

Plan, Do, Review Pilot Evaluation Plan



Evaluating Institution: University of Leeds

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PROJECT TITLE	Plan, Do, Review
DEVELOPER (INSTITUTION)	Wingate Community Nursery School
EVALUATOR (INSTITUTION)	University of Leeds
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)	Dr Erin Dysart & Professor Louise Tracey
EVALUATION PLAN AUTHOR(S)	Erin Dysart, Louise Tracey & Aimee Code
PUPIL AGE RANGE AND KEY STAGE	Early Years, children aged 3 to 4 years
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS/ SETTINGS	18 settings (5 Maintained, 6 Private, Voluntary or independent and 7 School-based)
NUMBER OF Early Years Practitioners (EYPs)	36

Evaluation plan version history

VERSION	DATE	REASON FOR REVISION
1.0 [<i>original</i>]	07/10/2025	n/a

Intervention

Acquiring proficient oral language during the early years forms the basis for many valuable communication skills for children, including literacy, collaboration and problem solving and skills to help children communicate their needs and wants with others (Shiel et al., 2012). Such skills are often linked to school readiness and later educational success yet many children, particularly those from low socio-economic backgrounds, struggle to develop key speaking and listening skills (Law et al. 2017, Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021). Additionally, there is concern about general weaker language skills in children in the early years since COVID-19 (Tracey et al., 2022, Pejovic et al., 2024), meaning that early intervention is of utmost importance (Bercow, 2008), especially given the speed in which language develops during the early years (Shiel et al. 2012).

Evaluations to improve early oral language skills are therefore timely. There is some evidence that teaching and modelling social communication skills through collaborative talk can support the skills underlying social communication (e.g. Farber & Klein, 1999, Wladron-Soler et al, 2002), and children's understanding of social processes (Aram & Shiak, 2008). Furthermore, whilst a review by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2024) found strong evidence of impact of collaborative talk for older children, there was also evidence of promise of this approach impacting on younger children's oral communicative competence, conversation skills, self-expression and engagement in lengthier dialogues. As such, supporting the development of children's oral language skills in the early years is a promising area for further research.

Plan, Do, Review is a whole class approach which aims to increase the language and communication skills of children in early years settings through enhancing speaking and listening skills. The approach aims to provide practitioners with the skills and knowledge to support children in developing collaborative conversations through modelling positive strategies (as outline in the TIDieR Table 1) and encouraging children to talk to one another using these strategies.

The Plan, Do and Review sessions are structured as follows:

- During the '**plan**' session, children participate in a 15–20-minute group conversation. The children are supported to share their plans for play with one another, using a conversational style. Children are supported to listen and to respond meaningfully to one another and to support one another's thinking.
- During the '**do**' session, children play for at least 60 minutes, enacting their plans, using continuous provision resources, supported by educators.
- During the '**review**' session, children participate in a 10–15-minute group conversation where they are supported to have a conversation about their play experiences, with the adult encouraging them to reflect on their learning and next steps.

Table 1. TIDieR for the Plan, Do, Review approach

Aspect of TIDieR	Exemplification relating to the evaluation
Brief name	Plan, Do, Review
Why: Rationale, theory and/or goal of essential elements of the intervention	<p>Practitioner training to support children's thinking using a scaffolding approach and implementing the key ingredients of the approach at each stage of implementation (Plan, Do, Review):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relinquishing power and control in the conversation • Encouraging children to talk to one another rather than just the practitioner • Valuing critical thinking over finding the right answer • Using a slow pace and a low volume • Using challenging and aspirational vocabulary rather than simplified words and terminology • Taking opportunities to expand and recap on what the children have said • Aiming for a normal conversational style of speaking, responding and questioning. <p>The programme aims to improve children's attainment in language and communication, gain increased capacity for critical thinking and active learning and be able to sustain conversations with peers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan session – Where children plan their activities in a group • Do session – When children carry out their planned activities • Review session – Where children review their learning in a group
Who: Recipients of the intervention	<p>Two practitioners from each setting receive the training. If a practitioner who is trained in the approach leaves the setting the remaining practitioner can cascade to a new practitioner.</p> <p>Children aged 3 to 4-years in the setting will receive Plan, Do, Review as a setting approach in groups (up to 13 children per group).</p>
What: Physical or informational materials used in the intervention	<p>Settings receive a practitioner handbook and have access to a group Padlet. The Padlet is for all practitioners, and contains guidance and training materials (along with an electronic version of the practitioner handbook) and signposting to other helpful resources and articles, (https://padlet.com/hesslewood/plan-do-review-g737mrbfokupzi5e)</p> <p>Settings will also be required to complete a weekly implementation log (Half of the settings will receive a weekly survey link to provide this data and half the settings will be asked to complete a spreadsheet on a weekly basis.</p>
What: Procedures, activities and/or processes used in the intervention	<p>Plan, Do, Review Development Team (DT, Wingate Nursery School) deliver 2x half day online training sessions. This introduces practitioners to the Plan, Do, Review approach and the key ingredients of the approach. Practitioners have mentoring support every two to three weeks (10x30 minutes over 25 weeks) in the form of coaching sessions.</p> <p>In the Autumn term, practitioners will receive two half-day live online training sessions, delivered by the DT. This is followed by 10x 30-minute online coaching sessions over 25 weeks of delivery.</p> <p>Practitioners implement the Plan, Do, Review approach daily within settings and record implementation using the implementation logs. Practitioners ask 'who', 'what', 'where', 'how' and 'why' questions to support children in their planning (Plan) and discussions of play (Review) to support children's critical thinking.</p>

