teachers from schools with less experience applying for funding who may be less likely to be exposed to the sources outlined above than those in schools actively looking for opportunities. To improve inclusivity, schools with less experience engaging with similar programmes could benefit from additional 'how to get started' web pages and more targeted messaging directed towards them specifically to raise awareness of the opportunity for schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils.

1.2 Awareness of the unique qualities of the programme

²⁰ British Council data showed that, of these 100 schools and colleges, 81 said they would prefer to postpone their exchange and travel before May 2021 whilst two would prefer to cancel and reapply for funding in a new round. The remaining 17 did not respond with a preference.

The programme was designed to include unique qualities and criteria in order to facilitate schools and colleges to apply for funding and include disadvantaged pupils in the opportunity.²¹

Awareness of the unique qualities of the programme varied among school staff who participated in qualitative research. The most common unique qualities they could easily recall were:

- the focus on providing a foreign exchange experience to disadvantaged pupils—some teachers described not having the funding to offer international opportunities to disadvantaged pupils prior to the programme and feeling that it would be particularly valuable for these pupils to raise their aspirations and show them how other cultures live; and
- a flexible approach to exchange design—they liked the non-essential language element as it allowed teachers to be flexible and creative in their approach to designing their exchange.

Teachers who were experienced at applying for grants particularly liked these elements because they were used to international programmes having rigid eligibility criteria; they thought the programme was unique in this way. Despite the low number of applications, teachers who did apply thought the eligibility criteria were fairly open, which enabled flexibility when designing their exchange.

Participants were less able to easily recall other qualities such as the amount of funding available and learning about the overseas seminars to support the formation of partner school relationships. There was evidence from the interviews with teachers that the promotion of the unique qualities of the exchange could be improved, for example, by:

- publishing them more boldly on the British Council's website;
- making web pages easily accessible in terms of language and ease of use;
- clearly highlighting the unique qualities throughout the application form, although this could increase the word count and complexity of the application form; and
- sharing them more frequently on different social media channels, for example, one post per unique quality with signposts to the application form.

The level of engagement the British Council received was positive considering the ISEP is a new initiative delivered in a short time during an unexpected global pandemic. Incorporating the measures above into future promotional activities could help to increase awareness of the unique qualities of the programme among applicants as well as promote the overall programme more widely to other eligible schools that did not apply.

2 Activities completed at the application stage by successful applicants

Sections 2 and 3 relate to the feasibility research question (RQ 3) by outlining barriers and facilitators schools and pupils experienced whilst participating in the programme at the application, pre-exchange, and post-exchange stages.

This first section outlines activities teachers completed to submit their ISEP application and the activities the British Council carried out to facilitate the application process.

Schools that were successful with their application for funding reported carrying out a range of activities to complete their applications, including getting buy-in from senior school leaders and doing research to explore the feasibility of their initial travelling plans. Schools that reported having early buy-in from school governors, teachers, parents, and pupils felt it made the application process easier because they could focus on the design of the exchange rather than needing to spend time convincing stakeholders of the potential value of the exchange. This is discussed further in section 3.1.

Other key activities schools completed to support their application process included:

- seeking stakeholder buy-in;

²¹ See Introduction for detail of unique qualities of the programme.

- research such as flights costs;
- liaising with an existing partner school or finding and establishing the relationship with a new partner school;
- choosing a subject or skill focus area to build the exchange around and planning activities for pupils to participate in; and
- completing risk assessments.

2.1 Seeking stakeholder buy-in—senior school leaders, other teachers, parents, and pupils

Knowing that stakeholders were supportive of the project meant that teachers could pursue the opportunity without the burden of persuading others of its value. Schools that reported having early buy-in from stakeholders said they were able to focus their energy on the design of the exchange, making the application process easier. For schools that did not apply or had difficulty getting stakeholder buy-in, it might be useful to consider developing specific communications that teachers can share with stakeholders to help them see the value of the ISEP. This would reduce the burden on teachers at the early stages.

2.2 Research

Teachers conducted their own research into travel costs and requirements, for example, flights and visas, to complete the application form and estimate any additional costs. This helped them to confidently judge how they might spend the fund if successful and share any additional costs with stakeholders. At this stage they also researched cultural activities that might be interesting for their pupils and how they could make the exchange run smoothly. This required time should be considered an additional activity for teachers, potentially causing a burden that could be a barrier to applying thus contributing to low participation.

2.3 Liaising with a partner school or establishing a new relationship

During interviews, teachers discussed contacting their existing partner school, where they already had one, or doing their own research to find and establish a relationship with a new partner school. During discussions with their partner school, teachers scoped out the feasibility of school-based activities that the two institutions could do together and worked out on-the-ground logistics such as transport.

2.4 Choosing a subject or skill focus area

Teachers decided on a subject or skill focus area to plan the exchange around. This helped teachers to think about the delivery of their exchange and which activities to include that would be relevant. It also helped teachers think through who they might include on the exchange, for example, which staff members and pupils.

Interviews revealed that teachers discussed various ways of choosing which staff members might go on the exchange. Often, subject-focused exchanges tried to include a relevant subject teacher. Where the exchange was based around a skill area, applicants also sought to include relevant subject teachers but chose other staff members based on their experiences of the exchange country, for example, being able to speak the language or being familiar with the country. Pupil selection was usually confirmed upon confirmation of receiving the funding (outlined in section 5.2).

2.5 Completing risk assessments

Applicants carried out safety risk assessments to ensure the various elements they were planning to include in their visit were compliant with their institution's standards. They used this exercise to identify potential risks and establish approaches to mitigate them.

3 Facilitators and barriers to applying

This section explores facilitators for applying to the programme, barriers schools faced for those who did and did not apply, and future support needs to facilitate successful applications.

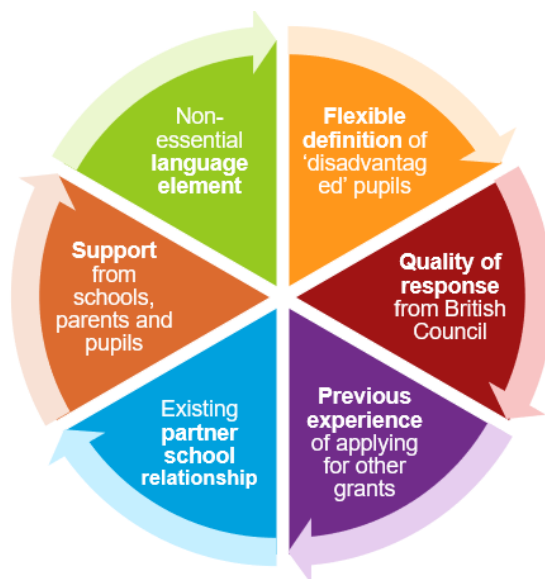
3.1 Facilitators for applying

The programme was considered a positive opportunity for schools and colleges by teachers and senior leaders. As discussed in section 1, key motivations for applying were consistent in interviews with teachers: the ability to give disadvantaged pupils access to international experiences that they otherwise would not have been able to offer without funding and the flexibility of the eligibility criteria, which allowed teachers to be flexible and creative when designing their exchange.

There were six key facilitators that supported teachers who were considering applying for the grant to feel confident to do so:²²

- flexible definition of ‘disadvantaged’ pupils;
- not essential to include a language element;
- support from the school or college, parents, and pupils;
- quality of response to applications from the British Council;
- previous experience applying for opportunities or organising school trips; and
- existing partner school relationships.

Figure 2: Six key facilitators to applying



3.1.1 Flexible definition of ‘disadvantaged’ pupils

The programme enabled schools and colleges to establish their own definition of ‘disadvantaged’ and the more commonly used indicators to select pupils were:

- Pupil Premium;
- free school meals (FSM); and
- single parent households.
- Looked-after children

Pupil Premium was felt to be one of many ways of measuring disadvantage, so a key reason applicants liked this flexibility was because it allowed them to think about the different components of disadvantage most pertinent in their setting and to target where they thought it would have an impact. It allowed them to include pupils from families they described as ‘just about making it’, that is, those who may not have otherwise been included in a formal definition of ‘disadvantaged’.

‘The rules around [the exchange] were flexible enough for us to make [our exchange] fit’ (teacher, exchange to Europe).

3.1.2 Non-essential language element

Teachers were positive about the fact that it was not a requirement to include a focus on language learning. They liked the inclusion of, and emphasis on, providing a cultural experience as they valued experiential learning and

²² Facilitators are presented in no particular order.

felt this would be engaging for pupils. For teachers who were more experienced at applying for funding, this flexibility set the programme apart from others.

'The criteria doesn't tie you down' (teacher, exchange to North America).

3.1.3 Support from stakeholders—staff at schools, parents, and pupils

Some teachers who submitted successful applications felt more confident and able to apply because of encouragement received from a range of stakeholders. They described feeling supported by parents and pupils who were enthusiastic about the opportunity and being given time during working hours to complete the application or getting help completing the application from other staff. They recognised the importance of buy-in from senior staff and acknowledged that this could be a barrier for schools without a history of exchanges. A teacher interviewed at a school that did not submit an application for funding felt it was in part due to a lack of internal support to complete the application.

'The time needed to apply for the grant has put a lot of staff off ... I genuinely don't think they've got the time to do it. If it could be streamlined that could help' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

3.1.4 Quality of response to applications from the British Council

The British Council returned all applications to schools and colleges along with feedback when they did not include sufficient information about the exchange, rather than simply rejected them—a feature that teachers were positive about.

'But some of the financial language can be less straightforward so we needed to make sure we read it carefully—but got advice from the British Council about this' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Where this happened, schools reported receiving clear feedback to guide them on where their application needed further work or more detail. This enabled them to resubmit their applications with the additional information, and some stated that the attention to detail required by the application form helped them to plan more thoroughly.

Some applications for funding do not permit resubmission as it can increase the administrative burden on programme administrators and applicants. However, this unique quality of the ISEP may support teachers with less confidence or experience with their application.

3.1.5 Previous experience applying for opportunities or organising trips

Teachers with previous experience applying for funding opportunities or organising trips reported feeling more confident about applying for the funding compared to those with less experience, either personal or at a school level. Teachers with experience felt able to draw on previous designs or applications so appeared to have a more advanced starting point. They also reported that the application was similar in structure to other application forms they had completed, and this familiarity gave them confidence that they would be able to apply.

'[I was] familiar with the process as I've applied for similar funding; it was straightforward' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

3.1.6 Existing partner school relationship

Related to having previous experience organising trips, teachers who had existing relationships with an international partner institution reported feeling confident about co-designing their exchange with the assistance of teachers at their host school.

'That link [with our partner school] was key in helping us be successful with our trip. If we didn't have that we would have been going out there blind' (teacher, exchange to Africa).

They felt their established relationship eliminated the time needed to establish a partner school relationship that was a good 'fit', which gave them more time to focus on designing the activities, consequently reducing stress associated with applying.

3.2 Motivations for applying

The qualitative research revealed that schools and colleges that applied for the grant were driven by the amount of funding available, the access to opportunity for disadvantaged pupils, and the flexibility of the programme.

Almost all schools that participated in qualitative research reported that they would not be able to offer exchanges to pupils whose families could not pay a proportion towards it without the grant. This was due to a lack of resources and international exchanges not being viewed as priority area for funding, particularly at schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils. Following exchanges, teachers were keen to be able to repeat the experience and pupils expressed enthusiasm about going on another exchange with their school or travelling abroad in the future.

Teachers also highlighted how the programme enabled them to provide a holistic learning experience —a classroom-based initiative combined with practical, in situ learning. They felt this would improve pupils' aspirations about their futures in relation to international travel and their overall global outlook. Teachers reported applying because they saw experiential learning over solely classroom-based learning as incredibly valuable and in some cases noted that parents also shared that value. Teachers hoped the exchange would improve pupils' intercultural outlook, particularly in schools where opportunities for the most disadvantaged to experience travel were low.

'Fundamentally our young people live in an area where aspirations are low, generationally they are low, and opportunity is lacking. So, for us a whole holistic education is about being able to see beyond the horizon so that was a key driver of this project' (teacher, exchange to North America).

Furthermore, schools and colleges saw the value of the programme not just for participating pupils but for other pupils too. They reported hoping that the success of the exchange would enable pupils in lower year groups to feel that opportunity would be available to them in the future. There were aspirations that a successful exchange could pave the way for, and facilitate, future exchanges by increasing staff capability to deliver and pupil demand to take up the opportunity. They also considered that having an established exchange programme could increase the appeal and profile of their institution to prospective pupils as a school that offers international opportunities.

'As a school, we want to have an international outlook. We want to make sure that our pupils finish school as global citizens' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

Additionally, some teachers saw the exchange as a development opportunity for themselves professionally. They were keen to learn about and experience different teaching styles and methods in other countries and hoped they might be able to implement what they learned when they returned home. It was also viewed as an opportunity for less experienced staff to gain the skills and capabilities needed to design and deliver international visits in the future.

3.3 Barriers to applying

Overall, teachers expressed enthusiasm for the programme and had positive expectations of the outcomes for them, their pupils, and their wider school network, which are discussed in section 7. However, despite being positive about the opportunity and overall application process, during the interviews, teachers highlighted some barriers they encountered when completing their application which included:

- lack of clarity regarding application instructions and examples of how to complete sections of the application;
- lengthy response times upon submission of their application; and
- lack of confidence completing the application (mainly among schools and colleges with less experience of organising exchanges).

3.3.1 Lack of clarity regarding application instructions and examples

Some schools and colleges were unsure of how much detail to include in the application. This was a barrier for teachers who were less experienced completing applications for funding programmes like this. They reported having their application returned to them by the British Council for more information. Some teachers—both experienced and less experienced—felt the application form itself was over lengthy and considered this a potential deterrent for teachers who were time-poor or had other school priorities that may take precedence.

'[Completing the application is a] huge amount of work, hours wise, that's been the main hinderance' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

Teachers suggested that having upfront guidance about how much information was expected would be helpful, for example, a word limit for each section of the application and breaking it down into further stages to make it more manageable and user-friendly.

Additionally, some colleges felt the language in the application form was directed towards schools rather than both schools and colleges. For example, in one pre-exchange interview, a teacher discussed how the application used FSM as an indicator of deprivation. They explained that FSM-eligibility was not relevant to post-16 institutions as a recorded measure of deprivation. This in turn caused confusion within the college when they were looking for evidence of disadvantaged pupils. Although teachers generally reported the flexible definition of 'disadvantaged' as a positive element of the programme, in this case there was evidence to suggest that more could be done to ensure inclusion by using a range of examples that reflect the various ways schools and colleges collect data on their pupils.

3.3.2 Lengthy response time upon submission of application

Schools and colleges reported waiting a long time between submitting their application and finding out if it had been successful. This left less time to organise and deliver the exchange within the funding timeframe. In some cases, they felt this impacted their ability to plan as they did not feel they could start spending time planning the logistics of their exchange until they received confirmation from the British Council that they had secured the funding. Once they had received confirmation, some schools mentioned feeling under pressure to plan their exchange within the timeframe because they had less time than they might otherwise have expected. In one case, a school reported receiving confirmation of funding later than expected and had to push the dates of the exchange back to allow enough time to sufficiently plan.

Despite this, feedback from the British Council was described as clear, thorough, and helpful.

'[The feedback came in the form of] "it doesn't meet the criteria because of x but if it had y that would meet the criteria." [It wasn't] particularly emotive or involved feedback but was concise, accurate, and purposeful, which I found useful for the application process' (teacher, exchange to North America).

While feedback on applications was welcomed by teachers and they generally found it helpful, in some cases—where application forms were returned to schools requiring more detail—it added further time to the process. Despite there being no deadline for applications and the published service level agreement (SLA) of six weeks for processing applications, teachers suggested a faster response from the British Council would give applicants longer to plan their exchanges. Less experienced teachers also suggested that sending communication acknowledging receipt of their application would help them feel more confidence around the submission process. It is noted that to provide a quicker response time, more funding would be needed for the British Council to expand their team and expenditure on staffing over grants to schools.

3.3.3 Lack of confidence completing the application form

Some schools and colleges with teachers who were newly qualified, inexperienced at applying for funding, or inexperienced at delivering international exchanges reported a lack of confidence when submitting their application. This was due to being unfamiliar with the process and feeling unsure who to ask clarification questions to for guidance, which was compounded by the long wait times. Despite the support offered by the British Council in the form of a direct contact email available to all applicants, participants felt that having a named contact at the British Council to whom they could have directed clarification questions may have improved their confidence and

helped them overcome this barrier. However, this additional support would require a larger delivery team and, with this, more expenditure on staffing.

3.4 Barriers for schools that did not complete applications

The evaluation included five qualitative interviews with teachers who started but did not complete or submit an application form for funding. These interviews highlighted four additional barriers to successful application completion; addressing these might support all applicants:

- limited experience completing application forms for funding;
- organising the exchange to fit into the school calendar;
- teacher resource to complete the application; and
- restrictions due to the COVID-19 situation.

3.4.1 Limited experience completing application forms for funding

Some teachers discussed a lack of confidence completing the application form due to limited previous experience completing forms for funding. While these teachers felt the ISEP was an opportunity they wanted their pupils to have for many of the same reasons as those who completed successful applications, these teachers were discouraged by the length of the application form and were unsure about the level of detail to include. For schools that did not apply, lack of experience combined with the length of the application and uncertainty about the level of detail to include was a deterrent. As suggested in section 3.3, it could be useful to consider adding guidance establishing a word limit for each section of the application and breaking it down into more manageable stages.

'[I would] appreciate a step-by-step contribution from a [British Council] team member looking at what we can put across, not just leaving it to schools. For example, "let's book an online session or a call, let's see what you have against the requirements. I'm a teacher—there's a lot in my head!" (teacher, school that did not apply).

In addition, facilitating peer to peer application support might help less experienced, less confident institutions feel more able to apply. During the pre-exchange qualitative interviews with teachers who had submitted a successful application, many spontaneously said they would like to support less experienced, less confident teachers complete future applications for similar funding opportunities.

'I've gone to other staff and told them if they want to apply they should come through me because now I've got a better idea of the requirements as I've been through the process twice' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

3.4.2 Organising the exchange to fit into the school calendar

Some teachers that did, and did not, complete the application process felt it was difficult to organise the exchange to fit within the school calendar, which was a requirement of the funding. From the programme administrator and delivery perspective, a multi-year funding window would give the British Council the flexibility to process applications in one year for an exchange taking place the following year.

'[It] would be helpful if the British council could extend the window on when you can send the grant ... a two-year window to allow for planning' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Teachers also reported struggling to convince senior leaders to give them the time to complete the form or to agree to let them apply for the exchange at all due to teaching priorities. They suggested it would be helpful to have more notice so they can get sufficient buy-in from senior leaders and have time to plan the exchange around fixed school calendar dates in advance, which would be possible if a multi-year funding window was established.

Related to this issue was the barrier of local public holidays or school holidays for the host country which had to be worked around. In both instances, pushing exchange visits into national 'holiday' periods pushed up overall costs, which resulted in financial challenges.

3.4.3 Limited teacher resource to complete the application

In some cases, among schools and colleges that completed successful applications, having an international outlook was part of the institution's remit. Generally, in these cases, teachers were encouraged by senior members of staff to actively look for international opportunities for pupils or it was part of a staff members' role to facilitate opportunities like ISEP. This was most likely to be the case in schools that had delivered exchanges before. In interviews with schools that did not apply, it was often the case that teachers were applying for opportunities in addition to their day-to-day role. Linked to previous points about timing and teacher resource discussed above, teachers that did not apply felt it was difficult to find the time to complete the application early enough to be able to organise and deliver an exchange before the programme closed. In one interview, a teacher explained that they were initially given permission by their headteacher to apply for the ISEP however could not find another member of staff to cover their lessons to give them time to complete the application, so were ultimately unable to apply. To address this, funding that covers the cost for a teacher to apply in addition to the cover provided to travel could be beneficial to schools with less spare capacity.

3.4.4 Restrictions due to the COVID-19 outbreak

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in global travel restrictions and prevented some schools from delivering their planned exchange. Others that had not yet applied for funding were deterred for reasons related to:

- pupil and staff safety;
- global infection rates changing frequently; and
- travel guidance changing frequently.

Despite this, qualitative interviews with teachers who did not apply and teachers who were unable to deliver a planned exchange because of the pandemic stated that they would still like to apply in the future.

