

School Information Sheet: Whole School SEND Review Process Evaluation

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is funding a two-year Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) of the Whole School SEND Review (WSS Review) process, developed by the Whole School SEND Consortium at nasen. We are seeking to recruit 160 secondary schools with particular focus given to schools in the following regions in England: The North; East Midlands, South Yorkshire and Humber; Southwest; South Central England and London, and West Midland, to take part in this exciting study.

What is it?

The WSS Review process enables school leaders to improve Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision at their setting. It was created in partnership with forty outstanding special and mainstream schools, parents and carers of children with SEND and organisations including Ofsted, the Council for Disabled Children and the Teaching Schools Council.

The WSS Review provides a framework that enables school leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of current SEND provision through a structured self-evaluation and peer review from another school undergoing a review. The WSS Review Guide helps schools identify areas for improvement within their SEND provision, equips schools to review and create improvement plans for SEND provision and helps embed a focus on SEND into normal school improvement practices. The Review Guide outlines a step-by-step audit process, including examples of good practice, guidance on how to carry out a review of SEND provision and self-evaluation templates. The WSS Review outlines eight areas for review:

- Outcomes for pupils with SEND;
- Leadership of SEND;
- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEND;
- Working with pupils and parents/carers of pupils with SEND;
- Assessment and identification;
- Monitoring, tracking and evaluation;
- The efficient use of resources;
- The quality of SEND provision.

Professor Philip Garner's evaluation of the WSS Review (2016) found that teachers engaged in the process demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of assessment for learning and targeted teaching for pupils with SEND. Furthermore, some participants secured improved attainment scores and evidence of accelerated progress for learners with SEND.

Who can take part?

Secondary schools in England that have not commissioned a WSS Review, and whose SENDCo has not undertaken WSS Reviewer training since July 2016.

Particular focus will be given to schools located in the following regions aligned with the Teaching Schools Council:

Region	Local Authorities
The North	Cumbria, Darlington, Durham, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, North Tyneside, North Yorkshire, Redcar and Cleveland, South Tyneside, Stockton, Sunderland
East Midlands, South Yorkshire and Humber	Barnsley, City of York, Derby, Derbyshire, Doncaster, East Riding of Yorkshire, Hull City, Leicester, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northeast Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Rotherham, Rutland, Sheffield
Southwest	Bath and Northeast Somerset, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, Plymouth, Poole Borough, Scilly, Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Swindon, Torbay, Wiltshire
South Central England and Northwest London	Barnet, Bedford, Bracknell Forest, Brent, Buckinghamshire, Camden, Central Bedfordshire, City of London, Ealing, Enfield, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hertfordshire, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Luton, Milton Keynes, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Westminster, Wokingham
West Midlands	Birmingham, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Coventry, Dudley, Herefordshire, Sandwell, Shropshire, Solihull, Staffordshire, Stoke, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall, Warwickshire, Wolverhampton, Worcestershire

What does taking part in an evaluation involve?

The EEF regularly evaluates its projects through an established evaluation process called Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs). In an RCT, participation is determined by random selection. For this project, that means each school's involvement in the WSS Review process will depend on whether they are randomly assigned into the **intervention group** or the **control group**. Once the intervention has been completed, outcomes for pupils in the intervention group will be compared to those in the control group to find out whether the intervention has made a measurable difference.

The random allocation of settings is essential to the evaluation as it is the most rigorous way to find out the effects of the programme on pupils. It is therefore important that school leaders, teachers, form tutors and pupils commit to engaging in whichever of the two groups they are randomly assigned to and undertake the evaluation tasks associated with that group.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this project fully describes the responsibilities of schools taking part in the evaluation, including the data that will need to be provided to FFT Education (FFT), part of the Fischer Family Trust on behalf of the evaluators.

What are the potential benefits for my school?

All participating schools have the opportunity to be part of a high-quality research trial, working with experienced researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University (Manchester Met) – the independent evaluators - that will provide insights into whether and how the WSS Review process leads to improvements in attainment and other outcomes for SEND pupils. Manchester Met will be supported by FFT who will be responsible for collecting the data from your school.

The trial will also use the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to measure any impact on student well-being, and this data will be shared with each school. The SDQ consists of 25 statements (eg 'I usually do as I am told') and takes 5-10 minutes to complete. Guidance for teachers will be provided along with the SDQs to support teachers in managing this process with their pupils. Summary reports of the SDQ data will be shared with participating schools and could support the identification of issues in relation to Government advice on mental health and behaviour in schools¹.

In addition, **intervention schools** (that is those participating schools allocated to the intervention group) will benefit from taking part in the WSS Review process which includes training and support. Preliminary research suggests that the WSS Review may improve attainment scores and accelerate progress for learners with SEND.

Control schools (those schools not allocated to the intervention group) will receive a financial payment of £1,500, in two instalments, on completion of different elements of the study, but will not participate in the WSS Review process. Schools in the control group will be able to access the WSS Review process from September 2023.

What are the potential risks for my school?