Who: Intervention providers/implementers	<p>The training is delivered by the DT to settings based across the Northeast of England (including North Yorkshire). Two practitioners per setting will attend the training.</p> <p><i>*The approach is designed to be delivered by the two trained early years practitioners within their setting.</i></p> <p>Setting leaders will act as a point of contact and be expected to support the implementation and delivery of the approach.</p>
How: Mode of delivery	<p>The training and mentoring is delivered online</p> <p>The intervention is designed to be delivered in groups within the setting, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15-to-20-minute group Plan session • 60-minute Do session • 10-to-15-minute Review session
Where: Location of the intervention	<p>The training will be delivered in the North of England, including North Yorkshire, via live online sessions.</p> <p>Plan, Do, Review sessions take place within the setting (School-based x9, PVI and maintained x9) with groups of 6-13 children</p>
When and how much: Duration and dosage of the intervention	<p>Training: Two half-day training sessions followed by x10 30-minute coaching sessions over 25 weeks</p> <p>The intervention is designed to be delivered for around 90 minutes per day at least 3 times a week (for all three elements) for 80% of the time over 25 weeks</p>
Tailoring: Adaptation of the intervention	<p>Acceptable adaptations are initially altering the timings of plan and review sessions and altering the length of the approach for children who require it e.g. children with SEND</p> <p>Unacceptable adaptations are not delivering the Plan, Do, Review session as a whole e.g. having a story session in-between or consistently (over 70% of the time) and continuously not delivering the intervention for the full stated time (as outlined above)</p> <p>A list of acceptable and unacceptable adaptations will be available on the Padlet.</p>
How well (planned): Strategies to maximise effective implementation	<p>Padlet with extra resources and coaching sessions are a space for sharing ideas and supporting delivery.</p> <p>Regular coaching/mentoring sessions from the developers.</p>

Research

questions

The research questions have been designed around the pilot criteria (feasibility of implementation, evidence of promise and readiness for trial) to test the assumptions of the logic model (see Figure 1). Specifically, RQ1 to RQ4 around feasibility of implementation test the inputs and the outputs of the logic model with a focus on how practitioners use the training and the training materials to implement the approach and whether there are differences in setting types in the way they are able to implement. Evidence of promise, RQ5 to RQ7, focuses on testing whether or not the inputs and outputs lead to short-term outputs (change in practitioner practice and child-level changes) and how likely the short-term outputs are to lead on to the longer-term

outputs (perceived impact at the practitioner and child level). Readiness for trial (RQ8 to 10) focuses on testing the inputs and outputs of the logic model to understand any changes that may be needed to the training, implementation of the approach and the feasibility of the research methods when considering upscaling to a larger trial.

In addition to testing the components of the logic model the research questions have been designed around the contextual assumptions of the approach and also look to understand any potential mediators and moderators of implementation.

The research questions are:

Feasibility of implementation

RQ1 – Is the Plan, Do, Review training delivered as intended across setting types?

This will include:

- *practitioner take up of training and coaching sessions (75%)*
- *practitioner engagement with training*
- *whether the training content is accessible and viable in terms of setting resources and practitioner time, and cascading of training where needed.*

RQ2 – Is the Plan, Do, Review approach implemented with fidelity and is it facilitated by practitioner knowledge of children’s language and communication?

This will include:

- *delivery of core components of the approach at least 3 times per week for 80% of the time,*
- *completion of implementation logs*
- *quality of implementation.*
- *monitoring changes in the learning environment implemented as part of the ‘Do’ element such as activities that do not require adult supervision to access, resources have multiple uses, and the layout of the room makes it easy for children to access activities. implemented as part of the ‘Do’ element such as activities that do not require adult supervision to access, resources have multiple uses, and the layout of the room makes it easy for children to access activities.*

RQ2b - Are there differences in implementation fidelity across setting types and contexts?

(i.e. in areas of high deprivation, in settings with high numbers of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and children for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL).

RQ3 – What are the barriers and facilitators across setting types and/or contexts in implementing the approach?

This will include:

- *whether or not practitioners feel the approach is manageable in daily practice,*
- *whether support from leadership moderates successful implementation across setting types.*
- *how practitioners organise the groups of children and how this may be influenced by differing attendance patterns of children and practitioners and whether there are*

differences in organisation and numbers of children in groups across settings types/contexts.

RQ3a – Are practitioners motivated to implement and engage with the approach?

This will include:

- *whether settings continue to implement the approach throughout the pilot and beyond*
- *whether practitioner motivation and engagement is facilitated by the setting ethos and practitioners' understanding of the needs of their families.*

RQ4 – Are there any unintended consequences of training and implementation?

For example impact on staff turnover or strategies being used outside the structured sessions, effects on social children development.

Evidence of promise

RQ5 – Does the Plan, Do, Review training influence practitioner attitudes and understanding of child-centered collaborative talk strategies as well as their confidence and consistency in using the strategies?

These are core areas of change identified in the logic model and this research question will address whether practitioner confidence and consistency in using the approach is a requisite condition to change in attitudes and understanding.

RQ6 – Does implementing the Plan, Do Review approach develop child to child talk?

Including:

- *practitioners facilitate children's responses to who, what, why, where and how questions*
- *practitioners expanding vocabulary to support language acquisition*
- *practitioners encourage children to talk to one another*
- *whether implementation is mediated by children's enjoyment and engagement with the approach*

RQ7 – What is the perceived influence (as identified by practitioners) on children's expressive language with peers and with adults?

Based on practitioner perceptions and will include:

- *whether there are differences in outcomes for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), SEND and EAL children*
- *whether there are differences by setting type and/or contextual factors e.g. levels of staff turnover.*

Readiness for trial

RQ8 – What is the cost and the demand for the approach and are there contextual-based differences in demand and perceptions of affordability?

For example, is there a higher demand in certain setting types or settings with a higher number of EYPP pupils.

RQ9 – Is the overall training, implementation and research manageable for scale up for of each element (plan, do, review) of the approach?,

Including:

- *practitioner completion of the implementation logs (across the two methods of data collection i.e. survey link or spreadsheet),*
- *Completion of research materials and feedback on the bespoke measure of attitudes, understanding and confidence.*
- *across different setting types and varying contextual requirements e.g. part-time staff, fit with the settings planning and manageability for the delivery team.*

RQ9a. - Do any of the Plan, Do or Review elements need further modification or development?