3.5 Future support needs to facilitate successful applications

Schools that did, and did not, apply for the grant were keen for the programme to continue and had similar requests to help them or other schools like theirs feel more confident applying or reapplying for the ISEP in the future. These included:

- **A named point of contact at the British Council** to enable teachers to resolve queries quickly. This was especially important to teachers who had less experience of completing similar applications—to speak directly to someone and seek clarification on queries.

'I think it's really important to have a named person to speak to [at the British Council]' (teacher, did not apply).

The point of contact could be included in guidance information or on the application form and should include a direct email address or phone number directed at someone dedicated to answering queries within a reasonable and specified timeframe.

- **Optional additional support** for schools that did not apply and less experienced schools in the form of a phased approach involving direct support from the British Council. It was felt that this would be useful to make completing the application more manageable and would make teachers more confident.
- **Peer to peer support** to enable more experienced teachers to provide advice to those who are less experienced at completing applications for exchange funding or delivering exchanges. Some more experienced teachers stated that they were willing to such provide support and less experienced teachers indicated that peer to peer support would be valuable in the future. The British Council might want to consider how best to facilitate support sessions for these groups.
- **Continued funding** to enable schools and colleges to offer a similar opportunity in the future. Almost all schools and colleges interviewed said they would not be able to run the exchange and afford to include disadvantaged pupils in the future without the funding.

'Fundamentally the probability of the [exchanges] happening would be significantly reduced to the point that it would be unlikely because of the funding in schools' (teacher, exchange to North America).

4 Issues relating to scalability and promise

The following sections relate to the scalability and promise research questions by exploring the principles and features that supported uptake and effective delivery of international exchanges, the ways the programme added value over and above support already available to eligible schools, and how the programme delivered the desired outputs as depicted in the logic model.

4.1 Activities completed by the British Council to facilitate the application process

This section discusses school experiences of the organisation and administration of the funding by the British Council and suggests potential ways to address support needs from schools and colleges in the future.

Overall, schools and colleges were positive about their interactions with the British Council. Teachers described being satisfied with the level and amount of feedback they received from the British Council but wanted more timely responses so they could better plan their exchange once they received the grant. Importantly, many of the qualitative interviews were conducted in the early stages of the ISEP funding being awarded. In pre-exchange interviews with teachers as the funding continued to be awarded and after FAQs were published on the British Council's website, there was a noticeable improvement in perceptions of the response time. While participants in the interviews reportedly did not use the overseas seminars to find a partner school or college, British Council data shows that 43 schools who were awarded grants used the seminars to find a partner school.

Schools and colleges found out about the programme through various sources. However, interviews suggest teachers would like to see more promotion of the programme by the British Council in the future. In this context, it is important to understand several challenges that the British Council faced when promoting the ISEP funding. These included:

- identifying schools with disadvantaged pupils without a central database to draw on;
- targeting individuals within schools who could respond to or share the ISEP opportunity with relevant staff; and
- navigating teachers' workload, particularly those who teach at severely disadvantaged schools where exchanges might be deprioritised.

In order to attract applications from schools and colleges as promptly as possible in future rounds, the British Council are considering additional promotion activities for the ISEP. Based on findings from the evaluation, activities that may be worth considering include:

- simplifying the application process;
- more storytelling through sharing successful case studies; and
- providing more information that addresses different aspects of the ISEP and spreading this over multiple webpages to improve the customer journey.

5 Schools selection processes to identify eligible pupils

This section explores how schools established their definition of 'disadvantaged' and identified pupils to offer the opportunity to.

5.1 Definition of disadvantaged

As discussed in section 3.1, schools were permitted to choose their own definitions of disadvantage. Table 10 below shows the definitions chosen by schools in terms of both the number and proportion of schools that returned MI about their exchange visits. Several schools chose multiple definitions of disadvantage to select pupils.

Table 10: Definitions of disadvantage used by schools

Definition of disadvantage	Number of schools	Proportion of schools
PP	27	71%
FSM	9	24%
Special educational needs and disability (SEND)	9	24%
Index of Multiple Deprivation	7	18%
Children looked after (CLA)	2	5%
Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan	1	3%

Base: Summary of 38 school report forms supplied to Kantar by the British Council.

Report form data suggests that the range of ‘disadvantage’ among pupils was considerable encompassing financial, social, emotional and behavioural, learning, and physical disadvantages of varying levels of complexity and requiring varying levels of support. Examples included taking away multiple first-time flyers, pupils who had not stayed away from home (or conversely had to stay outside a family setting so their care needs could be met), those with no passports, and those at risk of exclusion. Without support given via ISEP, these experiences would not be readily offered to this cohort.

One school reported:

‘As one of the most disadvantaged schools in the [local area] this programme has enabled us to fulfil a long-term ambition to run a GCSE language visit to a partner school. This would not have been possible without the funding provided by the British Council and really levels the playing field with schools where parents are able to pay for this sort of trip’ (teacher, exchange to Spain).

Despite this, it was sometimes humbling for pupils who were themselves considered to live in deprivation to contrast this ‘disadvantage’ with that of their exchange partners whose situations could be more disadvantaged.

5.2 Pupil selection process

Schools and colleges reported using a range of approaches to select pupils to take part in the exchange, including formal and informal application processes. Informal processes included:

- conversations among staff to determine which pupils should be a priority for the exchange: this involved discussing which pupils met the criteria the school set for being ‘disadvantaged’ or which pupils they felt would get the most value from the exchange experience; the flexible definition of ‘disadvantaged’ allowed teachers to have these conversations among themselves to determine the most appropriate pupils to invite—

‘Each child had to be considered in light of their own personal circumstances’ (teacher, visit to Asia);

- considering whether to only take disadvantaged pupils or to open the opportunity to all pupils: these conversations were often driven by the proportion of disadvantaged pupils within the school; and
- reviewing pupils’ punctuality records to gauge pupil engagement: one school felt that eligible pupils who had a track record of being punctual would be more likely to engage with the opportunity and take it seriously.

More formal measures taken to decide which pupils to invite included:

- requiring pupils to respond to an open invitation with a letter of interest outlining the reasons they would like to go on the exchange;
- conducting interviews to establish a final cohort to bring based on the number of places the school could afford to offer; and
- asking pupils to outline how they would give something back to the school when they returned, for example, by sharing their experiences with other pupils at assemblies.

In most cases, schools made families aware of the opportunity via email or letter to parents. Some teachers contacted parents directly to give them detailed information about the opportunity in the hope that they would encourage their child to go. There were some instances where teachers spoke directly to pupils with the intention of gauging interest or encouraging them to apply for the opportunity.

6 Preparation activities schools and pupils completed

This section outlines preparation activities schools and colleges completed upon receiving confirmation of their successful application.

Findings from the pre-exchange qualitative interviews revealed that schools identified several preparation activities, which they completed ahead of the exchange. These activities involved engaging with stakeholders (partner school, parents, and pupils) as well as completing important documents.

6.1 Engaging with stakeholders—partner school, parents, and pupils

Once applications had been accepted, schools reported engaging more with their partner institution to organise and finalise details. In some cases, this involved a teacher visiting the partner school as part of a preparation trip to establish or develop the relationship, which was included in the funding. Where teachers did visit their partner school, they were positive about the experience; it allowed them to visualise their exchange and to develop relationships with teachers at their host school. This was particularly important where there was no pre-existing relationship.

'I would recommend [a pre-trip visit to the exchange school]. Going out beforehand and looking at what you want to achieve together ... you could do it all online but going out there and spending time is such a powerful tool' (teacher, exchange to North America).

For some schools, pupils from the partner school visited their school prior to the reciprocal exchange. In these cases, teachers reported it being positive for pupils from England as it helped set expectations for what their exchange might look like by meeting the international pupils beforehand and getting to know them. Teachers in the schools where this happened felt it was particularly helpful for pupils who felt nervous about the exchange, allowing pupils to share interests with each other and to follow each other on social media ahead of their exchange visit.

Schools and colleges organised information evenings to share details of the exchange with parents/guardians and pupils, set expectations, and answer queries. Teachers felt the information sessions were useful for parents and guardians and helped alleviate concerns. Many concerns were about distance, mainly where the exchange was outside Europe and perceived dangers that were particularly apparent where parents/guardians had not visited the country before. Teachers also noted parents' concerns about political situations such as the state of Hong Kong during the protests of 2019, so sessions were helpful to provide reassurance to parents/guardians. In most cases, teachers felt parental engagement was good and that parents were generally enthusiastic about the opportunity for their child. However, some teachers felt that a handful of parents/guardians were less engaged, especially as there was no financial input required from families of disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils were generally excited about the upcoming exchange, however, as it approached, some expressed worries or nerves about travelling. Teachers described ensuring they were available to answer queries or allay concerns and felt it important that pupils could raise issues with them as they came up so they would be reassured enough to go through with the exchange.

'[It was important for us to] have an open door with children in case they were worried about anything' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

In addition to information sessions, schools and colleges prepared pupils by holding pre-exchange meetings, sometimes involving them in activity planning. This included teachers encouraging pupils to practise language skills and learn key phrases they might need in the host country. Some teachers reported trying to pair pupils with a host school 'exchange buddy' based on pupils' interests so they had common ground on which to build a friendship. Another approach tried by at least one school was setting up a club related to the exchange, which enabled participants to prepare through a variety of group activities.

6.2 Completing important documents

Teachers reported many instances where pupils did not have a passport, had not travelled abroad before, or had not left their town or city before. Schools and colleges helped families organise applying for travel documents such as passports, visas, and insurance. In some cases, the school was heavily involved in filling in passport application forms and providing funding. In other cases, schools let families lead but offered guidance.

'A number of our students had never been abroad before. The whole process of us trying to get passports was really, really challenging. We [the staff] were literally holding hands with the students and the parents all the way through the process' (teacher, exchange to Zambia).

Teachers completed additional risk assessments and organised consent forms ahead of the exchange. Where home stays were part of the exchange design, some teachers reported requesting the host school share their

school's safeguarding policy with the host family to ensure each family was aware of expectations outlined in the school's policy so that parents were reassured.

The following sections address the promise, feasibility, and scalability research questions by exploring evidence of intended outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils (despite participation in the programme from disadvantaged pupils being low), what schools learnt from their exchange experiences, and how likely they might be to conduct exchanges in the future, including information, resources, and support required for sustainability.

7.1 Reported outcomes for pupils

This section covers the reported outcomes of the exchange programme based on the qualitative and quantitative findings of the research. Within this, outcomes for pupils, teachers, and the wider school network are discussed in line with the theory of change.

7.1.1 Life skills and interpersonal skills for pupils

This section outlines the soft skills that were reported by pupils and teachers as benefits from the exchange.

Disadvantaged pupils able to have an international experience

It was central to the exchange programme's design—one of its main goals—that a substantial proportion of the pupils who went on the exchange visits were 'disadvantaged', according to the definition of their school. Overall, a main outcome was that disadvantaged pupils were able to go on an international exchange. Data from school report forms show that 45% of the 489 pupils involved fell into this category. As Table 11 shows, proportions varied: seven schools out of 38 reported taking a full cohort of disadvantaged pupils on an exchange compared to three schools that reported having no disadvantaged pupils as part of the cohort that they took on an exchange. For these schools, some teachers noted that disadvantaged pupils initially planned to go on the exchanges but faced additional barriers, for example from pupils dropping out, parents' concerns or administration issues.

Table 11: Percentage of disadvantaged students from the schools and colleges that took part in exchanges (n = 38)

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils within the cohort of pupils on the exchange	Number of schools
0%–20%	9
21%–40%	5
41%–60%	7
61%–80%	5
81%–100%	12

Base: Summary of 38 school report forms supplied to Kantar by the British Council.

In the pre-exchange interviews, teachers communicated two overarching expected benefits of the exchange for their pupils: giving pupils a more global outlook and providing them with new skills. The new competencies included 'life skills' and interpersonal skills to support the young person throughout all aspects of their learning. These expected benefits aligned with the aims of the International School Exchanges programme.

Teachers, particularly those who took a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils, spoke positively about how the funding support had enabled children from more disadvantaged backgrounds to have an experience more often reserved for the more affluent—that it levelled up the playing field between pupils from different backgrounds.

'It's given an awful lot of children the opportunity to do something that would've been beyond the grasp of their parents to do' (teacher, visit to Europe).

There were no targets set for the number of disadvantaged pupils the programme should reach. In fact, this first year was intended to present an opportunity to establish a reasonable target to set for the future. With this in mind, from the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who were able to go on the exchange, there did appear to be potential barriers to high proportions of disadvantaged pupils being part of school exchanges. This may suggest that

schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils face additional challenges to applying for funding. However, it is also important to note the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic: these findings may not be reflective of the planned exchanges (by a total of 142 schools) that were not able to take place.

Reported increased pupil resilience and aspiration

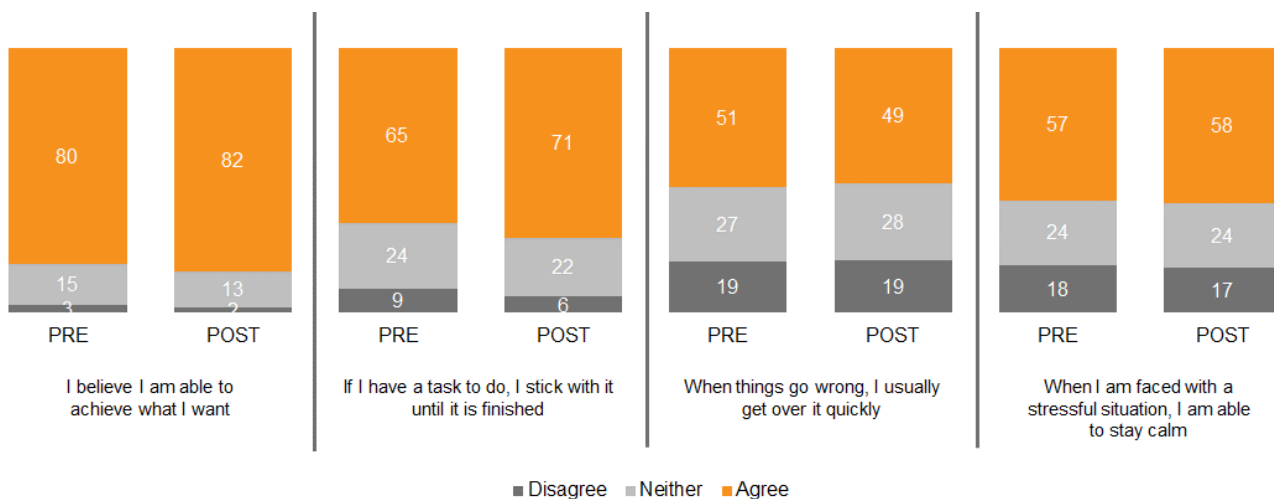
Reported evidence of perceived increased pupil resilience also emerged through the interviews with teachers. These outcomes linked back to pupils' fears of speaking another language and overcoming language barriers as well as being more independent in having to overcome challenges on the exchange and stick at something even if it was initially difficult. For example, some pupils described initially finding the food challenging or unexpected or finding the climate different to England—and getting used to it.

The pupil surveys (pre-exchange: N = 231; post-exchange: N = 165) measured elicited resilience through the four elements displayed in Figure 3:

- self-belief that pupils were able to achieve what they wanted;
- sticking with a task until it was finished;
- getting over things quickly when they went wrong; and
- staying calm in a stressful situation.

According to these indicators, pupils' resilience indicated small and not statistically significant evidence of change as a result of the visits ($p > 0.05$). There was a reported positive effect on pupils' determinedness, with a six-percentage point increase in pupils agreeing that when they have a task to do, they stick with it until it is finished (65% to 71%). Pupil survey data also indicated that most pupils agreed both pre- and post-exchange that they would be able to achieve what they wanted (80% agreed pre-exchange; 82% post-exchange). Furthermore, around half felt that they were able to cope when things went wrong (51% pre-exchange and 49% post-exchange), and slightly more than this were able to stay calm in the face of stress (57% pre-exchange; 58% post-exchange). Caveats on the statistical tests conducted at analysis are included in the analysis section on pupil survey data.

Figure 3: Pupil agreement with statements on resilience (%)



Q14. How far do you agree or disagree with the statements below? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange, 165.

Older pupils showed a greater increase in perseverance after the exchange than other year groups, agreeing they stick to a task until it is finished (71% of Year 12–13 pupils pre-exchange compared with 83% post-exchange). However, this difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This indicative outcome on pupils' resilience may be stronger among the older age groups perhaps because of their greater maturity or because new opportunities for their post school future were imminent (see Table 12).

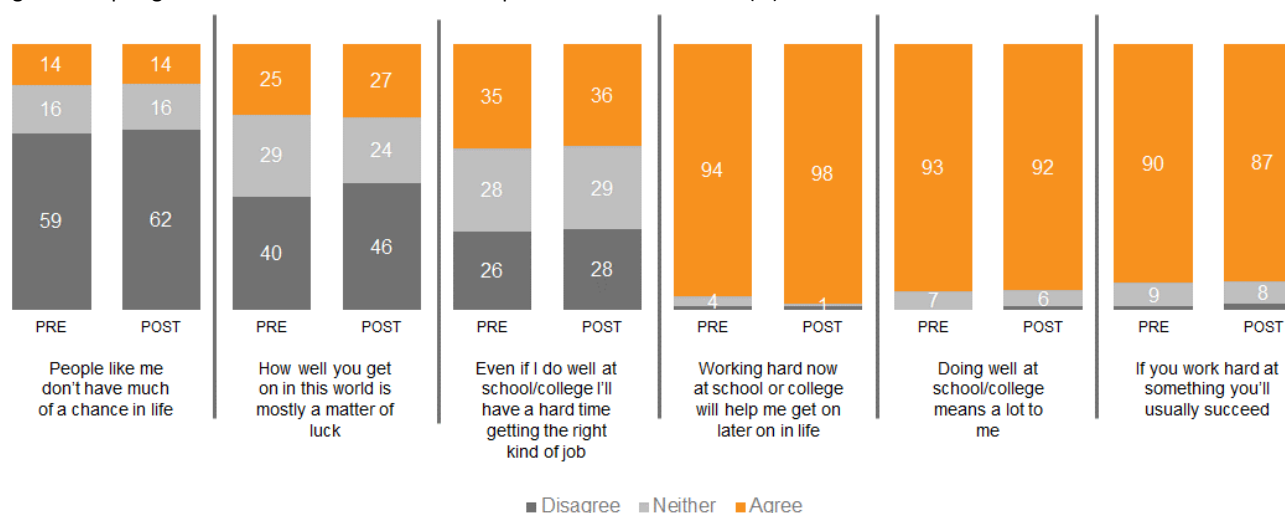
Table 12: Pupil agreement with statement on resilience

% Agree		All	Gender		Year group			Focus		Days away		
		All	Male	Female	7-9	10-11	12-13	MFL	Other	0-5	6-10	11+
Base		396	157	231	114	177	105	59	49	40	83	42
If I have a task to do, I stick with it until it is finished	PRE	65%	65%	65%	61%	63%	71%	-	-	-	-	-
	POST	71%	74%	70%	62%	69%	83%	75%	71%	65%	70%	79%

Q14. How far do you agree or disagree with the statements below? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange (2020), 165.