The SENDCo and other staff may feel professionally vulnerable if for any reason the process is not followed in a supportive way. The Project Directors will oversee the delivery of the WSS Review process and will take action to address this if perceived necessary.

Staff deployment may change as a result of the process, which can be stressful and may temporarily increase staff workload. However, such changes should lead to improvements in students' attainment and well-being.

Students completing the SDQ may be made aware of well-being issues that relate to themselves. Students will be told to tell their teacher if they feel any negative emotions as a result of completing the SDQ and staff will be made aware of the support required for students in these circumstances.

Does your school and its students have to take part?

It is up to your school to decide. Nasen staff will describe the study and go through this information sheet, which they will give to your school. Nasen staff will then ask your school to sign the MOU to show your school agreed to take part. Your school is free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf

If your school decides to take part and a parent does not want their child to be involved in the research, they will sign a withdrawal form on the Parent Information Sheet and return it to the school. The school will pass on the pupil name, DOB and school to Helen Prosser, Project Manager at nasen by email at helenp@nasen.org.uk or by phone 020 3925 3596, in order for nasen to instruct Manchester Met to remove the child's data. A parent is free to withdraw their child at any time, without giving a reason.

What exactly will the programme involve?

SENDCoS from schools assigned to the intervention group will receive a day's WSS Reviewer training then undertake a review in their setting with a partner school. The review process normally takes a school two-three days, including preparation for review, the review and follow up. A School Leader will participate in the WSS Review, alongside the trained SENDCo. The SENDCo will also travel to his/her partner school and conduct a WSS Review in the partner's school.

Following on from the WSS Reviews, the SENDCo will attend two engagement days, focusing on developing and delivering a bespoke action plan targeting areas of priority to drive improvement. The SENDCo will receive two visits from a Project Director to support the development and implementation of the bespoke action plan.

Does it cost anything?

The EEF is covering the cost of delivery of the WSS Review. Therefore, schools assigned to the intervention group will not need to pay to receive the WSS Review process. However, they are expected to cover release time for participating staff and travel expenses, including:

SENDCO release time

- 1 day release for attendance at initial WSS Reviewer training (plus travel expenses)
- 1-2 days release for preparation for the WSS Review
- 1 day release to visit to partner school (plus travel expenses)
- 1 day release to write partner school's WSS Review report
- 2 days release to attend engagement days 1 and 2 (plus travel expenses)
- 2 days release to meet with Project Director at school

Senior Leader release time

- 1 day release to support SENDCo in preparing for WSS Review
- 1 day release to participate in WSS Review
- 0.5 day release to meet with Project Director on school visit

Schools in the control group will need to provide data to Manchester Met, and in return will receive **£1,500** following the submission of data to the evaluators.

What will happen with the data that is collected?

We will collect from your school personally-identifiable information relating to students in Year 9 and Year 8 as of September 2019. We are leaving open the possibility of also collecting data from Year 7s

but we will only request this if delays are encountered in getting the scheme up and running across schools.

Manchester Met is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Manchester Met's Data Protection Policy.

Data will be transferred and stored securely, and only retained for as long as is necessary. If your school withdraws from the study, we will destroy any information about your school and your students that we have already obtained.

It is Manchester Met's policy to only publish anonymised data unless you have given your explicit written consent to be identified in the research. **Manchester Met never sells personal data to third parties.**

Please read the privacy notice which explains in more detail how your students' data will be processed and stored

(https://www.mmuperu.co.uk/assets/uploads/files/Privacy_Note_WSS_Review_Evaluation.pdf).

For further information about use of your students' personal data and their data protection rights please see Manchester Met's Data Protection Pages (<https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/data-protection/>).

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of the main phase of the research, focusing on students in Year 9 as of September 2019, will be published in a report in January 2023. If the data from the main phase are robust, then the results of the additional phase of the research, focusing on students in Year 8 as of September 2019, will be published in a report in January 2024. The evaluation team may publish articles in academic journals once the main reports have been published. All participants and schools will be fully anonymised in any reporting.

Who has reviewed this research project?

This research project has been reviewed by the funder, EEF, and has received ethical approval. A protocol for the research will be published, as will a statistical analysis plan. These will be peer reviewed.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?

Please contact Professor Cathy Lewin at Manchester Met in the first instance at c.lewin@mmu.ac.uk or telephone 0161 247 5191, or in writing to: Faculty of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University, Brooks Building, 53 Bonsall Street, Manchester, M15 6GX.

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical procedures adopted during this research, please contact the Faculty Head of Research Ethics and Governance at the University, Professor Ricardo Nemirovsky at R.Nemirovsky@mmu.ac.uk, or telephone 0161 247 2023, or in writing to: Faculty of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University, Brooks Building, 53 Bonsall Street, Manchester, M15 6GX.

If you have any concerns regarding the personal data collected from you, the Data Protection Officer at Manchester Met can be contacted at legal@mmu.ac.uk, or telephone 0161 247 3331 or in writing to: Data Protection Officer, Legal Services, All Saints Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M15 6BH. You also have a right to lodge a complaint in respect of the processing of your personal data with the Information Commissioner's Office as the supervisory authority. Please see: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT