

The Mayor's Schools for Success

WHAT HAS HELPED THEM TO SUCCEED?

October 2018



The Mayor’s Schools for Success: What has helped them to succeed?

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1. INTRODUCTION

Schools for Success is a programme initiated by the Mayor of London in 2017. It identifies London schools where students with low prior attainment (LPA) are making good progress, so that their knowledge and expertise can be shared with other schools. This report, undertaken by UCL Institute of Education (IOE), seeks to identify and understand specific strategies and approaches adopted by Schools for Success and relate these to what's known about raising the achievement of LPA students from the wider research base.

Schools for Success are designated according to criteria devised by the Greater London Authority (GLA). Primary schools are selected using the average progress of the schools' low prior performing cohort in reading, writing and maths between key stage 1 and 2. Secondary schools are selected using Progress 8 scores. The lowest performing eligible primary school for the 2017/18 cohort had an average progress score of 4.4 for their LPA pupils compared to the London average of 2 for these pupils. The primary schools were ranked by this progress measure and then the top 6% selected as Schools for Success. The lowest performing eligible secondary school for the 2017/18 cohort had a Progress 8 score of 0.93 for LPA pupils compared to the London average of 0.11. The secondary schools were ranked by this measure and then the top 6% were selected. Eligible schools must also be graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Schools for Success have completed school profiles, outlining their key approaches to raising achievement and these are available on the [GLA website](#). IOE analysed this self-reported data from 65 primary and 20 secondary schools. Several key themes emerged from this which we used as a frame for a rapid literature review, prioritising empirical studies carried out in the UK in the last ten years. We then explored key themes in greater depth through a workshop with invited primary and secondary schools, the outcomes of which inform exemplar case studies threaded through the report.

In section 2 of the report, we present an overview of the common approaches drawn from the school profile data and propose a Model for Success based on this analysis. Each element of the Model for Success is explored in more depth in sections 3, 4 and 5 and linked to key research.

In section 6, we summarise essential features which we term Keys to Success.

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2. A MODEL FOR SUCCESS – summary of school profiles

2.1 Primary schools

Profiles completed by 65 Schools for Success primary schools paint a rich picture of the range of approaches developed by schools to support lower prior attaining (LPA) pupils.

The majority of schools recognised through self-evaluation and data analysis that pupils presenting with LPA tended to be those eligible for pupil premium funding, pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and those with English as an additional language (EAL). These LPA pupils also presented with communication skills, both in respect to their learning and emotions, at an earlier stage of development than their peers.

Given the wide range of issues, schools typically responded by placing a whole-school focus on raising achievement for all pupils, alongside specific initiatives to address the holistic needs of LPA pupils. For example, 18 of the 65 schools aimed for high expectations of all pupils and another 15 explicitly placed a greater emphasis on the promotion of progress among LPA pupils.

Overall, primary schools most commonly focused on making the following five types of changes to school life:

- A strategic focus on data tracking and associated pupil progress meetings (38% of the schools)
- Enhancing the provision of staff professional learning and development (37%)
- Scheduling additional sessions for pupils who had fallen behind (37%)
- A revised or enriched curriculum with additional opportunities for active or experiential learning (31%)
- A focus on resilience, well-being and/or growth mindsets (29%)

Further elements of their strategy often included:

- Provision of additional personnel (21%)
- High expectations of all pupils (18%)
- A specific intervention (18%)
- Personalised learning or Assessment for Learning approaches (18%)
- Parental engagement (17%)
- Sharing good practice across the school (14%)

Primary schools that made the most progress with LPA pupils were most likely to have focused on enhancing staff CPD, creating an active/engaging curriculum, the provision of additional sessions, personalised learning, and strategies for supporting resilience and well-being.

2.2 Secondary schools

We analysed the profiles from 20 secondary schools. The majority of these found LPA pupils, again not just those eligible for pupil premium but also those with SEND or EAL, entered secondary school with, most notably, lower levels of English language skills than

their peers. They were also making the slowest progress throughout their time at the school. The implication is that communication and English language skills have a particularly strong influence and impact on educational outcomes.

Although the dataset is smaller, we noticed that secondary schools most commonly focused on the following five approaches:

- Scheduling additional sessions for those who had fallen behind (70%, 14 in total)
- A strategic focus on data tracking, with associated pupil progress meetings (40% of schools, eight in total)
- Enhancing the school's support for parents (40%, eight in total)
- High expectations for all pupils (35%, seven in total)
- Mentoring (30%, six in total) though it's not clear if this is academic or emotional in nature.

Further elements of their strategies often included:

- Personalised learning (25%, five in total)
- Organisational mentoring or reflection through a school improvement partner (15%, three in total)
- Efforts to raise aspirations (15%, three in total)
- Taking on additional personnel (15%, three in total)
- Improving CPD for staff (15%, three in total)