- *based on practitioners' views on what further training and support is needed and whether or not training content allows for successful implementation content allows for successful implementation*

RQ10 – What level of dosage do practitioners feel is needed to meet the short-term and longer-term outcomes in the theory of change?

Including;

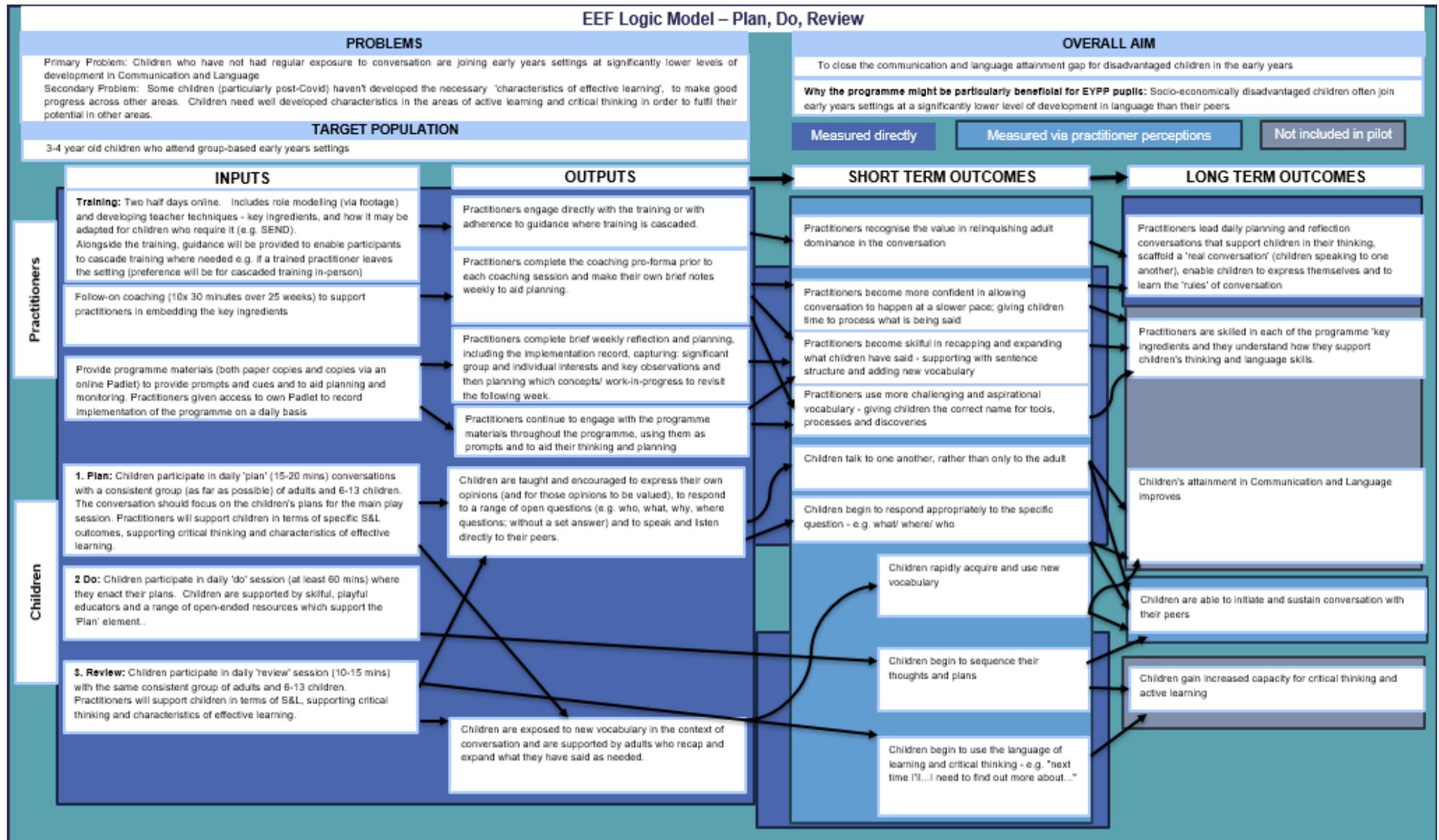
- *whether dosage is affected by contextual factors e.g. higher levels of EYPP or EAL pupils, staff absence*
- *whether the perceived level of dosage required is manageable for developers and settings.*
- *Whether the time given for implementation of each element of the approach are considered enough to impact child-level outcomes,*
- *whether implementation with smaller groups of children would be preferred and manageable*

Table 2 shows how each of the research questions link to the success indicators i.e. what criteria will need to be evidenced by the pilot to suggest the approach has been implemented as intended and it is deemed ready for a larger scale trial.

Table 2. Success indicators linked to research questions

Pilot Criteria	Success Indicators	How assessed
Feasibility of implementation	The majority of practitioners have high levels of engagement as measured through attendance at training and coaching sessions (75% of the time; attendance records). All new PDR practitioners receive cascading (RQ1)	Attendance records and practitioner baseline survey
	The approach is delivered with fidelity (all three components of the approach according to the TIDieR model; for a minimum of 3 times per week 80% of the time over the pilot period (RQ2)	Implementation logs
	The majority of practitioners feel the approach can be integrated with usual practice. The approach is deemed appropriate for practitioners and children with differing work/attendance patterns (RQ3)	practitioner endline survey and interviews
Evidence of promise	Change (perceived and measured) in practitioner attitudes understanding and confidence in the core elements of the Plan, Do, Review approach from baseline to endline (Bespoke survey measure) (RQ5)	Bespoke measure and practitioner endline surveys
	The approach is perceived by the majority of practitioners to have impact on children's child to child talk and the majority of children are observed to talk to each other more (comparatively to baseline and prevalence at endline) (RQ6)	Practitioner endline surveys, interviews and setting observations
	The majority of practitioners perceive changes in children's vocabulary, including for EAL, SEND and EYPP children (RQ7)	Practitioner endline surveys, and interviews
Readiness for trial	Settings are recruited to the pilot and the cost is deemed appropriate and affordable by the majority of practitioners (RQ8)	Recruitment data and practitioner endline surveys
	Training and guidance materials are deemed appropriate by the majority of practitioners and the development team (RQ9)	Practitioner endline survey and development team interviews
	Implementation of the PDR sessions (for 90 minutes daily at least 3 times per week) (RQ9)	Attendance data
	Completion of implementation logs and research materials is manageable by most practitioners across setting types and contexts (RQ9)	Research completion rates by method
	No major modifications to the approach or programme materials are required and any further modifications keep the programme manageable for practitioners and developers. (RQ9a and RQ10)	Developer interviews and practitioner interviews

Figure 1 – Plan, Do, Review Logic Model



Methods

Recruitment

Eighteen Early Years settings, a mix of 8 School-based (SB), 5 PVI (Private, Voluntary and Independent) and 5 Maintained settings, will be recruited for the pilot. Settings will be recruited by the Delivery Team (DT) (Wingate Community Nursery) through existing contacts and wider recruitment marketing. Settings will be eligible for the pilot if they meet the following eligibility criteria: Settings will be recruited by the Delivery Team (DT) (Wingate Community Nursery) through existing contacts and wider recruitment marketing. Settings will be eligible for the pilot if they meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Settings have at least 10 children aged 3 to 4 who will enter reception in the academic year 2026/2027. This is primarily because this is the sample (among other factors) we would envisage needing for a well-powered future trial, as with similar EEF early years efficacy trials e.g. [Communication Friendly Settings](#) (CFS).
- Settings are not undertaking any other research programme of Continual Professional Development (CPD) relating to Speech, Language & Communication (SL&C) being evaluated by the EEF during the pilot year. The DT will vet settings on the programmes they are implementing once the Expressions Of Interests (EOIs) have been received.

Prior to signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) eligible settings will be asked to watch a short video developed by the DT and the Evaluation Team (ET) outlining what the Plan, Do, Review approach entails and what it would mean to be part of the research. This decision was made to ensure that settings signing up for the evaluation have a full understanding of what is involved, and it is hoped this will keep any attrition to a minimum.

Settings will be regarded as recruited and fully onboarded if they:

- Agree to undertake the Plan, Do, Review training and participate in the pilot study research activities.
- Sign a Memorandum of Understanding which should include having full support from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to complete research activities within paid hours.
- Settings identify two lead practitioners to undertake the training.
- Two members of staff, who will receive the training, and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have completed the baseline survey.

Measures

Bespoke measure of attitudes, understanding and confidence in implementing child-centered collaborative talk strategies will be developed by the evaluation team in collaboration with the delivery team in order to measure practitioner change. A bespoke measure was decided upon in order to capture practitioner understanding of the core elements of the approach e.g. valuing critical thinking. The measure will incorporate a number of Likert scale questions to capture attitudes around the core components of the approach and wider ethos around children's learning, scenario-based questions which will measure understanding around

key implementation strategies and scaled questions around EYPs confidence in the answers they have provided. The measure will answer RQ5 and contribute to evidence of promise. It will be embedded into the baseline and endline surveys (distributed in September 2025 and April/May 2026 respectively).

Data collection

The pilot study takes a mixed methods approach to answer the research questions. Figure 2 shows the research questions linked to the data collection methods and the Implementation Dimensions (*Implementation and Process Evaluation Guidance for EEF Evaluations*, n.d.).

Routine Data will be collected from all settings ($n=18$, 5 Maintained, 5PVI, and 8 SB, from DT and will be analysed to support understanding of feasibility of implementation: RQ1 with regards to the take up and engagement of training; RQ2 around completion of the implementation logs; and RQ3 around the barriers and facilitators to implementation .

1. Weekly implementation log (half of the settings will receive this via a weekly survey log and half the settings will complete a standard spreadsheet) – will be collected following the 25-week implementation (May 2026).
2. Attendance at training (2.5 hours live online training) – will be collected following the initial training (November 2025).
3. Attendance at the 30-minute coaching sessions (x10 online over 25 weeks) – will be collected following all coaching (May 2026).

Observations of online coaching sessions (x4) along with the two half-day **initial training** sessions will be attended by two researchers (between October 2025 and February 2026) in order to ensure the evaluation team have a full understanding of the approach and what this should look like in settings. Researchers will also make notes on practitioner engagement. These observations will allow the evaluation team to develop or enhance the research instruments (e.g. setting observation schedule, interview schedules) for the evaluation based on the core components of the approach.

An online Early Years Practitioner (EYP) survey will be completed by both practitioners (at baseline and endline) who will/have receive(d) the coaching ($n=36$) and the setting manager ($n=18$). The survey will be developed by the evaluation team and distributed via an online system (Qualtrics) to gather, at baseline, general information about the setting including setting type, size, and percentage of EYPP, EAL, and SEND children. At endline the survey will ask questions around implementation, including barriers and facilitators, business as usual and perceived impact at the practitioner (change in practice) and child (change in S, L & C as perceived by the practitioner) level. Additionally, for setting managers the survey will ask about cost and dosage. The survey will embed a **bespoke measure of attitudes, understanding and confidence in implementing child-centered collaborative talk strategies** (as outlined above in the measures section) as well as wider language development strategies. Survey questions will be designed to contribute to all research questions. The baseline survey will be distributed in September 2025

prior to training and the endline survey will be distributed in April/May 2026, at the end of evaluation period.

Setting observations will be conducted at baseline ($n=7$) (October/November 2025) and endline (with the same 7 settings) following training to monitor change across time, with three further settings being observed at endline to measure implementation fidelity, ($n=10$) (April/May 2026) following full implementation of the approach. Setting observations will take place across setting types (2 Maintained, 3 SBS, 2 PVI to mirror the recruited numbers) and will also take into account, where possible, other contextual variables such as setting size, and number of EYPP, EAL and SEND pupils. Observations will be conducted with one of the practitioners who have received the training (ideally the same practitioner at baseline and endline) for the whole Plan, Do, Review session. The purpose of the setting observations will be to evaluate change over time in child-to-child interaction (for settings observed at baseline and endline) and how the practitioners support interaction and extend language and implement the approach with quality and fidelity (for all observed settings).

Interviews ($n=10$) with a trained practitioner from each of the 10 settings taking part in observations will be conducted to explore barriers and facilitators of implementation (particularly for settings with high staff turnover, children and staff on variety hours of attendance and differing opening times across setting types), change in practice and perceived impact on the S,L & C skills of children. Setting observation and interview data will be designed to explore feasibility of implementation, evidence of promise and some elements of readiness for trial.

Monthly email exchanges will be used as a way for the evaluation team to communicate with all settings ($n=18$) about the evaluation process and capture data around implementation barriers and facilitators throughout the implementation period (November 2025 to April 2026). Thus, up to 108 email exchanges will be collected from the trained practitioners implementing the approach. The email exchanges will be sent directly to settings via email and will ask three questions, within each email, about implementation of the approach. The emails will be sent from a central project email account which will enable the researchers to monitor responses. This approach is a valuable way of understanding real time issues faced by the settings that can often be forgotten by the end of the delivery period as well as maintaining participant engagement during the evaluation period. The email exchanges will mainly be designed around understanding evidence of promise around attitude change and setting change and will provide case study data around change at the child-level.

Interviews with trainers/developers ($n=2$) will take place at mid-point (January 2026) and endpoint (May 2026) to establish how well the training has been received and establish any barriers and facilitators to the approach delivery and how any barriers may be overcome to facilitate expansion of the approach to a larger scale trial. The interviews will provide data around implementation fidelity and readiness for trial.

Figure 2 – Research questions mapped to methods and implementation dimensions

Research Questions	Research Methods						Implementation Dimensions					
	Routine data	Training and coaching observations	EYP/setting manager survey	Setting observations and interviews	Monthly	Developer interviews	Reach and responsiveness	Fidelity and quality	Adaptation	Dosage	Perceived impact	Moderators
RQ1 – Is the Plan, Do, Review training delivered as intended across setting type?												
RQ2 – Is the Plan, Do, Review approach implemented with fidelity and is it facilitated by practitioner knowledge of children’s language and communication?												
RQ2b - Are there differences in implementation fidelity across setting types and contexts?												
RQ3 – What are the barriers and facilitators across setting types and/or contexts in implementing the approach?												
RQ3a – Are practitioners motivated to implement and engage with the approach?												
RQ4 – Are there any unintended consequences of training and implementation												
RQ5 – Does the Plan, Do, Review training influence practitioner attitudes and understanding of child-centered collaborative talk strategies and <u>as well as their</u> consistency and confidence in using the strategies?												
RQ6 – Does implementing the Plan, Do Review approach develop child to child talk??												
RQ7 – What is the perceived influence (as identified by practitioners) on children’s expressive language with peers and with adults												
RQ8 – What is the cost and the demand for the approach and are there												

contextual-based differences in perceptions of affordability and demand?											
RQ9 – Is the overall training, implementation and research manageable for scale up for each element (Plan, Do, and Review) of the approach?											
RQ9a. - Do any of the Plan, Do or Review elements need further modification of development?											
RQ10 – What level of dosage do practitioners feel is needed to meet the short-term and longer-term outcomes in the theory of change?											

Data analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected through the described research methods. Quantitative survey data will be analysed descriptively and integrated with qualitative data from interviews which will be coded in NVivo using a mix of inductive and deductive analysis to build themes and identify patterns within the data around the inputs, outputs and outcomes of the logic model. An in-depth overview of the analysis is listed under each of the research questions set out below. However, it should be noted that the evaluation team take a dynamic and responsive approach to the IPE meaning that the analysis that is conducted will reflect the data collected as part of the study and therefore some proposed analysis may not be possible where other forms of analysis may be needed.

Analysis of the data will be subjected to triangulation with data collected as part of the evaluation to understand potential moderators/facilitators which are outlined in Table 3. Moderator/facilitator data will be transformed to allow the evaluation team to group the data to support with analysis and triangulation. The transformation and subsequent coding of the data to allow for triangulation will be dependent on the data gathered with the exception of setting type which is already coded into three categories (Maintained/PVI/SBS).

Table 3 – contextual factors

Contextual Factors	How measured?	Triangulation	How measured?	Pilot Criteria/RQs addressed		
				Feasibility of implementation	Evidence of promise	Readiness for trial
Setting type	Recruitment data	Accessibility of training Accessibility of implementation	Baseline survey/EYP interviews/blogs Endline survey/interviews/blogs	RQ1		
		Implementation fidelity Implementation of the core components	Observations/Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ2b.		

		Environmental change				
		Barriers and facilitators Organisation of groups of children	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ3 RQ3a.		
		Perceived influence on children's outcomes	Endline survey/EYP interviews/observations/blogs		RQ7	
		Demand for the approach	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			RQ8
		Manageability of training and implementation	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs/trainer interviews			RQ9
Setting needs (e.g. place of setting, EAL, EYPP and SEND numbers)	Baseline survey	Take up of training	Recruitment figures	RQ1		
		Implementation fidelity Implementation of the core components	Observations/Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ2b.		
		Organisation of groups of children	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ3		
		Perceived influence on children's outcomes	Endline survey/EYP interviews/observations/blogs		RQ7	
		Demand for the approach	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			RQ8
		Level of required dosage	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			RQ10
Fit with setting values/ethos and family's needs	Baseline survey	Implementation fidelity	Observations/Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ2b.		
		Practitioner motivation and engagement	Baseline and endline EYP surveys	RQ3a.		
		Influence on practitioner attitudes and understanding	Baseline and endline EYP surveys		RQ5	
		Demand for the approach	Recruitment figures/baseline and endline EYP survey			RQ8

Leadership support	Endline survey	Implementation fidelity	Observations/Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ2b.		
		Barriers and facilitators	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs	RQ3		
Staff absence/turn-over	Endline survey	Implementation fidelity	Observations/Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			
		Perceived influence on children's outcomes	Endline survey/EYP interviews/observations/blogs		RQ7	
		Manageability of training and implementation	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			RQ9
		Level of required dosage	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			RQ10
Practitioner prior knowledge	Baseline survey	Practitioner motivation and engagement	Baseline and endline EYP surveys	RQ3a.		
		Implementation of approach strategies	Observations/Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs		RQ6	
		Manageability of training and implementation	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs			RQ9
Child engagement and enjoyment	Observations	Perceived influence on children's outcomes	Endline survey/EYP interviews/blogs		RQ7	

Feasibility of implementation

Research questions 1 to 4 are designed to assess the feasibility of the inputs and outputs of the logic model including the feasibility of training (attendance at training, practitioner engagement in training and coaching sessions and accessibility of training material) and feasibility of implementation (implementation of the core components of the Plan, Do, Review approach with groups of children, completion of weekly implementation logs and engagement with Plan, Do, Review materials).

RQ1 – Is the Plan, Do, Review training delivered as intended across setting types?

Routine data on attendance at training and coaching sessions will be collected from the delivery team for each individual practitioner. Seventy-five percent attendance for each practitioner will be considered a good level of compliance with the approach. The data will also be analysed across setting types (as outlined in Table 3). Monthly emails and interview data will also be coded and analysed deductively to look for patterns which emerge around accessibility of the training materials and viability in terms of setting resources, practitioner time and cascading of the training in the setting where needed. Training observations will also be coded and analysed

deductively and presented alongside interviews with trainers/developers to monitor engagement of training.

RQ2 – Is the Plan, Do, Review approach implemented with fidelity and is it facilitated by practitioner knowledge of children’s language and communication?

To measure the level of implementation fidelity implementation logs will be analysed to firstly, understand the feasibility of settings to complete the logs either via a spreadsheet or by a weekly survey link. The data will be further analysed across setting types to understand any fundamental differences between setting types. Interview data will be coded and analysed inductively to provide a more in-depth analysis of preference for implementation log completion. Secondly, the implementation logs will be analysed descriptively to measure compliance (implementation of the approach at least three times per week for 80% of the time). This data will be integrated with observation data which will be analysed as being compliant with implementation of each of the core components of the approach for plan and review sessions (implementation of 5 out of the 7 core elements across each of the plan and review sessions). Data will also probe into acceptable and unacceptable adaptations, Note that as not all practitioners and settings are being observed the data cannot be fully triangulated. The observation data will also be used to monitor change over time (from baseline to endline)

To measure quality of implementation at endline observation data will be quantified (4 children will be observed alongside the practitioner for each of the 7 components (in Plan and Review) each child will be given a mark if the component is observed within the adult-child interaction). This measure of consistency will act as a quality measure.

Implementation fidelity will be triangulated with practitioner qualification data taken from the baseline survey to understand whether the level of practitioner qualifications influence implementation fidelity and quality of implementation data will be presented alongside coded and deductively analysed data from interviews with developers and practitioners to understand perceptions around implementation of the seven core components.

RQ2b - Are there differences in implementation fidelity across setting types and contexts?

Implementation fidelity data (as taken from the implementation logs) will be further analysed across setting types and setting location according to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI, derived from the settings postcode). Additional analysis will also be conducted across settings according to high/low numbers of EAL and SEND children. Note that how the data will be analysed will be dependent on the data collected (i.e. differentiation in numbers of SEND and EAL children across settings).

Analysis to check for potential moderators around implementation fidelity will be conducted around settings needs/context, setting ethos and leadership support (taken from baseline and endline survey data)

RQ3 – What are the barriers and facilitators across setting types and/or contexts in implementing the approach?

Monthly emails will be coded and analysed deductively to look for patterns around barriers and facilitators to implementation. The data will inform development of options around facilitators and barriers within the endline survey. Endline survey data will be analysed descriptively and will

be integrated with practitioner interview data which will be coded deductively to provide richer data around facilitators and barriers.

The data will also be analysed, where possible, across setting type, setting needs and leadership support to understand whether any of these act as moderators to the most prominent barriers and facilitators.

RQ3a – Are practitioners motivated to implement and engage with the approach?

Data from the baseline survey around the core ethos of the setting will be coded and deductively analysed to allow the research team to allocate settings to groups in terms of the focus of the setting ethos. This data will be triangulated with endline survey data around motivation to continue implementation of the approach. The data will also be integrated with interview data around how the ethos supports implementation of the approach and researcher observation notes around general motivation seen during implementation of the Plan, Do and Review sessions and coded and deductively analysed developer/trainer interviews.

Motivation to continue implementation coded data from the endline survey will also be triangulated with setting type data and practitioner prior knowledge data (coded from the baseline survey) to support understanding as to whether these act as moderators to practitioner motivation.

RQ4 – Are there any unintended consequences of training and implementation?

Data from the endline surveys will be analysed descriptively to provide a list of common unintended consequences. The data will be triangulated with coded data around settings ethos to understand if the values of the settings contribute to positive unintended consequences. The data will also be integrated with coded and deductively analysed monthly email data and delivery team interviews.

Evidence of promise

Research questions 5 to 7 are designed to assess if the inputs and outputs of the logic model lead to short and longer-term outcomes including recognition of the value of the Plan, Do, Review approach, changes in practitioner confidence and skills in implementing strategies, and the perceived influence of the approach on child-level outcomes.