The pupil surveys also elicited pupils’ expectations for their future and their attitudes towards the value of hard work, as shown in Figure 4. These findings revealed that the majority of pupils involved in exchanges declared generally positive attitudes to work and effort, expecting that hard work and study would reap rewards. Pupils’ opinions on getting a job and the role of luck or chance in life success were more equivocal. However, changes between the pre-exchange and post-exchange results were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

Figure 4: Pupil agreement with statements about expectations for the future (%)



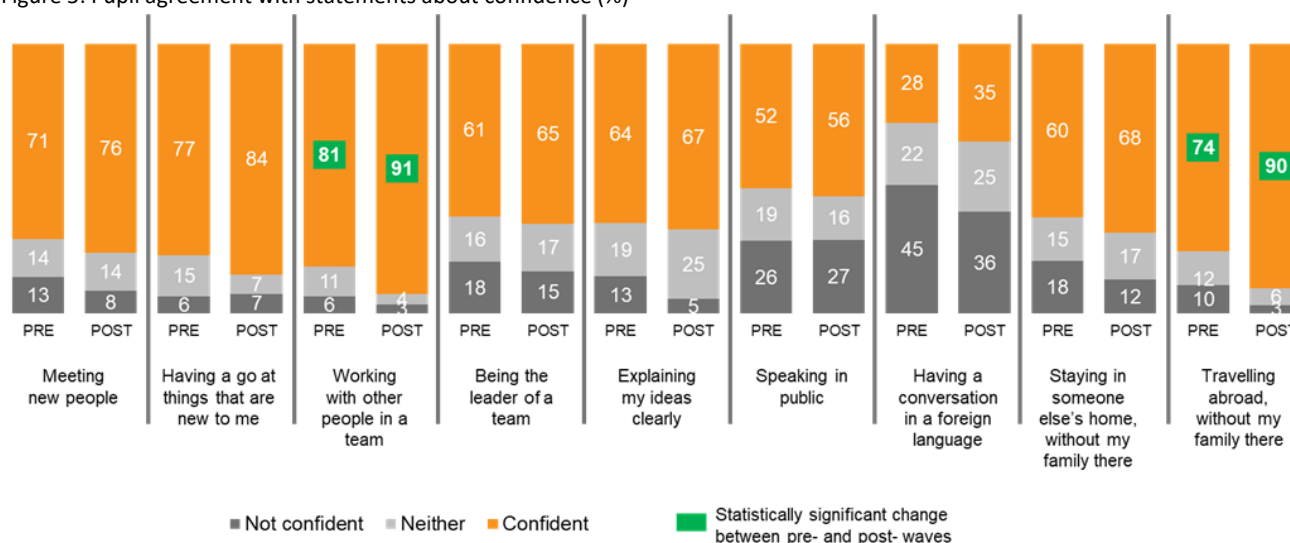
Q15. How far do you agree or disagree with the statements below? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange (2020) 165.

Reported increased confidence

Reported increased pupil confidence (pre-exchange: N = 231; post-exchange: N = 165) as a result of the exchange was noted by both teachers and pupils as an outcome. The report form data noted that nine in ten (92%) headteachers agreed that pupils were more confident as a result of their experiences on the international visit. This was fostered through new experiences that took them out of their comfort zone and in unfamiliar situations. While the process of gaining these skills was sometimes described as initially challenging, for example, experiencing an airport for the first time or through meeting new people and navigating cultural and language differences, teachers saw that pupils were able to adapt to challenging situations and therefore grew in confidence as a result. Pupils were supported to do this by being able to ask teachers and others on the exchange for help when needed and learn to problem-solve independently. As well as confidence to travel or learn a language as noted in section 7.1.2, meeting new people was considered a confidence boost for pupils. On many exchanges, teachers noted how pupils were able to present or speak in front of large groups of pupils and teachers at the partner school, which they would not have had the confidence to do in front of their peers in their home school. This is corroborated by the quantitative research (Figure 5), which found a seven-percentage point increase among pupils saying they feel confident about having a go at things that are new to them (77% to 84%).

‘Talking to people who didn't know English, you had to learn to be confident and teach them phrases’ (pupil, exchange to Asia).

Figure 5: Pupil agreement with statements about confidence (%)



Improvements in other elements of self-confidence were noted among pupils between the pre- and post-exchange surveys, with one of the most marked being working in a team, which saw a statistically significant ten percentage point increase on pupils' pre-exchange attitudes (91% post-exchange compared with 81% pre-exchange, $p < 0.05$). Caveats on the statistical tests conducted at analysis are included in the analysis section. Other indicative improvements, although not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), included meeting new people (76%, up from 71%), explaining ideas clearly (67%, up from 64%), and speaking in public (56%, up from 52%). Teachers and pupils noted that pupils worked together and, despite having different systems and ways of doing things, took care of and supported each other through the experience. Parents also noted improvements in self-confidence, self-reliance, and general attitudes after the exchange.

Such improvements in what might be termed 'life and interpersonal skills' may be as a result of the experiences undertaken during the exchange visit. For example, a pupil on a science-based exchange found that they were able to teach the host country pupils using their skills in public speaking, explaining ideas and subject knowledge. Others talked at host school assemblies or in front of other audiences.

'It was life changing for them ... it's empowering for the teachers to feel like we had a need from our students and let them accept that being vulnerable was an okay thing to be... [then] that cycle of improvement, their confidence levels in terms of how they can embrace new challenges really improved as a result' (teacher, exchange to South America).

'A lot of the pupils that we take away have never been away or been on their own before... it's just them—they're responsible for their documentation, their visas, their passports, their money ... all that personal management and independent skills' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

Some pupils felt they were able to translate the skills they had learned into practical experiences in their home schools through assemblies for schools and the wider community as well as writing articles for local or school papers, magazines, or newsletters.

The pupil survey data found that some changes in confidence pre- and post-exchange related specifically to the experience of being in a foreign country, most notably a statistically significant increase in pupils' comfort in travelling abroad without family present (74% pre-exchange compared with 90% post, $p < 0.05$). Post-exchange, pupils were also more likely to feel confident about having a conversation in a foreign language (28% pre-exchange compared with 35% post-exchange) or staying in someone else's home without family present (60% pre-exchange compared with 68% post). Pupils noted that whilst they were anxious at first, their nerves subsided once the exchange commenced and they were able to meet the host family.

Table 13: Pupil agreement with statements about confidence in travelling abroad by gender, year group, exchange focus, and length of exchange in days

% Confident		All	Gender		Year group			Focus		Days away		
		All	Male	Female	7-9	10-11	12-13	MFL	Other	0-5	6-10	11+
Base		396	157	231	114	177	105	59	49	40	83	42
Staying in someone else's home, without my family there	PRE	60%	67%	54%	56%	65%	56%	-	-	-	-	-
	POST	68%	70%	66%	62%	68%	74%	76%	67%	68%	67%	69%
Travelling abroad, without my family there	PRE	74%	79%	69%	75%	71%	76%	-	-	-	-	-
	POST	90%	95%	88%	81%	91%	98%	93%	90%	85%	92%	93%

Q12. How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange, 165.

7.1.2 Cultural benefits to pupils

Increased global outlook

Exchanges were generally considered by teachers to be a good way to foster a global outlook among pupils. Teachers spoke of many potential benefits and impacts that could result from pupils having a global, outlook including helping them to think about their position in a globalised world; increasing their interest in studying or working abroad; and raising awareness of cultural differences and commonalities. These were considered beneficial to prepare pupils for when they leave school by helping to expand their horizons and raise their aspirations, for example, for future study or travel, which they may not have otherwise considered.

There was evidence to suggest that the exchanges helped pupils to think about their position in a globalised world, which they might not have done before. This had several dimensions to it. On a fundamental level, providing pupils with the opportunity to go on an exchange was important in order for them to visit another country for the first time, or one that they would not have been able to go to otherwise as a valuable part of their education. Teachers spoke about some pupils thinking primarily about their local area rather having an international outlook that considered a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. Therefore, the exchange was a way to excite and engage pupils in foreign travel and expose them to somewhere new and take them out of their comfort zone. This finding was corroborated by the report forms that teachers returned to the British Council where 92% agreed that the international exchange visit was a valuable educational experience for their pupils.

'[About school expectations of the exchange] Children enthused about going somewhere foreign.'
Teacher, exchange to Europe

'They can see themselves as part of a global community now.' Teacher, exchange to South America

Teachers also discussed increased global outlook in terms of understanding the circumstances of those living in other countries and appreciating the opportunities that they have in the England. These were particularly important for exchanges outside Europe where some partner schools had fewer resources than pupils in schools and colleges in England. Pupils in focus groups reported that the exchange raised their awareness of the circumstances of those in other countries, either through the people that they met in their partner school or through travelling to different places and seeing the disparity between rich and poor in a more stark contrast to their home country. Within this, pupils – including disadvantaged pupils – described having a new perspective on their own circumstances and opportunities and felt grateful for what they had. This enabled them to see the advantages and disadvantages of where they lived more clearly.

'Our pupils were really shocked... I don't think they understood the real concept behind deprivation until they had seen that the [foreign] pupils had nothing. When we were having conversations with them after we had been to the community school, they said, 'wow we didn't realise this still happened in the third world' and why weren't they being given opportunities like they had back here.' Teacher, visit to Africa

'Me and one of the older pupils donated spending money to some of the schools because the workers don't get paid that much.' Pupil, visit to Africa

Increased tolerance of other cultures

Teachers and pupils alike noted an increased awareness of the cultural differences and similarities between their host and home country. The differences described were varied and included languages, previously untried cuisine, climate, time zone, and attitudes to education. Despite teachers often planning pre-exchange tasks to prepare pupils for cultural differences, these differences contributed to pupils feeling out of their comfort zone and subsequently offered the opportunity to learn from the experience, try new things, and gain skills.

'The whole purpose of what we wanted to do the trip for was to expose them to something very different, take them out of their norm and give them opportunities that they wouldn't normally encounter' (teacher, exchange to Africa).

'If we went somewhere like that again I'd like to go somewhere similar—like not as privileged as us, to see different cultures and how they survive' (pupil, exchange to Africa).

'[Visiting a market] was a culture shock, it was an eye opener really. It was kind of expected but still a shock to see it' (pupil, visit to Asia).

Although some of the cultural differences were less surprising to pupils, the contrast in attitudes towards education were often not anticipated. In some instances, they were surprised by how much pupils in their partner school appreciated their educational opportunities and the cultural importance of this for these pupils—for example, education being more important for social mobility in different countries and cultures. It also enabled both pupils and teachers to see different teaching styles and ways of presenting. For example, in some cultures they noticed that competition was encouraged more than in their own school or that public speaking was more common. From this, pupils described having a different perspective on their own learning and setting that they may not have had otherwise, noting that they wanted to appreciate their own education more because of the experience and wanted to set a good example to younger pupils in their school. Such learnings may have contributed to the attitudes evidenced by pupils with regards to their own language learning opportunities in their home schools.

'The other kids [at the partner school] had very high work ethic, they were very polite and took their education seriously. [It was] very different to the UK. Lots of them do more studying when they go home' (pupil, exchange to Asia).

As well as developing an understanding of cultural and circumstantial differences between themselves and those at the partner school, common ground and similarities were also apparent to pupils. The longer-term impacts of this are difficult to assess within the timeframe and scope of this evaluation. However, in some instances, experiencing cultural differences helped to break down immediate misconceptions or concerns that pupils had about travelling to another country as they were able to make friends with their partner school counterparts.

'None of them are out to get you really. They're just all nice' (pupil exchange, Africa).

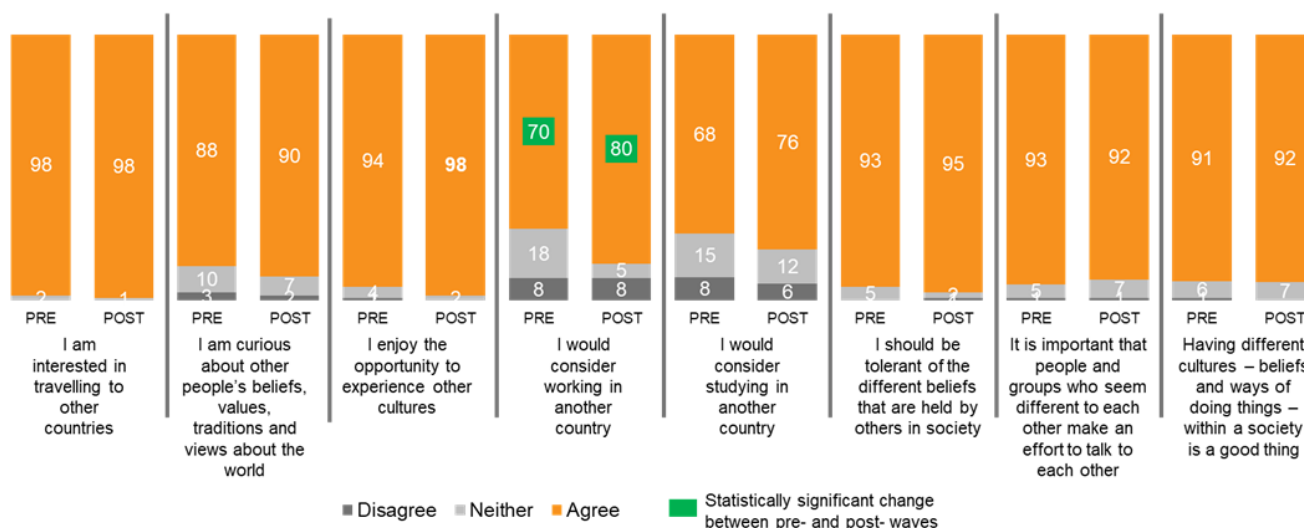
There were also some examples of greater tolerance towards other countries by breaking down misconceptions about cultural differences. Pupils found commonalities in some of the activities they did with their foreign counterparts, for example, although some games had different names, they were surprised to find that they were similar to play and had the same rules.

'I think realising that the world is a small place and people all over the world have much more in common than they have different is a really important lesson' (teacher, exchange to Africa).

Pupils enjoyed the opportunity to experience other cultures and ways of life that were different to their own. Pupil survey data, shown in Figure 6, revealed that pupils were curious about other cultures and that the experience reinforced this concept, with a statistically significant four percentage point increase in the proportion of pupils agreeing they 'enjoy the opportunity to experience other cultures' (94% pre-exchange compared with 98% post-

exchange, $p < 0.05$). Pupils were almost universally accepting of different beliefs held by others (93% pre-exchange and 95% post-exchange) and most agreed that having different cultures within a society is a good thing (91% pre-exchange and 92% post-exchange). However, there were no statistically significant changes for this measure between waves ($p > 0.05$).

Figure 6: Pupil agreement with statements about tolerance acceptance of other cultures (%)



Q13. How far do you agree or disagree with the statements below? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange, 165.

Increased interest in international travel

Linked with developing an understanding of their position in the world, there was some evidence of reported increased interest in learning languages or working abroad. This also connected to the idea of broadening horizons and aspirations of pupils in what they wanted to achieve and opening up possibilities that they might not have considered previously. Language was included in this for schools that went to countries where different languages were spoken. They saw the value of being able to develop different ways of communicating and navigating a new place.

Pupil survey data showed an almost universal interest in travelling to other countries (Figure 6, 98% both pre- and post-exchange), an attitude that was unchanged by their exchange but which may yet be impacted by COVID-19 and its wider impacts across the globe. In addition, post exchange, pupils showed a statistically significant ten percentage point increase in interest in working abroad (70% increasing to 80%, $p < 0.05$) as well as an eight percentage point interest in studying abroad (68% increasing to 76%, $p > 0.05$).

As discussed in section 7.1.1 on confidence, the pupil survey data also showed that pupils felt significantly more confident about travelling abroad without their family present after the exchange (74% increasing to 90%, $p < 0.05$). This suggests a greater sense of independence and desire to travel independently. There was also one example of an older pupil who was motivated to study and look for opportunities abroad.

'Now I know I feel confident to go further away and be on my own' (pupil, exchange to Asia).

'It inspired me ... I've found a scholarship in Seoul ... but before going to China I probably wouldn't have gone through with it on my own' (pupil, exchange to Asia).

Increased interest in languages

As a result of the international exchange, some pupils needed to practise foreign languages both before travelling and while they were abroad, for example, through lessons before going, activities on the exchange, or learning phrases with their partner school. From these experiences, some pupils who engaged in language learning reported having their interest sparked by the experience and a desire to continue to learn more in the future. This was down to seeing the practical benefits of speaking another language and being able to communicate with

others in order to travel more independently; it became a more tangible and valuable skill than might have been previously apparent through classroom lessons.

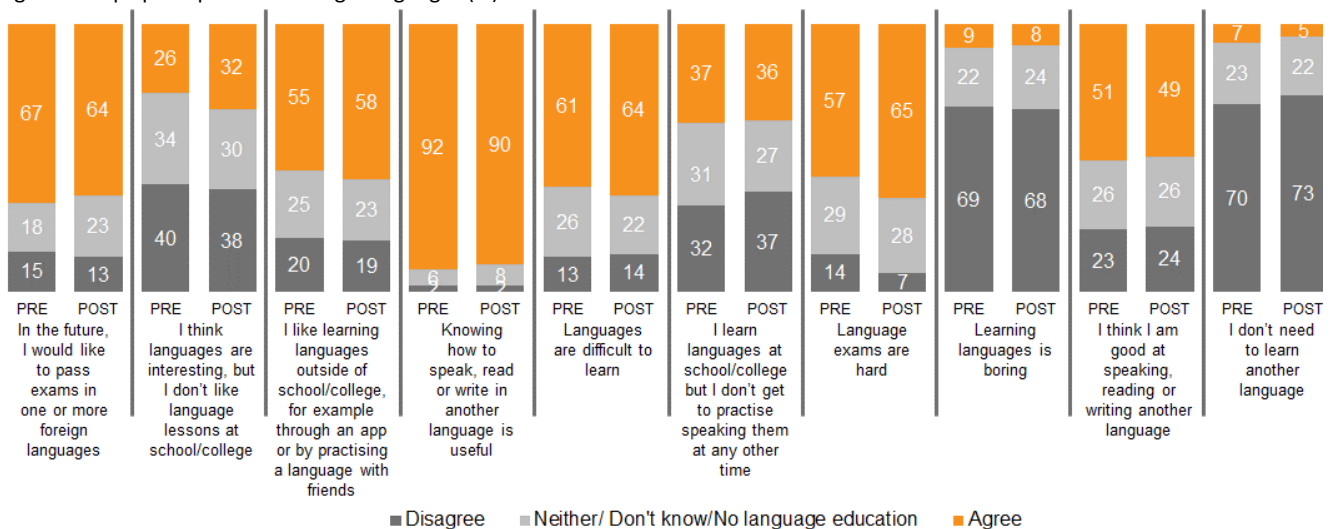
'I'd love to learn more Mandarin. It's really hard to learn but it's actually really nice to ... I'd love to learn more phrases' (pupil, visit to Asia).

'One student told me she wished she had taken Spanish; they see the value of learning another language and have a real interest in it now' (teacher, exchange to South America).

However, there was one instance on a European exchange where pupils reported feeling embarrassed that their foreign language level was lower than their partner school's level of English. This meant that they found it difficult to practise and participate in the foreign language element because of the imbalance in ability. While this did not have an impact on attitude to language learning in the future, it did not spark the interest in the same way as for pupils who went to countries where English was less widely spoken.

The pupil survey data does not show a statistically significant difference in attitudes to languages between the pre-exchange and post-exchange surveys. However, as shown in Figure 7, the majority of pupils agreed both before and after the exchange that knowing how to speak, read, or write in another language is useful (92% pre and 90% post-exchange) and two thirds of pupils said that they would like to pass MFL exams in future (67% pre and 64% post).

Figure 7: Pupil perceptions of foreign languages (%)




Q11. How much do you agree or disagree with the following ...? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange, 165.

There were some interesting differences between those pupils whose exchanges focused on MFL compared with other subject foci, although these should be treated with caution because of the small numbers of pupils in each category. The pupil survey data in Table 14 shows that pupils with an MFL-focused exchange showed a statistically significantly improved focus on their main subject post-exchange than those whose exchanges focused on other main subjects. These pupils agreed they looked forward to their main subject lessons in greater proportions (73% compared with 51%, $p < 0.05$), felt more interested in passing exams (76% compared with 51%, $p < 0.05$), and felt more confident they could do well in their main subjects (81% compared with 63%, $p < 0.05$).

Table 14: Pupil perceptions of main exchange subject (%)

% Agree	All	Focus	
	All	MFL	Other
Base	160	59	49
I look forward more than I did before to lessons in ...	61%	73%	51%
I feel more interested in learning more about ...	81%	81%	82%
I feel more interested in passing exams in ...	69%	76%	51%
I am more confident I can do well in ...	69%	81%	63%


 Statistically significant change between main trip focus on MFL and main trip focus on other subjects

Q10. Thinking just about [MAIN SUBJECT]. Since going on the trip, how much do you agree or disagree that you do the following...? Base: all respondents who completed the post exchange survey: total, 160.

In addition, Table 15 shows that pupils were less negative about school language lessons post-exchange than those whose focus was another subject. One in five (22%) MFL-focused students agreed that languages were interesting but they did not like language lessons at school, compared with half (47%) of those whose exchanges focused on another subject. ($p < 0.05$).

Table 15: Pupil perceptions of foreign languages (%)

% Agree		All	Focus	
		All	MFL	Other
Base		396	59	49
I think languages are interesting, but I don't like language lessons at school/college	PRE	26%	-	-
	POST	32%	22%	47%
I think I am good at speaking, reading or writing another language	PRE	51%	-	-
	POST	49%	59%	37%

 Statistically significant change between main trip focus on MFL and main trip focus on other subjects

Q11. How much do you agree or disagree with the following ...? Base: all respondents—pre-exchange, 231; post-exchange, 165.

In addition, post exchange, pupils for whom the exchange focused on a foreign language demonstrated a significantly better appreciation of their own language abilities: three in five pupils whose main exchange focus was on MFL (59%) agreed they were good at speaking, reading, or writing another language post-exchange compared with 37% of pupils whose exchange focused on another subject ($p < 0.05$). This was corroborated by comments from both teachers and parents supporting improvements in pupil abilities.

'It was an amazing experience to spend a week in a Spanish school and be able to practice my language skills with native speakers. We mixed every day with our new friends and learned a lot about the culture and food of the area. I spent time in lessons and I am sure that I will now do better in my GCSE Spanish than I would have if I had not been on this trip' (pupil, exchange to Europe).

'I loved being surrounded by the French language. I didn't notice my French progressing at first, and I felt a bit worried, but I realized that halfway through the week, I'd managed to have a conversation with one of my exchange's sisters for over an hour! I feel much more confident now

in my ability to speak French and I also understand that even French people don't always have perfect grammar!' (pupil, exchange to Europe).

Increased interest in exchange subject area

Developing skills and knowledge in the subject area of focus were desired outcomes of exchanges. Subject areas varied quite substantially between schools and colleges and how they went about incorporating them into exchanges. For some, subject-based elements were the main focus for both partner school and extra-curricular activities, maintaining the theme throughout the exchange. However, for others there was a specific focus on a subject during time with partner schools, with extra-curricular activities spanning other areas.

Across the board, teachers described high engagement from pupils in this element of the exchange. After the exchange, four in five (81%) pupils who completed the post-exchange survey said they felt more interested in learning the school subject that had been the focus of the exchange visit (see Table 14). Likewise, almost seven in ten (69%) agreed that they felt more interested in passing exams in the exchange main subject since going on the exchange. From the qualitative research, on one exchange focused on climate change, pupils were able to make links between their classroom learning and the pollution they saw in their host country, and teachers noted increased interest in the topic. One pupil described this as—

'quite a big theme in some of the lessons about global warming and helping the environment' (pupil, exchange to Asia).

Alongside greater interest in the subject focus of the exchange, teachers noted examples of pupils showing greater engagement in school more generally as a result of the exchange. In one school that serves disadvantaged pupils, looking forward to the exchange was an incentive for pupils to aim high in their behaviour and attitude to school. In others, going on the exchange provided pupils with soft skills that teachers associated with positive outcomes in their school life and this was described by teachers as helping pupils to be more independent in their learning.

'We hope it [the exchange experience] makes them more successful learners' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

7.2 Teacher outcomes

Teachers interviewed who went on the exchanges also reported positive outcomes for themselves. These included gaining experience organising—and participating in—an international exchange and learning about teaching in other contexts and cultures. In turn, this was seen as a valuable addition to their CV and overall teaching experience. The reported outcomes for teachers are based on views of volunteering teachers who were able to take part in the exchange and therefore could portray overly positive views. These findings must also be considered alongside additional limitations caused by COVID-19, preventing international school trips and further fieldwork.

Career and professional development

The opportunity to organise and go on an exchange was considered a boost to teachers in terms of their career development. This was particularly the case for teachers who were earlier on in their careers and involved in their first exchange. As a result of their experiences, they described greater understanding of the steps needed to run an exchange and how they had gained confidence through having a heightened responsibility for the pupils during the period of the exchange.

'[The exchange] has built up their confidence and that's the same for me, it's really built up my confidence. I've never flown nine and a half hours. Not with pupils anyway. It's a big responsibility' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

Teachers described how they felt the planning process had helped them to acquire new skills and at least one school organised preparatory reading and activities to enable students to understand more about the area and culture of the region and country they were visiting. On top of this, the visits themselves often led the teachers to

report developing softer skills and new knowledge about the culture and society they visited. Often teachers reported that both they and their pupils were surprised by how welcoming and friendly their partners were.

Teachers also felt they gained insights into how teaching was delivered in other cultures and settings or with different resources available. Like the pupils (section 7.1), the teachers noted the engagement of the partner school pupils in their education and gained an insight into the ways that teachers in the partner school taught in their setting. This had some learnings or considerations for teachers to take back to their classrooms—for example, by seeing that the technology widely used in England was not essential to teach the curriculum and that different techniques could be used effectively to present information. In some instances, teachers felt they had built their professional network and added to resources they could share colleagues.

'We will watch and observe the teachers as well. There's a real educational focus on how to improve teaching and learning by comparison' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

Learning about how other schools handle and interact with their pupils was enlightening for teachers who noted that teachers in other countries did not monitor pupil behaviour so closely and relied far more on the pupils self-regulating than getting involved themselves. Teachers were impressed by the behaviour and attitudes of their own and the exchange school pupils, perhaps reminding them to see the better side of their pupils.

'The students consistently exceeded my expectations in their willingness to give anything a go and not to be overly intimidated by new experiences' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Personal pride

Teachers also spoke about how rewarding the exchange was for them. While they acknowledged the amount of time and effort required to plan and execute the exchange, they described a sense of pride and inspiration from seeing the pupils respond positively and benefit from it. From this, the exchange also helped to facilitate better relationships with their pupils, for example, through having shared experiences during the exchange or through being there to support the pupils in challenging situations. Teachers often looked forward to being able to run a future exchange in order to give more pupils that experience and to foster rapport with pupils.

'It was one of the proudest moments I'd had' (teacher, exchange to South America).

Some schools with a long-standing experience of exchanges were proud of their offering and the 'international' credentials this demonstrated, which they considered to be a selling point for the school. However, it was acknowledged that the undertaking was hard work and not without risks (particularly in a perceived more risk-averse time than previously):

'Planning and running the exchange and keeping pupils safe is a huge undertaking' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

7.3 School and college outcomes

Developed relationships with partner schools

Teachers and pupils alike were overwhelmingly positive about the welcome they received from their partner school. Often this was an unexpected element of the trip for the pupils, who were not always sure what this element of the exchange would be like and at times were nervous about meeting new people.

'I enjoyed the school a lot more than I thought I would; there was a social aspect, meeting new people and forming new bonds with them but I didn't expect to enjoy that side of things as much as I did but by the end of the week I was sad to go' (pupil, exchange to Asia).

'The pupils were so nice and kind when we were in South Korea it's made me want to bring that here and make their time more enjoyable' (pupil, exchange to Asia).

Teachers interviewed noted that they particularly appreciated the support they received from partner institutions prior to the visit, for example, by being helped to organise the itinerary or by being provided with local knowledge

and information about transport. In some instances, schools particularly benefitted where the partner was also new to exchanges or where pupils had a similar level of international experience as their pupils. As a result, schools and colleges expressed great interest in continuing links with the partner school they visited on the exchange or with another school that they linked up with while on the trip. The benefits of this related to the desire continue the partnership and the legacy of the visit and foster greater connections and networks between the teachers and schools in the longer term. Schools hoped to do this through reciprocal visits, providing the pupils with the same welcome that they received.

'They were incredibly welcoming, helpful over things like curriculum links and so on ... most definitely we'd like to continue that relationship with the school' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

'If we could get to go back to the school again, we 100% would do ... to continue the partnership' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

Some teachers said their school or college would look at going to a different location in the future, perhaps to create a wider network of exchanges across the world or create new links with other areas. Given the small number of schools taking part in the research, more evidence would be needed to understand the balance between those continuing current partnerships and those looking to diversify their network of partner schools.

The outcomes of the exchange for the school or college were considered by teachers at the application stage and most had planned ways to share the learnings from the exchange more widely. Due to COVID-19 and school closures, many of these learnings were not able to be distributed in the way that was originally planned. For example, school assemblies and school radio presentations were not able to take place and so in most instances, pupils were not able to talk about their experiences with other pupils as planned. However, for schools and colleges that went on their exchanges earlier in the funding period, they were able to put some of their post-exchange activities into action, which involved assemblies with younger pupils, pupils talking to their friends about the visit, and sharing experiences on display boards in corridors. Moreover, nine in ten (89%) headteachers agreed that the international exchange visit had had a positive impact in the school beyond the pupils who took part and some schools encouraged pupils to reflect on their experience and shared this more widely, for example, on social media or through a school newsletter.

'We haven't been able to exploit all of that additional learning outside the classroom yet' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Despite the limitations due to COVID-19, the school report form data showed that teachers could see wider benefits of the exchange for their school in terms of its reputation and the development of its curriculum offer.

'The visit will have long term benefits for the school through our super curriculum, the SMSC curriculum, and our specialist science provision' (teacher, exchange to Asia).

In some cases where there were last-minute changes to exchanges such as pupils dropping out, schools were positive that lessons would be learned. They were keen to use these lessons to improve experiences in future years.

Increased appeal for prospective pupils and reputation of the school

A key benefit to the school, alongside the shared learnings of best practice between the two schools, was that teachers hoped it would help them to be an outward-looking school that adds value to its pupils. This was considered beneficial in terms of building relationships with parents, both current and future, to showcase that the school wanted to give their pupils experiences outside of the classroom. Schools were able to do this, for example, via posting about the exchange programme on social media and sharing the experiences more widely.

'It's a great thing for us to shout from the rooftops [for future pupils]!' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

It was also seen as beneficial for the reputation and Ofsted rating, helping to demonstrate that the institution has a focus on preparing pupils for an increasingly globalised world. Some felt that adding an international element

alongside classroom learning would demonstrate their ability to provide pupils with both theory-based and practical experiences.

'Having an international dimension to your school in this day and age is vital' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

'[It's about] building a reputation as a sixth form where you can learn languages!' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Increased capability to repeat exchanges in the future

In view of the wide-ranging benefits described by pupils and teachers, schools and colleges expressed the desire to run more exchanges in the future. School report form data demonstrated that just under nine in ten (89%) headteachers agreed they are more likely to encourage another international exchange visit as a result of this new programme. Alongside this, qualitative interviews showed that institutions wanted to be involved in further years of the programme in order to give a greater number of disadvantaged pupils opportunities that their current cohort had benefitted from. Furthermore, they thought that repeating would enable them to gauge longer term benefits for the school, provide further opportunities for teachers, and, in some cases, deepen relationships with their partner school, creating a legacy. They also felt better prepared for future exchanges because they had a better understanding of requirements, how to design the exchange, and greater confidence in running it.

'We would most definitely like to take another group out there and hopefully be just as impacting as this trip' (teacher, exchange to Africa).

'I will no doubt do it again, because you get so much from it' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

'It's an absolute no brainer, it's something we have to take advantage of' (teacher, exchange to South America).

Positively, it was noted by teachers in the school report forms that an exchange could have a positive impact on the entire school community, as those who did not take part in the exchange could also be involved when the partner school visited England through various school activities or through meeting partner students in a social context.

However, schools were also clear that future exchanges of this nature would only be possible with funding from the DfE or other sources. This was particularly important given the emphasis on disadvantaged pupils and the financial limitations that many of these pupils faced. In schools that had pupils from different socioeconomic backgrounds, ensuring greater equity between pupils would only be possible with funding and without it they noted that only pupils whose parents or guardians could afford to pay for the exchange would be able to participate.

'A lot of our families unfortunately haven't got the resources to do [a trip] so the grant is massively helpful and appreciated. It does make you step back [when] you think that some of them have never been to London before or on a train' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Some schools noted difficulties with internal school resources that make it challenging to set aside or prioritise funding for international exchanges, considering the other financial demands they face.

'The school hasn't been in budget for ten years despite our best efforts ... the only way we are able to facilitate any international travel is if we raise the money ourselves ... It absolutely just would not happen without British Council funding' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

There was also evidence to suggest that schools and colleges were concerned they would not receive funding in future years because they had received it in the current year. Therefore, reassuring schools and colleges regarding what they are and are not eligible for regarding future funding for subsequent years may be beneficial. That said, teachers expected there to be practical barriers to repeating the exchange in the short-term due to COVID-19.

7.4 Implications of outcomes on the wider sector

Increased equality of opportunity for pupils from all backgrounds

There was some discussion about the wider implications of grants for programmes like the ISEP that support disadvantaged pupils' access to opportunity. As noted in section 3.3, schools and colleges often did not feel able to prioritise funding for international exchanges alongside other competing priorities. This has the potential to exclude those pupils whose parents or guardians would be unable to financially contribute towards it. In one interview with a teacher, it was suggested that opportunities like the ISEP provide experiences that have longer-term benefits for disadvantaged pupils, such as an increased social mobility, by enabling them to access better opportunities in the future—for example, higher education and jobs that are more easily-accessed by their more privileged counterparts. Whilst this potential outcome was noted, evidence of any impacts would fall outside the scope and timeframe of this evaluation.

'When you've got children who can talk on a level playing field about experiences and trips they've had, that's where most people that are aspiring into professional services fall down because they haven't had that enrichment ... they've not got something that they can say, "When I went to Iceland, I learnt such and such." It allows them to talk on a level playing field with those who may travel all the time and for whom it's not an unusual experience. That's why it's very important for kids who are very disadvantaged to have as many experiences as they can' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

'By providing our kids with these experiences, they have some chance of being able to hold their own in a middle-class conversation' (teacher, exchange to Europe).

Raised profile of, and interest in, international exchanges

Experiences of the ISEP were overwhelmingly positive and resulted in reported outcomes for pupils, teachers, and institutions. Schools and colleges had formal plans to disseminate the message of their successful exchanges, although some had been paused due to COVID-19 as discussed in section 7.3. Furthermore, teachers and pupils discussed how they had shared their own experiences more broadly amongst their peer networks. Future widespread dissemination of the message of the value of ISEP could increase future interest in the programme and international travel more broadly. Furthermore, one of ISEP's unique qualities—being able to include disadvantaged pupils based on a school's own definition of 'disadvantage'—could raise awareness of the inequality of in-school opportunities between pupils and lead to further focus on providing support to enable these. These potential outcomes are beyond the scope of this evaluation.

Increased network of institutions with the capability to deliver international exchanges

As noted in section 3.4, a significant barrier to delivering international exchanges for schools and colleges was a lack of experience. There was evidence to suggest that the skills and confidence gained by teachers and schools through participating in the programme would be useful for the future should further funding become available. This confidence extended to all activities involved, from completing the application form for the grant to designing and delivering the exchange. Should this upskilling of institutions involved in the programme lead to the delivery of regular exchanges, this could have a positive impact on the sector by increasing the capability on institutions to offer international experience. This is a long-term potential impact and beyond the scope of this evaluation.

Discussion

Promise

Findings are limited to those that took part in exchanges and the evaluation, both of which were significantly affected by COVID-19. However, from the self-reported data available there is evidence to suggest positive pupil and teacher attitudes towards the exchange. As discussed in section 7, these positive attitudes largely focused on soft skills of pupils, for example, giving them an experience of another culture that they had not been able to experience before, increasing their global outlook, and growing their confidence through experiencing challenges and cultural differences as part of the exchange. In some cases, age also appeared to play a role with older pupils experiencing fewer challenges in building confidence or overcoming difficulties with being away from home for the first time, for instance.

Attitudes towards the curriculum areas of focus were mixed and were influenced by the design and focus of each exchange, for example, what the related activities involved were and how prominent these activities were amongst other non-curriculum-related activities. From the limited evidence, it appeared that where pupils were focusing on that curriculum area as part of their studies, engagement in the subject area was greater and felt more relevant to pupils. A curriculum focus that was closely aligned to the culture and place that pupils were visiting was also generally perceived positively.

Teachers perceived there to be additional benefits for pupils from the international experience. This included focused time away from classroom-based learning in England where pupils and teachers had a shared experience. In some cases where schools used formal application processes to select pupils, the exchange added an incentive to pupils to improve attendance or behaviour before the exchange. Some teachers reported wanting to raise pupils' aspirations for their future. Schools, including those that already offered foreign trips to pupils, viewed the fund as enabling their disadvantaged pupils to have an experience that other pupils from more affluent backgrounds would be able to access more easily. These elements were reported as adding value over other forms of support that are available to schools.

Overall, teacher and pupil attitudes towards exchanges were highly positive both before and after travelling. Teachers and pupils reported that they would be open to going on exchanges in the future. This was especially notable for teachers where a lot of additional work was involved in organising the exchange for pupils and therefore suggests that the value of the exchange outweighs the difficulties in organisation and logistics for some.

Feasibility

Despite the lower number of applications received earlier in the funding period and the planned exchanges that could not take place because of COVID-19, the outcomes for schools, teachers, and pupils demonstrate the programme's success at pilot stage. Teachers' anticipated outcomes for pupils were largely realised and evidenced in the form of reported increased pupil confidence with, and tolerance towards other cultures, increased pupil resilience, and increased pupil intercultural outlook. Additionally, evidence suggested that the programme successfully supported schools and colleges to view exchanges as a valuable experience for their pupils, increased their capability to deliver international exchanges in the future, and increased awareness of teaching in other countries.

There was evidence to suggest that the programme included disadvantaged pupils in international exchange opportunities and that schools and colleges would not have otherwise been able to include these pupils. However, more could be done to engage and include schools where international exchanges are less of a priority to ensure more schools and colleges with severely disadvantaged pupils are given the opportunity.

Teachers who had successful applications and teachers who did not apply faced similar barriers at the application stage:

- limited initial awareness of the programme and its unique qualities;
- lack of support available at application stage from a named contact, particularly for less experienced teachers and for schools that did not apply;

- lack of experience completing applications for funding;
- inflexibility around exchange delivery dates to fit in with the school calendar and teaching priorities; and
- the COVID-19 outbreak.

Awareness of the programme and its unique qualities

The evaluation provided evidence to suggest more could be done to actively target schools and colleges with large numbers of disadvantaged pupils to apply for the programme. Analysis of the interview data revealed that teachers often reported being unaware of all the unique qualities of the programme, indicating that they had not come across, or engaged with, some of the marketing activities that highlighted these. This suggests that schools/colleges that did not apply could also be unaware of the unique qualities of the programme and might be more likely to apply if they were aware. To be more inclusive in the future, the British Council should consider directly contacting schools and colleges with information about the opportunity, the funding available, and the support provided to complete the application, find a partner school, and deliver the exchange. This could be done by using case studies and sharing success stories and identifying staff members within schools to share opportunities with directly. Due to school administrative processes and data protection, the authors are aware the feasibility of collating such a database may be out of scope.

Lack of timely support available at application stage, particularly for less experienced teachers and for schools that did not apply

Although teachers were largely positive about the response time from the British Council as the application stage progressed and FAQs were shared, teachers expressed a desire for a key contact who could provide quick responses to queries. Providing this would require additional resources but would enable teachers to feel more confident about their applications and understand where they are in the process in relation to the funding being awarded.

Lack of experience completing applications for funding

Teachers with less experience of organising and delivering international school exchanges were keen to have more guidance on applying and designing their exchanges and teachers with more experience were willing to provide support. Facilitating a community of teachers willing to offer support might improve teacher's confidence in their application and increase engagement from 'novice' schools.

Inflexibility around exchange delivery dates to fit in with the school calendar and teaching priorities

A particular barrier for schools that did not apply for the programme was fitting the exchange around fixed term dates. Providing schools and colleges with more time to plan their exchange might give them more time to plan their exchange around their school's calendar. This could be achieved by advertising the opportunity an academic year in advance or extending the time allowed to spend the funding.

Funding is an essential component

Funding was highlighted as the most important form of support: without DfE funding, many exchanges could not have taken place.

The amount of funding was generally acceptable to schools and they were able to adapt the number of pupils that they could take on the exchange to fit within their allocated budget. Overall, the amount of funding—£10,000 for short haul and £15,000 for long haul—was seen as sufficient for schools and colleges to complete the exchange.