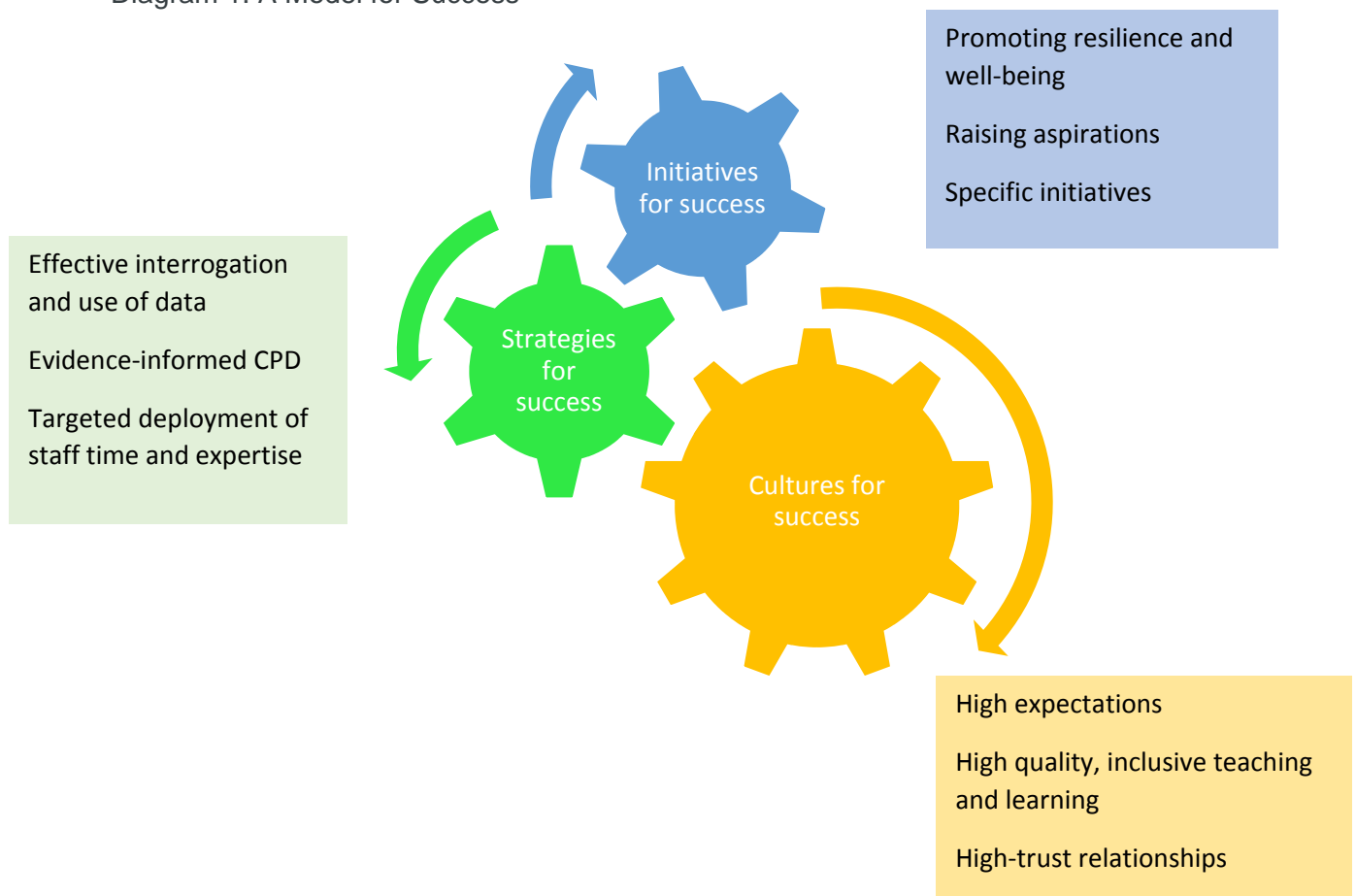
There is a strong connection between the themes emerging from this analysis of both primary and secondary Schools for Success profiles and the seven building blocks for raising the attainment of disadvantaged students outlined in a study commissioned by the Department for Education in 2014 (Macleod et al 2015). Rather than engage in single initiatives, successful schools were able to:

1. Promote an ethos of attainment for all pupils, rather than stereotyping disadvantaged pupils as a group with less potential to succeed.
2. Have an individualised approach to addressing barriers to learning and emotional support, at an early stage, rather than providing access to generic support and focusing on pupils nearing their end-of-key-stage assessments.
3. Focus on high quality first teaching rather than on bolt-on strategies and activities outside school hours.
4. Focus on outcomes for individual pupils rather than on providing strategies.
5. Deploy the best staff to support disadvantaged pupils; develop skills and roles of teachers and teaching assistants rather than using additional staff who do not know the pupils well.
6. Make decisions based on data and respond to evidence, using frequent, rather than one-off assessment and decision points.
7. Have clear, responsive leadership: setting ever higher aspirations and devolving responsibility for raising attainment to all staff, rather than accepting low aspirations and variable performance.

Interestingly, CfBT (2014) examined what has been coined the 'London effect' and found that many of these strategies had been employed by successful schools in London.

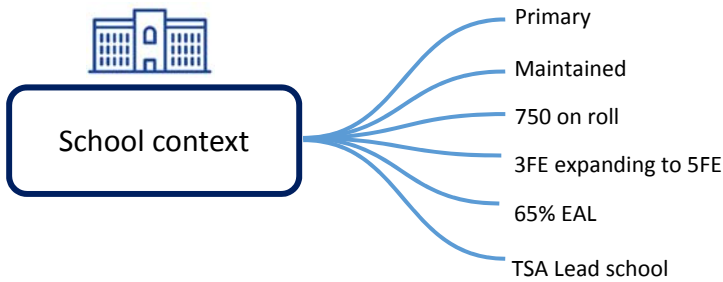
We shared our initial analysis of schools' practice-based knowledge, along with these key research findings, with five case study schools and developed the following Model for Success collaboratively. The Model recognises the value Schools for Success place on creating a whole-school ethos centred on the belief that all students can reach their potential. We call this a Culture for Success. This sense of high expectations and positivity is enacted through high quality relationships that engender trust within and across school communities and underpin inclusive teaching and learning. This culture drives whole-school Strategies for Success pertaining to staff development and deployment, informed by evidence and evaluated through a range of data-tracking processes. Resultant actions are expressed as specific Initiatives for Success or interventions that schools are trialling to address the needs of LPA children.

Diagram 1: A Model for Success



Byron Court School's approach to creating a whole-school culture for success is exemplified in the following case study.