RQ5 – Does the Plan, Do, Review training influence practitioner attitudes and understanding of child-centered collaborative talk strategies as well as their consistency and confidence in using the strategies?

The bespoke measure of attitudes, understanding and confidence will be coded and scored for each individual domain (attitudes, understanding and confidence) and for all domains in total for each practitioner. This will be done at baseline and endline to measure change. This pilot will be a means of learning about the sensitivity of the measure, particularly to assess pre/post change, given that it has not been previously validated. The analysis will also assess whether practitioner confidence and consistency in using the approach is a requisite condition for change in attitudes and understanding. The data will be integrated with descriptively analysed endline survey data and coded and deductively analysed monthly email data around perceived self-

change in each domain as well as consistency in using the strategies to give an indication of embedded practice.

To understand if consistency and confidence in using strategies taught through the approach is mediated by other contextual variables the quantitative survey data will be triangulated with coded data on setting ethos and child engagement and enjoyment (as measured through observations; number of children showing engagement and enjoyment of the sessions – all, most, some children).

RQ6 – Does implementing the Plan, Do Review approach develop child to child talk?

Data on child-to-child talk will be collected through survey data which will be descriptively analysed and integrated with observation data. Observations of the children during setting visits will be coded (number of children talking to one another during each session (Plan, Do, and Review) – all, most, some children). This will be done at baseline and endline to show change across time and will also be analysed at endline to assess prevalence across settings. This will be triangulated with the coded practitioner observational data (yes/no response to observed implementation) around facilitating responses to who, what, why, where questions, expanding vocabulary and whether children are encouraged to talk to one another as these three strategies are thought to be key in developing child to child talk. The data will be integrated with coded and deductively analysed monthly emails and descriptively analysed survey data around perceived change in child-to-child talk.

To understand any contextual moderators the main observational data will be triangulated with coded data from the observations around children's enjoyment and engagement with the approach and practitioner prior knowledge taken from the baseline survey.

RQ7 What is the perceived influence (as identified by practitioners) on children's expressive language with peers and with adults?

Endline survey data will be analysed descriptively and integrated with coded and inductively analysed monthly emails and interview data, to determine the perceived influence on children's expressive language development with peers and adults and to determine whether there are differential effects for EYPP, EAL or SEND children. The baseline and endline survey will be descriptively analysed to look for change in the percentage of children under the expected level for EYFSP language outcomes over the course of the evaluation.

EYFSP data will be triangulated with setting type data and/or other contextual factors data taken from the endline survey to understand potential moderators to child outcomes.

Readiness for trial

Research questions 8 to 10 are designed to assess if the Plan, Do, Review approach is ready to be scaled up to an efficacy trial. This will draw on whether or not there is demand for the approach, the manageability of the training, implementation, including implementation of all elements of the approach, for both practitioners and developers and whether the current dosage is deemed appropriate to produce the desired practitioner and child-level outcomes depicted in the logic model. It will also assess the feasibility of the research methods, particularly the

measure of attitudes, understanding and confidence, that may be used in an efficacy trial to gather the data.

RQ8 – What is cost and the demand for the approach and are there contextual-based differences in demand and perceptions of affordability?

Demand for the Plan, Do, Review approach will be collected through the monthly emails, and developer interviews which will be coded and deductively analysed. This will be triangulated with contextual data around setting type, setting needs and the settings ethos to understand if any of these factors are determined by any of these factors.

Data around additional costs settings have incurred through implementing the approach and practitioner views on the affordability of the approach will be collected via the endline survey and will be analysed descriptively. This data will be triangulated with the setting type to understand if there are differences in the cost occurred or perceptions of affordability in different setting types.

RQ9 – Is the overall training, implementation and research manageable for scale up for of each element (plan, do, review) of the approach?

Data around the manageability of the training will be collected through the endline survey and analysed descriptively. It will include perceptions of the online delivery, timing or the training and perceptions of the usefulness of the coaching sessions. The data will be triangulated with attendance records to further understand manageability of training. Manageability data will be triangulated with setting type to understand any changes that need to be made in terms of the training and coaching delivery to meet setting needs.

Data around manageability of implementation will be collected through the endline survey and analysed descriptively, it will also be triangulated with implementation logs to further understand manageability of implementation. Data will be triangulated with setting type and varying contextual requirements e.g. part time staff, children's hours, fit with settings planning. As part of this analysis completion rates of implementation logs will be analysed to understand the feasibility of settings to complete the logs either via a spreadsheet or by a weekly survey link. This data will be integrated with descriptive survey data and triangulated with setting type data to understand suitability of each approach across setting types.

Manageability of completion of the research activities will be gathered through the endline survey and will be analysed descriptively. The data will be integrated with data around completion rates of each of the research activities. As part of the survey practitioners will also be asked about their perceptions of the bespoke questionnaire and the baseline-endline data gathered from the questionnaire will be used to understand whether this measure is suitable for use in a larger trial.

RQ9a. - Do any of the Plan, Do or review elements need further modification of development?

Endline surveys will collect qualitative data around any perceived modifications of the Plan, Do and Review elements. Data will be coded and analysed deductively and integrated with coded and deductively analysed interview data and data from monthly emails around suitable adaptations made to the approach which may be included in future training.

RQ10 – What level of dosage do practitioners feel is needed to meet the short-term and longer-term outcomes in the theory of change?

Endline surveys will collect quantitative data around any perceived level of dosage of the Plan, Do and Review elements to embed practice and see changes to child-level outcomes. Data will also be collected around group size and manageability of group size. Data will be triangulated with contextual data around setting needs and staff absence to understand whether these contextual factors affect the level of perceived dosage required. Data will be analysed descriptively and integrated with coded and deductively analysed developer interview data which will seek to understand the ability of the delivery team to make any proposed changes for scale up to a larger trial.