In addition to the above, providing a multi-year funding window would give schools more time for advanced planning in order to fit the opportunity around the school calendar and encourage stakeholder buy-in. It might also encourage less confident teachers, schools with immovable calendar dates, and more disadvantaged schools and colleges to apply in the future.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 outbreak presented a unique barrier to schools' and colleges' ability to deliver their planned exchange or apply for the programme. Despite this, teachers whose trips were affected by the pandemic were still enthusiastic about applying for the funding in the future. However, they also acknowledged that the programme may continue to be affected by the pandemic causing further delays to planned exchanges.

Teachers and pupils were overwhelmingly positive about the ISEP in terms of how they might talk about the programme to others, demonstrating how attractive the programme is to stakeholders. During qualitative interviews many teachers shared their hopes of being able to apply for the funding again and pupils were enthusiastic about going on another exchange with their school.

Scalability

The impact of COVID-19 on this programme was significant—both in terms of planned exchanges that could no longer take place and the impact that this had on those able, and with time available, to take part in this evaluation. There are, therefore, limitations to the research: findings are from a smaller sample than that outlined in the Evaluation Plan. This assessment of the programme's scalability in terms of its replicability and affordability should be considered alongside these caveats.

The likelihood that schools or colleges will repeat the exchange

Despite these limitations, findings suggested that the programme delivered opportunities to disadvantaged pupils and provided wider benefits to teachers and schools. As a result of this, teachers that organised the exchanges became advocates for future exchanges, speaking highly of the outcomes it had for them, their pupils, and the wider school. Interviews with teachers demonstrated how extensively learnings from the exchange could go beyond the length of the trip, for example, with assemblies or presentations organised—even if these were postponed in some cases due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of these outcomes, and their greater knowledge and experience of organising these exchanges, teachers were eager to repeat the experience at the next opportunity.

The emphasis on disadvantage is attractive to schools

The focus on disadvantaged pupils as a key feature of the programme was appealing for schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils or those with wide disparities between what different parents or guardians could afford. For those who went on the exchange, teachers noted that communications were explicit in demonstrating that this was a key focus area. However, for those who considered making an application but did not apply, this feature was less well known, suggesting that communication or messaging may not always be reaching those who are making the application. For example, one suggested that communication often went to the headteacher whereas their role as the school's global coordinator would make that communication more relevant to them. This is clearly a challenge for any delivery organisation to ensure that communications reaches the appropriate individual within a school.

With regards to disadvantage, the British Council may wish to continue to monitor the proportion of disadvantaged pupils that participate in exchanges. The finding that just under half of those taking part in exchanges were from disadvantaged backgrounds may not be representative given that many exchanges were not able to take place, however, it will be an important metric for understanding reach and impact on disadvantaged pupils in the future. Extra support for schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils may be considered in order to increase engagement of the most disadvantaged pupils, for example through greater support with their application or case studies of what other schools like them have organised in order for them to have better expectations of what the exchange involves.

Further support is also needed for schools and colleges

When asked what advice they would give to other schools organising an international exchange, teachers who had organised and delivered one were positive about the opportunities it would give to pupils and the wider school.

However, they were also pragmatic about the amount of work and planning involved within the given timeframe. Therefore, they often advised other schools to be thorough in their planning of the itinerary and to make the most of their partner school. Some teachers noted that pre-existing links with a partner school was an advantage that they had which may not be possible for others.

Schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils that may not have international links or experience applying for funding may need additional support from any delivery organisation in applying and using the funding available. Giving schools examples of what an exchange may look like through case studies and experiences may be a useful tool for those applying. Alongside greater resource from any delivery organisation to support a larger number of schools and colleges applying for funding, this may help the programme to be scalable and able to reach more of its intended audience of schools.

Potential for ongoing disruption to travel due to COVID-19

The ongoing disruption to travel caused by the COVID-19 pandemic creates clear challenges for international school exchanges. Teachers reported these challenges being particularly stark for school-led exchanges with advice from local councils, concerns from parents and the necessity for risk assessments. From this, they predicted that the ability to go on an international exchange would be slower than general international travel taken by individual families. In view of this, the ISEP may face risks in terms of scaling up - in that any delivery organisation and schools might end up investing time and resources into planning exchanges that may not be possible.

Conclusion

Formative findings

This section outlines suggestions to improve the intervention.

The ISEP was unique in that it offered an opportunity for schools and colleges to take disadvantaged pupils on an international exchange—an opportunity many teachers said they would not have been able to offer if the funding was not available. While the opportunity was specifically open to disadvantaged pupils, there is evidence to suggest that schools and colleges with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils did not apply. This evaluation report highlights various reasons for this. Schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils might face additional barriers applying for programmes like the ISEP because international exchanges may be less of a priority or because teachers were, perhaps, not aware of opportunities like ISEP or were less experienced applying for this funding. While out of scope for this evaluation, additional research that explores barriers for teachers at schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils might further help to design programmes that are as accessible and inclusive as possible.

Some teachers were unaware of some of the unique qualities of the programme, particularly the amount of funding available and the overseas seminars. Despite this, they valued the unique qualities of the programme they were aware of: the flexible definition of ‘disadvantaged pupils’, which they felt made the eligibility criteria for pupils more inclusive, and the flexibility of approach to how the funding was used, which allowed them to be creative in the design of the exchange. Considering additional ways to promote the unique qualities of the exchange might encourage more schools and colleges to apply. As outlined above, additional activities might include:

- publishing unique qualities more boldly on the British Council’s website;
- making web pages more easily accessible in terms of language and ease of use;
- highlighting them more clearly throughout the application form; and
- sharing them more frequently on social media.

Reaching out to individual contacts within target schools, or schools in target areas, to encourage participation and providing tailored support. In addition to the unique qualities of the programme, there also appeared to be a lack of awareness from schools that the scheme was funded by the DfE. A further piece of research could explore whether adding this had any influence on engagement with the programme and willingness to apply and participate.

Overall, there is evidence to suggest that the predicted outcomes for pupils were largely achieved. Teachers and pupils reported improvements in pupils’ soft skills such as increased confidence and resilience, tolerance towards other cultures, and intercultural outlook. There was also some evidence of positive longer-term impacts, for example, increased interest in the subject focus area of the exchange. Conducting a follow-up evaluation, allowing more time to pass since the exchange, would provide more substantive evidence of longer-term impacts for pupils.

Teachers generally felt there were additional benefits of the exchange for schools and teachers. These included:

- developing and strengthening their relationship with the partner school or college;
- gaining a better understanding of the curriculum and experiences of international students who visit their school; and
- schools and colleges becoming more outward looking having used the ISEP: for example, using the experience to attract potential new pupils and improve Ofsted ratings.

Barriers to applying for the ISEP

Schools and colleges hoped to be able to repeat the exchange for the reasons discussed above. However, teachers identified practical barriers that may prevent them from doing so. Principally, many felt they would not be able to deliver another exchange that included disadvantaged pupils without funding. They hoped the funding would continue so they could offer the opportunity.

Confidence was another key issue when applying. Some teachers reported a lack of experience applying for such funding opportunities. Others were not confident about the level of detail to include and ultimately had to revise their application forms. A perceived long response time between submitting their application and confirmation of the funding made some teachers—including those who were more experienced at applying for similar programmes or funding—feel uncertain and affected their ability to deliver their exchange. Shortened response time to process applications and award funding, and confirmation upon receipt of the application, were suggested as ways to alleviate concerns. Additionally, some more experienced teachers spontaneously offered to help less experienced teachers complete their application as they felt so strongly about the positive impacts for pupils. Facilitating this peer to peer support might encourage more schools with teachers who are less confident or experienced to consider applying for the ISEP or other exchange programmes.

Increasing teacher burden and resourcing in schools is always an important consideration when engaging schools and colleges. There is limited external intervention that programme facilitators can do to help schools and colleges prioritise opportunities like the ISEP. However, this evaluation identified some practical changes that might be made to lessen the burden on teachers, particularly where international exchanges are not seen as a priority or as part of the school remit. These include:

- breaking the application down into manageable parts;
- sending reminders of the application deadline; and
- extending the exchange delivery dates so teachers can get buy in from stakeholders and plan the exchange around fixed events in the school calendar.

Limitations of the research

By 31 March 2020, 142 schools had been awarded grants but only 42 had travelled: the remaining 100 were due to travel between April and July 2020. At this point, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in global travel restrictions and prevented the majority of schools from delivering their planned exchange, which impacted the number of planned interviews this evaluation was able to undertake. This has impacted the overall robustness of the evaluation by reducing the sample size of participants contributing to both quantitative and qualitative elements. Additionally, the altered context in which foreign travel can currently occur (at the time of writing this report) could have implications on the relevance of findings and their applicability to similar programmes in the future. Therefore, whilst there was agreement across evaluation strands, data should be read taking these caveats into consideration. However, findings can be used as indicative evidence of programme outcomes. Furthermore, it should be noted that both teachers and pupils reported feeling positive about going on an international school exchange again in the future when it was safe to do so.

Qualitative pre-exchange interviews were conducted with teachers, but the evaluation did not include pre-exchange interviews with pupils to reduce burden, therefore the evaluation only captures post-exchange views from pupils. However, the quantitative data includes pre- and post-interviews with pupils to mitigate this, notwithstanding other limitations noted in the analysis section including a lack of counterfactual group and other explanations for change between waves.

Alongside capturing further evidence of outcomes and impacts of the ISEP on a larger scale, future research may wish to consider pupils' and schools' attitudes towards international exchanges in the years following COVID-19 to understand if there are longer term impacts or practical barriers. Additionally, given the variety in the number of disadvantaged students going on exchanges across the different schools and colleges, monitoring and understanding how schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils can further be supported and encouraged to take part in the programme would be welcome.

The evaluation sought to evaluate the programme in relation to pupils who went on exchange visits from England, Therefore the evaluation does not include comparable experiences from students who visited England as this was not a requirement of the ISEP programme.

References

The British Council (2014) 'British Council says "bring back school exchanges"':

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/contact/press/british-council-says-bring-back-school-exchanges>

The British Council (2014) 'Research and Analysis on the Benefits of International Education Opportunities':

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/literature_review_on_opportunities_for_international_experience_cfe_research_and_lse_enterprise_0.pdf

The British Council (2014) 'Research and Analysis on the Benefits of International Opportunities':

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research_and_analysis_on_the_benefits_of_international_opportunities_cfe_research_and_lse_enterprise_report_0.pdf

The British Council (2018) 'Language Trends Survey 2018': <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/research-reports/language-trends-2018>

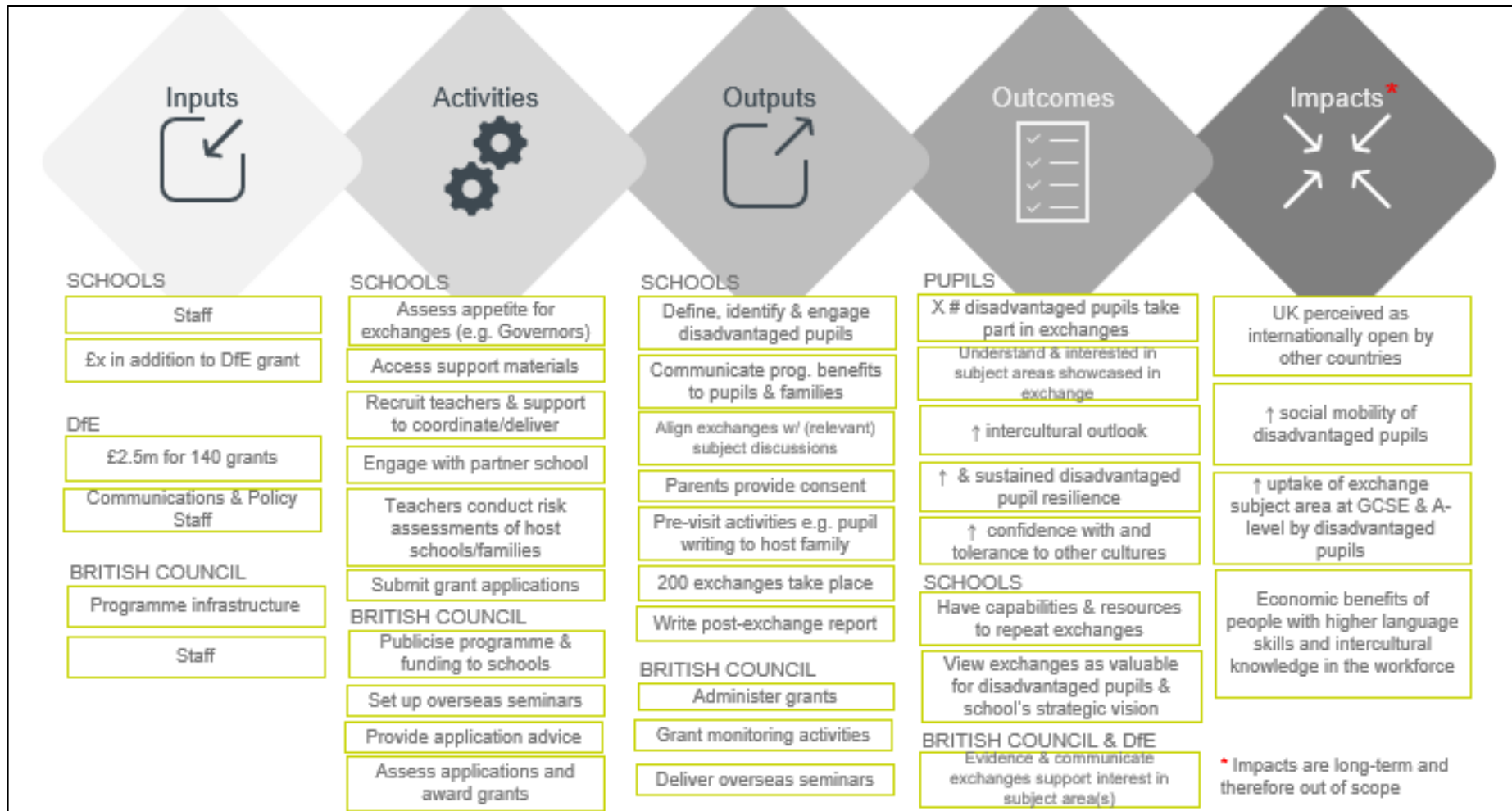
EEF (2019) 'International School Exchanges Programme Evaluation Plan', London: Education Endowment Foundation:

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Protocols/ISE_evaluation_plan.pdf

Department for Education (2019) '£2.5 million to boost international exchanges for schools':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/25-million-to-boost-international-exchanges-for-schools>

Appendix I – Programme Logic Model



Appendix II – Recruitment Materials

Information sheet for schools

KANTAR

*Schools & Teachers
Information Sheet*

Research on the International School Exchanges Programme



What is the programme?

The Department for Education has allocated £2.5 million to a programme that aims to enable secondary school and college pupils in England aged 11-19 to take part in an international exchange, who would not otherwise have gone on an exchange. The British Council is delivering the programme.



What is the evaluation?

The Education Endowment Foundation asked the research agency Kantar to independently evaluate the programme. The evaluation aims to understand people's experiences of delivering and taking part in an international school exchange. We want to know what is working well and what can be improved.



What are the benefits of taking part in the research?

This is your opportunity to have your say about how the programme works! We welcome your involvement in this research. Your views and feedback will play a key role in helping to shape and improve international school exchanges for other schools, colleges and young people.



What is involved for the school/college?

All schools are asked to do the following:

Management information: British Council will ask you to fill in and return a report form within 4 weeks of the visit.

Telephone discussion with school leaders: If you are coordinating an exchange and/or were involved in applying for the funding, we may invite you to take part in a 45 minute discussion about your views and experiences.

Support administering surveys: We will provide you with online links for pupils to take surveys before and after the visit and are grateful for your support in administering them in school time. We will also ask lead teachers to take a survey 3 months after the visit.

Support coordinating discussions: We greatly appreciate your support in coordinating the logistics of teacher discussions, and pupil groups (if relevant).

A small number of schools and colleges will also be invited to take part in a case study:

Case studies: Your school may be invited to take part in a case study. Each case study will include: 1) A pre-exchange telephone interview (lasting 45 mins) with staff leading the set-up of the exchange, and 2) A post-exchange visit, involving 2 pupil focus groups (each lasting 45 mins, and comprising 4-6 pupils) and 2 staff interviews (lasting 45 mins).



What is involved for pupils?

Survey of all pupils who take part in an exchange: We will gather opinions and experiences from pupils who went on exchange through a short online survey. We will be asking participating schools and colleges to send an invitation link to all pupils, shortly before the trip and again 2-3 months after the trip. This will give pupils the opportunity to share their views and experiences about the exchange. The survey will take about five minutes to complete.

Small group discussion with some pupils: We may ask your school/college to take part in a short case study. The case study will be used to understand pupil experiences of the exchange both before and after the visit. Pupils may be asked to participate in a small group discussion with some of their classmates. This will be facilitated by a Kantar researcher.



How will information be used?

No information that identifies pupils, teachers, schools or colleges will be shared outside the research team.

You can decide not to take part at any point. If you do not want to take part in the research, please tell the individual leading the international exchange in your school or college.

Pupils will be able to decide whether they take part in each element of the research. We will provide a letter for schools/colleges to send to parents so they can withdraw their child from the research, if they choose.

Email the research team on ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com with any questions.



How to administer the pupil survey: Instructions for teachers



All pupils going on an exchange will complete an online survey both before and after the exchange visit. The survey should be completed in school time. If this is not possible because of the nature of IT facilities or pupil access requirements, then please contact ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com to discuss an alternative approach.



Why are pupils being asked to do the survey?

Kantar want to measure whether pupils report any immediate changes in their thoughts and feelings after going on an international school exchange visit. The best way to measure this is to ask pupils directly about their views and experiences both before and after the exchange visit. This survey is vital to the evaluation and will help us assess the International School Exchange programme as a whole. We are very grateful for pupils' time and effort in filling in the survey and for teachers' work to administer it.



When do pupils need to take the survey?

Pupils need to take the survey twice: once before the exchange visit and then once approximately 3 months after the exchange visit. There will be two separate web links for them to use. You will find these links on the bottom of the cover letter or email in your evaluation pack.



Doing the survey

Once they click on the link, the survey will begin immediately. Pupils should do the survey without talking to anyone else as we want to understand what they think without the influence of other pupils' or teachers' views.

The survey will take 5-10 minutes. We have provided a copy of the questions in the evaluation pack so that teachers and parents can be reassured that the content of the questionnaire is appropriate for children.

Please make sure the pupils know that they need to finish the questions and press the "submit" button at the end.



Data protection

The survey is anonymous and does not collect any personal information about pupils. For full information about the collection, processing, storage and use of data, please see the privacy notice in the evaluation pack. GDPR legislation does not require schools to get opt-in parental consent for children to participate in the survey. However, we recommend that schools leave time for parents to let teachers know if they do not want their child to take part.



On completion of the survey

Pupils will submit their own responses online so there is no need for teachers to do anything further.

Information sheet for parents/guardians

KANTAR

Pupils, Parents & Guardians Information Sheet

Research about your international exchange



What is the international schools exchange programme?

The Department for Education has given money to a programme that wants to help pupils aged 11-19 to go on an international exchange. The British Council is delivering the programme.



What is the evaluation?

The Education Endowment Foundation asked the research agency Kantar to evaluate the programme. The research aims to understand pupils' and teachers' experiences of taking part in an exchange, and to learn lessons about what works well and less well.



What are the benefits of taking part in the research?

This is your opportunity to have your say! Your views and feedback are important to shape and improve exchanges for other young people.



What is involved?

Survey of pupils who went on an exchange: You will be asked to share your thoughts and experiences about the exchange in a short survey, before the trip and about 3 months after the trip. The survey will take about five minutes to do.

Small group discussion with some pupils: Your school may be chosen as a case study. As part of this, you may be asked to join a small discussion with up to five of your classmates. The discussion will be run by a Kantar researcher and last around an hour.

In-depth interviews and a survey with teachers: We will also gather more detailed feedback about coordinating the exchanges and its outcomes with staff involved.



How will my information be used?

Your thoughts and experiences will help the research team better understand how to improve exchanges for pupils and schools in the future.

Your name and what you tell the research team will not be shared with the government or British Council. There will be no way of knowing who said what in the research report.

You can decide not to take part at any point. If you do not want to take part in the research, please tell the teacher organising the exchange.

Email the research team on ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com with questions.