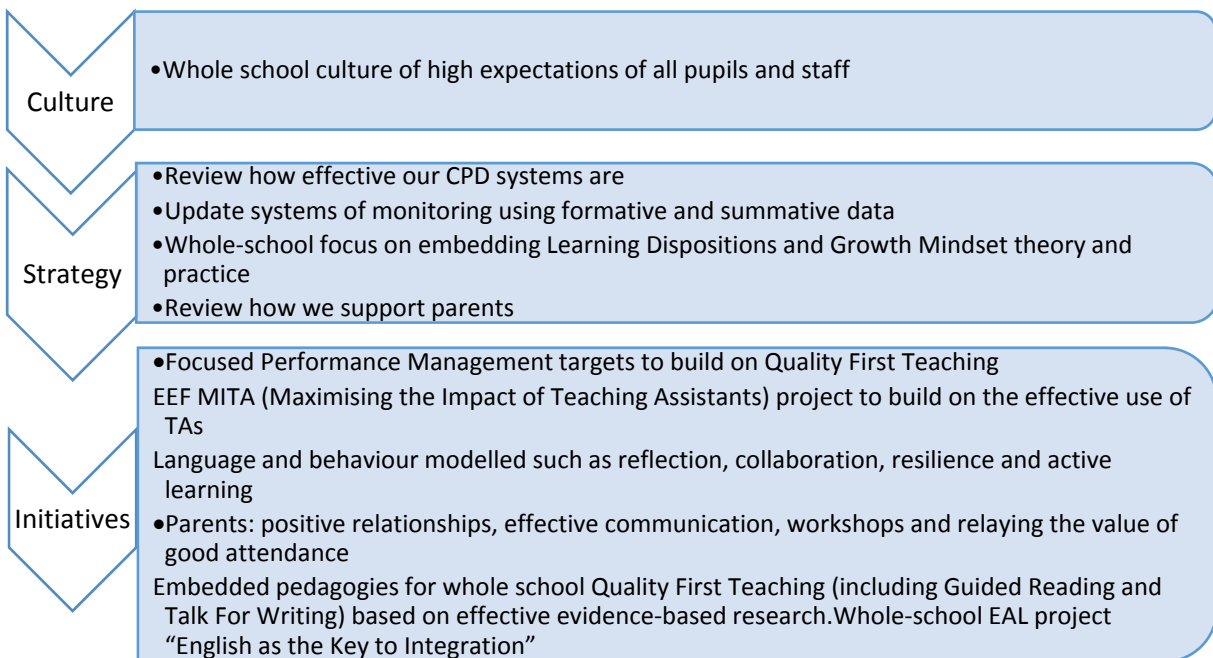
Byron Court School: culture for success



Characteristics of LPA students

- Low self-esteem
- Range of SEND/EAL/PP
- New arrivals
- Lack of parental support

APPROACH



OUTCOMES

Top 3% for progress in country (2016). *‘Children make outstanding progress - arrive in Reception significantly below and leave year 6 significantly above’*

Over the last 3 years, almost 85% of all children achieve expected progress or better across

Reduction in negative behaviour/exclusions.

Future: Continue to develop Quality First Teaching by taking an evidence-based action research approach to explore a range of pedagogies. Continue to reflect on practice and have regular ‘blue-sky thinking days’ with staff and governors.

3. CULTURES FOR SUCCESS

In this section, we'll take a closer look at how Schools for Success are creating Cultures for Success.

3.1 Developing a Culture for Success



A number of schools had become aware that staff had different expectations for pupils depending on their background or previous educational trajectory. Challenging this required not only a change of mindset and ethos, often addressed through staff CPD, but also the tools to identify and acknowledge a gap in the performance of pupils. Being able to identify the students that were falling behind through assessment and data analysis (discussed in more detail in section 4.1) was often key to raising awareness amongst staff that specific groups of students were being left behind. It also developed an awareness in teachers that teaching and learning could be tailored and targeted to meet the needs of all pupils. Other methods that schools reported to create a culture of high expectation included:

- Revising the curriculum for the entire school with the ethos that there was no ceiling to achievement
- Encouraging staff to set more ambitious targets
- Expecting good behaviour from all groups of pupils
- Encouraging both staff and pupils to see that '*barriers to learning are not an excuse for low standards*'
- Including parents in this process, particularly in secondary schools (e.g. through a 'raising achievement evening' at the start of year 11 for parents and students to provide advice and outline the expectations for the year ahead)
- Supporting 'teaching to the top' and 'scaffolding up for lower attainers'.

We targeted year groups that had the highest proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school. This was achieved through strengthening quality first teaching. Our team explored the idea of creating stimulating hooks for writing so that pupils would be engaged in the process. We used pupil premium funding to arrange educational visits to Shrek Land, Lambourne End, Lego Land and Cambridge University to inspire and instil a passion for writing. Our Yr6 pupils were encouraged by university students to produce a mini thesis/essay as part of the Brilliant Club project. This gave our pupils the opportunity to witness first hand that universities like Oxbridge are within reach if they aim for excellence and have high expectations for themselves. *Keir Hardie Primary School*

Research has linked teacher expectations with student 'academic self-concept', how good they felt about themselves as learners, and studies have been particularly focused on teachers' expectations of specific ethnic groups. Analysis by Professor Steve Strand shows

that white British students from lower socio-economic backgrounds made the least progress over the course of secondary school, and that the most significant factors in explaining this were the frequency with which young people completed homework, their 'academic self-concept, their attendance at school, and their educational aspirations (Strand, 2014). In contrast, researchers have found that students from ethnic minorities (including those eligible for FSM) can out-perform their white FSM eligible counterparts because their parents and community support positive academic self-concepts. For example, most ethnic minority groups (the exception being black Caribbean pupils) gain considerably compared to their white British counterparts throughout primary and secondary school, despite being amongst the worst performers at Key Stage 1 (Dustmann et al 2010).

Pupils from minority ethnic groups eligible for free school meals also outperform their white FSM eligible counterparts at age 16 (Strand, 2015). Low expectations amongst teaching staff in respect to male black Caribbean pupils also remains at the forefront of many theories (Strand, 2011) as to why black pupils from middle and high socio-economic backgrounds have substantially lower achievement than their similarly advantaged white British peers (Strand, 2014). Black Caribbean girls also achieve better at age 16 than their male counterparts and Strand (2014) cites aspiration and academic self-concept as key.

We therefore argue that a school culture that supports high expectations for all students is likely to go a long way in addressing the deficits apparent in some children's own academic self-concept.

3.2 High quality, inclusive teaching and learning

Several Schools for Success highlighted the importance of creating a culture of inclusion through pedagogies specifically addressing the needs of all pupils. Many schools saw this as being achieved by ensuring high quality teaching, often referred to by schools as 'quality first teaching', which occurs consistently in all classrooms. Quality first teaching first originated in the then DCSF's Guide to Personalised Learning published in 2008 and advocates:

- highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- high demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- high levels of interaction for all pupils
- appropriate use of teaching questioning, modelling and explaining
- an emphasis on learning through dialogue with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups
- an expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils.

This sense of empowering pupils to take control of and direct their learning is widely supported by research. John Hattie (2012) stresses the importance of visibility in the teaching and learning process so that student learning and the identification of factors that make a difference to this learning are clear. Making teaching and learning 'visible' is crucial in supporting students to develop a mentality of self-regulation leading to lifelong learning.

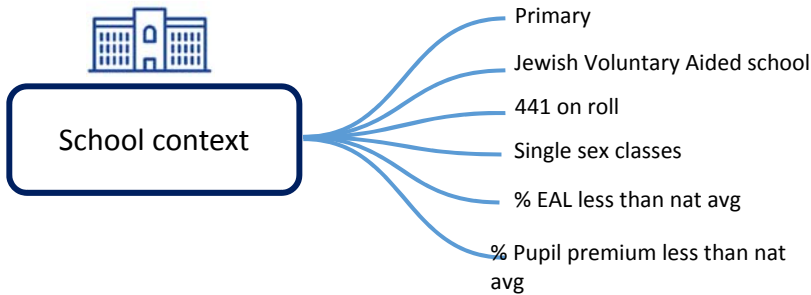
Rob Coe and colleagues (2014) identify six components of teaching that lead to improved student outcomes. Amongst them is quality of instruction which includes elements such as effective questioning and use of assessment by teachers, along with specific practices such as reviewing previous learning, providing model responses for students and giving adequate time for practice to embed skills securely.

We provide tailored 'in-house' professional development training with a focus on inclusive teaching. To develop teaching further, weekly triad sessions are held in which teachers share good practice, conduct lesson studies and keep abreast of contemporary educational theory. This focus on quality first teaching is monitored by book scrutinies, learning walks and teaching and learning reviews. An Inclusion Panel (a panel of SENCOs and inclusion leaders across the Trust) regularly meet to further monitor the progress and provision in place for all children, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups of children. Maths and English initiatives occur daily and academic success is celebrated in assemblies. Learning ambassadors and peer coaching have further accelerated the progress of low attaining pupils.

Whittingham Primary School

Another of our case study schools, Menorah Primary, 'trained all staff in quality first teaching with the aim of questioning the culture of traditional styles of pedagogy'. Importantly, though, Menorah also introduced specific teaching strategies specifically designed to meet the needs of children with complex needs, including those on the autistic spectrum.

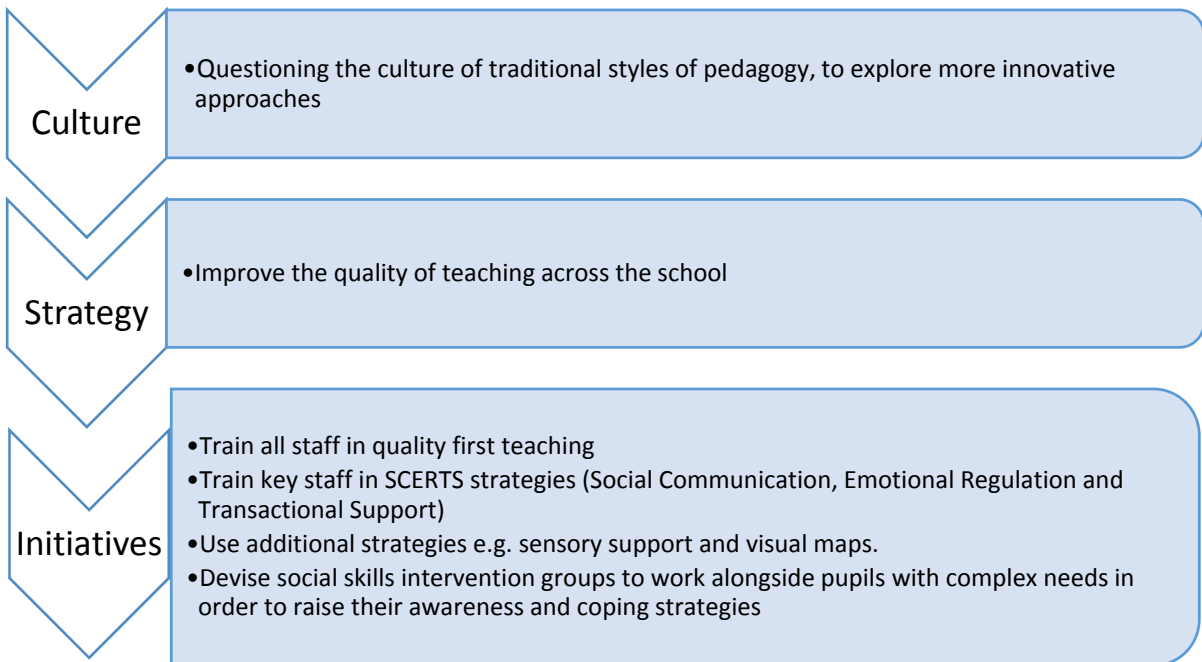
Menorah Primary School: a focus on inclusive teaching to meet complex needs



Characteristics of LPA students

- Poor focus in class
- Complex learning needs
- Lack meta-learning skills
- Low aspirations
- Low self-esteem

APPROACH



OUTCOMES

- Our pupil voice meetings showed us that pupils were more motivated to learn and proud of their achievements
- Improved both academic and pastoral outcomes
- Positive feedback from parents

Future: Cascade these strategies to TAs. Widen research models to improve peer group learning at staff and pupil levels. Embed this model into the ethos of the school as a “learning community”, focusing on higher aspirations and empowered learning.

3.3 High-trust relationships

In the context of challenging budgets and the urgent need to retain staff, particularly in the capital, it was noteworthy that many Schools for Success recognised the importance of establishing high levels of professional trust amongst staff, creating a culture of mutual respect and professionalism.

In a major piece of research about relational trust in schools, Bryk and Schneider (2002) argue that ‘strong relational trust ... makes it more likely that improvement initiatives will diffuse across the school because trust reduces the sense of risk associated with change. When teachers trust one another and sense support from parents, they feel safe to experiment with new practices’.

Whittingham Primary, Byron Court School and Highlands Primary were among schools who are forging trusting relationships across their staffrooms by encouraging their staff to become more research-engaged. It has been shown convincingly that ‘research can impact positively on teacher practice and school improvement.’ (Greany and Brown, 2015).

Oakington Manor was one school that invested in mentoring and coaching for staff and pupils by outstanding teachers, funding this through the pupil premium. Hazelwood Junior School embraced distributed leadership and adopted a multi-layered responsibility for children's progress.

Some schools sought collaborations with others, establishing a culture of trust and mutual learning both within and across schools. Several schools indicated that, to further embed the improvements they had made and to support the school system locally, they were looking to forge closer networks and develop their practice jointly.

Through our partnership with two other Hackney Schools, we deliver a responsive CPD programme for our classroom support staff as well as teaching staff. Evaluations from these are used to improve subsequent training in a weekly programme with a clear focus on how effective learning can be maximised in the classroom. Personalised training support is used in addition to this to develop experienced and new teachers to become the best that they can be.

A Hackney Primary School

4. STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS.



In this section, we consider the strategic decisions and actions that Schools for Success have taken to support the progress of LPA children.

4.1 Effective interrogation and use of data

Effective data tracking was seen to be a key strategy for success by a large proportion of schools, one referring to it as ‘fundamental to the achievements of children and staff’. It often

involved having a clear and consistent assessment tracking system in place. The system would, in turn, underpin the planning and evaluation of initiatives and resources to support improvement. Stoll et al (2012) advocate 'starting with the end in mind', i.e. having a clear vision at the outset of what the intervention is intended to achieve, being clear about the difference the school needs and wants to make. Sharper inspection of their data enabled schools to:

- identify strengths and areas for development among individuals or groups of pupils
- set aspirational targets for those individuals or groups of pupils
- track the progress of these individuals or groups of pupils
- identify gaps in learning
- promote child-specific planning
- support staff with identifying individual need and hold teaching staff to account regarding these groups or individuals
- map provision, identifying gaps within the curriculum and identifying staff development needs for that provision
- target teaching, initiatives and additional sessions.
- measure and evidence impact consistently across the school.

Data was seen to be most productive when it was shared and discussed with staff in regular cycles of pupil-progress meetings, usually attended by senior staff, class teachers and support staff. In some cases, the outcomes would be reviewed by an Inclusion Panel. This enabled the monitoring and resultant initiatives to remain responsive to ongoing need. As one primary school put it 'the secret of our success is forensic continuous assessment that informs pacy next steps teaching and learning'. This emphasis on using evidence and data productively to improve practice and, ultimately, pupils' learning, chimes with Chris Watkins' argument (2006) that an over-emphasis on performance, can depress learning whilst a focus on learning can enhance performance.

Research also suggests that schools cannot simply rely on a students' past performance as an indicator of their future progress, and this serves to reflect how important the ongoing and dynamic use of data can be in ensuring that no child falls through the net. For example, studies have shown that the trajectory of student performance is not always linear and that students who perform well at earlier stages of their education will not necessarily go on to perform well at 16. Indeed, data analysis can identify and pinpoint where pupils' own personal characteristics and background may correlate with their educational outcomes and enables schools to target key groups for intervention or focus. For example, children from poorer backgrounds who are high attaining at age 7 are more likely to fall off a high attainment trajectory than children from more affluent backgrounds. Likewise, lower-achieving affluent children are more likely to catch up with higher-achieving children from more deprived backgrounds between key stage 2 and key stage 4 (Crawford et al., 2014).

A close and effective focus on particular data sets can also enable schools to drill down into specific areas of need within a target group. For example, while EAL pupils who enter the educational system in England at age five make good progress (Malmberg & Hall, 2015), Strand et al (2015) show that once EAL pupils subsequently acquire fluency, they make rapid educational progress. However, students arriving in the UK after the age of five with a main language other than English appear to be in more need than EAL students born in this country. Demie (2013) asserts that it is important not only to capture the educational performance of EAL students but also other background variables to enable sharper analysis and targeting of specific initiatives. He usefully sets out a number of case studies focused on schools' use of data in the London Borough of Lambeth.

In reference to pupil mobility and data management, Brown et al (2011) claim that schools must become expert at receiving pupils who enter school at non-standard times of the

academic year, must take responsibility for sharing information on departing students, and must establish targets for newly arriving students which respond to their individual learning.

4.2 Evidence-informed professional learning and development

We believe that the greatest single factor that impacts upon the quality of pupil learning is the quality of teaching, and the greatest single factor that impacts upon the quality of teaching is the quality of teacher professional learning.

Highlands Primary School

Schools for Success place high value on the development of staff knowledge and practice and see the provision of high quality, personalised professional development as imperative in assisting the progress of LPA children. To ensure whole-school consistency in the implementation of key strategies, CPD sometimes focused on enhancing how staff, including teachers, tutors and middle leaders, gathered, analysed and acted on a range of data. Others identified the importance of all staff understanding and following new policies, such as those in place to address pastoral needs.

A large proportion of Schools for Success placed a whole-school focus on high quality or quality first teaching in general, rather than specific focuses on particular strategies or innovations. Several emphasised the importance of improving classroom practice through professional development tailored to the needs of individuals and groups of staff. This often involved deploying specialist staff, sometimes designated as CPD champions, to work collaboratively to develop particular areas of subject knowledge and, consequently, practice. There was some mention of particular approaches deemed to be beneficial for all such as dialogic teaching, a PATHS programme, Talk a Lot Children and Makaton to improve communication skills. Several schools also mentioned the importance of ensuring that designated staff, including key learning support assistants, were properly prepared to deliver one-to-one support and specific initiatives, such as a learning mentor delivering Friendship Groups, a programme for children needing support with social skills. Other key themes for professional development included exploring how to develop growth mindsets amongst staff as well as children, how to spot signs of anxiety in the classroom and developing maths skills through the use of games.

One school noted that it evaluated its in-house CPD to ensure it was of high quality and always improving.

We looked at all aspects of school life, thinking about ethos and culture within our school. We reinforced and built this together throughout our school community. We introduced 'Growth Mindset' and 'Philosophy for Children' for staff and children to work on resilience and being able to critically analyse and justify their own ideas and thinking.

A structured programme for CPD, building knowledge and working practice together has impacted well resulting in effective learning communities.

We focus on well-being; the impact on the school and children is vital to success.

St Marks Church of England Primary School

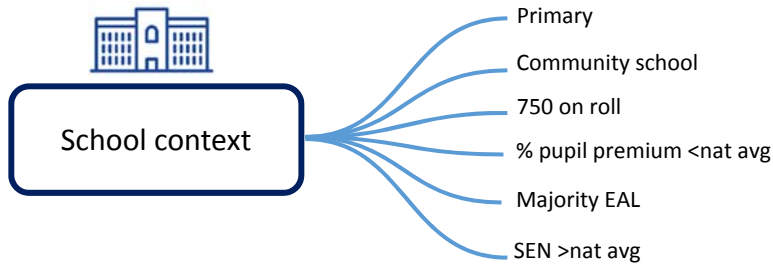
Research supports the strategic perspective taken by many Schools for Success in ensuring that 'effective continuing professional development is likely to consist of that which first and foremost enhances pupil outcomes, but which also helps to bring about changes in practice and improves teaching' (Bubb & Earley, 2007).

Indeed, key messages emanating from the strong and consistent research base defining effective professional development (Stoll et al, 2012 and Cordingley et al, 2015) support approaches taken by Schools for Success. Several of these messages are implicit in the Standard for Professional Development (DfE, 2016) which proposes five key elements:

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.
And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:
5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

This next case study, produced by Highlands Primary School, describes how engaging in and with research ensures that staff work collaboratively with the needs of learners at the heart of the activity and that this can be robustly evaluated for impact.

Highlands Primary School: staff CPD



Characteristics of LPA students

Poor behaviour for learning skills



EAL

Low aspirations



Poor attendance

Personal, social and emotional learning needs

APPROACH

Culture

- The biggest single factor that impacts upon the quality of children’s learning in schools is the quality of teaching

Strategy

- Leaders focus on actively leading teacher learning to improve practice
- Identified that LPA pupils are likely to need better quality teaching & additional initiatives to enable them to reach expected standards of literacy & numeracy. They need to make accelerated progress & develop metacognitive learning skills to prepare them for secondary education.

Initiatives

- All teachers engage in collaborative action research, peer learning & Lesson Study to develop their knowledge & understanding of pedagogy
- Every member of staff is a trained coach enabling them to have solution-focused conversations with each other, parents & children.
- Staff are able to continually reflect upon their practice to meet all their children’s individual personal and academic learning needs.

OUTCOMES

Teaching is more research-informed and teachers know why they are doing what they are doing

Teachers are saying that they are more confident and better teachers.

Progress data shows that pupils are performing & progressing better than in previous years.

Children are reporting that their teachers ‘teach them in the way that they want to learn’.

Future: Continually developing teaching through action research, peer learning and Lesson Study.

4.3 Targeted deployment of staff time and expertise

A large proportion of Schools for Success have identified ways to create additional learning opportunities for specific groups of pupils. For example:

Many have introduced additional sessions within the school day, reallocating or redirecting resources to make this possible. For example, one school had released each class teacher for one and a half hours a week to work on a one-to-one or small group basis with any child or children they felt had not understood or embedded the learning from the week. Another used pupil premium funding to employ sports coaches to take one session of PE per week. During this time lower attaining pupils worked with the class teacher for small group intervention with their writing. These children then had an additional PE session on a Friday.

Others schools introduced additional sessions by extending the school day via breakfast club, after school sessions, Saturday schools or targeted teaching during school holidays.

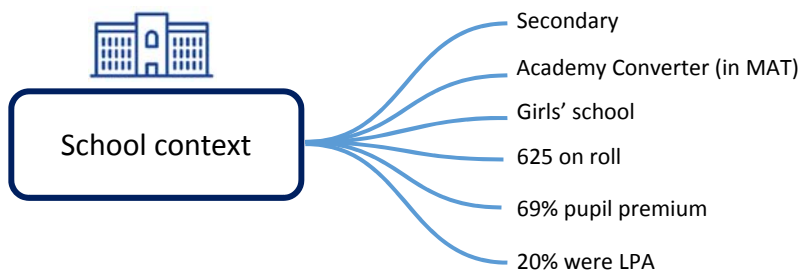
The school day was extended by one hour for pupils at the end of key stage 2 (year 6) with the introduction of 'early bird' classes to focus on essential curriculum subjects of English and maths. This equated to an additional 6 weeks of English lessons and 6 weeks of maths lessons. Although focused on underachieving pupils, all pupils were encouraged to attend which raised the status and expectation of what would be achieved in the sessions. 28/30 pupils attended regularly. Half-termly pupil progress meetings identified specific areas of need for individual pupils which were addressed through targeted intervention sessions. Improved assessment for learning systems throughout the school ensured that teaching became more focused on specific areas of need.

Ashmole Primary School

Oxford Gardens Primary School reduced class sizes by introducing a 3-teacher model, in other words, deploying three teachers across a year group in a two-form entry school. This model, they believe, enables them to teach core subjects in smaller class sizes and to staff regular intervention groups, run by teachers that know the children well and who can therefore target and address pupils' needs.

At secondary level, Fulham Cross School students, used pupil premium funding to create new posts for two teachers responsible for identifying students in need of additional, personalised curriculum support.

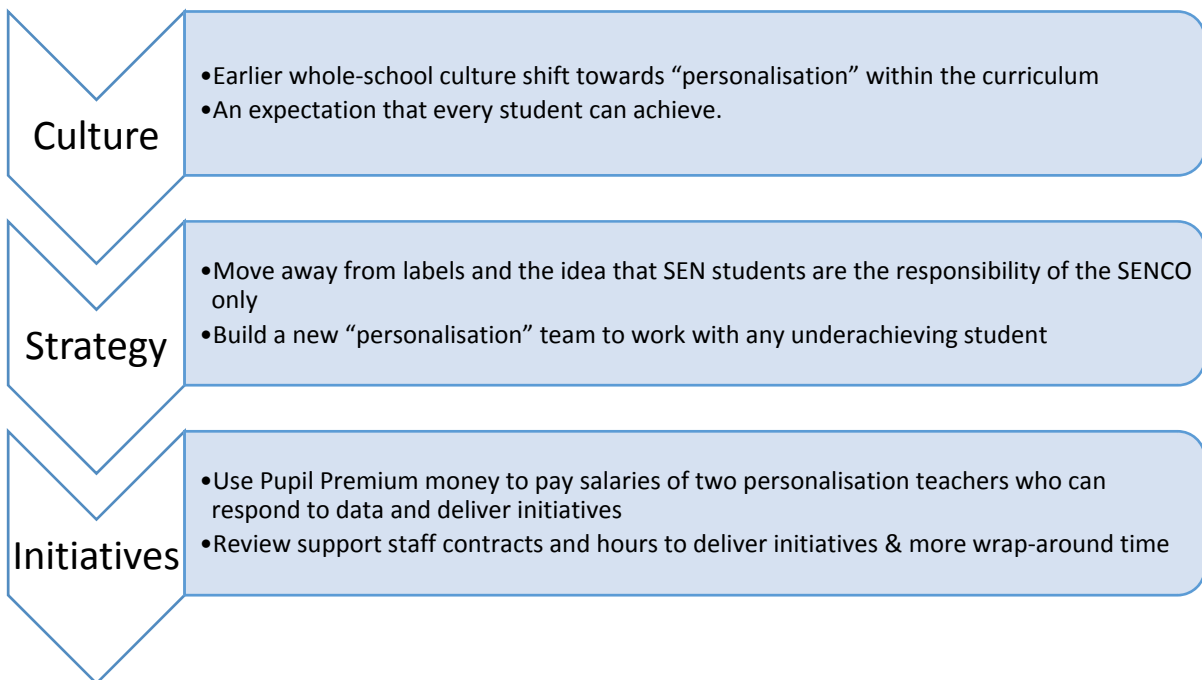
Fulham Cross Girls' School: deployment of key staff to support personalisation



Characteristics of LPA

-  Poor organisation & focus
-  Poor attendance
-  Low aspirations
-  'Lost' in large classes
- Struggle with transition

APPROACH



OUTCOMES

Progress & attainment of LPA students moved from significantly below the national average to significantly above in 3 years

The LPA Progress 8 is +1.8 (Up from 1.2 previous year)

Student video evidence on results day *'is full of thank yous to the personalisation team for support'*

Future: A “personalisation panel”, held tri-weekly for each year group, draws on data and deploys a multi-professional team to ensure no student falls through the net.

5. INITIATIVES FOR SUCCESS

Here we explore specific initiatives deployed by Schools for Success.



5.1 Promoting resilience and well-being

A number of schools felt that unmet social, emotional and psychological needs were impacting on students' progress and sought to address these through a range of initiatives to develop students' confidence, self-efficacy as learners and emotional wellbeing.

Examples included:

- strategies to develop resilience and positive learning behaviours
- using effective CPD and action research to accelerate progress through growth mindsets/positive learning dispositions approaches
- specialist behaviour support and the deployment of play therapists
- providing inspirational mentors or mentors with 'high emotional literacy' to develop positive relationships with pupils and instil growth mind set approaches to support learning
- developing a link between teaching assistants and play leaders so that the growth mind set approaches could be reinforced on the playground
- small group mentoring for disadvantaged boys so they had opportunity to develop confidence, self- esteem and aspiration through enriched activities
- training for a learning mentor in delivering Friendship Groups (Southwark Primary School)
- 'Time for You' drop-in, informal counselling sessions for children to be heard and be supported emotionally (Sudbourne Primary School)
- providing children with language to articulate their feelings
- training staff on anxiety and how to spot signs in the classroom and strategies to use when working with children
- tailored staff training around inclusion and mental health.

Through our school's inclusion commitment, we have engaged with parents and carers to help them to support their children on their learning journey. Our community house provides English and maths classes, Functional Skills, NVQs and other skills training for parents.

Children are given a whole range of experiences and opportunities through partnership work. We have developed inclusion champions and received tailored staff training around inclusion and mental health.

We believe in developing the whole child improving mental health and building resilience. We have developed a "Me Zone" with children as ambassadors who support others.

Staff have been upskilled on autism and sensory dysfunction and use individualised programmes for key children e.g. the TEACCH approach.

Yeading Junior School

Research by Morrison Guttman et al (2012) concurs that supporting pupils' well-being and resilience is a productive area of activity for Schools for Success because children:

- with higher levels of emotional, behavioural, social, and school wellbeing, on average, have higher levels of academic achievement and are more engaged in school, both concurrently and in later years
- with better emotional wellbeing make more progress in primary school and are more engaged in secondary school.
- who are bullied are less engaged in primary school, whereas those with positive friendships are more engaged in secondary school.
- who are not engaged in troublesome behaviours at ages 10 and 13 make more progress in secondary school.

It seems that children and young people in the UK may be in the greatest need compared to other developed countries according to Hart and Green (2012) who cite the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2007) report which ranked children's well-being in the UK lower than 21 nations surveyed. Furthermore, between 2002 and 2014, the rate of children subject to Child Protection Plans and on Child Protection Registers in England increased by 82%. Though this may be due to factors such as an increase in population, the implication is that more children are facing significant emotional challenges.

The Mental Health Foundation (2015) identify a number of strategies and initiatives to promote emotional wellbeing and mental health. These include: skills-oriented initiatives which are effective in improving social and emotional skills and enhance self-perception; therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) which can help address depression and anxiety; art therapy that encourages students to explore and articulate their emotions (including visual arts and dance, for example); and strategies to deal with bullying and behavioural problems. Hart and Green (2012) propose a Resilience Framework which supports schools to identify strategies and initiatives that can be used to support pupils to achieve academically in the face of personal adversity.

5.2 Raising aspirations

15% of secondary schools said they perceived a 'lack of aspiration' on the part of some LPA students which they had sought to address. The Education Select Committee (2014) cites research that suggests that rather than 'lacking aspiration', children from poorer backgrounds are significantly less likely to see schooling as instrumental or relevant for their future progression. Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2011) supports this view, arguing that aspiration is high across all social groups. Goodman and Gregg (2010) make the case that the difference between young people from lower income groups and their more affluent peers is the strength of their belief that they can actually achieve aspirational goals. This has a crucial impact on performance as Haroon et al (2009) show that young people who think, at age 14, that they will apply to higher education are significantly more likely to do well at key stage 4 than those who do not.

This implies that schools need to influence students' individual belief systems and expose them to experiences and adults who can help them both understand their options and, crucially, see themselves pursuing a range of opportunities not previously considered. Schools for Success employed a number of strategies to achieve this including:

- expert, individual advice and guidance
- careers workshops and setting aspirational targets with students
- engaging students and parents in regular dialogue around student targets

- enrolling pupils on the National Citizen Service Challenge
- visits to universities and workplaces
- Year 6 pupils working with students from the Brilliant Club to produce university-style pieces of writing
- deploying past pupils and older students as learning ambassadors and training them in peer coaching.

5.3 Specific initiatives

Though the majority of schools have taken a strategic, whole-school approach to supporting LPA pupils many have introduced what might be described as specific initiatives to meet the needs of individual pupils or groups with particular needs. In the main, these have focused on language and literacy development and initiatives that could be described as enrichment activities.

In terms of literacy initiatives, one school trained additional adults working with foundation stage pupils to provide opportunities for small group work and targeted communication and literacy initiatives. Schools in Hackney piloted a reading programme called Destination Reader which involved the discrete teaching of reading for 45 minutes a day. Princess May Primary School deployed their Speech and Language therapist to run Launchpad for Language, to support children's speech, language and communication skills in their nursery and reception classes. Elm Park Primary employed Literacy Lego to engage boys in writing and Robin Hood Junior School developed an 'author in residence' programme to provide on-going feedback and support for pupils' reading. Several initiatives were aimed at EAL pupils including, at Woodberry Down Primary, 'communication in print' strategies, 'green-screening' and talk-for-writing initiatives.

Enrichment opportunities, often targeted at particular groups of pupils, such as music tuition, class trips and residential visits, were mentioned by many schools. Princess May Primary developed its own enrichment curriculum, ensuring all children went on trips to support their understanding of a topic and could talk about their own experiences using the contextualised vocabulary. Some schools spoke about subsidising these activities for those who may not be able to afford it.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published a suite of evaluations of educational initiatives under thirteen key themes. A summary of the findings (EEF, 2018) related to initiatives taking place out of regular school hours states that, on average, pupils make an additional two additional months' progress per year from extended school time or the targeted use of before and after school programmes. There is some evidence that disadvantaged pupils benefit disproportionately, making approximately two and a half months' additional progress. There are also often wider benefits for low income students in terms of attendance at school, behaviour and relationships with peers. After school programmes that support and encourage children academically while providing stimulating environments and activities are more likely to have an impact on attainment.

The EEF¹ has also brought together several studies under the theme of enrichment. They are careful to acknowledge that enrichment activities should not only be measured against their contribution to a student's overall grades but that their contribution to a pupil's character, confidence and overall wellbeing should also be considered. They conclude that the overall impact of enrichment activities tends to be positive, but small.

6. KEYS TO SUCCESS



It is clear from our report that no single initiative or strategy is sufficient to raise the levels of progress or attainment for lower prior attaining pupils in London schools. Leaders in these schools take what might be termed a complex intervention approach, with each feature interlocking with and co-dependent on the others. Their ethos sets the context for high quality learning relationships and a determination that all can achieve their best. Leadership at all levels means that this is translated into long-term strategies that provide the in-school evidence, the resources and the skilled staff to

successfully deliver the initiatives that help the progress of all pupils.

Schools for Success create **Cultures for Success** characterised by:

- high expectations of staff and students and the belief that all students can reach their potential
- high quality, inclusive teaching and learning, embracing and meeting the needs of all individuals
- high quality relationships within and between school communities, engendering high levels of trust to enable innovation and learning to be shared and practice to be improved.

They develop **Strategies for Success** which are likely to include a sharp focus on:

- the effective interrogation and use of evidence and data to identify needs, closely monitor individual progress and evaluate the impact of initiatives
- evidence-informed professional development so staff have the knowledge, dispositions and skills to ensure all students meet their potential
- the creative use of time and personnel to enhance learning and curriculum provision.

Schools for Success devise context-specific, evidence-informed **Initiatives for Success**, grounded in school values, including:

- support for the emotional and social development of children and young people and their overall well-being
- influencing students' individual belief systems by exposing them to experiences and adults who can help them both understand their options and, crucially, see themselves pursuing a range of opportunities not previously considered
- initiatives to support students' language and literacy development along with specific curriculum and enrichment activities.

¹ See <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/school-themes/enrichment/>

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- Reducing class size:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/reducing-class-size/>

- Small group tuition:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition/>

- Summer schools:

[https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=148&t=Teaching and Learning Toolkit&e=148&s=](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=148&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=148&s=)

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