As part of the endline surveys practitioners will be asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, the core elements in terms of ease of implementation and consistency of implementation. The data will be coded as high (1 to 3), medium (4 to 6), or low (7 to 10) for ease and consistency, and integrated with coded and deductively analysed monthly emails, and interviews with developers' data which will probe into the perceptions of the necessity of implementing each of the core elements.

The coded data on ease and consistency of implementation will be triangulated with setting type and setting needs/context data to look for any moderators influencing implementation.

Ethics and registration

Ethical approval for this study has been obtained from the University of Leeds Cross-Faculty Research Ethics Committee (Faculties of Business, Environment & Social Sciences (Ref: 2490 on 24th January 2025).

All participating settings will sign a Memorandum of Understanding that covers information about the study, the respective responsibilities of the settings, evaluation team and programme delivery team and the ways in which the data will be handled under GDPR regulations (see below). Practitioners will be given the opportunity, if they request it, to view a copy of the transcript of their interview up to ten days after data collection and (if they should wish to do so) to withdraw this data from the evaluation. After this point it will be anonymised. The programme developer/trainers (Wingate Community Nursery School) will also be provided with information and consent forms for taking part in the focus groups.

Associated privacy notices will also be issued, where appropriate. All practitioner consent forms and privacy notices are available via the Wingate Community Nursery School website. This pilot study will be registered with the OSF Registries Network (<https://osf.io/registries>)

Data protection

A Data Management Plan will be put in place under the oversight of the Data Protection Officer at the UoL with regular review periods. All outputs (including the statistical database, reports and publications) will be anonymised. No participant or setting will be identifiable in the report or dissemination of results. Data will be handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Personal data would be processed under Article 6 Section (e) of the GDPR ('Tasks carried out in the public interest') as the research is being conducted to support

education provision in the UK. The statistical database will hold non-identifiable data. All data collected will be subject to quality assurance procedures, to assess reliability, accuracy and consistency. Confidentiality will be maintained and no-one outside of the evaluation team will have access to the database which will be held securely on University of Leeds servers. Full consent will be obtained from participants (settings/practitioners) This will include the principle of withdrawal under GDPR for practitioner-level data and depositing data at the end of the pilot. Privacy notices and data sharing agreements will be put in place where applicable.

Personnel

Delivery Team

Nichola Hessewood, Deputy Headteacher, Wingate Community Nursery School, will be responsible for the delivery of the programme, including direct delivery of the majority of the training and coaching sessions, running the padlet and general day-to-day running of the programme delivery. Nichola will also be responsible for ensuring that any key information (e.g. settings info) is passed to the Evaluation Team in a timely manner.

Natalie Hawksby, Office Manager, Wingate Community Nursery School, will be responsible for creating and maintaining delivery-level administrative records which will enable the programme to run smoothly - e.g. contacts for settings, sharing arrangements for training etc.

Becky Wood, Headteacher, Wingate Community Nursery School, will oversee all project delivery and will directly support delivery of some training and coaching sessions. **Evaluation Team**

Dr Erin Dysart (Co-PI), University of Leeds, will oversee the overall conduct of the study and will lead on the report writing.

Professor Louise Tracey (Co-PI), University of Leeds, will provide overall quality assurance and expertise in mitigating potential biases and risks and will contribute to all aspects of the programme.

Dr Aimee Code (Research Associate), University of Leeds, will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the study including liaising with settings to ensure timely data collection, supporting with the development of research instruments, conducting fieldwork and maintaining the project database.

Risks

Risk	Likelihood/impact	Preventative measures	Revised impact
Insufficient settings recruited/retained	Moderate/High	<p>We will work closely with the DT to ensure effective recruitment</p> <p>We will develop measures which allow us to build relationships with settings while minimising burden to minimise attrition</p> <p>Ensure more than one contact point per setting to mitigate against staff turnover</p>	Medium
Attrition of settings	Moderate	<p>From our experience attrition of early years settings from evaluations can be high. To minimise this we will:</p> <p>Conduct initial telephone conversations to ensure settings meet the eligibility criteria and ensure they are aware of what is expected when taking part in research. This is currently working well for CFS.</p> <p>Build relationships with all settings participating in the pilot through continuous contact.</p>	Low
Low completion of measures	Moderate/High	<p>We will contact all settings prior to any data collection to ensure they are aware of the research and what this means for them</p> <p>We will send timely reminders and follow ups</p> <p>Observation visits and interviews will be arranged at a time to suit the setting</p> <p>Personalised contact from named researchers</p>	Low
Project Management and Capacity	Low	<p>Erin Dysart would be the substantive PI with support from Louise Tracey. Both Louise and Erin have extensive experience of managing IPEs and Louise has extensive experience of running research trials. We have sufficient team members for this size of pilot that, in the event of staff absence, others would be able to take on the additional tasks as required and we have transparent working practices to facilitate this</p>	Low
Loss of practitioners	High	<p>In our experience staff turnover in some settings can be high. The programme has a cascading element to ensure new practitioners are trained</p> <p>The evaluation team will work closely with the delivery team to monitor where cascaded training is needed</p> <p>The evaluation team will ask about the level of staff turnover in the endline surveys and conduct additional analysis where needed</p>	Medium

Timeline

Dates	Activity	Staff responsible/ leading
December 2024 to January 2025	Ethics approval	UoL
February 2025 to July 2025	Recruitment	Wingate
September to October 2025	Baseline survey distribution	UoL
October 2025 to November 2025	Baseline setting observations	UoL
October 2025	Initial training (starting 6 th October)	Wingate
October 2025 to May 2026	Intervention delivery (including mentoring sessions)	Wingate
April to May 2026	Endline observations and interviews	UoL
April to May 2026	Endline survey distribution	UoL
May to June 2026	Routine data collection	UoL/Wingate
September 2026	Preliminary findings presentation	UoL
November 2026	Draft report	UoL
March 2027	Final report	UoL

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