MOU



International School Exchanges programme evaluation – Reply Form

If you are happy to participate in the evaluation of the International School Exchanges programme, please read and sign the below reply form and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and email a scanned copy to British Council at school.exchanges@britishcouncil.org. Once we have received your reply form we will send you a confirmation email confirming receipt and outlining the next steps.

Further details

Please see the programme pack and information sheet for further details about the evaluation managed by the research agency Kantar and a privacy notice covering how any information you give us will be used and stored. If you have questions about the evaluation requirements please contact ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com.

Contact Details	
School Name:	
Headteacher:	
Tel. No:	
Fax No:	
Email address:	

My school will take part in this evaluation and agrees to the conditions stated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Headteacher signature.....

Name of nominated lead contact in the school:

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr:

Job title:

Contact phone number:

Contact email address:

Best time to contact you:



Memorandum of Understanding

The following outlines our expectations from schools and teachers taking part in the evaluation. Please read the following statements and sign the reply form provided to confirm that you have read the document. Please also sign and keep this copy for your own reference.

Our overall expectations of the school;

- The school must allocate a named contact to the project to work with Kantar and British Council (guidance can be provided on who this should be). They should have sufficient capacity to be able to respond to requests and facilitate requirements as outlined in the "Specific expectations" sections of this document and in the information sheet for schools. If they leave the school or are no longer able to meet the requirements for the role, we ask that they inform Kantar and provide details of a replacement contact.
- All data required by Kantar in relation to the project should be, as far as possible, provided within the deadlines stipulated by Kantar at the time of making the data request.

Specific expectations of all schools

- Schools will make reasonable efforts to ensure that all pupils participating in the international exchange programme, and who have consented to participate in the evaluation, complete an online questionnaire in school time using IT facilities both shortly before and 2-3 months after the exchange visit.
- The lead contact will also be expected to complete a short questionnaire 2-3 months after the exchange visit.
- Schools consent for information they provide to British Council as part of their post-visit report form, including information about exchange visit itineraries, costs and numbers of participating pupils, to be shared with Kantar. This information will be used only for research purposes.

Specific expectations of schools selected for case study research:

- Schools will agree to allow school staff leading the set-up of the exchange to participate in a telephone interview in advance of the exchange visit
- Schools will allow Kantar to visit the school after the exchange visit to hold two pupil focus groups and conduct two staff interviews in private rooms on school premises. Rooms should be able to accommodate 2-3 people for the staff interviews and 10-12 people for the focus groups.

The evaluator (Kantar) undertakes to fulfil the following responsibilities.

Allocation of school involvement

- Kantar will select schools for participation in the evaluation from all those with exchange visits planned to take place from July 2019 until April 2020 and inform them as soon as is possible to give them advance notice.

Communications



- Kantar will be the point of liaison for schools on anything related to the evaluation throughout the course of the trial.
- Kantar will frequently liaise with the British Council (responsible for delivering the International School Exchange programme), Department for Education (funding the programme and co-funding the evaluation) and EEF (funding and facilitating the programme evaluation) throughout the course of the trial.

Fieldwork

- All researchers visiting schools will hold a current enhanced DBS (formerly CRB) certificate.
- Kantar will work to set up convenient times to undertake telephone interviews and case-study visits.

Correct use and storage of data

- Please see the privacy notice for details of how school, teacher and pupil data will be collected, processed and stored in line with GDPR requirements.

Please read the following statements and sign at the bottom if you agree with the statements:

I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided about the project and I have passed a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding and Schools and Teachers Information Sheet to my designated named contact. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily.

This is a project that aims to evaluate the implementation of the funding administered by British Council and seeks to understand people's experiences of delivering and taking part in an international school exchange.

I understand that my school's participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my school at any time, however I will let British Council and Kantar know if I choose to withdraw from the evaluation.

I agree to facilitate the activities involved in the evaluation project as described above and in the School and Teachers Information Sheet.

I know whom I can contact if I have any concerns or complaints about the study.

I agree that my school will take part in the above study.

Signed.....

Print.....

Position.....

Date.....

Consent forms for face-to-face pupil focus groups (pre-March 2020)

Dear Parent / Guardian,

The Department for Education has given money to a programme that wants to help pupils aged 11-19 to go on an international school exchange. The British Council is delivering the programme. The Education Endowment Foundation asked the research agency Kantar to evaluate the programme (see <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/international-school-exchanges/>).

The research aims to understand pupils' and teachers' experiences of taking part in an exchange, and to learn lessons about what works well and less well. Your child recently went on one of these exchanges with their school.

Kantar is carrying out this research at 12 schools across England, and your child's school has been chosen. The research involves mini focus groups with pupils who went on an exchange. There will be 4-6 pupils in each session. Each group will last 45 minutes and be moderated by an experienced Kantar researcher. The groups will be **an exploration of pupils' experiences of and attitudes towards their recent international exchange**. Each session will be audio recorded for analysis purposes, but the research will be anonymous and confidential.

Kantar (Public Division) is an independent social research company. We advise on service delivery, communications, and policy, and our expert team is experienced in conducting research with children and young people (see <https://www.kantar.com/public/>).

If you are happy for your child to take part in a mini focus groups, please complete and return this form to the teacher organising the school exchange.

For details of how data will be used and stored, ask your school for a copy of the privacy notice. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the research team at Kantar on email at ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com.

Thank you,

Rosie
Research Manager, Kantar

Giles

.....

I give consent for my child to take part in a mini focus group as part of the International School Exchanges evaluation research conducted by Kantar.

Child's name and class:

Parent / Guardian's signature:

Parent / Guardian's name:

Date:

Dear pupil,

The Department for Education has given money to a programme that wants to help pupils aged 11-19 to go on an international school exchange. The British Council is delivering the programme. The Education Endowment Foundation asked the research agency Kantar to evaluate the programme (see <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/international-school-exchanges/>).

The research aims to understand pupils' and teachers' experiences of taking part in an exchange, and to learn lessons about what works well and less well. You recently went on one of these exchanges with your school.

Kantar is carrying out this research at 12 schools across England, and your school has been chosen. The research involves taking part in a mini focus group with other pupils who went on an exchange. There will be 4-6 pupils in each session. Each group will last 45 minutes and be moderated by an experienced Kantar researcher. The groups will be an exploration of your experience of and attitude towards your recent international exchange. Each session will be audio recorded for analysis purposes, but the research will be anonymous and confidential.

Kantar (Public Division) is an independent social research company. We advise on service delivery, communications, and policy, and our expert team is experienced in conducting research with children and young people (see <https://www.kantar.com/public/>).

If you are happy to take part in a mini focus groups, please complete and return this form to the teacher organising the school exchange.

For details of how data will be used and stored, ask your school for a copy of the privacy notice. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the research team at Kantar on email at ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com.

Thank you,

Rosie
Research Manager, Kantar

Giles

I agree to take part in a mini focus group at my school as part of the International School Exchanges evaluation research conducted by Kantar. I confirm that I am aged 16 or older.

Pupil's name and class:.....

Pupil's signature:

Date:

Consent forms for online pupil focus groups (post-March 2020)

Dear Parent / Guardian,

I hope you are keeping well and coping with the changes Covid-19 has brought.

Some months ago, your child went on an international exchange with their school. This was as part of a wider programme* that wants to help pupils aged 11-19 to go on international school exchanges. Kantar (an independent research agency) has been asked by the Education Endowment Foundation to carry out some research** to understand pupils' and teachers' experiences of taking part in exchanges and to learn lessons about what works well and less well – and we would really like your child to be involved. As you can imagine, some pupils from other schools were not able to go on their exchanges due to the Covid-19 outbreak so it's even more important that we hear from pupils like your child who were able to go.

Kantar is carrying out this research with a handful of schools like your child's across England. The research involves your child taking part in a small online focus group with up to 3 other pupils who also went on the exchange. An online focus group is a bit like a video chat. It will last 45 minutes and be moderated by an experienced Kantar researcher. Your child will be asked about their experience of and attitude towards their international visit. The session will be audio recorded for analysis purposes, but the research will be anonymous and confidential. You would be welcome to be in the room while your child takes part; we would simply request that you are off-screen and able to be reasonably quiet for the duration.

As this will be held as a video session, there's a couple of privacy points we need to run by you below as it's our priority to keep you safe and adhere with all government guidance. Please do have a read through the below and return the completed form via email to the school or Kantar directly.

NB. If you are unable to e-sign the form, you can also return a scanned copy or attach a picture of the signed copy via email.

How will it work?

We will be using the online platform provider Zoom which can be accessed via any device i.e. laptop/desktop or smartphone/tablet. A Kantar researcher will send a Zoom link directly to your chosen contact email address in advance of the discussion.

What do we need now?

In order to conduct a video session there are some important things to note to help keep your child's data secure. To do this Kantar will need **your child's name and a contact email address of your choice. Please do complete and return this form to confirm your consent.** By replying with your consent, you agree to Kantar having the personal data you provide to enable participation. You can be assured that any personal data acquired is confined to and used only to the extent necessary to conduct the research study. This information will be deleted at the completion of the project, in line with GDPR guidance.

Kantar (Public Division) is an independent social research company. We advise on service delivery, communications, and policy, and our expert team is experienced in conducting research with children and young people (see <https://www.kantar.com/public/>).

If you are happy for your child to take part in a small focus group for this research, please complete and return this form to your child's teacher or to Kantar directly.

*The programme is run by the British Council and funded by the Department for Education.

**See <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/international-school-exchanges/>.

For details of how data will be used and stored, ask your school for a copy of the privacy notice. If you have any questions about the research, please email the research team at Kantar on ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com.

Thank you,

Rosie Giles
Research Manager, Kantar

I give consent for my child to take part in an online focus group as part of Kantar’s research into the International School Exchanges programme.

Child’s name and class:

Parent / Guardian’s signature:

Parent / Guardian’s name:

Contact Email Address:

Date:

Dear pupil,

I hope you are keeping well and coping with the changes Covid-19 has brought.

Some months ago, you went on an international exchange with your school. This was as part of a wider programme* that wants to help pupils aged 11-19 to go on international school exchanges. Kantar (an independent research agency) has been asked by the Education Endowment Foundation to carry out some research** to understand pupils’ and teachers’ experiences of taking part in an exchange and to learn lessons about what works well and less well – and we would really like you to be involved. As you can imagine, some pupils from other schools were not able to go on their exchanges due to the Covid-19 outbreak so it’s even more important that we hear from pupils like you who were able to go.

Kantar is carrying out this research with a handful of schools like yours across England. The research involves taking part in a small online focus group with up to 3 other pupils who also went on your exchange. An online focus group is a bit like a video chat. It will last 45 minutes and be moderated by an experienced Kantar researcher. You will be asked about your experience of and attitude towards your recent international visit. The session will be audio recorded for analysis purposes, but the research will be anonymous and confidential. You would be welcome to have a parent/guardian in the room while you took part, as long as they are off-screen and quiet enough so we can hear you!

As this will be held as a video session, there’s a couple of privacy points we need to run by you below as it’s our priority to keep you safe and adhere with all government guidance. Please do have a read through the below and return the completed form via email to the school or Kantar contact directly.

NB. If you are unable to e-sign the form, you can also return a scanned copy or attach a picture of the signed copy via email.

How will it work?

We will be using the online platform provider Zoom which can be accessed via any device i.e. laptop/desktop or smartphone/tablet. A Kantar researcher will send a Zoom link directly to your chosen contact email address in advance of the discussion.

What do we need now?

In order to conduct a video session there are some important things to note to help keep your child’s data secure. To do this Kantar will need **your child’s name and a contact email address of your**

choice. Please do complete and return this form to confirm your consent. By replying with your consent, you agree to Kantar having the personal data you provide to enable participation. You can be assured that any personal data acquired is confined to and used only to the extent necessary to conduct the research study. This information will be deleted at the completion of the project, in line with GDPR guidance.

Kantar (Public Division) is an independent social research company. We advise on service delivery, communications, and policy, and our expert team is experienced in conducting research with children and young people (see <https://www.kantar.com/public/>).

If you are happy to take part in a small online focus group for this research, please complete and return this form to your teacher or to Kantar directly.

*The programme is run by the British Council and funded by the Department for Education.

**See <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/international-school-exchanges/>.

For details of how data will be used and stored, ask your school for a copy of the privacy notice. If you have any questions about the research, please email the research team at Kantar on ExchangesResearch@Kantar.com.

Thank you,

Rosie Giles
Research Manager, Kantar

I agree to take part in an online focus group as part of Kantar’s research into the International School Exchanges programme. I confirm that I am aged 16 or older.

Pupil’s name and class:.....

Pupil’s signature:

Contact Telephone No:

Contact Email address:

Date:

Appendix III – Research Materials

Pupil questionnaire

KANTAR

Questionnaire for pupils taking part in the ISE programme

You have been asked to fill in this survey because you are going on, or have recently been on, a school/college exchange outside of the UK. The survey should take you about 5 minutes to fill in.

1. What best describes your gender?
Male, female, I don't identify as either, Prefer not to answer
 2. What year group are you in at school/college?
7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
 3. Before this school/college exchange, how many times have you been abroad? If you can't remember, just write your best guess. [OPEN NUMERIC]
- [QUESTIONS FOR POST EXCHANGE ONLY FOLLOW]*
4. How many days were you away on the exchange? [OPEN NUMERIC]
 5. When you were away, did you sleep at the home of a family? [SINGLE, FIX ORDER]
Yes, No, Don't remember
 6. Were you asked to speak a language other than English for long periods of time on the trip?
Yes, No, Don't remember
 7. In total, how many pupils went on the trip from your school/college or in your group? If you can't remember, just write your best guess. [OPEN NUMERIC]
 8. Which of the following subjects, if any, did the trip help you to learn about?

You can choose as many as you need. [MULTI, RANDOMISE]
 - a) Art, design and technology
 - b) Citizenship
 - c) Computing
 - d) English
 - e) Foreign languages e.g. French, Spanish, German
 - f) Geography
 - g) History
 - h) Mathematics
 - i) Music
 - j) Physical education
 - k) Science
 - l) Another subject [FIX]. Please specify [to feed through to subject in Q10]
 - m) The trip did not teach me anything about these subjects [FIX]
- ASK IF MORE THAN ONE SELECTED AT PREVIOUS QUESTION
9. And which of the following subjects, did you learn **most about**?

Please choose just one. [SINGLE CODE]
 - a) Art, design and technology

KANTAR

- b) Citizenship
- c) Computing
- d) English
- e) Foreign languages e.g. French, Spanish, German
- f) Geography
- g) History
- h) Mathematics
- i) Music
- j) Physical education
- k) Science
- l) Another subject [FIX], Please specify [to feed through to subject in Q10]

ASK ALL EXCEPT THOSE WHO SAY THE TRIP DID NOT TEACH THEM ANYTHING ABOUT SUBJECTS

10. Thinking just about [INSERT MAIN SUBJECT FROM PREVIOUS QUESTIONS]

Since going on the trip, how much do you agree or disagree that you do the following...

[ASK ALL CODING A-L AT Q7, GRID, SINGLE PER ROW, RANDOMISE STATEMENTS, FIX ANSWER OPTIONS]

Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know

- a) I look forward more than I did before to lessons in [insert subject]
- b) I feel more interested in learning more about [insert subject]
- c) I feel more interested in passing exams in [insert subject]
- d) I am more confident I can do well in [insert subject]

[QUESTIONS FOR PRE AND POST EXCHANGE FOLLOW]

11. The next question is about how you feel about learning modern foreign languages. These are languages other than English that are spoken around the world today, such as French or Spanish. How much do you agree or disagree with the following...

[GRID, SINGLE PER ROW, RANDOMISE STATEMENTS, FIX ANSWER OPTIONS]

Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know, I do not learn languages at school/college [for options b and f only]

- a) In the future, I would like to pass exams in one or more foreign languages
- b) I think languages are interesting, but I don't like language lessons at school/college
- c) I like learning languages outside of school/college, for example through an app or by practising a language with friends
- d) Knowing how to speak, read or write in another language is useful
- e) Languages are difficult to learn
- f) I learn languages at school/college but I don't get to practise speaking them at any other time
- g) Language exams are hard
- h) Learning languages is boring
- i) I think I am good at speaking, reading or writing another language
- j) I don't need to learn another language



12. The next question is about how confident you feel about different areas of your life. How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before? [GRID, SINGLE PER ROW, RANDOMISE STATEMENTS, FIX ANSWER OPTIONS]

Very confident / Confident / Neither confident nor not confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident, Don't know

- a) Meeting new people
- b) Having a go at things that are new to me
- c) Working with other people in a team
- d) Being the leader of a team
- e) Explaining my ideas clearly
- f) Speaking in public
- g) Having a conversation in a foreign language
- h) Staying in someone else's home, without my family there
- i) Travelling abroad, without my family there

13. How far do you agree or disagree with the statements below? [GRID, SINGLE PER ROW, RANDOMISE STATEMENTS, FIX ANSWER OPTIONS]

Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know

- a) I am interested in travelling to other countries
- b) I am curious about other people's beliefs, values, traditions and views about the world
- c) I enjoy the opportunity to experience other cultures
- d) I would consider working in another country
- e) I would consider studying in another country
- f) I should be tolerant of the different beliefs that are held by others in society
- g) It is important that people and groups who seem different to each other make an effort to talk to each other
- h) Having different cultures – beliefs and ways of doing things – within a society is a good thing

14. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements about yourself? [GRID, SINGLE PER ROW, RANDOMISE STATEMENTS, FIX ANSWER OPTIONS]

Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know

- a) I believe I am able to achieve what I want
- b) If I have a task to do, I stick with it until it is finished
- c) When things go wrong, I usually get over it quickly
- d) When I am faced with a stressful situation, I am able to stay calm

15. How much do you agree or disagree that... [GRID, SINGLE PER ROW, RANDOMISE STATEMENTS, FIX ANSWER OPTIONS]

- a) Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know
- b) People like me don't have much of a chance in life
- c) How well you get on in this world is mostly a matter of luck
- d) Even if I do well at school/college I'll have a hard time getting the right kind of job
- e) Working hard now at school or college will help me get on later on in life
- f) Doing well at school/college means a lot to me
- g) If you work hard at something you'll usually succeed

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey. When you have answered the last question, please click "finish".

Management Information Report Form



DFE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EXCHANGE GRANTS 2019

REPORT FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL PARTS OF THE FORM:

- A. Details of institutions & participants
- B. Details of activities:
 - i. Preparatory visit
 - ii. School exchange with students
 - iii. Personal evaluation from a student that participated
 - iv. Evaluation from Head/Senior Leadership team
- C. Financial report & balance payment request
- D. Statements & signatures
- E. Checklist

and then email to school.exchanges@britishcouncil.org, within 4 weeks of your return from your exchange visit.

A. INSTITUTIONS & PARTICIPANTS

UK school / institution (England only)

Name of institution	
Address and postcode	
Name of coordinating contact	
Direct Contact Email	

Partner school / institution abroad

Name of institution	
Address and postcode	
Country	
Partner coordinator Name:	
Partner coordinator email:	

B(I). PREPARATORY VISIT

If your project grant included a preparatory visit, please give us a few bullet points of how that helped your exchange:

Dates of visit	
Main topics covered	
Learning points from the visit	

B(II). SCHOOL EXCHANGE VISIT WITH STUDENTS

1. Please provide a completed programme itinerary of the actual activities for your exchange visit. You can use our suggested programme template for this, accessible at the bottom of our [website here](#).
2. Please attach to this report any promotion, press articles, newsletters etc, where your exchange visit was mentioned.
3. Dates and duration

Please indicate when your visit took place:

Date of departure from the UK	
Date of return to the UK	

Total number of exchange days (excluding travelling):	
---	--

4. Numbers of people experiencing the exchange visit

	Female	Male
Number of students from the UK		
Number of teachers/chaperones from the UK		
Number of students in the host country		
Number of teachers/chaperones in the host country		

5. What definition(s) of disadvantage did you use for selecting students for the exchange visit?

6. How many students in your school group were from this/these disadvantaged group(s)

	Female	Male
Number of disadvantaged students from the UK		

7. Please provide one paragraph on how your exchange went:

8. Do you consider your project could be used as a case study for an international school visit? For what reason? What made your project notable?

www.britishcouncil.org	3
------------------------	---

Would you be happy to be contacted by one of our team, to create a case study of your visit for marketing and promotion of international school exchanges?

