

PROJECT TITLE	Pathways Literacy
DEVELOPER (INSTITUTION)	The Literacy Company
EVALUATOR (INSTITUTION)	Oxford MeasurEd
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)	Lydia Marshall
EVALUATION PLAN AUTHOR(S)	Jonah Bury, Lydia Marshall
PUPIL AGE RANGE AND KEY STAGE	7-8, KS2
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS/ SETTINGS	20
NUMBER OF PUPILS	600-900

Evaluation plan version history

VERSION	DATE	REASON FOR REVISION
1.0 [original]	01/07/2025	N/A

Intervention

Pathways Literacy incorporates Pathways to Write (P2W) and Pathways to Progress (P2P), which will be delivered to Year 3 pupils across 20 primary schools in the 2025/26 academic year as part of this pilot. P2W is a whole-class programme, using a structured approach to teaching writing based on a mastery learning model. It is designed to support foundational skills and metacognitive strategies and allows opportunities to practise all five stages of the writing process. P2P is a targeted writing intervention aimed at Year 3 pupils working towards the expected standard (i.e. just below the expected standard) in writing that complements P2W. From four to six pupils will be selected by the teacher each term to attend P2P sessions. Previously taught skills are consolidated in half termly units delivered by a trained teaching assistant (TA). P2W will be delivered from September 2025 for a full academic year, with P2P being introduced from November 2025 onwards.

TiDieR checklist

This section presents a detailed description of Pathways Literacy following an adapted Template for Intervention Description and Replication (TiDieR) checklist. The purpose of this detailed and structured description of Pathways Literacy is to ensure a shared understanding of what is being evaluated among key stakeholders (e.g., EEF, delivery partner, evaluation team) alongside improving the consistency of intervention descriptions in EEF study plans and reports (Humphrey et al. 2016).

BRIEF NAME

Pathways Literacy

WHY

Writing is one of the most important skills children learn at school and a critical enabler of children's attainment in most other school subjects (DfE 2012, EEF 2021a). Writing is a life skill and carries importance for numerous aspects of work and personal life (Schmoker 2018). Writing involves multiple components – transcription, text generation, and executive functions – that pupils must master and coordinate (Hyland 2015). Despite this, the evidence base around writing-specific interventions for primary and secondary pupils is limited. Writing interventions targeted at primary school pupils are particularly important considering that 72% of all children met the expected standard in writing in 2024 compared to 78% in 2019 (DfE 2025). Crucially, the gap in literacy attainment grows substantially throughout primary school for disadvantaged pupils – defined as pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) (The Sutton Trust 2021) – with such pupils making less progress than their peers in both reading and writing (EEF 2021a). Supporting disadvantaged pupils through writing-specific programmes such as Pathways Literacy is therefore critical to closing the attainment gap between them and their peers.

Pathways Literacy is based on the application of mastery learning. It follows evidence (William and Thompson, 2008) on key strategies that support pupils in moving forward such as clarifying understanding and sharing learning intentions, tasks that elicit evidence of learning and feedback that moves pupils forward and gives them ownership. There is some evidence that mastery learning can be effective at closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers (EEF 2021b). At the core of the mastery approach is the idea that all pupils need to have mastered key concepts before moving to the next topic (DfE 2015).

However, for mastery approaches to be effective for pupils with gaps in understanding, it is crucial that additional support is provided. Approaches that simply build upon foundational knowledge without targeting support for pupils that fall behind are unlikely to narrow disadvantage gaps (DfE 2015, EEF 2021b).

P2P – the *targeted* component of Pathways Literacy – has been designed following recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) on running high-quality structured interventions (EEF 2020, EEF 2021a), for instance by ensuring that:

- targeted intervention is delivered in addition to whole-class literacy lessons
- sessions are brief and regular and maintained over a sustained period
- sessions follow a well-defined and repetitive structure with clear objectives from the National Curriculum
- there are opportunities for ongoing assessment of pupils' progress
- there are clear links to class-based learning
- there is a clear focus on ensuring application of skills beyond the intervention
- there is regular training for staff to ensure an accurate and consistent approach to terminology and delivery of grammar-related content

The developer-led pilot of Pathways Literacy provides anecdotal evidence that the programme has promise. A total of nine schools from one multi-academy trust (MAT) based in Staffordshire took part in P2P, with P2W being optional for schools. Participating staff reported improvements in pupils' level of confidence, stamina, and enthusiasm for writing. However, some schools found three intervention sessions for P2P difficult to timetable and struggled to provide ringfenced time for a member of staff to deliver the programme consistently.

Although Pathways Literacy is not a continuous professional development (CPD) programme *per se*, it incorporates key mechanisms that are key for practitioners changing practice, including action planning, arranging social support, modelling the technique, or providing feedback (EEF 2024).

WHO (RECIPIENTS OF THE INTERVENTION)

The programme is targeted at three groups of practitioners. Literacy Consultants from The Literacy Company train subject leaders (e.g., Heads of Literacy), Year 3 teachers, and TAs. Teachers deliver P2W to all Year 3 pupils, while TAs deliver P2P sessions to up to six Year 3 pupils per term who are working towards the expected standard in writing.

Year 3 pupils have been identified as likely to particularly benefit from Pathways Literacy due to the transition to a new Key Stage (KS), particularly as the transition from Year 2 to Year 3 is challenging for pupils who are not secure with grammatical writing skills from KS1. While P2W recaps on some of the skills from KS1 for all pupils, P2P gives extra support for pupils who are working towards the expected standard as it focuses solely on those skills rather than new content. Moreover, following the discontinuation of Year 2 SATs, The Literacy Company have identified a need for teachers to monitor pupil progress in writing in Year 3.

WHO PROVIDED

Pathways Literacy has been designed by The Literacy Company, a team of dedicated literacy experts who work closely with schools to enhance the curriculum and improve standards in English. The Literacy Company is based in Cheshire and have experience of working with schools with high numbers of pupils on free school meals (FSM). P2W and P2P are two of five programmes The Literacy Company offer to schools, alongside Pathways To Spell, Pathways To Read and Pathways To Poetry.

The Literacy Company team is led by Catherine Richardson (Director) and Jo Gaskell (Product Manager and Literacy Consultant). Alongside Jo and Catherine, four other Literacy Consultants will deliver training to school staff and support with implementation.

WHAT (PROCEDURES)

Initial training

Half-day face-to-face training – Delivered by Literacy Consultants and attended by all subject leaders and Year 3 teachers, the in-person session aims to equip participants with a) an understanding of the P2W mastery approach b) an introduction to the programme c) how to deliver the P2W resources; and d) how best to adapt the units to suit the needs of all pupils. There will be five half-day face-to-face training sessions, one per geographical cluster.

Full-day face-to-face training – Delivered by Literacy Consultants and attended by all subject leaders, Year 3 teachers and TAs, the full-day in-person session aims to ensure participants a) gain familiarity with P2P b) are able to identify suitable pupils through the Gateway Task in P2W; and c) understand how P2P sits alongside P2W. Moreover, the training aims to improve TAs' subject knowledge of writing. There will be five full-day face-to-face training sessions, one per geographical cluster.

Continuous training and support

Online learning community groups – Delivered by Literacy Consultants to Year 3 teachers and TAs at two time-points, the half-day online session aims to support participants in a) shared writing; b) editing and proof-reading; and c) carrying out assessment of writing and identifying next steps. Each of the five geographical clusters will form their own group, so there will be five half-day sessions happening at each time-point.

Online group sessions – Delivered by Literacy Consultants to groups of four subject leaders on a termly basis (one group per geographical cluster), the 1.5-hour online session supports subject leaders in a) monitoring progress of implementation; b) considering next steps in implementing the programme at their school; and c) completing audits and supporting with action planning. Attendance of these sessions for Year 3 teachers is optional.

Weekly meetings – Attended by a Year 3 teacher and their TA, the weekly in-person session takes place over 20-30 minutes and includes a discussion of a) how best to adapt P2P plans to suit the pupils and address gaps in their writing; b) suitable pupils for P2P (only required at the end of the half term); and c) pupil needs, their progress to date and next steps.

Delivery

Pathways To Write – P2W should be delivered by Year 3 teachers to the whole class daily during literacy lessons throughout the academic year 2025-26. Each of the six half-termly units of work is expected to last four to six weeks across the academic year. Each unit comprises 15 sessions, but each session may take longer than an actual lesson (typically 1 hour) depending on the class. Where sessions take longer than individual lessons, teachers are free to complete the session in the following lesson before moving on to another session or begin a new unit if all 15 sessions have been completed. Teachers are instructed to teach the Mastery skills detailed in each unit and in the order that units appear in the overview to allow for progression of skills. Moreover, teachers are instructed to use the book recommended for each of the six units. The books are central to each unit and are used to 'hang' each session on, with teachers reading a small section of the book each session and activities being based on what has just been read. A range of books are used across units to ensure a range of themes, genres and diversity are covered (Johns-Shepherd 2020). For pupils working below and towards the expected standard, teachers are expected to personalise delivery. For instance, pupils working below the expected standard should complete a more accessible final writing task which allows them to apply adapted mastery keys.¹

P2W follows a mastery-learning model. Key skills (i.e., skills related to coherence in writing, punctuation, and transcription) are taught and repeated, and there are multiple opportunities throughout each unit to use and apply the skills until they can be mastered fully. Within each sequence, there are many opportunities for incidental short-burst writing with an extended written outcome by the end of each unit. Within each unit, teachers must teach the three parts of the mastery sequence throughout delivery: conceptual understanding (Gateway), procedural fluency (Pathway), and mastery (Writeaway). We explain each of these below.

- **Session 1: Conceptual understanding (Gateway)** – This is an opportunity to assess previously taught mastery skills. A short writing task is set at the end of this session to assess the application of Gateway skills. Here, the focus is on assessment of previously taught skills and pupils are not assessed on skills or genres that they have not been taught before. Where pupils are struggling to apply and to use Gateway keys, these should be built into the planning of the unit to ensure more personalised learning.
- **Sessions 2-11: Procedural fluency (Pathway)** – In this section, the Mastery skills are introduced, with pupils provided with opportunities to practise and apply these skills in different writing tasks. The tasks use genres that the pupils will be most familiar with (e.g., character or setting descriptions, dialogue, diary entries, poetry, and sentence work) providing a range of ongoing evidence for teachers to assess and understand pupils' writing proficiencies.
- **Sessions 12-15: Mastery (Writeaway)** – This final section begins with sectioning and sequencing texts using a model. If the final written outcome at the end of the unit is narrative-based, then this will usually be the text which has been read or for

¹ The keys are listed at start of each unit. *Gateway keys* are skills that should have been previously taught. *Mastery keys* are the main skills the unit will focus on. *Feature keys* are features of the writing genre that is the outcome of each unit.

younger pupils a shortened version to support re-telling has been included. If the final written outcome is a non-fiction text, a model is often provided in the resource section. Two sessions have been allocated for the writing of the text, but this may be extended depending on what is being written. Within the Writeaway, pupils are encouraged to plan, write, check, edit, re-draft and publish as required; with the focus on using and applying the mastery skills they have been taught.

Spoken language (oracy) is integrated into P2W in a progressive way that develops pupils' ability to communicate effectively. Many of the drama, group discussion, speaking and listening activities from the Primary National Strategy (DfES, 2003) have been incorporated into the units to ensure that pupils are immersed in stories and characters, can articulate their thoughts and use exploratory talk to develop their ideas and write effectively for a range of purposes. Moreover, P2W incorporates opportunities for pupils to develop and apply vocabulary based on key strategies for teaching vocabulary and modelling language (Reynolds, 2023), such as identifying vocabulary specific to each text and unit.

Pathways To Progress – P2P is a targeted writing intervention and complements P2W, so pupils participating in P2P are *also* participating in P2W. Using the same texts as the P2W programme and running concurrently, previously taught skills are set out in half termly units to be delivered by a teaching assistant (TA) in three 20-minute sessions per week. Teachers should select four to six pupils who are working toward the expected standard for a half term's intervention. The same four to six pupils should complete the full unit. Different pupils can attend each half term, based on where gaps lie. Short, weekly planning meetings between the teacher and TA are expected to take place while CPD videos support TAs with subject knowledge.

Each unit is focused on a small number of grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation skills. Skills for each unit have been chosen to be cohesive, build on prior learning and link to the work pupils will be doing in class. The expectation is that pupils will apply the work from the intervention in their writing and bring their English work to the following week's review session to show their application back in the classroom. The weekly sessions follow a Revisit and review, Teach, Practise and Apply sequence.

- **Session 1: Revisit and review** – Each week starts with an opportunity to revisit and review prior learning. It should take around 5 minutes, but TAs are encouraged to be flexible about timings if there are clear misconceptions at this stage of the session. In this part of the session pupils may be asked to bring their writing books from the English lessons (or if appropriate writing from other areas of the curriculum) to use as part of the review session so that they can look for evidence of the previous week's focus skill in their class-based writing. The purpose of this is to ensure there is transference of skills from the intervention sessions into pupils' writing in English lessons and across the curriculum.
- **Session 1: Teach** – This part of the session is key in delivering new learning to pupils. The 'Teach' sessions have been designed to actively engage pupils in learning through a combination of explaining, questioning, investigating, and modelling to introduce concepts to pupils. They review and build on prior learning to develop pupils' understanding.
- **Session 2: Practise** – Pupils will be given activities that reinforce learning from session 1 and allow them to practise the focus skill. Sessions will include a mixture of

paired and independent activities to build pupils' confidence with the focus skill. Activities may be recorded in notebooks by pupils, but will predominantly focus on use of sentence strips, whiteboards, cards, or other simple, on-hand resources.

- **Session 3: Apply** – Every 'Apply' session should start with a writing warm-up activity to support pupils with development of gross and fine motor skills required for writing. During this session, pupils will complete a short piece of writing in which they should apply the skill for the week as well as previously taught skills from the unit. All pupils should have a notebook in which to write that they keep in a folder with any other resources from the session, although the notebook is not provided as part of the programme. They should be encouraged to have this available to them in English lessons so that they can refer to their writing from the P2P sessions or any useful resources they have been given. A short amount of time should be given to collecting and sharing ideas before pupils complete their writing independently. These pieces of writing can be used to adapt planning for subsequent weeks, to plan additional sessions to address errors or misconceptions or as evidence of progress.

The final part of *each* session will give pupils the opportunity for self-reflection and discussion of key learning points. The group should discuss tips and hints for achieving the skills taught in the sessions. In this part of the session, following the 'Apply' writing opportunity, pupils will be asked to evaluate their writing and identify where they have used the focus skill. They will be encouraged to reflect on their successes and next steps in writing at this stage each week and should be given feedback on their writing (EEF 2021c).

TAs are advised to use pre-learning as a strategy to support pupils struggling to access the age-related curriculum. This involves introducing pupils to learning objectives and key concepts either individually or in small groups before whole-class teaching, therefore giving them confidence going into the lesson and increasing their engagement.

WHAT (RESOURCES)

The supporting materials for delivery of Pathways Literacy (P2W and P2P) include:

- **Pathways to Write Set 1 + 2 Overview** – The P2W overview gives detail of the relevant texts for each unit along with the writing skills taught within those units.
- **Reading and Spoken Language Overview** – The reading and spoken language overview details the reading and spoken language objectives from the National Curriculum that are included in the programme.
- **Feature Keys Progression** – This document contains guidance on the elements of writing specific to the genres of writing within P2W. The Feature Keys ensure consistency within the teaching of a genre across schools and progression with the genre outcomes between year groups.
- **Y3 Assessment Framework** – The Assessment Framework is designed to be used as a tool to support the assessment of groups or individuals. The framework provides the whole year group curriculum on a single page for ease of reference. Assessment Frameworks are provided for pupils working towards the expected standard (WTS), those working at the expected standard (EXS) and those working at greater depth (GDS).
- **Pathways Overview of Objectives** – This document details the coverage of mastery keys in each half term and shows how these develop over the year. Ongoing writing

skills such as writing for purpose and audience, spelling, handwriting, and editing are identified in the document. The document can be used by teachers to identify which writing skills have been covered, allowing them to make precise and effective assessments. This will also support teachers with the adaptation of mastery keys as they can track back to previous year groups using this document.

- **Assessment guidance for Pathways to Write** – This document guides teachers with tips on how to assess writing produced in P2W using the Assessment Frameworks and explains how to assess writing following the mastery approach.
- **Curriculum overview set 1 + 2** – This document supports the identification of links with the Pathways texts to the wider curriculum. The document particularly suggests links to science, history, and geography.
- **Writing Opportunities** – This document outlines the suggested forms and genres of writing that should be covered. It also suggests the grammar that can be taught within each genre. This document is intended to support teachers with cross-curricular writing.
- **CPD videos** – The aim for staff delivering the P2P programme is that their English subject knowledge and understanding of a variety of effective strategies for teaching and learning will be improved through the accompanying CPD videos. The CPD videos are a few minutes long, with the longest video lasting around 10 minutes.

HOW (MODE OF DELIVERY)

P2W is a whole-class programme delivered in-person to all Year 3 pupils during regular literacy lessons. P2P – the targeted intervention – is also delivered in-person but *in addition* to regular literacy lessons.

The training (initial training and continuous training) includes a mix of in-person and online delivery. The initial half-day training and full-day training delivered by Literacy Consultants are in-person. Weekly meetings between a Year 3 teacher and their TA are also held in person. Online learning community groups delivered by Literacy Consultants to Year 3 teachers and TAs are held remotely, as are online group sessions delivered by Literacy Consultants to subject leaders.

WHERE

P2W sessions are held during timetabled Year 3 literacy lessons in the classroom. P2P is usually delivered outside the classroom in another teaching and learning space.

WHEN AND HOW MUCH

P2W sessions are delivered by Year 3 teachers to the whole class for five hours a week during literacy lessons. Each of the six units of work is expected to last four to six weeks across the academic year. Each unit comprises 15 sessions, but each session may take longer than an actual lesson depending on the class.

P2P is delivered by a teaching assistant (TA) in three 20-minute sessions per week per term, beginning in the second autumn term (November 2025).

TAILORING (ADAPTATION OF THE INTERVENTION)

Key elements of P2W and P2P need to be delivered as intended, while there is a degree of flexibility for other elements. For instance, for P2W, it is essential for teachers to teach the three parts of the mastery sequence (Gateway, Pathway, Writeaway), although some sessions can be adapted and removed. Similarly, teachers are instructed to teach the mastery skills outlined in each unit but have flexibility over adapting the skills to meet their pupils' needs. For delivery of P2P sessions, a timetabled slot is 'non-negotiable' but schools have flexibility about the frequency and duration of each session as long as pupils are exposed to one hour of P2P delivery a week. For instance, while 3x20 min P2P sessions are recommended, schools might prefer to have two weekly sessions of 30 minutes instead.

Appendix 4 includes a detailed overview of 'non-negotiables' and permitted adaptations.

MODIFICATIONS

The pre-pilot between September 2022 and June 2023 did not include delivery of P2W and P2P as an integrated intervention; instead, all participating settings took part in P2P, with P2W being an optional element. Other key differences included:

- **Mode of delivery** – all training sessions were delivered online rather than including a combination of in-person and online training
- **Training participants** – all training sessions were targeted at Year 3 teachers and TAs rather than also being targeted at the subject leader

Theory of Change

The detailed programme's Theory of Change (ToC) is included in Appendix 1 of this study plan. It shows how intended changes in professionals' knowledge, confidence and practice are expected to enable the delivery of the programme that is expected to lead to pupil-level change. The log of associated causal mechanisms and contextual assumptions can be found in Appendix 2 and 3.

Through engaging with the training (initial training and continuous training), subject leaders, teachers and TAs are expected to improve their knowledge of the mastery approach, improve their knowledge of the writing process and become more confident to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom. It is further expected that teachers and TAs will feel sufficiently knowledgeable to deliver Pathways Literacy to year groups other than Year 3 after the end of the programme.

Through whole class teaching of a finite number of skills and additional targeted support for pupils working towards the expected standard in writing, it is anticipated that Year 3 pupils will experience a range of short-term outcomes during the programme. This includes an increased understanding of basic writing skills as well as improved attitudes towards writing, including an increased confidence to write; increased desire to write; improved writing fluency; and improved writing stamina. Ultimately, and through these changes, it is expected that the programme will result in better academic attainment in writing.

Research questions

The evaluation will address 16 research questions, mapped in Table 1 below against the EEF's three pilot criteria – evidence of promise, feasibility of implementation and readiness for trial (including scalability).

The research questions have been developed in consultation with the EEF and The Literacy Company (TLC) during the project inception phase. The research questions about evidence of promise address the intended and unintended consequences stated in the ToC. The research questions about feasibility reflect the causal mechanisms and contextual assumptions set out in the ToC and associated logs. The research questions about readiness for trial consider scalability and the ability of an evaluation to test the programme's ToC, including intended impacts.

Table 1 Research questions

Pilot criteria	Research questions
Evidence of promise	<p>1. Practitioner outcomes – What evidence, if any, is there of intended changes in practitioners' knowledge, confidence and skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a perceived improvement in subject leaders', teachers' and TAs' understanding of the mastery approach? • Do subject leaders feel confident reviewing audit and action plans? • Do subject leaders feel confident feeding back audit results and progress? • Is there a perceived improvement in teachers' and TAs' knowledge of the writing process? • Do teachers feel confident to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom? • Do TAs feel confident to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning? • Is there a perceived improvement in teachers' and TAs' confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills? • Is there a perceived improvement in teachers' and TAs' confidence and skills to assess writing? • Is there a perceived improvement in teachers' and TAs' ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils? • What is perceived to lead to these changes?
	<p>2. Practitioner outcomes – What evidence, if any, is there of intended changes in practitioners' pedagogical practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do teachers and TAs assess and evaluate pupils' learning? • Do teachers and TAs model and break down basic writing skills • Do teachers and TAs provide individual feedback to pupils? • Do TAs adapt the content of sessions to address pupil misconceptions? • Do TAs use pre-learning as a strategy to support struggling pupils? • What is perceived to lead these changes?

	<p>3. Pupil outcomes – What evidence, if any, is there of intended changes in pupils?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a perceived increase in pupils' understanding of basic writing skills and how to use them? • Is there a perceived increase in pupils' confidence and desire to write? • Is there a perceived improvement in pupils' basic writing skills? • Is there a perceived improvement in pupils' understanding of their own writing? • Is there a perceived improvement in pupils' writing fluency and stamina? • Are there any perceived differences between disadvantaged children and their peers? • What is perceived to lead to these changes?
	<p>4. Practitioner responsiveness – Are lead teachers, teachers and TAs motivated to engage with the programme?</p>
	<p>5. Pupil responsiveness – Are pupils motivated to engage with the Pathways sessions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any perceived differences between disadvantaged pupils and their peers? • Are there any differences in engagement levels between whole class (P2W) and targeted (P2P) sessions?
	<p>6. Unintended consequences – Are there any unintended consequences of participation in this programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities are displaced by P2W and P2P? • Are there any perceived consequences for other components of pupils' literacy (e.g. spelling, speaking, reading)? • Are there any perceived consequences for other components of pupils' learning (e.g. maths)?
	<p>7. Business as usual – How different is the programme to business as usual?</p>
Feasibility	<p>8. Fidelity – Is the programme delivered as intended?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the training and ongoing support delivered as intended? • What are the attendance rates for the training and support sessions? • Do subject leaders use the action plan to drive implementation? • Do the meetings between teachers and TAs take place weekly? • Do TAs engage with CPD videos on a regular basis? • Are the P2W and P2P sessions delivered as intended?
	<p>9. Adaptations – What adaptations are made to the programme and why?</p>
	<p>10. Barriers and facilitators – What are the barriers and facilitators to successful implementation?</p>
	<p>11. Accessibility – Are programme inputs (materials, training, ongoing support, Pathways pedagogy) accessible and useful to participants?</p>
	<p>12. Pupil selection – Are teachers able to confidently and appropriately identify pupils who would benefit from the targeted intervention?</p>
	<p>13. Costs – Is the programme affordable for schools?</p>
Readiness for trial	<p>14. Scalability – Can the programme feasibly be delivered at a larger scale?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the overall training and implementation support system manageable? • What modifications, if any, are required to scale delivery?
	<p>15. Mechanisms – How well do we understand the causal chain and mechanisms that underpin the intended effects of the programme?</p>

16. **Outcome measures** – What outcome measures may be suitable for a trial?

We will report on 18 key success indicators to inform the decision about whether Pathways Literacy should proceed to trial.

Table 2 Table 2 maps these success indicators against the three pilot criteria and the research questions listed above and provides the sources of evidence for each indicator and how they will be assessed. The sources of evidence are all explained under Methods below.

Table 2 Success indicators

Pilot criteria	Success indicators	Sources of evidence
Evidence of promise	Subject leaders, teachers and TAs have improved knowledge of the mastery approach (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
	Teachers and TAs have improved knowledge of the writing process (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
	Teachers and TAs feel confident to implement the programme (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs teachers • Post-delivery survey with lead teachers/teachers/TAs
	Teachers and TAs model and break down basic writing skills (RQ2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Observations of classroom and targeted sessions
	TAs make appropriate adaptations in the content of sessions to address pupil misconceptions (RQ2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Observations of targeted sessions
	No evidence that the programme is likely to widen the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers (RQ3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs

Pilot criteria	Success indicators	Sources of evidence
	Lead teachers, teachers and TAs are motivated to engage with the programme and improve practice (RQ4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Observations of training • Observations of learning community groups • Observations of online group sessions • Observations of classroom and targeted sessions
	Pupils are motivated to engage with the classroom and targeted sessions (RQ5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Observations of classroom and targeted sessions • Discussion group with pupils
	No major concerns around negative consequences of displacement of teacher and TA time (RQ6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Interviews with subject leaders /teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders /teachers/TAs
	No major concerns around negative impact on learning in other areas of literacy and other subjects (RQ6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Interviews with subject leaders /teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Discussion group with pupils
	The programme is different from business as usual (RQ7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
Feasibility	Programme activities (training/ongoing support/in-class delivery) are delivered with fidelity (RQ8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmatic data • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Learning workshop • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Observations of training • Observations of online learning community groups • Observations of online group sessions • Observations of classroom and targeted sessions

Pilot criteria	Success indicators	Sources of evidence
	Intervention components (training/ongoing support/training material/delivery resources) are accessible and useful (RQ11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Observations of training • Observations of online learning community groups • Observations of online group sessions • Observations of classroom and targeted sessions
	Teachers are able to select the appropriate pupils working towards the expected standard for the targeted sessions (RQ12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with teachers • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
	The estimated programme costs are affordable for schools (RQ13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leader interviews • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
Readiness for trial	Clear and realistic plan for what scaling to deliver in more schools would look like and require (RQ14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning workshop with The Literacy Company • Evaluator/ EEF judgement
	Plan for scaling would entail little or no modification to in-school delivery (RQ14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning workshop with The Literacy Company • Evaluator/ EEF judgement
	Outcome measure(s) identified that is/are a) aligned to intended outcomes, b) able to measure changes that we expect to see and c) convenient to administer in primary schools (RQ16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme documentation • Outcome measure review • Outcome measure piloting

Methods

We have designed our methodology in line with EEF IPE and pilot guidance (EEF 2022; EEF 2023) to:

- explore views on delivery from different participant groups, including triangulating findings within schools to gain a deeper understanding of implementation
- minimise burden on schools
- inform the design of a trial

We will carry out a mixed-methods implementation and process evaluation that elicits data through desk-based research, research with the delivery team (DT), research with school - staff and pupils and observations of delivery. Figure 1 sets out how our design will address the three evaluation domains and 16 evaluation questions.

Figure 1 Evaluation matrix

Evaluation domain	Evaluation questions	Desk-based research			Research with DT			Research with school staff				Observations				Research with pupils		
		Programme documentation	Programmatic data	Outcome measure review	IDEA workshop	Interviews with LCs	Learning workshop	Interviews				Training	Online learning community groups	Online group sessions	Classroom delivery	Targeted sessions	Pupil discussion groups	Outcome measure planning
								Subject leaders	Teachers	TAs	Survey							
Evidence of promise	1. What evidence, if any, is there evidence of intended changes in practitioners' knowledge, confidence and skills?																	
	2. What evidence, if any, is there evidence of intended changes in pedagogical practice?																	
	3. What evidence, if any, is there of intended changes in pupils?																	
	4. Are lead teachers, teachers and TAs motivated to engage with the programme?																	
	5. Are children are motivated to engage with the Pathways Literacy sessions?																	
	6. Are there any unintended consequences of participation in this programme?																	
	7. How different is the programme to business as usual?																	
Feasibility	8. Is the programme delivered as intended?																	
	9. What adaptations do participants make to the programme and why?																	
	10. What are the barriers and facilitators to successful implementation?																	
	11. Are programme inputs accessible and useful to participants?																	
	12. Are teachers able to confidently identify pupils who would benefit from the targeted intervention?																	
Readiness for trial	13. Is the programme affordable for schools?																	
	14. Can the programme feasibly be delivered at a larger scale?																	
	15. How well do we understand the causal chain and mechanisms which underpin the intended effects of the programme?																	
	16. What outcome measures may be suitable in a trial?																	

Recruitment

The delivery team (The Literacy Company) will recruit 20 primary schools for the pilot evaluation. We agreed this sample size considering both TLC's capacity constraints and the size required to enable exploration on questions of scalability and fidelity.

The delivery team and the evaluation team will monitor school recruitment to ensure that:

- schools are located within the specified regions, including in Education Investment Areas (EIAs)²
- schools have single-age year groups only
- schools do not participate in any of the following EEF-funded interventions during the 2025/26 academic year: Writing Roots, Power of Reading, Rehearsal Room Writing, and Tutoring with the Lightning Squad
- we achieve a diverse sample, including a mix of rural and urban schools; and mix of different setting types (i.e., maintained schools, single academies and MATs)

² EIAs are the third of local authorities in England where educational outcomes (e.g., reading, writing, maths) were the weakest. This is based on sustained low performance across Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 in 2017 to 2019 (DfE 2023).

Participating schools will nominate three practitioners when they sign up to the pilot. This includes a Head of Literacy overseeing delivery at the school (referred to as subject leader), at least one Year 3 teacher and one TA.³ Beyond this, there will be no eligibility criteria for these practitioners, other than the school authorising their time to be spent attending initial and continuous training sessions and allowing time for delivery and preparation of sessions. The subject leader and a member of the school's senior leadership team (SLT) will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreeing to the requirements of the programme and the evaluation.

There are no eligibility criteria for pupils, as Pathways Literacy will be delivered to all Year 3 pupils and Year 3 classes at participating pilot schools.

We (the evaluation team at Oxford MeasurEd) will prepare all recruitment materials for specific evaluation activities. These recruitment materials will outline the purpose of the evaluation, what will be involved in taking part and how data will be used. We will also explain this verbally before all workshops, group discussions, interviews and observations, and participants will be able to ask questions before agreeing to take part. Recruitment documents and verbal briefings will also make clear the steps we will take to minimise the chance of participants being identifiable in reports.

Measures

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Table 3 lists the short-term outcomes for the four target groups (subject leaders, teachers, TAs, and pupils) as outlined in the programme's ToC (included in full in Appendix 1).

Table 3 Short-term outcomes

Target	Short-term outcomes
Subject leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leader has improved knowledge of the mastery approach • Subject leader feels confident reviewing audit and action plans • Subject leader feels confident feeding back the audit results and progress to HT, Y3 teacher and TA at the end of each term
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have improved knowledge of the mastery approach • Teachers have improved knowledge of the writing process • Teachers feel confident to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom • Teachers have improved confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills • Teachers have improved confidence and skills to assess writing • Teachers are better able to provide individual feedback and support to pupils

³ Where the subject leader and the Year 3 teacher are the same person, the delivery organisation would invite the school's assistant head or curriculum lead to join the training sessions.

TAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAs have improved knowledge in the mastery approach • TAs have improved knowledge of the writing process • TAs feel confident to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support pupils' writing • TAs' have improved confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills • TAs develop improved confidence and skills to assess writing • TAs are better able to provide individual feedback and support to pupils
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils have increased understanding of basic writing skills and how to use them • Pupils have increased confidence to write • Pupils have improved basic writing skills • Pupils have improved understanding of features within writing, what is good about their writing and what can be improved • Pupils have increased desire to write • Pupils have improved writing fluency • Pupils have improved writing stamina

A selection of the above outcomes will be measured as follows, focusing on proximal, staff-level changes:

Table 4 Evidencing short-term outcomes

Success indicators	Sources of evidence
Subject leaders, teachers and TAs have improved knowledge of the mastery approach (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Literacy Consultants • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
Teachers and TAs have improved knowledge of the writing process (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with subject leaders/teachers/TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs
Teachers feel confident to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with teachers • Post-delivery survey with lead teachers/teachers/TAs
TAs feel confident to administer appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with TAs • Post-delivery survey with subject leaders/teachers/TAs

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The programme's ToC specifies the long-term outcomes listed in Table 5.

Table 5 Long-term outcomes

Target	Long-term outcomes
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Subject leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leader feels confident using audit and action plans in the future for other year groups • Subject leader can identify next steps for Y3 pupils for the transition to Y4 following a final audit
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers feel confident to deliver the P2W programme to other year groups
TAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAs feel confident to deliver the P2P programme to other year groups beyond Y3 classes
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' academic attainment in writing improves

This pilot is not designed to measure impact. While we aim to gather evidence of promise regarding long-term outcomes for subject leaders, teachers, and TAs at the end of delivery via the post-delivery survey (see below), evidencing long term outcomes for pupils is beyond the scope of the evaluation.

Data collection

DESK-BASED RESEARCH

Before finalising the evaluation design, we **reviewed programme documentation** to:

- understand the ToC, including causal mechanisms and contextual assumptions
- map research evidence collected against the causal mechanisms and contextual assumptions so far and identify evidence gaps
- identify any programmatic data that we might use for the evaluation

We carried out a desk-based **review of potential outcome measures** for a future trial, including primary and secondary outcome measures. We agreed the methodology for this review with the EEF. Our review considered for each potential outcome measure:

- whether they were suitable for testing short-term and long-term outcomes outlined in the ToC
- their statistical properties
- logistical factors such as mode of data collection, length of assessment and any training/briefing required to administer the assessment

We analysed the pros and cons of each identified measure and outlined these for discussion with the EEF and BRS (Appendix 5). We identified Pearson's Wechsler Individual Achievement Test - Third UK Edition (WIAT-III UK) and the Writing Assessment Measure (WAM) (Dunsmuir et al. 2015) as two suitable primary outcome measures to measure pupils' writing attainment. We concluded that WAM would be more appropriate as an outcome measure for a trial of Pathways Literacy because of the feasibility of administering the assessment and limited costs.

Our review of secondary outcome measures examined measures assessing pupils' attitudes towards writing. We identified the Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS) (Bruning et al. 2013) and Writing Attitude Survey (WAS) (Kear et al. 2000) as potentially promising but

concluded that neither fully aligned with the intended outcomes of the programme (confidence, stamina, fluency, and desire to write) or had been tested with the same age group of pupils in England. Moreover, both measures require a relatively long administration time. Given the limitations of these measures and the lack of suitable outcome measures measuring the domains of interest, we agreed with EEF in February 2025 to develop and pilot a new outcome measure in five schools (see Research with Pupils).

The final aspect of our desk-based research will be **analysis of programmatic data**. **This will include anonymised attendance data in aggregate form** to understand programme reach and dosage. The data will be continuously collected by the delivery team and shared with the evaluation team at the end of delivery in July 2026. We will examine:

- The overall number of sessions delivered, covering half-day training, full-day training, online learning community groups and online group sessions
- The overall attendance rate for half-day training, full-day training, online learning community groups and online group sessions
- The overall attendance rate by role for half-day training, full-day training, online learning community groups and online group sessions

RESEARCH WITH DELIVERY TEAM

We facilitated a two-hour **IDEA workshop** with core members of the delivery team in November 2024, following EEF guidance. In this workshop, we discussed the ToC, assumed causal mechanisms and contextual assumptions, and began to identify priorities for the evaluation. We also encouraged The Literacy Company to start thinking about any modifications that might be needed to scale the programme.

During implementation of Pathways Literacy, we will carry out six **qualitative interviews** with Literacy Consultants: three in **December 2025** and a further three in **May 2026**.

Interviews with Literacy Consultants will gather data on fidelity, feasibility of the delivery model, engagement, and any reflections on perceived impact, including unintended consequences. Carrying out interviews with Literacy Consultants at two different timepoints will enable us to focus on different parts of delivery while reducing the risk of participants struggling to recall key information. In December 2025, we will focus particularly on the delivery of the in-person training sessions (taking place in July 2025 and September 2025) as well as the first online learning community group (taking place in November 2025). Interviews in May 2025 will focus more on the online group sessions with teachers (happening in December 2025, April 2026 and June 2026).

After delivery, we will facilitate an online **learning workshop** with the delivery team in **July 2026**. In the workshop we will explore lessons learned by the delivery team, discuss the delivery team's plans for scaling delivery, seek participant validation of our interim analysis and gather any additional data on evidence gaps to inform the final analysis and reporting stage. Unlike the interim presentation to EEF in **September 2026**, the learning workshop is not intended primarily as a presentation of interim findings; instead, it presents an opportunity for the delivery team to sense-check findings and raise any questions about the data. The workshop also manages expectations about what findings in the final report will

look like, although we will emphasise to the delivery team that the analysis presented is not final to avoid drawing final conclusions.

TRAINING OBSERVATIONS

We will observe *in-person initial training sessions* at the beginning of delivery, aiming to observe each of the five geographical clusters once. We will carry out three observations of the half-day training for subject leaders and teachers in **July 2025** and two observations of the full-day training for subject leaders, teachers, and TAs in **September 2025**.

Moreover, we will carry out online observations of continuous training activities. This includes three observations of the half-day learning community groups (1-2 observations in **November 2025** and 1-2 observations in **February 2025**). We will also conduct three observations of the online group sessions with subject leaders (1 observation each in **December 2025, March 2026** and **June 2026**). We will observe each geographical cluster at least once across the six online observations.

The purpose of the observations will be to provide insights to tailor prompts and probes used in interviews. We will also gather observational data on the fidelity of delivery, any adaptations, responsiveness among teachers, and TAs, and subject leaders and the apparent accessibility of the training and support.

RESEARCH WITH SCHOOL STAFF

We will conduct qualitative and quantitative research with teachers, TAs, and subject leaders to achieve depth and breadth in our understanding of their experiences and views.

Qualitative research

We will carry out *qualitative interviews* with a group of teachers (n=10-12), TAs (n=10-12) and subject leaders (n=6) between **December 2025 and May 2026**. The involvement of these three key participant types in interviews will enable a comprehensive view of the programme given their respective roles in a) facilitating and overseeing implementation (subject leader), b) providing in-school support and selecting pupils (teachers), and c) delivering whole-class and targeted sessions (teachers and TAs). The interviews at different timepoints will also enable us to capture perspectives about implementation at different stages of the programme from early to late implementation. *Table 6* sets out topics for each participant group.

Table 6 School Staff interview topics

Teachers	TAs	Subject leaders
<p>Training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usefulness of initial training Usefulness of online learning communities Usefulness of weekly meetings with TA Usefulness of action planning with/by subject leader Barriers and facilitators to participation/engagement in training and support Any other support received/needed <p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporation of mastery approach into daily literacy lessons Displacement of other activities – e.g. reading Selection of pupils for targeted intervention using gateway task Scheduling of targeted intervention Any adaptations made Pupil motivation and engagement Barriers and facilitators to delivery <p>Perceived outcomes for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic writing skills Confidence to write Understanding of what is good writing and understanding of own writing Desire to write Writing fluency Writing stamina Differences for different groups, including disadvantaged children Negative spillover effects Any other outcomes (positive and negative) What led to these outcomes <p>Practitioner outcomes (self and TA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of the mastery approach Knowledge of the writing process Confidence to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom Confidence to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning Confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills Confidence and skills to assess writing Ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils Any other outcomes (positive and negative) What led to these outcomes <p>Intentions to sustain practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-class mastery learning model Targeted intervention Components of pedagogy Confidence to deliver Pathway2Write to other year groups 	<p>Training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usefulness of initial training Usefulness of training on targeted intervention Usefulness of teacher learning communities Usefulness of CPD videos Usefulness of weekly meetings with teacher Usefulness of action planning with/by subject leader Barriers and facilitators to participation/engagement in training and support Any other support received/needed <p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of targeted intervention sessions Completion of tracking grids Any adaptations made Pupil motivation and engagement Barriers and facilitators to delivery <p>Perceived outcomes for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic writing skills Confidence to write Understanding of what is good writing and understanding of own writing Desire to write Writing fluency Writing stamina Differences for different groups, including disadvantaged children Negative spillover effects Any other outcomes (positive and negative) What led to these outcomes <p>Self-reported practitioner outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of the mastery approach Knowledge of the writing process Confidence to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning Confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills Confidence and skills to assess writing Ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils Any other outcomes (positive and negative) What led to these outcomes <p>Intentions to sustain practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted intervention Components of pedagogy Confidence to deliver Pathway2Progress to other year groups 	<p>Training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usefulness of initial training Usefulness of training on targeted intervention Usefulness of teacher learning communities Usefulness of support from LC consultant Barriers and facilitators to participation/engagement in training and support Any other support received/needed <p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action planning Incorporation of Pathways Literacy into school literacy provision, including balancing time with other priorities – for example time spent reading Teacher/TA motivation and engagement Barriers and facilitators to delivery <p>Practitioner outcomes (self, teachers and TA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence reviewing audit and action plans Confidence feedback back audit results and progress Understanding of the mastery approach Knowledge of the writing process Confidence to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom Confidence to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning Confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills Confidence and skills to assess writing Ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils Any other outcomes (positive and negative) What led to these outcomes <p>Intentions to sustain practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compatibility with usual practice Difference to usual practice Intentions to sustain... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-class mastery learning model Targeted intervention Components of pedagogy Confidence using audit and action plans in the future for other year groups

Quantitative research

We will invite all teachers, TAs, and subject leaders individually to complete a 15 minute **online survey** after delivery of the programme finishes in **June and July 2026**. We will finalise the survey after initial analysis of qualitative data, and use it to test whether themes emerging from the qualitative evidence apply across the broader sample. Table 7 sets out preliminary topics to be covered with each group.

Table 7 School staff survey topics

Teachers	TAs	Subject leaders
<p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of mastery approach into daily literacy lessons • Scheduling of targeted intervention • Displacement of other activities • Key adaptations emerging from the qualitative research • Key barriers to delivery emerging from the qualitative research • Proportion of P2W sessions missed <p>Perceived outcomes for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic writing skills • Confidence to write • Understanding of what is good writing and understanding of own writing • Desire to write • Writing fluency • Writing stamina • Differences for different groups, including disadvantaged children • Negative spillover effects • Any other outcomes (positive and negative) • What led to these outcomes <p>Training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key barriers to participation in training and support emerging from the qualitative research <p>Practitioner outcomes (self and TA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the mastery approach • Knowledge of the writing process • Confidence to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom • Confidence to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning • Confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills • Confidence and skills to assess writing • Ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils • Other key outcomes (positive and negative) emerging from the qualitative research <p>Intentions to sustain practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-class mastery learning model • Targeted intervention • Components of pedagogy • Confidence to deliver Pathway2Write to other year groups 	<p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of targeted intervention sessions • Completion of tracking grids • Key adaptations emerging from the qualitative research • Key barriers to delivery emerging from the qualitative research • Proportion of P2P sessions missed <p>Perceived outcomes for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic writing skills • Confidence to write • Understanding of what is good writing and understanding of own writing • Desire to write • Writing fluency • Writing stamina • Differences for different groups, including disadvantaged children • Negative spillover effects • Any other outcomes (positive and negative) • What led to these outcomes <p>Training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key barriers to participation in training and support emerging from the qualitative research <p>Self-reported practitioner outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the mastery approach • Knowledge of the writing process • Confidence to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom • Confidence to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning • Confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills • Confidence and skills to assess writing • Ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils • Other key outcomes (positive and negative) emerging from the qualitative research <p>Intentions to sustain practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted intervention • Components of pedagogy • Confidence to deliver Pathway2Progress to other year groups 	<p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action planning • Displacement of other activities • Final audit to inform transition into year 4 • Key barriers to delivery emerging from the qualitative research • Costs of implementation <p>Practitioner outcomes (self, teachers and TA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence reviewing audit and action plans • Confidence feedback back audit results and progress • Understanding of the mastery approach • Knowledge of the writing process • Confidence to implement mastery learning for writing in the classroom • Confidence to implement appropriate teaching strategies to support children's learning • Confidence and skills to model and break down basic writing skills • Confidence and skills to assess writing • Ability to provide individual feedback and support to pupils • Other key outcomes (positive and negative) emerging from the qualitative research <p>Training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usefulness of support from LC consultant • Key barriers to participation in training and support emerging from the qualitative research <p>Intentions to sustain practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-class mastery learning model • Targeted intervention • Components of pedagogy • Confidence using audit and action plans in the future for other year groups • Identification of next steps for Y3 pupils for the transition to Y4 following a final audit

OBSERVATIONS OF IN-SCHOOL DELIVERY

Some of the qualitative interviews described above will be carried out as part of **site visits** in six schools (see section on sampling). These site visits will take place in three batches of two schools at different stages of implementation in **January 2026**, **March 2026** and **May 2026**. During these site visits, we will also **observe** delivery of a **whole-class session** (P2W) and a **targeted session** (P2P) as well as carry out a group discussion with Year 3 pupils participating in the targeted session.

The primary aim of the observations will be to provide insights to tailor prompts and probes used in interviews and group discussions. We will also gather qualitative observational data on the fidelity of delivery, any adaptations, responsiveness among practitioners and pupils, and the apparent accessibility of the resources and pedagogy. We will also record two key indicators of promise: whether teachers and TAs *model* writing skills in sessions, and whether TAs *adapt* P2P sessions to address pupils' misconceptions and abilities. The latter will include triangulating observation data with TAs' interviews.

RESEARCH WITH PUPILS

Our research with children will include qualitative research to understand their perspectives on evidence of promise and feasibility, and piloting of outcome measure data collection to inform our understanding of readiness for trial.

Qualitative research with pupils

Pathways Literacy aims to improve children's basic writing skills as well as improving their attitudes towards writing. We will carry out **group discussions** using age-appropriate facilitation techniques to explore children's:

- views on the session content
- enjoyment of/motivation towards writing

The group discussions will take place with the six children selected for P2P and be held after observations of the whole-class and targeted sessions. Our approach will draw on good practice guidance (see for example Brady and Graham 2019) and include key strategies such as:

- keeping activities as brief as possible to maintain focus
- being flexible and planning a range of alternative activities in advance
- using projective techniques such as drawing and using pictures to elicit children's views
- engaging small groups in activities together as well as circulating to speak quietly to children one-on-one about their thoughts and feelings
- using age-appropriate language

During the process of drafting the data collection tools, we will consult closely with TLC as experts in both the intervention and in working with this age group.

Outcome measure piloting

Our desk-based review highlighted that there are no existing outcome measures that are well-aligned with the secondary outcomes identified in the Pathways Literacy Theory of Change (ToC) (see Appendix 1). We have therefore agreed with EEF that we will develop a bespoke secondary outcome measure that could be used in a trial of Pathways Literacy, and pilot it as part of our evaluation. The following criteria will inform the development of the measure and our analysis of how 'successful' it has been:

- **Content validity** – all four short-term outcomes broadly related to attitudes towards writing (confidence to write, desire to write, writing fluency, writing stamina) are covered by the items.
- **Internal consistency**: A Guttman's λ_2 of 0.80 or higher.
- **Targeting** – the tool captures a range of attitudes to writing and does not suffer from major "floor" or "ceiling" effects.
- **Administration** – the tool can be administered by teachers rather than external assessors, and the scoring of the tool is not labour intensive (either for teachers or for the evaluator).

In addition, the outcome measure needs to be short. The primary outcome measure (Writing Assessment Measure, WAM) likely to be used in a future trial but not as part of this pilot

takes approximately fifteen minutes, with an additional five minutes of planning time. Given the age group targeted by the intervention, it is essential that the secondary outcome tool does not take more than fifteen minutes to administer, and desirable it does not take longer than ten minutes.

The steps we will take to develop a secondary outcome measure tailored to the Pathways Literacy ToC include:

- 1) **Measure development:** We will identify relevant items from two existing measures that align with some of the outcomes in the ToC (Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS) and Writing Attitude Survey (WAS), see Appendix 5). We will then review this longlist of items with TLC to understand which items are most relevant to the changes they expect to occur as a result of the intervention. TLC and our Literacy and Writing Specialist will also advise on the suitability of items for Year 3 pupils in England, and any adaptation and contextualisation needed. Based on this we will compile a questionnaire, along with guidance/instructions with schools. We will ensure that the questionnaire is accessible to pupils who are not fluent readers.
- 2) **Data collection:** Data collection will include one class of Year 3 pupils per school, in five of the schools participating in the Pathways Literacy pilot. We anticipate that this will result in an achieved sample size in the region of 120-150 pupils (see Sampling approach). We will send each school in the pilot questionnaires for pupils and a pre-paid envelope for secure return of the papers. Teachers will administer the questionnaire at a time of their choosing within a two-week window and return the completed questionnaires to us. The questionnaires will be anonymous. Upon receiving the questionnaires, the data will then be manually entered, resulting in a final completed dataset for analysis with unique pupil IDs.
- 3) **Feedback from schools:** We will collect feedback from schools on the data collection process via short online survey. This will include their feedback on the feasibility and appropriateness of the process, as well as how long administration took. We will also provide an email address and contact phone number that schools can use if they want to provide any further feedback and/or have any questions or concerns.
- 4) **Analysis of questionnaire performance:** We will analyse the outcome data to review the questionnaire's performance against the key success criteria set out at the beginning of this section, which are related to content validity; internal consistency; targeting; and administration.

Sampling approach

Table 8 sets out sampling strategies and sizes for the evaluation. To ensure a depth of understanding and enable triangulation of perspectives, we propose that the majority of qualitative research (practitioner interviews, subject leader interviews, observations of classroom delivery and targeted sessions, group discussions with pupils) is carried out with schools selected for site visits. We propose to select six schools for site visits, using geography (urban/rural setting, Education Investment Area (EIA) schools vs. non-EIA schools) and setting type (e.g. maintained setting vs. academy) as primary sampling criteria while using teacher and TA experience (i.e. how long they have been teaching Year 3

pupils) as a secondary criterion. This will ensure that the site visit schools represent the diversity of schools taking part and include schools of particular interest, such as schools with higher proportions of pupils on FSM in EIAs. Interviews with staff in schools selected for site visits can be carried out in-person during the visit or online, to suit staff availability. Interviews with teachers and TAs in other schools will be carried out online.

There is no hard and fast “rule” about an appropriate sample size for developing an outcome measure. Power calculations are not appropriate, since we are not aiming to infer impact or measure significant differences between groups. However, the exercise requires a sample size large enough to estimate a measure’s properties. A typical rule of thumb when using Item Response Theory (IRT), for example, is a minimum of 50 individuals.⁴ We anticipate an achieved sample size of 120-150 for our piloting of the new secondary outcome measure, which we believe to be sufficient to estimate the properties we are interested in. It is vital that the development process includes the range of “proficiencies” that we would expect to see in a trial. We believe that including *all* pupils in each selected class, and classes across five schools with different characteristics (by geography and setting type), should provide a broad enough sample of pupils with higher and lower levels of performance, to allow us to test its suitability.

Table 8 Sampling

		Sampling strategy	Timing	Mode and duration	n.
DT	IDEA workshop	All core delivery staff	Inception	In-person, 2 hours	1 workshop
	Qualitative interviews - LCs	Purposive sampling	Middle and end of delivery	Online, c. 45 mins	6 interviews
	Learning workshop	All core delivery staff	After delivery	Online, 2.5 hours	1 workshop
School staff (Teachers, TAs and lead teachers)	Qualitative interviews - teachers	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	In-person or online, c. 45 mins	10-12 interviews (6 with site visit schools)
	Qualitative interviews - TAs	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	In-person or online, c. 45 mins	10-12 interviews (6 with site visit schools)
	Qualitative interviews - lead teachers	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	Online, c. 45 mins	6 interviews (all with site visit schools)
	Post-delivery survey	Census of all participating staff	After delivery	Online c. 15 mins	c.80
Observations	Training	Purposive sampling	Before in-school delivery (summer 2 and autumn 1)	In-person	3 half-day and 2 full-day training sessions
	Learning community groups	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	Online (asynchronous), half-day	3 half-day sessions
	Online group sessions	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	Online (asynchronous), c. 1.5 hours	3 online group sessions
	Classroom delivery	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	In-person, c. 45 mins	6 observations
	Targeted sessions	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	In-person, c. 20 mins	6 observations
Research with pupils	Pupil discussion groups	Purposive sampling	Throughout delivery	In-person c. 45 mins	6 discussion groups
	Outcome measure piloting	Purposive sampling	After delivery	In-person, 10-15 mins	5 Y3 classes in 5 schools (at non-site visit schools)

Data analysis

We will use the “Framework” approach to manage **qualitative data** (Ritchie et al. 2013) in Microsoft Excel. Using the themes covered in the topic guide, we will develop an initial thematic framework and assemble a matrix in Excel, in which each row represents an

⁴ Note that we do not intend to use IRT as the outcome measure will not measure one unidimensional trait, but use this as an illustrative example.

individual interview and each column an analytical theme. We will summarise data in the matrix, including illustrative quotes where appropriate. After a few data encounters, we will revisit the initial thematic frameworks as a team and make refinements where appropriate, meaning that thematic coding is in part deductive and in part inductive.

Data management will be carried out by at least two members of the project team and overseen by the IPE lead, who will deliver a detailed briefing to the project team before data management begins. When drawing on transcripts, analysts will be instructed to record page numbers in their summaries; when using recordings, summaries will include the approximate timings of the recording the relevant summary relates to. The advantage of using the Framework approach in this way is that it allows analysts to move back and forth between different levels of abstraction while always being able to return to the summaries and the raw data. This audit trail ensures the dependability of findings, as another researcher can understand how the analyst might have arrived at a certain concept. It also ensures authenticity – an important criterion for judging quality in qualitative research - as it enables us to explore a range of participant realities and provide detailed descriptions of these realities (Ayton et al. 2023).

Once we have coded all data in this matrix, we will analyse it thematically. This will include applying the themes in the thematic framework that the matrix is structured by and identifying new themes emerging from the data, meaning that the analysis is in part deductive, and in part inductive. We will develop individual analysis/chapter plans for each individual RQ. For instance, when bringing together the key themes from different participant groups, we will be able to carry out both descriptive and explanatory analysis, identifying convergence and dissonance between individuals and between participant groups and looking for explanations for differing views.

Throughout the fieldwork period, the evaluation team will meet at regular periods to share emerging findings based on interviews, observations, and charted data, which will inform development of the post-delivery survey. While formal analysis won't take place until after the post-delivery survey, the evaluation team will develop an analytical log where they will record analytic ideas and hunches which can be useful for the final analytical stage.

We will analyse quantitative data descriptively using Stata. We will analyse fidelity using training attendance data, reporting the percentages of practitioners who attended each session. We will analyse the school staff survey data using unweighted frequencies and – where possible – using cross-tab analysis on several background characteristics, including role and years of experience. We note that our capacity for subgroup analysis will be limited by the small sample size. We will agree an analysis plan for the survey data with EEF. The Principal Investigator (PI) will quality assure the analysis plan and the analysis syntax and output – checking for consistency with the analysis plan as well as any errors or omissions in the analysis.

Qualitative analysis will be carried out by two members of the research team and quantitative analysis by one member, with analysis plans quality assured by our IPE lead and PI. Alongside the regular meetings to discuss emerging findings, we will hold an all-day synthesis workshop during the analysis stage to triangulate quantitative and qualitative findings. The workshop will be led by our PI. During the workshop, team members will present findings from different sources under each of the research questions and identify

convergent and divergent findings, which we will explain in our reporting. This form of peer discussion and review for mixed method research also serves the purpose of quality assurance, as it ensures legitimacy of findings (EEF, 2022). Where findings diverge between sources, we will revisit the summaries and raw data and consider potential theoretical and methodological reasons for these differences.

Ethics and registration

The evaluation was reviewed and approved by the Oxford MeasurEd ethics board in February 2025. An updated ethics application was submitted to and approved by the ethics board in March 2025 following the decision to design and pilot an outcome measure.

We are committed to the highest ethical standards. Our team will be guided by UK Evaluation Society Guidelines for Good Practice and comply with our Code of Conduct, Safeguarding, and Anti-Bribery and Corruption policies. Some key ethical considerations for this project will include:

- **Obtaining informed consent:** We will provide recruitment materials outlining the purpose of the evaluation, what will be involved in taking part and how data will be used. We will explain this verbally before all qualitative encounters and participants will be able to ask questions before agreeing to participate.
- **Ensuring participation is voluntary:** Schools will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreeing to take part in the evaluation as a condition of being in the pilot, but we will be clear that taking part in interviews, observations and surveys is optional for participants. Participants can choose not to take part or to skip questions they do not wish to answer. At the end of interviews, participants will be able to say if they do not wish certain parts of the interview to be included in the write-up of the findings.
- **Evaluation activities involving pupils:** We understand schools to be in *loco parentis* and able to consent to observations. We will provide materials for the settings to inform pupils and parents/carers about the evaluation and highlight that all of our researchers have enhanced DBS certification to reassure parents/carers. We will provide parental opt-out consent for evaluation activities, including site visits and the piloting of the outcome measure. Parents/carers of those children who a) will take part in a group discussion as part of our site visits or b) will complete questionnaires as part of the outcome measure piloting will be given further information in a letter, which includes an opt-out form. We will seek pupils' assent by explaining the research in accessible language so that they understand what is expected of them. As we explain the purpose of the group discussion, including the voluntary nature of participation, we will encourage the pupils to use props to indicate their understanding and approval of what participation entails.
- **Risk of harm and safeguarding:** We do not expect the evaluation to increase the risk of harm beyond the low-level risks participants will face in delivering/participating in the pilot. However, there is always potential for participants to become upset or make a safeguarding disclosure. We will focus data collection on experiences of the pilot and brief researchers on handling different situations that might arise. We will agree safeguarding protocols with EEF and the DT.

Data protection

Data collected for this evaluation will only be used for research purposes. We will store and handle data in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Only named individuals will have access to personal data and the team will comply with information security procedures that include preventative measures and processes for reporting, reviewing, and responding to breaches. We will securely delete personal data six months after the project ends.

Data subjects will include the DT (including Literacy Consultants), teachers and TAs, subject leaders, and Year 3 pupils. We will outline data protection procedures and safeguards and our legal bases for processing data in the protocol and during recruitment. We will publish a privacy notice online and circulate it to all concerned parties. Our legal basis for data processing will be 'legitimate interests'. For any special categories of personal data, we will use the research exception.

We will take steps to ensure that research participants are kept anonymous. We will not report schools' or individuals' names, but some participants may be recognisable due to the small size of the pilot. We will communicate limits to confidentiality and anonymity.

Personnel

The programme will be delivered by The Literacy Company. The delivery team includes:

Name	Role	Institutional affiliation
Catherine Richardson	Director	The Literacy Company
Jo Gaskell	Literacy Consultant	The Literacy Company
Kirsten Aidley	Literacy Consultant	The Literacy Company
Louise Stokes	Literacy Consultant	The Literacy Company
Lynne Daniel	Literacy Consultant	The Literacy Company
Jen McManus	Literacy Consultant	The Literacy Company

The evaluation will be carried out by Oxford MeasurEd. The team from Oxford MeasurEd includes:

Name	Role	Institutional affiliation
Dr Lydia Marshall	Principal Investigator and Project Director	Oxford MeasurEd (Director of Research)
Dr Jonah Bury	Senior Evaluator and Project Manager	Oxford MeasurEd (Principal Consultant)

Robert Wishart	Impact Evaluation Expert	Oxford MeasurEd (Associate)
Ellen Smith	Junior Evaluator and Project Coordinator	Oxford MeasurEd (Consultant)
Sara Bashir Malik	Junior Evaluator	Oxford MeasurEd (Consultant)
Paulina Valenzuela	Junior Evaluator	Oxford MeasurEd (Consultant)
Charlotte Hacking	Literacy and writing specialist	Freelance, formerly at The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (external consultant)

Risks

Within our project management procedures, the Project Director and Project Manager have the responsibility of maintaining a risk register. The risk register will allow us to identify and communicate risks to both EEF and the delivery team in a timely manner, as well as to develop mitigation strategies. The initial risks identified for this project are outlined below.

Type	Risk	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation/contingency
Timeline	Evaluation delayed by delivery timeline slippages	Likelihood: Medium Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear frequent communication during inception and implementation with EEF team to understand progress and agree contingencies • Flexible, agile management to adapt timelines and design if needed
	Evaluation delayed or disrupted by resourcing gaps	Likelihood: Low Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of established tools and processes to allocate, protect and adjust staff resource as needed • Wider pool of consultants with relevant skills and expertise to draw on if timelines or availability shift
Quality	Weak quality of data collected	Likelihood: Low Impact: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and quality assurance throughout to ensure data is of appropriate quality • Pragmatic design relying on triangulation • Close collaboration with EEF to highlight issues and limitations
	Low quality of analysis or reporting/findings do not meet client needs	Likelihood: Low Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately qualified and experienced team • Clear frequent communication during inception and implementation to ensure EEF needs are being addressed • Pre-agreed internal quality assurance process • External validation process with EEF during inception and through learning workshops

Response rates and response bias	Participant groups do not engage with the evaluation	Likelihood: Low Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring a member of the SLT team signs the MoU • Emphasising value of pilot and findings to all participant groups • Minimising burden by keeping all data collection encounters short, offering flexible timings and remote data collection options • Short and engaging communications with a clear ask • Providing advance notice for upcoming evaluation activities • Tailored communication materials for TAs • Providing teachers at the schools selected for outcome measure piloting sufficient time (two weeks) to administer the questionnaire
	Participants are unwilling to discuss barriers, challenges, and negative effects	Likelihood: Medium Impact: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment materials emphasising that we want to hear from everyone about their experiences – good and bad • Scheduling by Oxford MeasurEd to emphasise independence • Use of individual interviews with TAs to ensure they feel more comfortable • Appropriate reassurances about confidentiality
	Response bias in quantitative surveys	Likelihood: Medium Impact: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment materials emphasising that we want to hear from everyone about their experiences – good and bad • Invitations sent from Oxford MeasurEd to emphasise independence • Regular reminders using behavioural nudges to encourage all practitioners to take part • Consider asking the DT to send reminders to practitioners to encourage participation • Triangulation of findings with other data sources
	Participant selection is compromised, resulting in a bias in findings	Likelihood: Low Impact: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documenting clear sampling strategies and tracking sample selected against sample intended • Use of multiple methods for triangulating findings • Disclosures and disclaimers for any deviations from strategy

Timeline

Dates	Activity	Staff responsible/leading
Nov 2024	IDEA workshop with delivery partners	EEF, Oxford MeasurEd

Nov-Dec 2024	Set-up meetings	EEF, Oxford MeasurEd, TLC
Nov – Dec 2024	Desk-based review of programme documentation	Oxford MeasurEd
Dec 2024 – Feb 2025	Recruitment materials	Oxford MeasurEd, TLC
Jan– Feb 2025	Desk-based review of outcome measures	Oxford MeasurEd
Jan – Feb 2025	Ethical approval	Oxford MeasurEd
Feb – May 2025	School recruitment	TLC
Mar – Jun 2024	Study plan	Oxford MeasurEd
Jun – Sep 2025	School and teacher enumeration	Oxford MeasurEd, TLC
Jun – Sep 2025	Instrument development	Oxford MeasurEd
Jul 2025	Initial training observation (half-day)	Oxford MeasurEd
Sept 2025	Initial training observation (full-day)	TLC
Nov 2025	Half-day online learning community groups observation	Oxford MeasurEd
Dec 2025	Online group observations School staff interviews (non-site visit schools) Literacy Consultant interviews	Oxford MeasurEd,
Jan 2026	Site visits	Oxford MeasurEd
Feb 2026	School staff interviews (non-site visit schools) Half-day online learning community groups observation	Oxford MeasurEd
Mar 2026	Site visits Online group session observation	Oxford MeasurEd
Apr 2026	School staff interviews (non-site visit schools)	Oxford MeasurEd
May 2026	Site visits Literacy Consultant interviews	Oxford MeasurEd
Jun 2026	Online group session observation	Oxford MeasurEd
Jun – Jul 2026	Post-delivery survey Outcome measure piloting Collection of programmatic data	Oxford MeasurEd, Participating schools
Jul 2026	Learning Workshop with delivery team	Oxford MeasurEd
Jul – Sep 2026	Final analysis of main evaluation data	Oxford MeasurEd
Sep – Oct 2026	Interim presentation	Oxford MeasurEd

Oct 2026	Final report and presentation	Oxford MeasurEd
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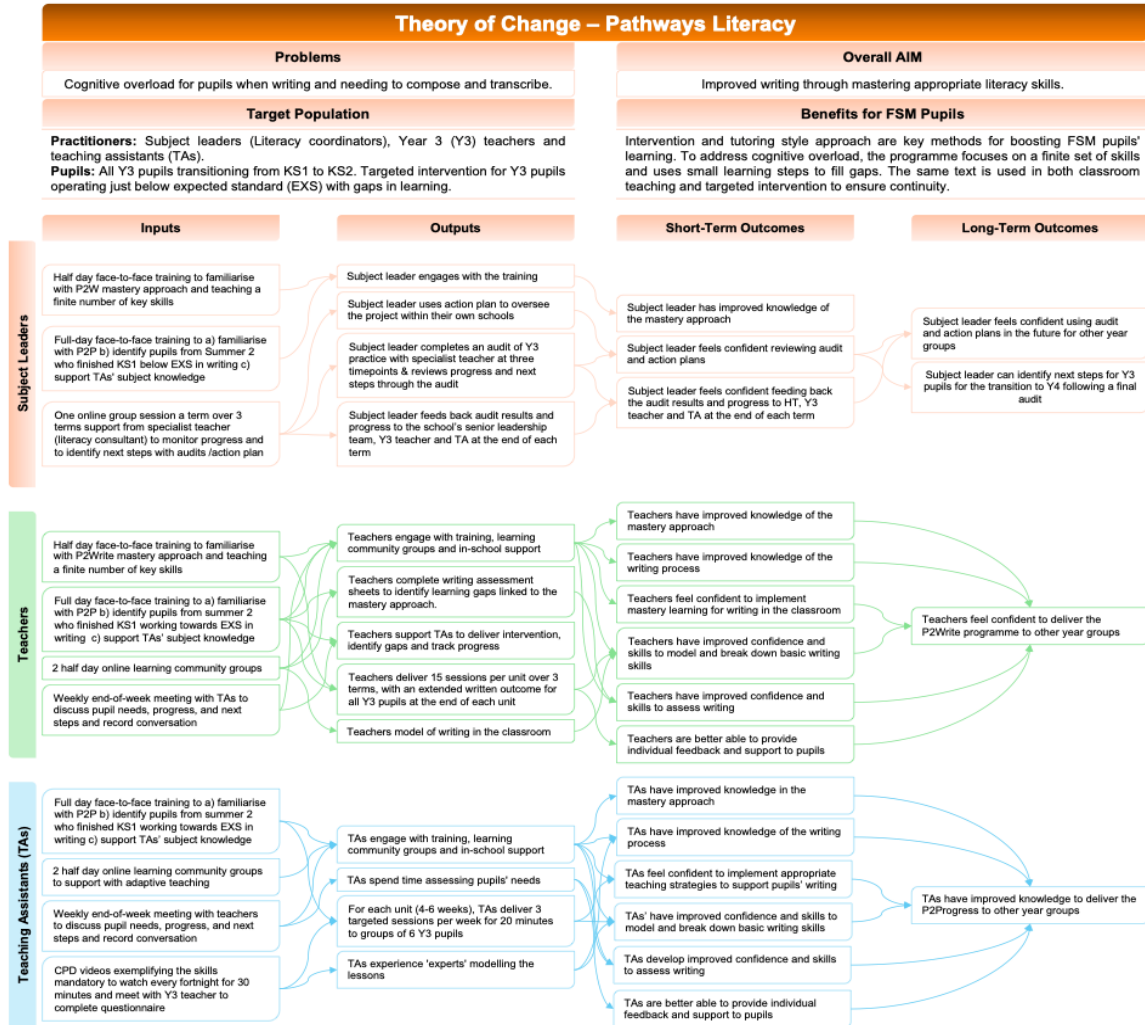
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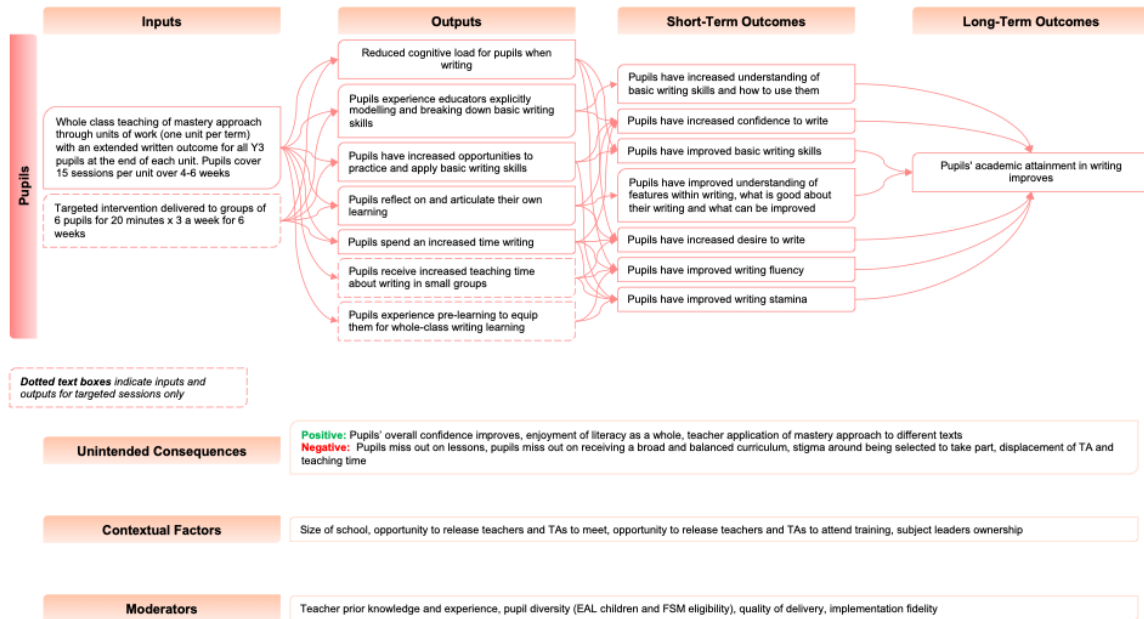
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Appendix 1 – Theory of Change

Appendix Figure 1 Theory of Change (developed by the delivery team with facilitation from the EEF and the evaluation team)





Appendix 2 Assumed causal mechanisms

Appendix Figure 2 Assumed causal mechanism (updated by the delivery team with facilitation from the EEF and the evaluation team)

Causal assumption	Where in the ToC does this assumption occur?	Why is this assumption key for your programme?	What is the underlying evidence behind this assumption?	How strong is the underlying evidence for this assumption?
Practitioners (subject leaders, teachers and TAs) trained in the mastery approach leads to improved knowledge in the mastery approach.	Input, output and short-term outcome	If the training isn't increasing knowledge of the mastery approach, then the following outputs and short /long term outcomes are unlikely to occur.	Previous developer-led pilot conducted (unpublished). The trial showed promise of improved knowledge in the mastery approach for all programme participants participating in the pilot.	Green - this evidence is from a developer-led pilot using these programmes.
Coaching model for subject leaders leads to effective identification of next steps	Input and output	If next steps aren't identified clearly by the subject leader, then it's less likely that the teachers and TAs will deliver the programme effectively for Y3 pupils.	The coaching model works effectively to support learning. It is only when follow-on support is added on to training in the form of expert coaching that teachers are able to apply the conceptual understanding to practical classroom behaviours.	Amber /Green – findings in recent research <i>How can coaching lead to school improvement</i> (2021). Lofthouse and Hollweck demonstrate that effective teacher coaching leads to conditions that underpin school improvement.
Teachers and TAs engaging with well-structured community group training leads to improved knowledge of the writing process and assessment of this	Output and short-term outcome	If community group training isn't improving knowledge of the writing process and assessment the writing outcomes will not meet the standards required.	Previous developer-led pilot conducted (unpublished). In the developer-led pilot, there was positive feedback from the majority of schools suggested that the online support had supported improved knowledge of the writing process and assessment of this for teachers and TAs.	Green - studies as shown in 'putting evidence to work: a schools' implementation.' (EEF, 2019)

<p>Teachers and TAs engaging with weekly meetings to discuss pupil progress and next steps leads to improved knowledge of writing gaps and how to address these.</p>	<p>Input, output and short-term outcome</p>	<p>If weekly meetings aren't improving knowledge of writing gaps and how to address these, the pupils will not make the progress needed.</p>	<p>Previous developer-led pilot conducted (unpublished). The pilot showed promise of improved knowledge in the mastery approach for all participants taking part in the pilot.</p>	<p>Green - this is based on a similar programme through a structured survey.</p>
<p>TAs engaging with CPD videos leads to improved knowledge /confidence in delivering intervention programmes for pupils.</p>	<p>Input, output and short-term outcome</p>	<p>If the CPD isn't improving knowledge of delivering the intervention programme effectively, the pupils will not make the progress needed.</p>	<p>Previous developer-led pilot conducted (unpublished). In all schools where meetings took place, feedback indicated that this was invaluable time for addressing pupil progress and next steps.</p>	<p>Green - this is based on a similar programme through a structured survey.</p>
<p>Pupils engaging with increased time for writing leads to improvement in writing fluency and increased knowledge of applying basic skills.</p>	<p>Output and short-term outcome</p>	<p>This assumption sits at the core of the programme- if increased time to write doesn't take place, then the pupils, will not make the progress needed.</p>	<p>Previous developer-led pilot conducted. Pupil surveys indicated improved pupil confidence and stamina for writing had increased in the majority of the schools who participated in the pilot.</p>	<p>Green - this evidence is from a developer-led pilot using these programmes.</p>

Appendix 3 Contextual assumptions

Appendix Figure 3 Contextual assumptions (updated by the delivery team with facilitation from the EEF and the evaluation team)

Contextual assumption	Assumption strength	Assumption risk
Teachers can access the training and will attend for the duration, requiring schools to organise staff cover for training	Amber/Green	Amber/Green
Subject leaders are released to work alongside the Literacy Consultants on a termly basis	Green	Amber/Green
TAs are given time to plan with the teacher, be supported and to identify groups of pupils for support	Amber/Red	Amber/Green
Teachers and TAs are motivated to engage with the training and support	Green	Amber/Red
The targeted intervention (P2P) is delivered as an additional action rather than replacing taught sessions	Green	Amber/Red
Pupil sessions can be timetabled, and small group sessions staffed	Green	Amber/Red
Teachers and TAs have the opportunity to change their practice (time to prep sessions, watch CPD videos, meet and supported by SLT)	Amber/Green	Amber/Red
Pupils attend the intervention sessions (P2P)	Green	Red
Pupils engage with the intervention sessions (P2P)	Amber/Green	Amber/Red
TAs have gaps in their knowledge of teaching writing that the CPD will support	Green	Amber/Red
Teachers have gaps in their knowledge of a mastery approach and building up skills in this way to support writing that the training will support	Green	Amber/Red
Teachers select appropriate pupils for the trial, avoiding SEND pupils ⁵	Green	Amber/Red
The targeted intervention is implemented 30 minutes, 3 x a week for 6 weeks for each group of pupils	Amber/Green	Amber/Red
TAs participate in the moderation sessions to be able to assess the	Green	Green

⁵ Teachers select pupils for each P2P unit based on an assessment of pupils' independent writing and the focus on the half termly unit.

writing of pupils and identify gaps in learning		
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*Assumption strength key: **green** – this assumption will hold in the vast majority of circumstances where the programme is delivered, **green/amber** – this assumption will hold in most of the circumstances where the programme is delivered, **red/amber** – this assumption will often not hold in the circumstances where the programme is delivered, **red** – there is a good chance of this assumption not holding / do not know whether this assumption will hold or not.*

*Assumption risk key (if this assumption does not hold): **green** – the programme could continue to be delivered with very minor impact, **green/amber** – the programme could continue to be delivered, but the impact would be substantial, **red/amber** – the programme could continue to be delivered, but without fidelity to original design; **red** – the programme could not be delivered*

Appendix 4 Permitted programme adaptations

What does fidelity to Pathways to Write look like?

Non-negotiable	Flexible
Teachers must teach the three parts of the mastery sequence – conceptual understanding (Gateway), procedural fluency (Pathway), mastery (Writeaway).	Some sessions in the Pathway section of the plan may be adapted or removed. However, care must be taken to ensure all skills are covered and opportunities to apply are given.
Teachers must assess writing against Gateway keys at the end of the conceptual phase.	Teachers may adapt the Gateway task to suit the needs of the class, but the same Gateway skills should be assessed.
Teachers should teach the Mastery skills detailed in each unit.	Teachers may use the <i>Overview of Objectives</i> document to adapt Mastery keys to previously taught, related objectives for pupils struggling to keep up with the demands of the curriculum.
Teachers should use the book recommended for each unit.	Schools may supplement the unit with other related texts (e.g. during grouped reading/ end of day read-aloud stories).
Teachers should teach the sequence of units in the stated order across the year to allow for progression of skills.	
Teachers should follow the teaching sequence for the unit and for each session.	Some parts of sessions may be adapted to suit the needs of pupils in the class. Initial training will support teachers to make effective adaptations.
Pace should be determined by the teacher based on the needs of pupils in the class.	We would recommend teachers consider the sessions in the full unit in advance and consider how it will 'break down' into lessons available across a half term.
Teachers should work towards the given final outcome, discussing with the class the audience and purpose in advance.	Teachers may adapt the complexity of the final outcome to simplify for pupils struggling to keep up with the demands of the curriculum. Teachers should use the <i>Progression in Feature Keys</i> document to support with this and amend Feature keys and outcome as appropriate.
Pupils should complete a number of suggested writing opportunities across the course of a unit.	Some writing opportunities in the Pathway section of the plan may be adapted or removed based on the needs of the class. However, care must be taken to ensure all skills are covered and opportunities to apply given. Training will be provided to support this.
Teachers must use the Gradual Release of Responsibility to model writing for all pupils.	Teachers can decide where to apply the Gradual Release along the Pathway.
The final outcome should not be modelled. All pupils must complete the final outcome.	Adaptation of the final outcome and scaffolds for the Writeaway can be put in place for pupils struggling to keep up with the curriculum. Teachers may adapt or reduce the number of Feature keys to apply.

What does fidelity to Pathways to Progress look like?

Non-negotiable	Flexible
A timetabled slot and workspace must be ring-fenced in advance for the intervention.	The timeslot should be chosen to suit the school's timetable.
A facilitator should deliver the intervention for the full year. This adult should have full access to all planning and CPD videos in advance.	Where staff leave or move year groups, there may be changes. However, stability is key as far as it is possible.
The facilitator should be allocated 30mins per week preparation time for the intervention. This includes time to watch the CPD videos.	
Teachers should assess pupils' writing after a Gateway task and consider how gaps relate to the Pathways to Progress objectives.	
Teachers should use the Overview to select which unit is best matched to close these gaps.	Units can be delivered in any order, to suit the needs of pupils. However, the current order links to Pathways to Write sequence of Gateway keys. Not all units need to be delivered.
Teachers should select 4-6 pupils for a half term's intervention. The same 4-6 pupils should complete the full unit. These pupils should be writing at WTS standard, not working below.	The selected pupils do not need to remain in the intervention for the full year. Pupils may be swapped in or out each half term based on assessment of the Gateway task.
Units are currently sequenced to link with the sequence of texts taught in Pathways to Write.	Examples should be changed to suit the text being used in the classroom.
There are 6 weeks of lessons planned per half term. The weeks should not be taught out of order.	Some parts of sessions may be adapted to suit the needs of the pupils in the group. Care must be taken to ensure all skills are covered.
Sessions should follow a Review, Teach, Practise, Apply sequence.	Planning is organised across 3 x 20 min sessions. Teachers may amend appropriately (e.g. 2x 30 mins/ 1x 1hr).
The suggested 20-minute allocation for a session does not take into account time to collect pupils/ set up the session.	
Intervention should follow the skills for the given session, aimed at pupils WTS.	Facilitators may vary the pace of the session based on pupils' understanding of the skills. Extra sessions or adaptations to address misconceptions may be planned in as required.
Teachers should consider what impact this intervention is having on the rest of the curriculum. Pupils should not be removed from the same foundation lesson every week.	Teachers should decide when on the timetable the intervention should be delivered so as to minimise impact on other subjects.
Facilitator and teacher should liaise during a weekly meeting to discuss progress and challenges. Writing should be shared.	The length and timing of this meeting should be decided by the teacher and facilitator but communication is key.
Teacher should support the facilitator in adapting sessions/ addressing misconceptions.	
Teacher should support the facilitator in managing the behaviour of pupils in the groups if necessary. Pupils may be removed from the intervention if negative behaviour is impacting the progress of the group.	

Appendix 5 Review of primary and secondary outcome measures and piloting secondary outcome measures

Purpose and context

The purpose of this desk-based review is to **review potential primary and secondary outcome measures** for a potential trial of Pathways Literacy by considering:

- whether they were suitable for testing short-term and long-term outcomes outlined in the ToC
- the alignment between what they measure and intended outcomes, based on the ToC and programme documentation
- their statistical properties
- logistical factors such as mode of data collection, length of assessment and any training required to administer the assessment

The review is intended to inform decisions about which existing measures can be used to capture primary and secondary outcome measures in a trial, and whether new measures needed to be **developed and piloted**.

Findings – Primary outcome measures

The programme ToC posits that pupils' improvements in academic attainment in writing (writing attainment) is the long-term outcome of this programme. Our review of potential primary outcome measures (measures of writing attainment) identified eight relevant measures in total: some of these were identified in the EEF Attainment Measures database while others were listed in the EEF document 'Evaluation considerations for projects aiming to improve writing attainment'. We also looked at websites of leading assessment developers to identify any gaps in our review.

We eliminated six measures for consideration based on the following reasons:

- length administering assessment
- high enumerator qualification requirements for administering assessment
- no UK norms
- validity and reliability statistics not high or unavailable
- insufficient number of writing domains covered

The shortlist included two measures:

1. WIAT III UK
2. Writing Assessment Measure (WAM)

Table 9 includes an overview of the main differences between the two measures.

Table 9 Primary outcome measure shortlist

	WIAT III UK	WAM
Subtests	Relevant subtests include alphabet writing fluency, spelling, sentence composition and essay composition	No subtests
Sample size	3000 in US UK-normed on sample of 744 children	97 in UK
Administration format	Individual	Whole class
Implementation mode	Paper-and-pencil or web-based visa Q-interactive	Pen and paper following an oral writing prompt
Length of assessment	45 to 90 minutes depending on the age of examinee and number of subtests administered. Subtests should rarely take >10	15 minutes of writing following a standardised, scripted introduction. In an EEF trial using WAM as the outcome measure 5 additional minutes of

	minutes to administer	planning time were allowed based on findings from a small-scale pilot of the assessment. Scoring takes around 10-15 minutes per assessment depending on the skill and experience of the marker (tbc)
Costs	£240 for Q-interactive license for 1 user £826.98 for complete kit - Includes Examiner's Manual, Technical Manual, UK Scoring and Normative Manual, Stimulus Book, Scoring Workbook, Oral Reading Fluency Book, Word Card, Pseudoword Card, Downloadable Audio, 25 Response Booklets and 25 Record Forms.	Prompts and scoring criteria available for free in journal article. The guidelines form a training manual, which is available from the first author on request. The author of the journal article has confirmed that WAM is freely available and open access for evaluations
Validity rating	Good	Excellent
Reliability rating	Excellent	Excellent
Statistical properties	Information not available	Information not available (however, distribution of scores looks fine in the two EEF reports)
Strengths	Suitable for age groups UK norms Covers several required domains Digital administration 20 minutes to administer Tested on a large representative sample Excellent reliability iPads already available with Q-interactive installed if outcome measure trialled	Free to use Developed with reference to UK national curriculum attainment targets Covers several required domains High validity and reliability statistics Suitable for age groups Little over 15 minutes to administer Has been used on previous EEF trials (The Craft of Writing, Power of Pictures)
Weaknesses	Expensive Can only be administered individually Does not cover stamina and attitudes towards writing	Sampled on a small number of children which was homogenous and not UK normed Criterion-based marking is time-consuming Does not cover stamina and attitudes towards writing

CONCLUSION

Due to the feasibility of administering the assessment and costs, **we suggest that WAM is more appropriate as a potential outcome measure for a trial of Pathways Literacy**. For a trial, we propose combining WAM with a measure capturing attitudes of writing as a secondary measure – these are short-term outcomes in the ToC and include confidence to write; desire to write; writing fluency; and writing stamina. While changing attitudes towards writing is a key part of the ToC, this domain is not captured by WAM. As WAM is currently being used in two EEF trials – including with Year 2 (KS1) and Year (5) – there is no need to pilot the primary outcome measures (WAM) as part of this pilot. We would recommend that a trial evaluator refers to those trials for information on how the measure was scored and how it performed.

Findings – Secondary outcome measures

Our review identified 11 secondary outcome measures in total related to the short-term outcomes of interest: confidence to write; desire to write; writing fluency; and writing stamina. These were identified through a search on Google Scholar to find journal articles on the development or use of outcome measures that targeted the domains of interest. We used the backward snowball method, examining the reference list of relevant articles that described the use of an outcome measure to assess an intervention to find other relevant articles.

We encountered the following challenges while identifying outcome measures:

- There is a scarcity of outcome measures specifically developed or tested within the UK context.
- Many outcome measures were created to assess specific interventions and have not been tested on sufficiently large or diverse samples. In most cases, even when the sample size was substantial, the measures had not been normed.

- None of the identified outcome measures explicitly focused on the outcomes of interest (confidence, writing stamina, fluency, and desire). As a result, we reviewed several measures that addressed at least some elements of these areas.

Based on these challenges, we had to be cautious about the criteria we used for exclusion. We eliminated nine measures for consideration based on the following reasons:

- length administering assessment
- validity and reliability statistics not high or unavailable
- lack of use with age group of interest (7-8-year-olds)

We shortlisted two outcome measures:

1. Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS)
2. Writing Attitude Survey (WAS)

Table 2 includes an overview of the main differences between the two measures.

Table 2 Secondary outcome measure shortlist

	SEWS	WAS
Sample size	697 in the first study and 563 in the second study used to develop the measure in the US	1,503 (normed over 974 students) in US
Age group	In original study, validated on 13-14-year-olds and 16-17-year-olds and with Year 5 pupils in an EEF trial	Grades 1-12 in the US (6-18-year-olds)
Administration format	Individual, whole class	Individual, whole class
Implementation mode	Paper-and-pencil	Paper-and-pencil. Questions can be read to the children who respond on their response sheets.
Length of assessment	15-20 minutes. Feedback received from teachers indicated that students completed the survey comfortably within the 20-min time frame.	Not specified. 28 items are likely to require around 30 minutes.
Costs	Available in journal article. Author permissions may be required.	Available in journal article. Author permissions may be required.
Validity rating	Good	Excellent
Reliability rating	Excellent	Excellent
Statistical properties	Information not available	Information not available (however, distribution of scores looks fine in the two EEF reports)
Strengths	Large sample size for validation Excellent reliability Targets stamina and fluency Has been used on previous EEF trial (Power of Pictures)	Suitable for age group Only outcome measure with US norms available Large sample size for validation High validity and reliability statistics Targets desire to write and stamina Suitable for age group Scoring uses cartoon images making it user-friendly for age group Oral administration possible to support respondents
Weaknesses	Not used for the age group of interest, but used with Year 5 pupils in the UK 15-20 minutes to administer	No identified use in the UK 30 minutes to administer

CONCLUSION

Based on the evaluation of the SEWS and WAS outcome measures, neither fully meets our requirements for assessing all areas of interest (stamina, fluency, and desire to write) or aligns perfectly with our target context. Both measures require a relatively long administration time, with SEWS taking 15-20 minutes and WAS likely requiring around 30 minutes. Additionally, SEWS has not been used for the specific age group of interest (though it has been used with Year 5 pupils in the UK), while WAS has not been used in the UK at all.

Given these limitations, **we propose developing a new outcome measure for a prospective trial by selecting relevant items from both SEWS and WAS**, to achieve the following:

- ensure all areas of interest are targeted
- administration time remains under 10 minutes, as it is a secondary outcome measure
- ensure it is age-appropriate for participants, by incorporating user-friendly elements, such as cartoon-based scoring or oral administration options, to support ease of use for younger respondents.