Yes / No

B.III STUDENTS THAT PARTICIPATED

9. Please ask one of the students who was involved in the project to write one paragraph about their personal experience of the international school exchange. (We also accept videos, with a link emailed to: school.exchanges@britishcouncil.org).

B.3. HEAD TEACHER/SENIOR LEADERSHIP

TEAM

10. Impact of the Exchange Visit, from the Head Teacher

Please read the following statements and indicate how strongly you agree or disagree...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
This international exchange visit was a valuable educational experience for our pupils					

The pupils are more confident as a result of their experiences on the international exchange visit					
The international exchange visit has had positive impacts in the school beyond those pupils who took part					
I am more likely to encourage another international exchange visit as a result of this new programme					

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, please provide any comments or reflections of the exchange visit. You could comment on the reasons for any high or low scores you have provided above, or any ideas you have for how we could make improvements to the programme.



G. FINANCIAL PLAN & BALANCE PAYMENT REQUEST

Please provide a clear and comprehensive finance report using this template.

- Provide a detailed breakdown of all costs related to the exchange visit, regardless of who is covering them
- Please read the guidelines to check which costs are eligible and which aren't
- Please separate the items in the grid below, according to eligibility
- List the actual costs that can be proven by invoices and receipts
- Remember: please do not submit receipts to the British Council. Records of receipts and expenditure must be kept on site for 5 years, for audit purposes

	Area of expenditure	Description/details	Actual Cost for eligible items (in £GBP)	Actual Cost for non-eligible items (in £GBP)	For British Council Use
Preparatory Visit Grant up to £500 (Europe)/up to £1000 (rest of World) Up to 100% of	Travel & Transport				
	Accommodation				

eligible costs Admin & Management costs (For staff costs: please list number of hours, and keep timesheet record showing date and hours for potential audit)	Cost per head for meals				
Exchange visit Grants for visits in Europe: up to £10,000 / up to 100% of eligible costs Grants for visits outside Europe: up to £15,000/up to 100% of eligible costs.	International travel (actual costs that can be proven by receipts and invoices)				
	Local travel in UK and partner country (actual costs that can be proven by receipts and invoices)				
	Accommodation (actual costs, or contribution for home stay)				

	Costs for Meals (actual costs that can be proven by receipts and invoices)				
	Project costs (materials, resources that can be proven by receipts and invoices)				
	Other eligible costs (that can be proven by receipts and invoices)				
	Other costs not eligible for the grant (excursions, visits, hardware etc)				
TOTAL					
		<i>Actual Cost for eligible items</i>	<i>Actual Cost for non-eligible items</i>	<i>Internal check for eligible items</i>	

Balance payment calculation

	<i>School to complete</i>	<i>British Council check</i>
Total 100% grant awarded from International Schools Exchange Programme (as per award email/Grant Agreement):	£	
80% grant received already from the British Council:	£	
Amount of eligible spend for exchange visit (total from above)	£	
Remaining balance expected to pay (20% payment)	£	



D. STATEMENTS & SIGNATURES

Data protection

The International Schools Exchange Programme is managed by the British Council, on behalf of the Department for Education.

We will use the information you are providing for the purpose of participation in the International Schools Exchange Programme. We may pass this information on to the Education Endowment Fund and KANTAR for future evaluation of the project. It will continue to be handled in accordance with UK data protection law.

We will keep your information for a period of 7 years from the time of collection. You have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold on you, and the right to ask us to correct any inaccuracies in that information. If you have concerns about how we have used your personal information, you also have the right to complain to a privacy regulator

We may want to use your information to send you details of other activities, services and events which you may find of interest.

We may want to use words from this report to quote in publications, reports, web pages, social media and other research outputs for promotion of the programme.

Please tick the relevant statements below.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, I am happy for words from this report to be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, social media and other research outputs for promotion of the International Schools Exchange Programme.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, I would like to be sent details of other relevant activities, services and events.

Signatures

I confirm by my signature below that all the details submitted are, to the best of my knowledge, correct.

I confirm my endorsement of and support for the above project report and expenditure declaration.

I agree to adhere to the necessary contractual arrangements between my school/college and the British Council.

Name & signature of coordinator (UK)

Date

Name & signature of head of institution (UK)

Date

E. CHECKLIST

Remember to include the following when you submit your report:

1. Finalised daily activity programme for the exchange visit
2. Any promotion, articles, newsletters etc where the exchange visit was mentioned
3. Financial grid with actual costs (eligible and non-eligible under terms of grant agreement) – Section C of this report form
4. Completed report form, signed by coordinator and Head

And then email all the above to: school.exchanges@britishcouncil.org within one month of your return from your exchange visit.

Pre-exchange Teacher Topic Guide

EEF ISE Evaluation

Pre-exchange Staff Interviews (45 mins)

Topic Guide V2

Evaluation objectives

Is the DfE-funded programme a viable way of enabling secondary-school and college students in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to have an international experience by taking part in a school / college exchange with partner schools/colleges around the world?

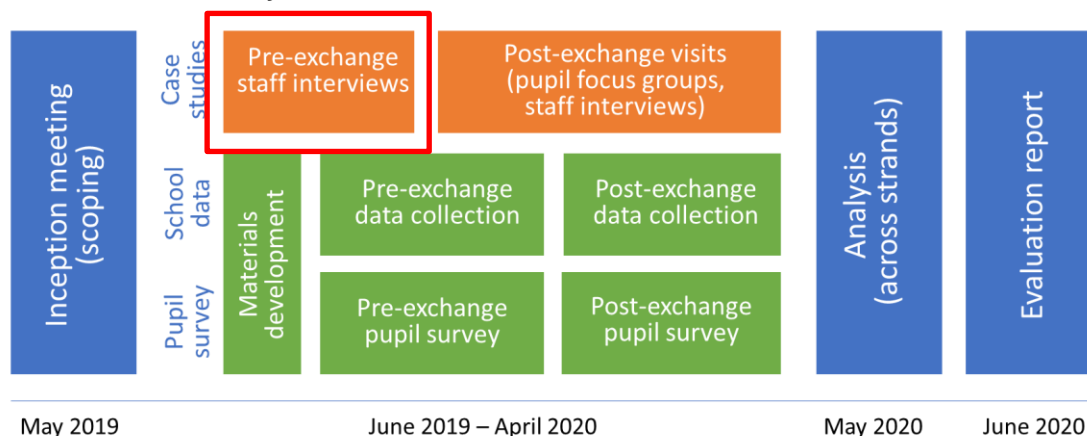
Related documents for reference: Programme Logic Model and Kantar Proposal

Pre-exchange staff interview objectives

Conduct one telephone interview each with 20 school/colleges to:

1. Explore **motivations and experiences** of applying for the programme and design decisions
2. Identify the **barriers and facilitators** to school/college and pupil engagement in the programme – throughout application process and implementation of exchange
3. Understand **expectations and aspirations of outcomes** of the programme for pupils, teachers and schools / colleges

ISE Evaluation Journey



Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

This guide is intended to be used with different school/colleges with varying characteristics and backgrounds. As such, it does not contain pre-set questions, but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with participants in each interview. Words or short phrases are instead used to indicate the study issues and allows the researcher to determine the formulation of questions and how to follow up. This encourages the researcher to be responsive to the situation and most crucially to the terms, concepts, language and behaviours used by the participants.

The key areas for discussion are the same; the order in which issues are addressed and the amount of time spent on different themes may vary between interviews. Please try to cover the content as fully and consistently as possible. You of course need to reflect each specific conversation, but you must

also be led by what you feel is appropriate given the specific conversation that arises. But it is important that we achieve the pre-exchange interview objectives for every interview.

Researcher information

In advance of the pre-exchange staff interview, researchers should complete the table found on page 3 and note any exchange-specific prompts. Information can be found in exchange applications from school/colleges and other documents received related to the project. This table should be used to provide context and knowledge of the exchange before the interview.

Fieldwork checklist

- Charged recorder
- Room with telephone booked
- Copy of pre-populated topic guide
- Participant name and phone number

Contextual project information

Researcher note: *Please complete before interview and add in any additional contextual information immediately after each interview. These should be very brief, bulleted researcher notes. Please use the table below to populate the table in section 3 with project-specific prompts*

Exchange details overview	
School/college identifier (from recruitment log)	
Funding applied for: 1 – preparatory visit; 2 – exchange; 3 – admin costs	
Exchange location incl. partner school/college	
No of pupils participating in exchange and method of recruitment	
Year group(s) of pupils	
Curriculum or skill focus area(s)	
Activities planned	
Exchange objectives	
Is language learning element involved (as a primary or secondary/tertiary objective)	

1. Introduction

(2 mins)

- **Thanks & Introduction:** Introduce yourself and Kantar, Public Division – independent research agency
- **About the client:** research on behalf of EEF, responsible for evaluation of ISE programme, funded by the Department for Education and delivered by the British Council.
- **Reason for participation:** We're interested in exploring their experience of the application process, setup and implementation of their school/college's exchange, and expectations for the impacts of the exchange. Emphasise that this is not related in any way to their access to funding from British Council.
- **How their info will be used:** Their views and experiences will be looked at together with views of teachers from other school/colleges also arranging school/college exchanges. These views will be analysed by theme then a report written based on those themes. While we will be discussing some things specific to their school/college and exchange programme, we guarantee anonymity and will ensure that no quote will be attributed to identifiable individuals.
- **Ethical considerations:** Anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation
- **Duration:** up to 45 minutes
 - **Reassurances:** No right or wrong answers - we are simply asking for people's views and opinions; comfort – let me know if you'd like a break at any time
- **Reminder about audio recording:** the discussion will be recorded so that we can accurately capture their views, and so researchers can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team will have access to the recordings
- **Any questions/concerns?**
- **Start recording:** acknowledge consent for being recorded

2. Background

(10 minutes)

- **Participant intro**
 - **Role and remit** within school/college incl. any secondary roles held
 - **Defining features** of school/college *e.g. SEN/specialist science/specialist arts school/college; about pupils, local area*
 - Briefly, **involvement in process** of applying for, designing and setting up school/college exchange (*and relative timings of these*)
 - Any **previous experience** of delivering international school/college exchange (ISE) – personally, then school/college's
 - If yes, similarity of experience to ISE (at this point)
 - If no, why no experience / any barriers preventing exchanges
 - Explore personal, school/college's and parent's broad **attitudes** towards:
 - Exchanges in general
 - ISE exchange programme
 - Whether/where **ISE fits within wider context** of school/college's strategy

3. Introduction to Exchange

(5 minutes)

- **Exchange overview**

NB. Explain you are broadly familiar with the planned exchange having reviewed their application. Briefly summarise descriptive information in table above (page 3) to participant, to check it's correct (amend where appropriate). Throughout section 3 discussion, use project specific prompts identified in table below, prepared before the interview from the background materials, as relevant.

Project specific prompts

- *(If they have different views from your summary, explore:)* **Description** of exchange design/delivery
 - Planned activities
 - Curriculum or skill focus area(s)
 - How many pupils and teachers taking part
- **Defining features** of their exchange - What makes it unique/exciting
- **Perceptions of curriculum or skill focus** of the exchange
 - Teachers
 - Pupils
- Who is **involved in the exchange design/delivery**, and briefly their roles.

Spontaneous but prompt if they are unsure:

 - teachers
 - head teacher
 - governors
 - parents
 - students
 - partner school

4. Experience of application process

(15 minutes)

- Explore how they **learnt about the programme**
 - Sources
 - initial reaction/impressions of programme, including questions/concerns
- Explore **motivations for applying for the grant**. *Spontaneous then prompt;*
 - linked to specific curriculum or skill
 - develop pupils' soft skills and character
 - new experience for disadvantaged pupils

- something they would not otherwise do
- builds on existing work
- related to school/college's strategy
- pressure from leadership
- pressure from parents
- motivation for pupils
- widening pupils experience/international outlook
- whether new exchange or already planned prior to grant

- Explore understanding of **eligibility criteria**
 - Facilitators/barriers to understanding
 - What might help understanding of eligibility criteria

- *(If they have had experience of a similar application process)* Explore **awareness of and attitudes towards 'unique qualities' of ISE programme**
 - Amount of funding available (10k/15k depending on exchange location)
 - Focus on providing foreign exchange experience to disadvantaged pupils
 - Flexibility of approach to how funding used e.g. school/college chooses curriculum or skill area(s)
 - Requirement for specific activities related to curriculum or skill area(s)
 - Requirement for significant engagement with pupils in another country

- **Explore influences on the design** of their exchange at the application stage
 - Drivers of their particular design during application
 - Changes to design to finalise application
 - Compromises to finalise application

- Experience of **identifying a partner school/college**
 - Degree of ease
 - Whether received any support – who, experience
 - Whether went/plan to go on preparatory visit – who, experience

- **Approach to engaging and recruiting pupils**
- How is **'disadvantaged'**:
 - Defined
 - Expressed to parents/pupils

- Experience of **application approval process**
 - Was their application approved straight away
 - If yes, did they receive any feedback
 - If no, when was it approved / did they receive any support to complete

- **Lessons learnt for administration** of the grant. *Spontaneous, then prompt;*
 - messages to support understanding of eligibility criteria
 - communications to signpost to support
 - provide additional support
- *(If not yet covered)* Whether **changes made to design** of their exchange since funding awarded. *Spontaneous then prompt:*
 - Strategic level, reasons – aims, scope, scale
 - Operational level, reasons – staffing, timings

5. Experience of set-up and prep for exchange (5 minutes)

NB. Explain you are now focusing on the time following notification of their successful application.

- Explore how the suggestion of the exchange was **received by school/colleges' stakeholders** (e.g. Board, teachers, parents, students)
- What **activities were completed to prepare** for exchange, and by who. *Spontaneous then prompt;*
 - safeguarding
 - parent consent and engagement
 - pre-exchange activities with pupils
 - Any further activities before exchange takes place
- So far, **facilitators and barriers to set-up and prep**
- Steps taken/intend to take **to mitigate barriers**
 - Used British Council guidance/support?
 - Other guidance/support
- **Support needed** for school/colleges/teachers to coordinate exchange

6. Expectations of outcomes (5 minutes)

- What do they expect / hope would be **the immediate impact of exchange** on:
 - Pupils
 - teachers
 - school/colleges
 - other
 - host school and pupils
- *(Note to researcher, adjust time frame based on year group going on exchange)* In the next couple of years/post-secondary school/college, what do they expect / hope would be the impact on
 - Pupils
 - teachers
 - school/colleges

- other
- **Barrier/facilitators to repeat exchange** in the future
 - With grant
 - Without grant
- **Top piece of advice** for a school/college setting up an exchange like yours, based on experience so far

7. Conclusion

(2 minutes)

- **Thank** for participation
- Remind of **confidentiality/anonymity**
- Any **questions/ final thoughts**
- Reminder if school/college is chosen for a case study, we will follow up around 3 months after their exchange, for another discussion
- **Confirm name of key contact for liaising with going forward**

Post-field work admin:

- Confirm with Paul interview went ahead
- Circulate topline findings email, using existing chain
- Upload audio recording to secure project folder
- Complete fieldnotes and save in secure project folder



Post-exchange Teacher Topic Guide

EEF ISE Evaluation

Post-exchange Staff Interviews (45 mins)

Topic Guide v2

Evaluation objectives

Is the DfE-funded programme a viable way of enabling secondary school and college students in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to have an international experience by taking part in a school / college exchange with partner schools / colleges around the world?

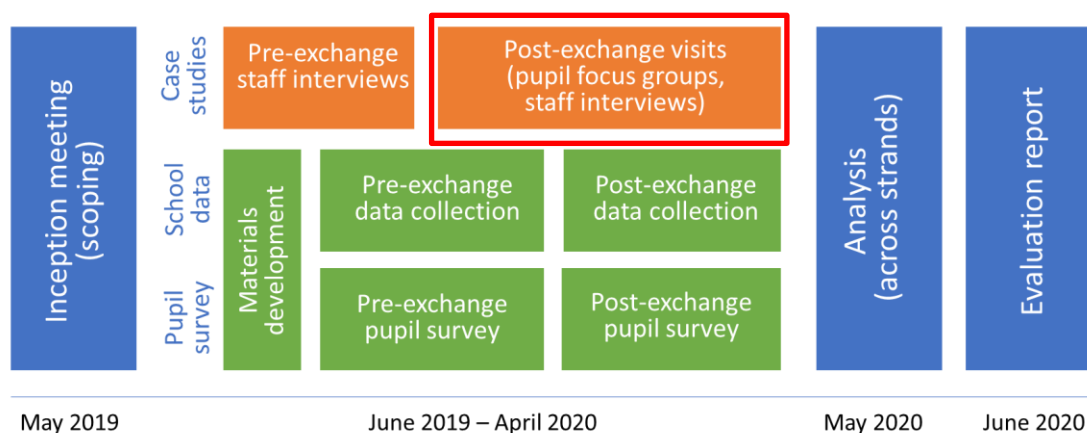
Related documents for reference: Programme Logic Model, Kantar Proposal and school lead interview notes

Post-exchange staff interview objectives

Conduct two face-to-face interviews with 12 school / colleges to:

4. Understand **how the exchange was implemented and delivered**
5. Understand **barriers and facilitators** to successful delivery of the exchange
6. Understand future **expectations and aspirations of outcomes** of the programme for pupils, teachers and schools / colleges – including impact of COVID-19 on these

ISE Evaluation Journey



Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

This guide is intended to be used with different school/colleges with varying characteristics and backgrounds. As such, it does not contain pre-set questions, but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with participants in each interview. Words or short phrases are instead used to indicate the study issues and allows the researcher to determine the formulation of questions and how to follow up. This encourages the researcher to be responsive to the situation and most crucially to the terms, concepts, language and behaviours used by the participants.

The key areas for discussion are the same; the order in which issues are addressed and the amount of time spent on different themes may vary between interviews. Please try to cover the content as fully and consistently as possible. You of course need to reflect each specific conversation, but you must also be led by what you feel is appropriate given the specific conversation that arises. But it is important that we achieve the post-exchange interview objectives for every interview.

Researcher information

In advance of the post-exchange staff interviews, researchers should complete the table below and note any exchange-specific prompts or any points of interest from the pre-exchange interview. Information can be found in exchange applications, pre-exchange interview charts and other documents received related to the project. This table should be used to provide context and knowledge of the exchange before the interview.

Fieldwork checklist

- Charged recorder
- Participant contact details
- Copy of pre-populated topic guide

Contextual project information

Researcher note: *Please complete before interview and add in any additional contextual information immediately after each interview. These should be very brief, bulleted researcher notes.*

Exchange details overview	
School/college identifier (from recruitment log)	
Funding applied for: 1 – preparatory visit; 2 – exchange; 3 – admin costs	
Exchange location incl. partner school / college	
No. of pupils participating in exchange and method of recruitment	
Year group(s) of pupils	
Curriculum or skill focus area(s)	
Activities planned	
Exchange objectives	
Is language learning element involved (as a primary or secondary/tertiary objective)	
Points of interest from pre-exchange e.g. any concerns about the exchange, expectations of short-term outcomes for pupils	

1. Introduction

(2 minutes)

- **Thanks & Introduction:** Introduce yourself and Kantar, Public Division – independent research agency. Acknowledge that we are likely to have spoken to them or their colleague before.
- **About the client:** Research on behalf of the Education Endowment Foundation, responsible for evaluation of ISE programme, funded by the Department for Education and delivered by the British Council.
- **Reason for participation:** We're interested in exploring their experience of the exchange, any barriers / facilitators they encountered post-application phase and expectations for the impacts of the exchange. Emphasise that this is not related in any way to their access to funding from British Council.
- **How their info will be used:** Their views and experiences will be looked at together with views of teachers from other schools / colleges that have also arranged school / college exchanges. These views will be analysed by theme then a report written based on those themes. While we will be discussing some things specific to their school / college and exchange programme, we guarantee anonymity and will ensure that no quote will be attributed to identifiable individuals.
- **Ethical considerations:** Anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation
- **Duration:** Up to 45 minutes
- **Reassurances:** No right or wrong answers - we are simply asking for people's views and opinions; comfort – let me know if you'd like a break at any time
- **Reminder about audio recording:** the discussion will be recorded so that we can accurately capture their views, and so researchers can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team will have access to the recordings
- **Any questions/concerns?**
- **Start recording:** acknowledge consent for being recorded

2. Overall feedback of exchange

(10 minutes)

Explain you are broadly familiar with their planned exchange having reviewed their application and pre-exchange interview notes. Briefly summarise descriptive information in table above (page 3) to participant to check it's correct (amend where appropriate). Throughout section 2 discussion, use project specific prompts identified in table above, prepared before the interview from the background materials, as relevant.

Explain that we are aware that the COVID-19 outbreak will have brought about lots of changes for their school and their role as a teacher.

- Briefly explore their experience of school closing due to COVID-19
 - experience of home-working (if applicable)
 - what do they miss about being in school as normal?

- are there any benefits of not going to school as normal right now?

Explain that we would like to talk about their experience and thoughts about the international exchange before the COVID-19 outbreak. We will ask specific questions about any impacts or changes in attitudes as a result of the pandemic.

- **Explore overall views of how the exchange went**
 - Initial thoughts on what went well / less well
- **Explore any changes to the design of their exchange post-application**
 - Reasons - *spontaneous then probe*:
 - Strategic level, reasons – aims, scope, scale
 - Operational level, reasons – staffing, timings
- **Explore how much the teacher thought pupils:**
 - enjoyed the visit
 - learnt from the visit (subject wise)
 - benefitted from the visit (soft skills)
- **Explore broad attitudes to the exchange since the trip took place for:**
 - Parents
 - Pupils
 - The school
- **Explore any changes in attitude towards the exchange since COVID-19**

3. Experience of exchange

(10 minutes)

- **Explore relationship with partner school**
 - What worked well / less well
 - Would they go back to this school in a future exchange
- **Explore planned activities students took part in. Probe on:**
 - Curriculum or skill focus area(s)
 - Activities students particularly enjoyed
 - Any unexpected events / activities
- **Explore facilitators and barriers to running the exchange**
 - At the point of departure
 - While on the exchange
 - *(If applicable)* With host family
 - With school
 - *(If applicable)* During any travel
 - Returning to the UK
- **Steps taken to mitigate barriers / challenges**
 - Used British Council guidance / support?
 - Other guidance / support

- Explore what support, in hindsight, they feel they may have needed at any point of the exchange (if any)

4. Future exchanges (10 minutes)

- Explore interest in running exchange again
 - Barriers / facilitators to repeating exchange next year considering COVID-19
 - Barriers / facilitators to repeating exchange in the future
 - With grant
 - Without grant
 - Would they do anything differently – what
- Explore how comfortable / confident they would feel applying again
 - Barriers / facilitators
 - Support needed. *Spontaneous then probe:* more funding, more time or support to complete application
- Top piece of advice for a school / college setting up an exchange like yours
 - Are there any channels / sources that would be useful to share this with other schools

6. Expectations of outcomes (10 minutes)

Note and explore any mention of broader intercultural outlook, increased resilience, increased confidence, increased tolerance of other cultures, increased interest in foreign languages

- Explore perception of the value of the exchange, including shorter-term outcomes for:
 - Pupils, then focus on disadvantaged pupils - *spontaneous then probe:*
 - Access to international experience
 - Interest in foreign languages and / or subject focus area
 - Improved confidence and / or resilience
 - Increased likelihood of studying languages and related subjects in future
 - Teachers
 - School / college
 - The sector / industry
 - Host school and pupils
 - Other
 - Explore any changes in perception of shorter-term outcomes since COVID-19
- Explore perception of potential for longer-term impacts for pupils. *Probe on:*
 - Broadened international outlook
 - Likely take-up of foreign languages
 - Social mobility of disadvantaged pupils
 - Access to opportunities they may not have had otherwise
 - Explore any changes in perception of potential longer-term impacts for pupils since COVID-19

- *Note to moderator, adjust time frame based on year group going on exchange* **In the next couple of years / post-secondary school / college, what do they expect / hope would be the impact on:**
 - Pupils
 - Teachers
 - School / colleges
 - Other

7. Conclusion

(3 minutes)

- **Thank** for participation
- Remind of **confidentiality/anonymity**
- Any **questions/ final thoughts**

Post-field work admin:

- Confirm interview went ahead
- Circulate topline findings email using existing chain
- Upload audio recording to secure project folder
- Complete fieldnotes and save in secure project folder



Post-exchange Pupil Topic Guide

EEF ISE Evaluation

Post-exchange Pupil focus groups (45 mins)

Topic Guide v1

Evaluation objectives

Is the DfE-funded programme a viable way of enabling secondary-school and college students in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to have an international experience by taking part in a school / college exchange with partner schools/colleges around the world?

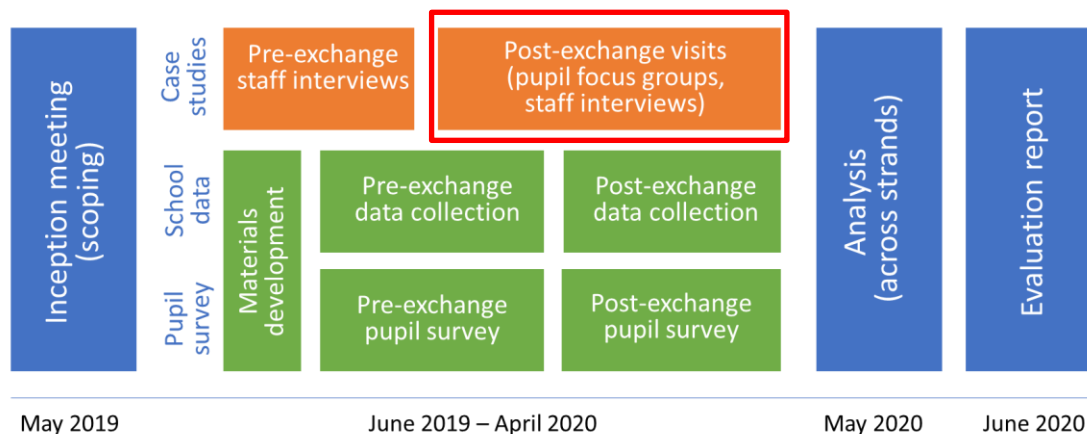
Related documents for reference: Programme Logic Model, Kantar Proposal and school lead interview notes

Post-exchange pupil focus group objectives

Conduct focus groups with two groups of 2-4 pupils in school/colleges to:

7. Explore **perceptions of the exchange from students' perspectives**
8. Understand **barriers and facilitators** pupils experience pre-, during and post-exchange
9. Explore pupils' **reflections on the exchange and** their attitudes towards the curriculum area of focus, confidence in a new context and global outlook – including impact of COVID-19 on these

ISE Evaluation Journey



Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

This guide is intended to be used with different school/colleges with varying characteristics and backgrounds. As such, it does not contain pre-set questions, but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with participants in each interview. Words or short phrases are instead used to indicate the study issues and allows the researcher to determine the formulation of questions and how to follow up. This encourages the researcher to be responsive to the situation and most crucially to the terms, concepts, language and behaviours used by the participants.

The key areas for discussion are the same; the order in which issues are addressed and the amount of time spent on different themes may vary between focus groups. Please try to cover the content as fully and consistently as possible. You of course need to reflect each specific conversation, but you must also be led by what you feel is appropriate given the specific conversation that arises. But it is important that we achieve the post-exchange interview objectives for every focus group.

Researcher information

In advance of the post-exchange pupil focus group, researchers should complete the table found on page 2 and note any exchange-specific prompts or any points of interest from the pre-exchange interview. Information can be found in exchange applications and pre-exchange interview charts from school/colleges and other documents received related to the project. This table should be used to provide context and knowledge of the exchange before the interview.

Fieldwork checklist

- Charged recorder
- Review teacher pre-exchange interview notes
- Copy of pre-populated topic guide
- Civicom link to online focus group

Contextual project information

Researcher note: *Please complete before interview and add in any additional contextual information immediately after each interview. These should be very brief, bulleted researcher notes.*

Exchange details overview	
School/college identifier (from recruitment log)	
Funding applied for: 1 – preparatory visit; 2 – exchange; 3 – admin costs	
Exchange location incl. partner school/college	
No. of pupils participating in exchange and method of recruitment	
Year group(s) of pupils	
Curriculum or skill focus area(s)	
Activities planned	
Exchange objectives	
Is language learning element involved (as a primary or secondary/tertiary objective)	
Points of interest from pre-exchange e.g. any concerns about the exchange, expectations of short-term outcomes for pupils etc.	

1. Introduction

(2 minutes)

Please use this introduction to ensure pupils are fully informed about the research, how their data will be used and have signed consent forms to take part (from parent/guardian for those under 16).

- **Thanks & Introduction:** My name is **xyz**. I work for an independent research company called Kantar. My job is to talk to different types of people about different topics. We've been asked by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to talk about the exchange trip you went on recently. The EEF are an organisation that provide schools with money for pupils to go on school exchanges. They are interested in hearing from you about your experience on your trip, what you liked / disliked / thought could have been better
- **How their info will be used:** Your views and experiences will be looked at together with views of pupils who went on exchanges in other school/colleges. We'll look at what everyone says and then make a presentation for EEF to show them pupils' views.
- **Duration:** up to 45 minutes
- **Reassurances and ethical considerations:** This isn't a lesson and I'm not a teacher, so you don't need to put your hands up and you can call me **xyz**. As I already mentioned, I work for an independent research agency, so nothing you can say will offend me – feel free to be as open as you like! EEF and I are really interested in hearing what you have to say so try to be as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers and it's important for you to remember that.
- **Reminder about audio recording:** I would like to audio record our conversation so that I can listen back to the discussion we've had today and take some notes. I'll join my notes with the notes of other people in my team who are also doing the same thing we're doing today. We'll make a presentation and share this with the client. We won't use names in the presentation
- **Technical issues:** There is a Civicom Engineer on the call available to help if we have any technical issues. They won't listen into our conversation but are just on hand in case we need to ask them for technical support.
- **Ethical considerations:** This is completely voluntary (which means you don't have to take part if you don't want to), confidential and anonymous (we won't use your name when we show the client the presentation). **You don't have to take part if you don't want to.** If you decide you don't want to take part during the group just let me know and I can remove you from the session.
- **Safeguarding:** However, if you tell me anything that makes me concerned for your safety or the safety of someone else, I will have to tell a teacher. I will let you know before I do.
- **Any questions/concerns?**
- **How does that all sound? Does anyone not want to take part?**
- **Start recording:** acknowledge consent for being recorded

2. Participant introduction

(5 minutes)

- Name

- Favourite subject
- Briefly explore their experience of school closing due to coronavirus
 - experience of home-schooling
 - what do they miss about going to school?
 - what are the benefits of not going to school right now?
- Whether they've been abroad before this trip – if so where? If not, where would they like to go if they could travel at the moment?

3. Initial reactions to the exchange (5 minutes)

Moderator to explain that you understand we're not able to travel at the moment, but you would like participants to ask participants to think back to when they went on their exchange.

- **Explore initial reactions to the exchange from**
 - Them
 - Other pupils
 - Parents
 - Teachers
- **Explore which aspects of the exchange excited them when they found out about it**
- **Explore whether there were any immediate concerns**
 - Were they worried about anything?
 - Were their parents / family worried about anything? How were concerns navigated / mitigated?

4. Preparing for the exchange (10 minutes)

Moderator to ask participants to write down / draw things they did to prepare for the trip. Prompt on:

- *Legal documents e.g. visas, passports*
- *Preparation with host school*
- *Clothing*

Note to moderator: as a group, explore what they have written/drawn. Probe on barriers / facilitators of preparation where relevant

- **Explore any unexpected preparation activities.** *Spontaneous, prompt if needed on legal documents, cost (for older students)*
- **Explore parental involvement preparing for the exchange**
- **Explore school involvement in preparing for the exchange**
 - What could the school have done more / less of

5. Experience of the exchange

(10 minutes)

Moderator to ask participants to write / draw on post- it notes two things they enjoyed, two things they learnt and two things they thought were unusual on their trip. Moderator to give participants three minutes to do this and then ask them to hold up to the camera and share what they have written to discuss.

- **Explore planned activities students took part in.** *Probe on:*
 - Subject related?
 - Activities they / other pupils particularly liked / disliked
 - Any unexpected events / activities

6. Reflections

(10 minutes)

- **Explore how comfortable / confident they would feel going on another school exchange next year considering coronavirus**
- **Explore how comfortable / confident they would feel going on another school exchange in the future**
 - Barriers / facilitators
 - Support needed
- **Explore attitudes to travelling abroad in the future without school**
 - *Probe on whether attitudes have changed as a result of the exchange*
 - *Explore whether their views about international travel have changed since returning from their exchange and now in light of the coronavirus*
- **Explore whether there is anything they were doing when they were at school after their exchange / would like to do when schools reopen, that they did not do before they went on the exchange?** *Spontaneous but prompt if needed on:*
 - Speak to new people
 - Try things that are new to them
 - Work with others in a team
 - Speak in public
 - Learn a new language / take a language class at school
 - Explore subject focus area more
- **What would they say to other pupils like them considering going on an exchange trip?**

7. Conclusion

(3 minutes)

- **Thank** for participation
- Any **questions/ final thoughts**
- Remind of **confidentiality/anonymity**

Post-field work admin:

- Confirm interview went ahead
- Circulate topline findings email using existing chain

- Upload audio recording to secure project folder
- Complete fieldnotes and save in secure project folder



Teachers who did not apply for the programme Topic Guide

EEF ISE Evaluation

No Exchange Staff Interviews (30 mins)

Topic Guide v1

Evaluation objectives

Is the DfE-funded programme a viable way of enabling secondary-school and college students in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to have an international experience by taking part in a school / college exchange with partner schools/colleges around the world?

Related documents for reference: Programme Logic Model and Kantar Proposal

No exchange staff interview objectives

Conduct one telephone interview each with 5 teachers at a school/college to:

10. Explore **motivations** of applying for the programme
11. Identify the **barriers** to application process and implementation of exchange
12. Understand **facilitating factors** to encourage school/college to apply in the future

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

This guide is intended to be used with different school/colleges with varying characteristics and backgrounds. As such, it does not contain pre-set questions, but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with participants in each interview. Words or short phrases are instead used to indicate the study issues and allows the researcher to determine the formulation of questions and how to follow up. This encourages the researcher to be responsive to the situation and most crucially to the terms, concepts, language and behaviours used by the participants.

The key areas for discussion are the same; the order in which issues are addressed and the amount of time spent on different themes may vary between interviews. Please try to cover the content as fully and consistently as possible. You of course need to reflect each specific conversation, but you must also be led by what you feel is appropriate given the specific conversation that arises. But it is important that we achieve the interview objectives for every interview.

Researcher information

In advance of the staff interview, researchers should complete the table found on page 3 and note any exchange-specific prompts. Information can be found in exchange applications from school/colleges and other documents received related to the project. This table should be used to provide context and knowledge of the exchange before the interview.

Fieldwork checklist

- Charged recorder
- Topic guide
- Participant name and phone number

1. Introduction

(2 mins)

- **Thanks & Introduction:** Introduce yourself and Kantar, Public Division – independent research agency
- **About the client:** research on behalf of EEF, responsible for evaluation of ISE programme, funded by the Department for Education and delivered by the British Council.
- **Reason for participation:** We're interested in exploring how they heard about the programme, their understanding of the eligibility criteria and motivations and barriers to applying for the grant. Emphasise that this is not related in any way to their access to funding from British Council.
- **How their info will be used:** Their views and experiences will be looked at together with views of teachers from other school/colleges that arranged school/college exchanges and those that did not arrange an exchange. These views will be analysed by theme then a report written based on those themes. While we will be discussing some things specific to their school/college and exchange programme, we guarantee anonymity and will ensure that no quote will be attributed to identifiable individuals.
- **Ethical considerations:** Anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation
- **Duration:** up to 30 minutes
 - **Reassurances:** No right or wrong answers - we are simply asking for people's views and opinions; comfort – let me know if you'd like a break at any time
- **Reminder about audio recording:** the discussion will be recorded so that we can accurately capture their views, and so researchers can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team will have access to the recordings
- **Any questions/concerns?**
- **Start recording:** acknowledge consent for being recorded

2. Background

(3 minutes)

- **Participant introduction**
 - **Role and remit** within school/college incl. any secondary roles held
 - **Explore experience with COVID-19 at their school**
 - **Defining features** of school/college e.g. *SEN/specialist science/specialist arts school/college; about pupils, local area*
 - Any **previous experience** of delivering international or domestic school/college exchange (ISE) – personally, then school/college's
 - If yes, briefly explore experience
 - If no, why no experience / any barriers preventing exchanges
 - Explore general **attitudes within school network (other teachers, senior leaders, parents)** towards exchanges in general
 - Establish what **stage of the application process** they got to before deciding not to apply

3. Understanding of the programme

(10 minutes)

NB: Explain you would like them to think back to where they heard about the programme and their understanding of it

- Explore how they **learnt about the programme**
 - sources
 - initial reaction/impressions of programme, including questions/concerns
- Explore understanding of **eligibility criteria**
 - Facilitators/barriers to understanding
 - What might help understanding of eligibility criteria
- Explore **awareness of and attitudes towards 'unique qualities' of ISE programme**
 - Amount of funding available (10k/15k depending on exchange location)
 - Focus on providing foreign exchange experience to disadvantaged pupils
 - Flexibility of approach to how funding used e.g. school/college chooses curriculum or skill area(s)
 - Requirement for specific activities related to curriculum or skill area(s)
 - Requirement for significant engagement with pupils in another country
- Explore how they interpreted **'disadvantaged pupils'**

4. Barriers and motivations to applying (10 minutes)

NB. Explain you are now focusing on initial interest in the programme and the barriers to applying.

- Explore **initial motivations for applying for the grant**. *Spontaneous then prompt;*
 - linked to specific curriculum or skill
 - develop pupils' soft skills and character
 - new experience for disadvantaged pupils
 - something they would not otherwise do
 - builds on existing work
 - related to school/college's strategy
 - pressure from leadership
 - pressure from parents
 - motivation for pupils
 - widening pupils experience/international outlook
 - whether new exchange or already planned prior to grant
- Explore **level of support** from school/college to apply
- Explore **barriers to applying for the grant**. *Spontaneous then prompt if necessary;*
 - lack of time to apply
 - lack of resource (teachers' time)
 - lack of senior level buy-in

- lack of student/parent buy-in
- lack of information from British Council
- application process too complicated
- application process too slow
- other subjects prioritised
- could not apply in time
- unable to set up and prepare for the exchange if application was successful

5. Further support

(5 minutes)

- Did they **receive any support** when thinking about applying? *Spontaneous then prompt if necessary;*
 - from senior staff at school
 - from other teachers
 - from British Council
- How would they like to be **supported in the future to:**
 - apply for the grant
 - coordinate exchange
- Who do they think should provide schools/colleges with **support to apply for the grant?**
- Explore whether they would **apply for the grant in the future**
 - If yes, why? What would they do differently this time?
 - If no, why?
- **Any advice** for a school/college like theirs that is thinking about applying, based on their experience

7. Conclusion

(2 minutes)

- **Thank** for participation
- Any **questions/ final thoughts**
- Remind of **confidentiality/anonymity**

Post-field work admin:

- Confirm with Rosie interview went ahead
- Circulate topline findings email, using existing chain
- Upload audio recording to secure project folder
- Complete fieldnotes and save in secure project folder



Appendix IV – Analysis

Codeframes

Q8. Which of the following subjects, if any, did the trip help you to learn about?

	Codes
1	Art, design and technology
2	Citizenship
3	Computing
4	English
5	Foreign languages e.g. French, Spanish, German
6	Geography
7	History
8	Mathematics
9	Music
10	Physical education
11	Science
12	Another subject
13	The trip did not teach me anything about these subjects
14	*Food technology/cookery
15	*Philosophy
16	*RE, Religious Education

*New code added after fieldwork based on open-ended responses at Q8

Q9. And which of the following subjects, did you learn most about?

	Codes
1	Art, design and technology
2	Citizenship
3	Computing
4	English
5	Foreign languages e.g. French, Spanish, German
6	Geography
7	History
8	Mathematics
9	Music
10	Physical education
11	Science
12	Another subject
13	*Food technology/cookery

*New code added after fieldwork based on open-ended responses at Q9

You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0.

To view this licence, visit <https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or **email:** psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned. The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

This document is available for download at <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk>