Formative evaluation of the North East primary literacy scale-up campaign

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

The EEF aims to raise the attainment of children facing disadvantage by:

- identifying promising educational innovations that address the needs of disadvantaged children in primary and secondary schools in England;

- evaluating these innovations to extend and secure the evidence on what works and can be made to work at scale; and

- encouraging schools, government, charities, and others to apply evidence and adopt innovations found to be effective.

The EEF was established in 2011 by the Sutton Trust as lead charity in partnership with Impetus (formerly Impetus Trust) and received a founding £125m grant from the Department for Education. Together, the EEF and Sutton Trust are the government-designated What Works Centre for improving education outcomes for school-aged children.

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About the research team

The study was undertaken by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). The principal investigator was Caroline Sharp and the project manager was Dr Julie Nelson. Both are based in NFER's Centre for Policy and Practice Research.

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Executive summary

The Campaign

In 2016, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) launched a five-year campaign to boost literacy levels for pupils in the North East (NE) of England, with a particular focus on those eligible for free school meals. In the period covered by this report (2016–2018), the campaign had three main strands:

1. Practical guidance: the EEF published three guidance reports to support the campaign— Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 (September 2016), Improving Literacy in KS2 (April 2017), and Preparing for Literacy, focused on the early years (June 2018).[1] These were subsequently mailed to all primary schools in England.

2. Local advocacy provided by eight advocate-partner organisations (practice-focused intermediaries), five of which began work in September 2016, and the remaining three in summer/autumn 2017. Each advocate supported schools to develop their evidence-based literacy practices in quite different ways. Some provided centrally-led training (we refer to these as 'advocate led'); others modelled practice and guided school improvement within school settings (we refer to these as 'advocate facilitated'), while others adopted a more arms-length approach, encouraging groups of schools to support each other to improve (we refer to these as 'distributed advocacy').

3. Programmes support: five evidence-based literacy interventions began delivery in schools in September 2016.[2]

Co-funded by Northern Rock Foundation, the North East Primary Literacy Scale-up Campaign (hereafter referred to as 'the Campaign') aimed to reach all 880 primary schools in the region with advocacy support over five years, although in the two years covered by this formative evaluation (2016–2018), advocates worked with just under half (389) of these NE schools. The EEF also appointed a regional programme manager, based in the NE, to manage the Campaign.

The evaluation

The evaluation used a theory-based approach and adopted a mixed-method design. This included the following activities:

- baseline (2016) and endpoint (2018) surveys with intervention (NE) and comparison (non-NE) primary schools;

- six advocacy case studies (incorporating, in each case study, one observation of delivery, interviews with up to two advocates, and interviews with up to six members of school staff across three linked schools: four schools in one advocacy area, 19 schools in total);

- interviews with two EEF Campaign staff members;

- collection of management information (MI) data from advocates on school enrolment and participation in their activities;

- analysis of the EEF's Google Analytics data to track visits to key EEF webpages over the course of the evaluation; and

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[1] This guidance was published towards the end of the formative evaluation period and therefore we were not able to consider its impact.
[2] Read Write Inc. Fresh Start, Catch Up Literacy, Changing Mindsets, Accelerated Reader, and Grammar for Writing. These interventions were all subject to EEF impact evaluations, the results of which will be published separately on the EEF website.

- context monitoring of literacy publications and initiatives nationally and specific to the NE between March 2016 and September 2018.

. The key research questions (RQs) posed by the formative evaluation were as follows.

- RQ1: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes (measured through surveys and explored through case studies)?

- RQ2: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on schools' propensity to support good practice in literacy (measured through surveys and explored through case studies)?

- RQ3: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' use of evidence to inform literacy practices (measured through surveys and Google Analytics data and explored through case studies)?

- RQ4: 'What works' in effective advocacy and wider campaign provision (explored through MI and case-study data)?

Key conclusions

1. There was evidence of positive impacts on RQs 1 and 2—schools' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and schools' propensity to support good practice in literacy in the NE relative to schools across the rest of England. There was also evidence of improvement in NE schools' use of research evidence when making decisions about literacy teaching (RQ3) relative to schools in other parts of England. This indicates that the Campaign had promise.

2. Although the regional focus of the Campaign appears to have had a positive impact on NE schools' self-reported literacy practices and research use outcomes, there is currently a mixed picture as regards the impact of *advocacy*. At this stage, there is insufficient evidence from the survey analysis to support the Campaign theory that guidance plus advocacy will have a greater impact than guidance alone. Our analysis of survey results for NE schools receiving versus not receiving advocacy was limited by the fact that it is very early for advocacy support to be resulting in detectable improvements in school literacy practices, and the fact that (due to sample size) we were unable to undertake more detailed analysis by advocacy approach. The case-study data indicated that schools were generally positive about the advocacy support received and that some were adopting evidence-based practices as a result.

3. Advocacy support was feasible: advocates were successful in recruiting schools serving high proportions of disadvantaged populations and only a few schools formally dropped out. However, rates of participation in advocacy activities were variable by advocate, and there was a general falling-off in rate of school participation across all advocates over the course of the evaluation.

4. Some advocacy approaches appeared more promising than others (RQ4). The *advocate facilitated* models included in our case-study analysis appeared to have the greatest promise due to their focus on facilitating learning through modelling and demonstration within school settings. They also had reasonably good adherence to the evidence base. Other advocacy approaches had strengths, but typically more weaknesses. *Advocate-led* approaches were strong on expertise, but tended to lack the capacity to support schools to self-improve; while *distributed advocacy* approaches struggled to maintain momentum and participation and also ran the risk of creating a climate for *practice sharing* rather than *evidence-informed practice development*. There is a tension within the Campaign model between a need for *expertise and* a need for *capacity building* for school self-improvement. Approaches which managed to capture elements of both were most likely to be successful.

5. Prospects for sustainability (RQ4) were highest where support models were based around existing networks of schools that had the commitment, funds, and capacity to self-improve by leading evidence-based literacy developments in future. *Advocate-facilitated* and *distributed* approaches generally appeared to be more sustainable than *advocate-led* approaches, though *advocate-led* and *advocate-facilitated* approaches tended to be more faithful to the evidence.

What are the findings?

This report represents the findings from the process evaluation that took place during the initial two years of the Campaign and was intended to inform its ongoing development by providing feedback to the EEF. The impact of the Campaign on schools' longer-term evidence-based literacy practices and pupils' literacy attainment is being evaluated by a separate team from University College London's Institute of Education (UCL IOE) and the University of Nottingham (UoN), with a final report due in 2021. This process evaluation focused on changes in schools' literacy practices: promise (the extent to which there was evidence of expected literacy practice change), feasibility (whether advocacy was reaching its intended target audience and working effectively, and in what circumstances), and sustainability (the extent to which evidence-informed literacy learning and developments had the capacity to be sustained in future).

Advocacy approaches

- There were two rounds of advocate activity: Round (R) 1 from 2016–2018 and R2 from 2017–2019. R2 advocates were appointed earlier in the academic year prior to starting delivery than was the case for R1 advocates and therefore they benefited in a number of ways. These included more time to identify schools, aiding rapid school recruitment, earlier access to published EEF guidance enabling fuller content planning, and greater support with bid and offer development from the EEF regional programme manager, who had the benefit of more lead-in time with the R2 advocates, and experience of having supported the R1 advocates.

- The advocates included local authorities, training organisations, teaching school alliances (TSAs), and multi-academy trusts (MATs), with some involving more than one individual, organisation, or group working together.

Advocacy reach and participation

- The EEF's expectation was that advocates would aim to support as many schools serving high proportions of disadvantaged schools as possible. NE schools that received advocacy support had a significantly higher proportion of FSM pupils than NE schools that did not receive such support. This suggests that the advocates were reaching the type of schools that the EEF intended.

- Collectively, the advocates worked with 389 schools from 2016 to 2018. The number of schools per advocate ranged from ten to 109.

- Attrition was low and two advocates increased the number of schools they worked with during the monitoring period.

- R2 projects achieved higher rates of participation in their activities than R1 projects (91% for R2 schools over one year compared to 63% for R1 schools over two years).

- Advocates experiencing the greatest stability in participation had the greatest social capital (that is, existing relationships with schools) in the NE.

Promise: literacy practice outcomes

A number of the items in our survey were designed to measure 'evidence-based practices' (see Appendix A). These items were included in exploratory factor analysis (EFA). EFA generated three literacy practice composite measures (factors): reading comprehension, writing composition, and catch-up support. We used regression analysis to identify whether there were any differences in factor scores over time for intervention and comparison schools. We also ran separate regression models on survey questions that did not load onto any specific factors including a balanced and blended approach to reading, handwriting strategies, and diagnosing pupils' needs. Overall, there was a mixed picture with regard to schools' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices, with evidence of positive developments in some specific aspects of literacy during the evaluation period.

- Survey data showed increased adoption of evidence-based teaching of reading comprehension and catch-up literacy practices in NE schools compared to comparison schools.

- Survey data showed no difference between NE and comparison schools in terms of the adoption of evidence-based practices for teaching writing composition and handwriting, a balanced and blended approach to reading, or diagnosing children's literacy needs.

- The case studies suggested that schools valued the Campaign and advocacy support for providing knowledge about evidence-based literacy programmes. This was reported to be leading to the adoption of evidenced-based literacy practices and programmes.

EFA also generated an additional composite measure: 'school has the *propensity* for good practice in literacy'. We used regression analysis to identify whether there were any differences in factor scores over time for intervention and comparison schools.

- Survey data showed evidence of increased propensity for good practice in literacy in NE schools compared to similar schools located elsewhere.

- Case-study interviewees reported positive outcomes for subject and pedagogical knowledge, and to some extent for literacy leadership and school-to-school partnership working.

There was no association between whether NE schools had received advocacy support and any of the outcome measures for evidence-based literacy practices (reading comprehension, writing composition, and catch-up support) or schools' propensity to support good practice in literacy.

Promise: use of research evidence

There were signs that the Campaign was showing promise in increasing schools' use of research evidence.

- Survey data indicated that research evidence had a greater influence in schools' decision-making in NE schools than in schools in other areas. However, there was no association between whether or not NE schools had received advocacy support and the use of research evidence in their decision-making.

- Case-study data revealed that teachers and school leaders in the NE who had received advocacy support valued research evidence and used evidence to inform changes to literacy practice.

- Survey data showed that schools in the NE were more aware of, and had used, the EEF literacy guidance documents or taken part in EEF trials of education interventions, compared with schools located in other areas.

- Case-study data suggested that recipients of advocacy support were generally familiar with the EEF literacy guidance (particularly for KS1) and some had used it to identify their areas for development.

Feasibility of different advocacy approaches

Overall, advocates were highly regarded by schools and the EEF. They each had strengths in particular areas.

- Advocacy demands a wide range of skills and capabilities (including knowledge and expertise in literacy, practice experience, the ability to engage with schools and teachers, and organisational skills). All of the advocates had strong interpersonal 'people skills' and high credibility with schools.

- Some advocates promoted the EEF guidance as central and others as peripheral to their work with schools. Advocates' willingness to develop their own tools reflecting the guidance varied according to their capacity and expertise. Some advocates expected to receive more implementation input and tools from the EEF than they received.

- Advocates used a range of approaches to support school improvement. *Advocate-led* and *advocate-facilitated* approaches were stronger in supporting evidence-based literacy learning.

In *distributed advocacy* approaches there was a tendency for schools to share practice experiences rather than evidence-based practices.

- Advocates did not systematically monitor schools' progress (although some would have liked to have done so had resources permitted), neither did they challenge schools to improve. This was apparent across all advocates.

- In *distributed* approaches, there was sometimes confusion about where responsibility lay and some school-based advocates had insufficient time to support others.

- The effectiveness of advocacy approaches was clearly influenced by the specific needs and stage of development of the school.

Sustainability

- The EEF planned for advocacy to be sustainable by making it affordable for schools, obtaining senior leadership endorsement, and by building on existing school networks. Most schools felt that the advocacy was affordable but some schools and advocates felt the costs were not sustainable and, in some cases, had limited their participation during the Campaign.

- Most staff directly involved in advocacy support had 'scaled out' their involvement by spreading the recommended literacy pedagogy to other teachers in the same school. There was little evidence during the first two years of the campaign of 'scaling up' (that is, moving to schools not directly involved in the advocacy support).

- The case studies indicated that there was a greater prospect for sustainability of the literacy pedagogy promoted through the Campaign than of a commitment to adopting evidence-based practice in literacy.

- All school staff interviewed said they valued the advocates and would like to continue working with them in future but few had yet made any concrete plans for sustainability. *Advocate-led* approaches appeared to be less sustainable than *advocate-facilitated* or *distributed advocacy* approaches because they tended to rely heavily on an 'external expert' who had not been able to support development of an infrastructure for school self-improvement. There was some suggestion that the *advocate-facilitated* approaches (typically developed through TSAs) might provide a structure for sustainability.

- The key barriers and enablers of sustainability were affordability and access to support from other schools and experts. A few interviewees mentioned a lack of senior leadership support as a barrier.

- The main motivator for sustainability was whether the participants believed their involvement was improving their literacy pedagogy and would improve pupils' outcomes.

- Few of the evaluated advocacy approaches had reached the stage where they could be scaled up to larger numbers of schools within, or outside, the region without further testing. The use of advocates has potential for scalability to schools in other areas although it is a relatively resource-intensive approach requiring careful attention to multiple components of the structure and implementation of support over time.

Introduction

About the North East Primary Literacy Scale-up Campaign

In 2016, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) launched a five-year campaign to boost literacy levels for pupils in the North East (NE) of England,[3] with a particular focus on those eligible for free school meals. Co-funded by Northern Rock Foundation, the North East Primary Literacy Scale-up Campaign (hereafter referred to as 'the Campaign') aimed to reach all 880 primary schools in the region with more intensive support going to those in most need. The EEF committed £5 million towards the endeavour, match-funded by Northern Rock Foundation. In its first two years of operation (the period covered by this formative evaluation) the Campaign had three main strands:

1. Practical guidance: the EEF published three major guidance reports to support the Campaign—Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 (September 2016), Improving Literacy in KS2 (April 2017), and Preparing for Literacy, focused on the early years (June 2018).[4] The KS1 and KS2 reports were mailed to all primary schools in England in April 2017. The early years report was not mailed.

2. Local advocacy: the EEF appointed eight advocate-partners (practice-focused intermediaries) in the NE, the first five of whom began work in September 2016 and the remaining three in summer/autumn 2017. These advocates supported schools to develop their literacy practices in line with EEF guidance as it became available. Advocates were not required to cover all the content of the guidance; rather, the EEF encouraged them to work with schools to identify which particular priorities were appropriate to a local situation. This was based on careful needs analysis rather than expediency or personal preference.

3. Programmes support: five evidence-based literacy interventions began delivery in schools in September 2016.[5]

Background evidence

The EEF's main remit is to:

- raise the attainment of three- to eighteen-year-olds, particularly those facing disadvantage;
- develop their essential life skills; and
- prepare young people for the world of work and further study.

The EEF supports teachers and senior leaders by providing free, independent, and evidence-based resources designed to improve practice and boost learning. These are based on evidence of what works to improve teaching and learning informed by rigorous trials of promising but untested programmes and approaches. The EEF also supports schools, early years, and post-16 settings in scaling evidence to achieve the maximum possible benefit for young people. In December 2014, the EEF Board of Trustees agreed to pursue an approach to scaling evidence organised around 'campaigns'. Campaigns were defined as specific and directive activities that address practical issues in schools by scaling up

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[3] Schools involved in the Campaign were located in Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton on Tees, Durham, Darlington, and Northumberland.

[4] This guidance was published towards the end of the formative evaluation period and therefore we were not able to consider its impact.

[5] Read Write Inc. Fresh Start, Catch Up Literacy, Changing Mindsets, Accelerated Reader, and Grammar for Writing. These interventions were all subject to EEF impact evaluations, the results of which will be published separately on the EEF website.

evidence-based approaches. They are one potential vehicle for knowledge mobilisation (KMb) alongside other initiatives supported by the EEF, such as the Research Schools Network.[6]

Put simply, KMb is the process by which evidence is produced by research organisations, transformed into accessible and usable outputs through a process of collaboration and/or mediation, and implemented by teachers in order to better their teaching practice and enhance pupil outcomes (Becheikh *et al.*, 2009; Campbell and Levin, 2012; Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014; Nutley *et al.*, 2007; Sharples, 2013). The EEF's commitment to KMb demonstrates a growing interest, not just in improving the supply of high quality research evidence for schools by funding interventions and evaluating them through randomised controlled trials (RCTs), but also in supporting the use of that evidence in schools through a variety of practical strategies designed to bridge the gap between research and practice. In commissioning independent evaluations of its campaigns, the EEF is also demonstrating a commitment to developing a better understanding of 'what works' in effective KMb. The evidence base on this issue is particularly weak at present (Coldwell *et al.*, 2017, Dagenais *et al.*, 2012; Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014), although it is improving (Lord *et al.*, 2017).

Advocacy support

The EEF advertised for a number of advocates in the NE, each of whom would work with a group of schools (especially schools serving a high proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds). The main purpose of the advocacy work was to help schools implement the EEF's evidence-based guidance on effective literacy teaching. Organisations interested in this opportunity were invited to apply. The EEF shortlisted and interviewed applicants before deciding whom to appoint.

The role of advocates was intended to include:

- recruiting schools;
- providing support for diagnosis of schools' literacy challenges;
- encouraging schools to engage with the EEF's evidence and resources, and encouraging fidelity to the EEF's literacy guidance (although it was not a requirement that advocates covered all of the literacy guidance recommendations through their support offers);
- providing support and challenge on implementation through training and coaching;
- integrating the EEF's work within the existing processes and priorities in the region; and
- signposting schools towards EEF-funded literacy interventions (trials) that could provide further support for implementation.

Advocates were expected to offer a combination of conferences, cluster or network events, and one-to-one support (though the combination of modes of delivery differed between advocates, with agreement from the EEF). The EEF expected that each school in each advocate's network would be involved in at least one type of advocacy activity per term.

The appointed advocates represented three different kinds of organisation: local authorities, literacy training providers, and teaching school alliances (TSAs). Each school that received advocacy had an identified key contact in addition to the headteacher (usually the literacy coordinator). Some of the advocates had a two-tier structure whereby there was a lead advocate who worked with clusters of schools, and then individual cluster leads/facilitators who were school practitioners. Some of the advocates were very well known in the area and had worked with the participating schools before. Others (especially the literacy training providers) had either not worked in the region before or had not worked with some or all of the participating schools.

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[6] See: https://researchschool.org.uk/

Advocates received a fee from the EEF for each school they were working with over a two-year period (ranging from £700 to £1,200 per school—the EEF varied the fee in relation to the proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds).[7] Advocates asked participating schools to make a small additional financial contribution (of between £200 and £500). The EEF encouraged advocates to secure active support from the senior leaders of participating schools, comprising both formal approval (via signing a memorandum of understanding) and resource allocation (for example, by releasing members of staff to attend events and implement new approaches).

The EEF's regional programme manager had responsibility for coordination and facilitation across the three areas of the Campaign (guidance, advocacy, and trials) but also had other roles which took up about 50% of their time. The regional programme manager briefed the advocates at the beginning of their work and liaised with them periodically during the Campaign. The EEF organised a conference for all participating schools at the beginning of their involvement with the advocates, and continued to offer conferences in some advocacy areas throughout the duration of the evaluation, according to need. The regional programme manager also attended a small number of advocates' events as an observer.

 A key feature of many of the EEF's Campaign models is partnering with practice-focused intermediaries ('advocates') in geographically-focused target areas. The rationale for this, well cited in the research-engagement literature, is that creating access to and awareness of new initiatives is insufficient to promote adoption without motivating people to engage through *social interaction* (see, for example, Campbell and Levin, 2012; CUREE, 2011; Hemsley-Brown and Sharp, 2004; Langer *et al.*, 2016; Levin, 2013; Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014; Nutley, 2013; Rogers, 2003; Sharples, 2013). This is an underpinning principle of the NE primary literacy scale-up Campaign Theory of Change (ToC; see Figure 1).

The EEF decided that there was sufficient evidence of effective practice in primary literacy teaching to justify a campaign. The design and management of this Campaign was informed by learning from previous campaigns run by the EEF on the effective use of Teaching Assistants.[8]

According to the Northern Rock Foundation, the main rationale for basing the Campaign in the NE was that the area had twice as many disadvantaged pupils as the national average. At the time of the Campaign's inception, almost two in five primary school pupils in the NE were classified as disadvantaged and they were twice as likely to begin secondary school struggling to read and write as pupils across England (Northern Rock Foundation, 2016). This analysis was confirmed by other research. For example, the Social Market Foundation (2016) found that GCSE results were considerably higher in London and the South East than the North and Midlands and that regional disparities in attainment were apparent by the end of primary school. Other research has identified evidence of a relatively large disadvantaged pupils' attainment gap in the NE at age five. According to the Education Policy Institute (EPI, 2016), the gap between the most disadvantaged pupils and others was 5.1 months in the NE compared with 2.7 months in London. A study of attainment in the early years (Dunatchik *et al.*, 2018) identified a 'gradient' operating from the South to the North of England. The study concluded that most of the regional differences in attainment by age five were related to socio-economic characteristics of the population, rather than to geographic location *per se.*

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[7] The EEF used the proportion of pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium as an indicator of disadvantage.
[8] For more details on the TA campaign, see: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/scaling-up-evidence/campaigns/making-best-use-of-teaching-assistants/

Evaluation rationale and reporting remit

The evaluation had two main aims, as stated in the evaluation protocol (University of Nottingham and NFER, 2016).[9] These were to:

- evaluate the impact of the Campaign effort in the NE (in terms of intermediate—teacher- and school-level—outcomes and longer-term pupil impacts); and
- identify how the different Campaign elements interact (with each other and with wider contextual factors) to encourage the take up of evidence-based practices to inform the EEF's broader scale-up approach.

The formative evaluation, based on the first two years of the Campaign and reported here, aimed to address four research questions (RQs):

- RQ1: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' access to, and awareness of, research evidence?
- RQ2: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' understanding of what the research evidence says?
- RQ3: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' adoption of evidence-based policies and practices?
- RQ4: 'What works' in effective advocacy and wider campaign provision?

As the Campaign developed, we realised that these RQs did not have precisely the right focus, neither were they in the most logical order. In agreement with the EEF, the order and wording of these RQs was changed and the Campaign Theory of Change (ToC; see Figure 1 below) was amended to mirror these changes. The revised RQs were.

- RQ1: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes?
- RQ2: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on schools' propensity to support good practice in literacy?
- RQ3: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' use of evidence to inform literacy practices?
- RQ4: 'What works' in effective advocacy and wider campaign provision?

In terms of RQ1, although we aimed to measure literacy practices that were closely aligned with the EEF's emerging guidance (our survey was designed to mirror the draft KS1 guidance as it was developed), our measure of effective literacy practice was not limited to the guidance recommendations: we also considered issues related to schools' capacity to support effective literacy practices, for example. Broadly speaking, the KS2 recommendations (when published) were very similar to the KS1 recommendations and therefore the limitations of our approach were not unduly problematic. However, the KS2 guidance was not published until 2017 and the EYFS guidance was not published until 2018, so fully aligning the evaluation with the recommendations in the guidance was not feasible (see Research Design and Methods chapter).

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[9] This evaluation is being conducted in partnership with the University of Nottingham. For further details, see page 17 of this report and the evaluation protocol:
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Campaigns/Campaigns_-_NE_literacy_campaign_evaluation.pdf

The evaluation team met with the EEF in May 2016 to agree the Campaign ToC and subsequently designed the evaluation to test the assumptions in it. The ToC was reviewed in 2017 and amended in July 2018 in line with the agreed change in RQs (Figure 1 presents the revised version).

The Campaign embodied two elements of complexity (Rogers, 2008) as it had both a complicated structure (multiple components at different levels in the school system) and assumed multiple influences on outcomes. This was reflected in the design of the ToC, which attempted to represent some of the complex relationships (indicated by parallel pathways and double-headed arrows) at different levels (national, regional, and local) on different beneficiaries (schools, teachers, and pupils) and to identify some of the assumptions about the conditions and enabling factors. One of the challenges lay in attempting to isolate the impact of advocacy from the impact of the Campaign and other influences on schools' literacy teaching during the evaluation period.

This report is based on NFER's formative evaluation of the Campaign's intermediate outcomes (adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes, increased school propensity to support good practice in literacy, and teachers' uses of research evidence to inform literacy practices). It also supports understanding of 'what works' in effective advocacy and wider campaign provision (RQ4). The impact of the Campaign on schools' longer-term evidence-based literacy practices and pupils' literacy attainment is being evaluated by a separate team from University College London's Institute of Education (UCL IOE) and the University of Nottingham (UoN), with a final report due in 2021. The formative evaluation was designed to focus primarily on the impact of advocacy, rather than the entire Campaign, because the guidance reports and literacy trials were also available to schools located outside the region and therefore it was not possible to establish a viable counterfactual (that is, what would have happened in the absence of the Campaign).

Figure 1: Theory of Change for the EEF North East Literacy Scale-up Campaign (2017 version)

Purpose: to learn about effective models of scale-up and the feasibility of the campaign model
Theory: social relationships are fundamental to knowledge exchange (see Fiske 1991), and using advocates as change agents will result in a greater uptake and fidelity of evidence-based practice in literacy, resulting in even greater improvements in pupils' literacy attainment (this assumes that guidance + advocacy + evidence-based literacy interventions has greater impact than guidance + advocacy, which has greater impact than guidance alone).

Activity 1: EEF guidance packages ('the what') available to all schools nationally

- Practice-oriented guidance documents for primary schools (EYFS, KS1 and KS2)
- Other resources and implementation tools

Activity 2: Advocacy in NE ('the how') incentivised to work with the most disadvantaged schools

- Launch events
- Ongoing meetings and events
- Audit and gap analysis
- In-school coaching
- School-to-school support
- Signposting to evidence-based interventions and trials

Activity 3: Evidence-based literacy interventions targeted on the most disadvantaged NE schools

- EEF trials: pilot, efficacy, effectiveness and scale up

External enabling factors

Endorsement of guidance and evidence-based approaches by key opinion leaders (e.g. Ofsted, Regional Schools Commissioner; networks of schools)

Campaign outputs

Reach and engagement

School conditions

School level: culture and orientation towards research evidence

School characteristics (e.g. proportion of disadvantaged pupils, size and location)

Internal enabling factors

Regional programme manager provides linkage and QA of advocacy support

Intermediate outcomes: schools

Adoption of evidence-based literacy practices & programmes:
- Reading
- Writing
- Catch-up support

Increased propensity for good practice in literacy

Use of research evidence to inform literacy practices

Intermediate outcomes: teachers

Improved literacy pedagogy

Advocacy conditions

Advocacy providers: fidelity to research evidence; prior engagement with schools; personal skills and qualities in facilitating co-construction with schools

Impact: schools

The use of research in informing literacy practices is embedded within school culture and ethos

Impact: pupils

Literacy attainment is improved

Project and evaluation team

The project team was drawn from the EEF

Thomas Martel (EEF regional programme manager) responsible for programme development and management

Jonathan Sharples (Senior Researcher, EEF) responsible for programme design

Camilla Nevill/Triin Edovald (EEF evaluation managers) responsible for evaluation oversight.

The process evaluation team comprised the following NFER staff

Caroline Sharp (project director)

Julie Nelson (project leader)

Palak Roy (lead statistician)

Jennie Harland/Helen Poet (survey lead/team member)

Kerry Martin (team member)

Keren Beddow (survey administration)

Rob Green (Management Information (MI) collection/analysis and survey administration)

Zoe Claymore (survey analysis)

Amanda Taylor (national and regional context monitoring)

Alex Derham/Alex Blakey (web and social media monitoring)

Neelam Basi (project coordinator)

Ethics overview

The evaluation team used the NFER's Code of Practice (NFER, 2012) to guide the conduct of the study. In particular, the team took the following steps to ensure ethical practice:

- informing research participants of the purpose of the evaluation and their right not to participate;
- informing research participants about the intended treatment and use of their data;
- asking participants' permission to audio-record interviews;
- informing participants what would happen to their data via a privacy notice; and
- avoiding referring to participants by name or otherwise identifying them or their organisations to anyone outside the evaluation team;[10] to preserve anonymity among a general readership, we have referred to all advocates by number in this report, however, due to the small numbers of advocates commissioned by the EEF, it is possible that advocates will recognise themselves

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[10] The evaluation team obtained advocates' permission to identify their organisations when reporting advocates' reach and participation figures to the EEF.

and possibly each other in the reporting: for this reason, the report was sent to all advocates for comment prior to publication.

Structure of the report

The report structure is informed by the EEF's guidance for implementation and process evaluation pilot studies (studies that are at pre-trial stage; Humphrey *et al.*, 2016). It covers the three domains of *promise* (the extent to which there is evidence of expected literacy change), *feasibility* (whether advocacy is proving effective, and in what circumstances), and *sustainability* (the extent to which evidence-informed literacy learning and developments have the capacity to be sustained in future).

Findings 1 provides a description of the various advocacy approaches adopted in the NE. Findings 2 considers the extent to which advocates achieved their anticipated levels of school participation (contributing to the feasibility domain), while Findings 3 and 4 consider the promise of the Campaign—the extent to which it achieved its intended intermediate outcomes at school level. Findings 5 considers the feasibility of the different advocacy approaches—the ways in which these were received by schools and their relative effectiveness—while Findings 6 considers the legacy of the Campaign and its likely sustainability.

Research design and methods

Overview of research design

The NFER evaluation team used a theory-based approach (Chen, 1990; Donaldson, 2007) for this evaluation. A theory-based approach takes the initiative's ToC as a starting point for the evaluation design and seeks to gather evidence on each element in the ToC and the relationships between the elements. The purpose of this process is to establish whether the ToC is operating as envisaged and to what extent the desired outcomes have been achieved.

The evaluation team also adopted some of the principles of developmental evaluation (Patton, 2011) by building in opportunities for the evaluation team to inform the EEF Campaign team of emerging findings so that the evaluation could contribute to the development of the Campaign.

The evaluation used a multi-method design to gather evaluation information, including the following components:

- a baseline and endpoint literacy education survey of primary schools located in the NE and elsewhere in England;

- management Information (MI) data collection on the participation of schools in advocacy in the NE;

- interviews with EEF programme staff;

- case studies of advocacy, including observations and interviews with advocates and school staff;

- analysis of the EEF's website statistics and social media traffic related to the Campaign; and

- national and regional context monitoring—we produced a series of bi-annual context reports, mapping national and regional developments in literacy and evidence-informed practice research and policy throughout the duration of the evaluation; these reports were shared with the EEF and used by the evaluation team to provide context for the evaluation findings.

The use of each method or combination of methods is outlined in Figure 2.

The process evaluation set out to identify the progress of the Campaign in four domains: reach, promise, feasibility, and sustainability. These were adopted from the EEF's guidance on implementation and process evaluation pilot studies (Humphrey *et al.*, 2016) and adapted to relate to a campaign rather than a prospective trial.

'Reach' refers to whether the intended number of target schools sign up for support, their subsequent rates of participation in events or activities, and rates of attrition. It is closely related to measures of promise and feasibility.

'Promise' refers to whether there is evidence that the expected change is likely to happen—'What perceived needs does the intervention address, what potential benefits do stakeholders identify, and is there preliminary evidence of the impact of the intervention on intended outcomes?' In particular, the evaluation sought to establish whether there was evidence that using a social relations approach to knowledge mobilisation was showing evidence of promise.

'Feasibility' refers to the acceptability of the approaches (for example, is the intervention reaching its intended audience and are the recipients engaged during the delivery?). Of particular interest to this evaluation was the extent of fidelity to the EEF's guidance, its adaptation for the local context, and any particular models of delivery that made sense to advocates and schools.

'Sustainability' refers to whether the approaches are likely to endure beyond the intervention period. This area of interest does not come from Humphrey *et al.* (2016)—which focuses on 'readiness for trial'—but was substituted to provide a better fit with the evaluation remit for a campaign intending to promote proven and promising practice. Sustainability was adopted rather than 'scalability' as the main focus as this was felt to be more amenable to evaluation during the relatively short period of the process evaluation, although still challenging within the timescale. As Findings 6 indicates, our findings relate primarily to sustainability intentions rather than sustainability in practice. Additionally, the evaluation team was aware of some of the literature on scalability (Coburn, 2003; Perlman Robinson, 2016; Rogers, 2003; RAND, 2004; Slavin, 2004; Shiell-Davis, 2015) and used this to inform its data collection.
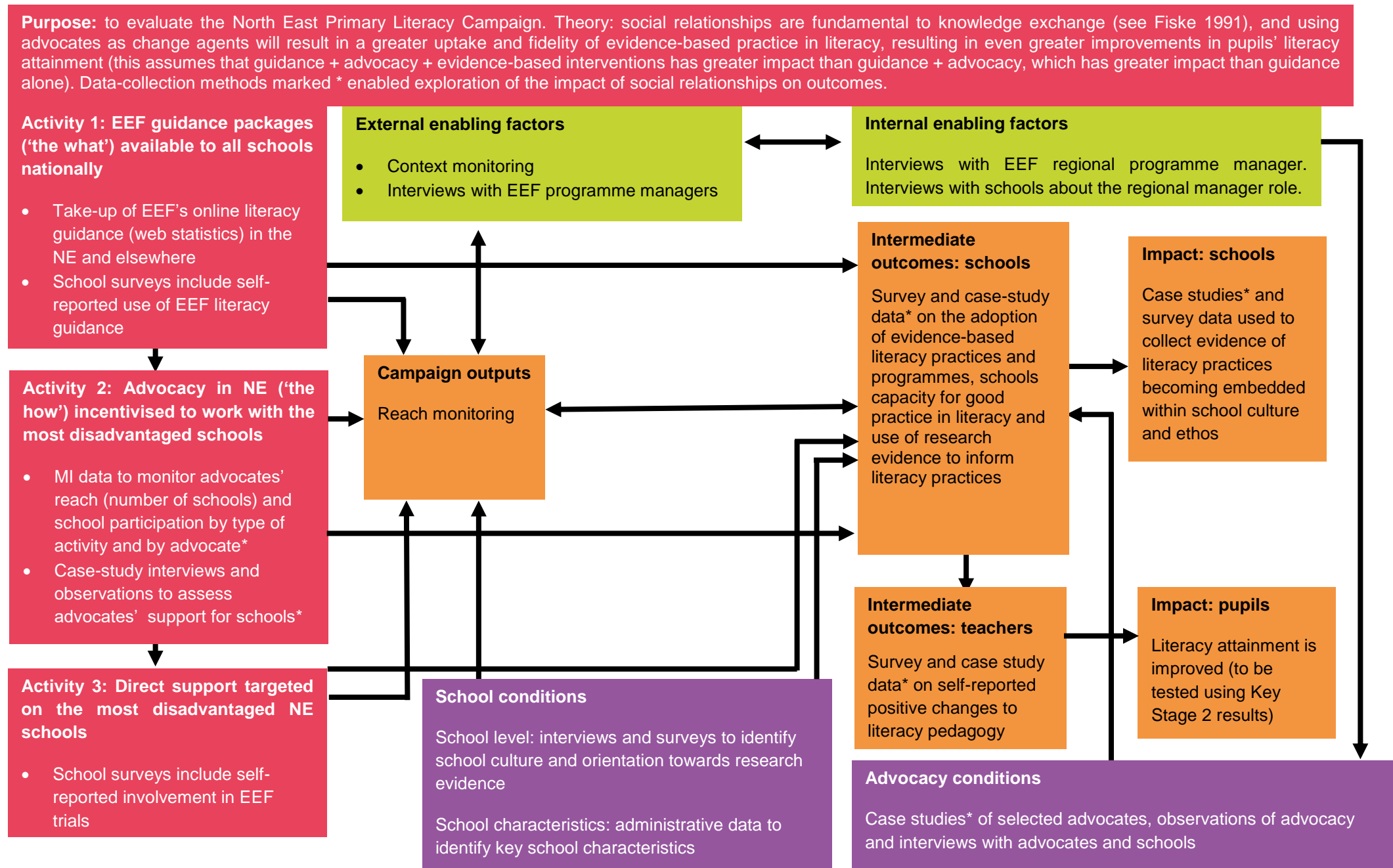
The three domains of interest can be mapped onto the research questions for this evaluation as set out below.

- RQ1: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes?—promise and sustainability;

- RQ2: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on schools' capacity to support good practice in literacy?—promise and sustainability;

- RQ3: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' use of evidence to inform literacy practices?—promise and sustainability; and

- RQ4: 'What works' in effective advocacy and wider campaign provision?—reach, feasibility, and sustainability.

The evaluation team drew on theory and evidence from previous research to measure the Campaign's progress and early outcomes. As one of the main areas of interest was the effectiveness of advocacy, we developed instruments to measure advocacy based on previous research into change agents and knowledge brokers in education, for example when considering their role requirement and skill set (Campbell and Levin, 2012; Cooper and Shewchuk, 2015; Lieberman, 2001; McLaughlin, 1990; Miles *et al.*, 1987; Saxl *et al.*, 1989).

We know from previous research that advocacy demands a wide range of skills and capabilities. Miles *et al.* (1987) and Saxl *et al.* (1989) identified 18 key skills required by effective change agents. These cluster into the following six skill areas: trust and rapport building, organisational diagnosis, dealing with the process, resource utilisation, managing the work of school improvement, and building the capacity to continue. In order to explore the skills influential to advocates' effectiveness, these six skills areas were used to form dimensions of advocacy which were explored in the observations and qualitative case-study interviews with advocates and school staff (see also Appendix F).

Figure 2: Campaign evaluation design

Purpose: to evaluate the North East Primary Literacy Campaign. Theory: social relationships are fundamental to knowledge exchange (see Fiske 1991), and using advocates as change agents will result in a greater uptake and fidelity of evidence-based practice in literacy, resulting in even greater improvements in pupils' literacy attainment (this assumes that guidance + advocacy + evidence-based interventions has greater impact than guidance + advocacy, which has greater impact than guidance alone). Data-collection methods marked * enabled exploration of the impact of social relationships on outcomes.

Activity 1: EEF guidance packages ('the what') available to all schools nationally

- Take-up of EEF's online literacy guidance (web statistics) in the NE and elsewhere
- School surveys include self-reported use of EEF literacy guidance

External enabling factors

- Context monitoring
- Interviews with EEF programme managers

Internal enabling factors

Interviews with EEF regional programme manager. Interviews with schools about the regional manager role.

Campaign outputs

Reach monitoring

Intermediate outcomes: schools

Survey and case-study data* on the adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes, schools capacity for good practice in literacy and use of research evidence to inform literacy practices

Impact: schools

Case studies* and survey data used to collect evidence of literacy practices becoming embedded within school culture and ethos

Activity 2: Advocacy in NE ('the how') incentivised to work with the most disadvantaged schools

- MI data to monitor advocates' reach (number of schools) and school participation by type of activity and by advocate*
- Case-study interviews and observations to assess advocates' support for schools*

Activity 3: Direct support targeted on the most disadvantaged NE schools

- School surveys include self-reported involvement in EEF trials

School conditions

School level: interviews and surveys to identify school culture and orientation towards research evidence

School characteristics: administrative data to identify key school characteristics

Intermediate outcomes: teachers

Survey and case study data* on self-reported positive changes to literacy pedagogy

Impact: pupils

Literacy attainment is improved (to be tested using Key Stage 2 results)

Advocacy conditions

Case studies* of selected advocates, observations of advocacy and interviews with advocates and schools

Overview of research methods and data collected

As Figure 2 shows, the formative evaluation collected data from a number of sources to establish the promise, feasibility, and sustainability of advocacy within the Campaign. These included:

- **measurement of reach—**management information (MI) data (collected from R1 advocates on a termly basis from September 2016 to July 2018 and from R2 advocates on a termly basis from September 2017 to July 2018);

- **measurement of promise** (intermediate outcomes)—survey data (collected via baseline (2016) and endpoint (2018) surveys with NE primary schools and with matched comparison schools) and analysis of the EEF's national and regional website statistics and social media (Twitter) data (collected and analysed on a termly basis from September 2016 to July 2018); and

- exploration of the **feasibility** and **sustainability** of advocacy (including testing the feasibility of the Campaign ToC)—case-study and interview data (collected in 2017 and 2018 from the EEF, R1 advocates, and R1 schools, and, in 2018, from the EEF, R2 advocates, and R2 schools).

Measurement of reach

In order to measure the reach (number of schools enrolled) and participation (rates of involvement in each advocate's events and activities) we collected MI data from each advocate at the end of each academic term from 2016 to 2018. During the first three terms, we monitored the R1 advocates (collecting data retrospectively in January 2017, April 2017, and August 2017). In terms four to six we monitored both R1 and R2 advocates (with returns in January 2018, April 2018, and July 2018). Each advocate was asked to complete a pre-populated proforma, which asked for information on schools' participation in the three types of activity:

1. **EEF conferences**—training events or conferences that were partly, or wholly, organised by the EEF, including presentations by Professor Steve Higgins (Durham University); whole-network conferences organised by advocates (without EEF input) were incorporated into the 'cluster/network events' category below, rather than this category, in the MI returns;
2. **cluster/network events**—training events, meetings, or conferences that were organised by advocates, or by advocates' partners or schools within their networks, for groups of schools; and
3. **one-to-one support**—direct support, over and above regular communications, provided by advocates to individual schools.

Once completed, advocates uploaded their proformas securely via NFER's portal.

As noted earlier, when advocates signed their contracts with the EEF, the expectation was that each school in each advocate's network would be involved in at least one activity per term. This was the benchmark the evaluation team used for monitoring participation.

Limitations of reach monitoring methodology

The process of working with advocates to collect MI data was smooth. We held initial face-to-face meetings with the advocates to discuss the MI proforma design, and made amendments to the proforma accordingly so that it was suitable for all. We received data from advocates in most terms. In Term 1 of R1 and R2 advocates' provision, we pre-populated the proformas with details of schools that we understood to be involved in each advocates' provision (as supplied by the EEF). Each term we asked advocates to update their list of schools (adding or removing schools as appropriate and including critical data such as school unique reference number or postcode, for matching purposes). Then, in the following term we supplied them with a revised pre-populated list to work from and amend as necessary. We are confident that this kept school enrolment figures as up to date as possible. As we were reliant on advocates' reporting of changes in school participation, there is a possibility that information may

not always have been up to date. However, advocates were engaged in this activity and worked well to support data collection. The EEF regional programme manager also carried out various informal checks of the MI data, such as schools' attendance at events, so we have no particular concerns about the accuracy of the data collected.

Measurement of promise

Survey design

In order to explore the promise of the Campaign on schools' use of evidence-based literacy practices and capacity for good practice in literacy provision, we asked schools in the NE and comparison schools about various aspects of their literacy teaching practices via a survey administered in 2016 and repeated in 2018. The survey was designed to reflect the evidence-based literacy practices recommended in the KS1 guidance.[11] Table 1 sets out the recommended practices in the KS1 guidance and the survey items and questions that attempted to reflect these practices.

Table 1: KS1 guidance recommendations and evaluation survey questions

KS1 guidance recommendations	Survey questions/items
Develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and wider understanding of language	Q3
Use a balanced and engaging approach to developing reading which integrates both decoding and comprehension skills	Q2
Effectively implement a systematic phonics programme	Q2 and Q7
Teach pupils to use strategies for developing and monitoring their reading comprehension	Q3
Teach pupils to use strategies for planning and monitoring their writing	Q5
Promote fluent written transcription skills by encouraging extensive and effective practice and explicitly teaching spelling	Q4
Use high-quality information about pupils' current capabilities to select the best next steps for teaching	Q6
Use high-quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their literacy	Q7, Q9 and Q11

The survey included questions about the sources of influence on schools' literacy approaches based on the Research Use Survey (RUS) developed by NFER with the EEF and piloted in 2014 (Nelson *et al.,* 2017; Poet *et al.*, 2015). The survey also included questions about the schools' capacity for good practice in literacy teaching, and the resources they had at their disposal to support literacy teaching. Finally, the endpoint survey included additional questions asking about schools' awareness and use of the the EEF Toolkit, guidance, and trials. The full survey can be viewed in Appendix A.

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[11] The KS2 guidance was under development but had not been published at the time of designing the survey.

Survey administration

We mailed both online and hard-copy versions of the survey to all primary schools in the NE and to a comparison sample of primary schools across the rest of England. Comparison schools were identified by matching to the NE group of schools on key characteristics.[12] We used propensity score matching (PSM) to draw the comparison sample. Characteristics used for matching were:

- type of school establishment;
- percentile groups based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM);
- the percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN, statement or school action plus);
- the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL); and
- KS2 literacy score (the percentage of pupils receiving 4B or above in KS2 reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) and 4 or above in teacher-assessed writing.

These school characteristics relate to the academic year 2014/2015.

The baseline survey was administered between June and October 2016. It was sent to the literacy coordinator or senior leader with oversight of literacy developments in each school. We asked each respondent to answer each question with regard to the school's position on that topic. The endpoint survey was administered between April and July 2018 and completed by the same person or their equivalent within each school. We conducted an extensive reminding strategy and offered a small incentive of either a £5 voucher or equivalent charity donation for both the baseline and endpoint surveys, which resulted in the response rates (RR) presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Sample response rates (%) and numbers (N)

Sample	Target sample		Achieved sample				
	Intervention (NE) N	Comparison N	Intervention (NE) N	RR %	Comparison N	RR %	TOTAL N
Baseline	870	718	**388**	45	**261**	36	**649**
Endpoint	865	709	**352**	41	**260**	37	**612**
Matched	-	-	**241**	-	**159**	-	**400**

Table 2 shows that a total of 649 schools responded to the baseline survey, 612 responded to the endpoint survey, and 400 of these schools responded to both the baseline and endpoint survey. The analysis was based on responses from these 400 schools. We checked the sample representativeness for each of the achieved samples at baseline, endpoint, and the matched sample and found a good level of alignment between the intervention and comparison groups across five stratification criteria for all three samples (for further details please view Appendix B).

Survey analysis

Survey items reflected practices that aligned with the evidence on 'what works' in effective literacy teaching as recommended in the KS1 guidance, as well as aspects of practice that were less substantiated by empirical evidence and served as 'distractor' items. Survey responses that reflected

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[12] This was completed by running nominal regression and creating probabilities of being in the intervention group compared to the comparison group. The method then removed comparison schools that were the least likely to be in the intervention. From the propensity score we created a categorical variable that was used as sampling stratifier when selecting the final comparison group of schools.

evidence-based literacy practices received a score which was used as the basis for all statistical analysis. In Appendix A, the items highlighted green in the survey reflect practices that aligned with evidence on 'what works' in effective literacy teaching.

Basic frequencies of all responses to the survey questions at baseline and endpoint are provided in Appendix C and within Findings 3 and 4. At both baseline and endpoint, the largest group of survey responses came from literacy coordinators/English subject leaders (44% and 42% respectively), with the bulk of the remainder split between headteachers (23%) and deputy/assistant headteachers (23% and 27% respectively). At baseline, this distribution was very similar between NE and comparison schools whereas at endpoint, a noticeably higher proportion of respondents from NE schools were literacy coordinators/English subject leaders (48%) compared to the comparison schools (33%) where a more even spread of responses from the three main roles was achieved. This indicates that the survey obtained an appropriate response from individuals with sufficient seniority or specialism to provide a picture of literacy practices at the school level.

All survey items identified in our scoring guide as 'evidence-based practice' were included in exploratory factor analysis (EFA). EFA generated three literacy practice composite measures (factors) and one further composite measure: These were:

- reading comprehension;
- writing composition;
- catch-up support; and
- 'school has the propensity for good practice in literacy'.

We checked how items 'loaded' and the internal consistency of the factors using Cronbach's Alpha. All four factors were reliable at baseline and endpoint.[13] Some items were removed from the factors because they did not load well or reduced the reliability. See Appendix D for a summary of the survey items that made up each of the above factors and the Cronbach's Alpha scores. We used regression analysis to identify whether there were any differences in factor scores over time for intervention and comparison schools. We also ran separate regression models on survey questions that did not load onto any specific factors—including a balanced and blended approach to reading (Q2), handwriting strategies (Q4), diagnosing pupils' needs (Q6), influences on literacy approaches (Q8), and literacy resources (Q10). All the regression analysis was based on the matched sample of 400 school survey responses at baseline and endpoint to provide the most robust analysis of any change over time in responses.

In this report we refer to NE schools exposed to the Campaign as the 'intervention group' and schools from a sample of the rest of England as the 'comparison group'. In an additional analysis, we compared the responses of intervention schools *within* the NE according to whether they had, or had not, received advocacy support. There were 870 schools in the NE, 314 of which had received advocacy support at some point between 2016 and 2018.[14] Of these, 99 advocacy and 142 non-advocacy schools responded to our survey at both baseline and endpoint. While these numbers were sufficient to construct a reliable regression model, we cannot be absolutely sure that they were representative of all advocacy or non-advocacy schools in the NE. Each regression model included the score for each respective measure or survey question at endpoint as the dependent variable, regressed on a number of independent variables. Table 3 displays a list of the variables included in the regression analysis.

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[13] A score of 0.7 or above is considered acceptable for surveys.
[14] This figure was derived from analysis of advocates' MI returns. We removed duplicate entries (for example, where schools were involved over both years, or with more than one advocate, as our interest was in a binary measure 'received advocacy' versus 'did not receive advocacy'.

Table 3: Variables included in regression analysis

Background variable	Base case comparator
Intervention school	Comparison school
Composite measure score at baseline[15]	Lower compared with higher (continuous variable)
FSM entitlement: percentage pupils eligible for FSM (2014/2015)	Lower compared with higher (continuous variable)
SEN status: percentage SEN pupils (Statement or School Action Plus, 2014/2015)	Lower compared with higher (continuous variable)
EAL status: percentage pupils with EAL (2014/2015)	Lower compared with higher (continuous variable)
KS2 literacy score: percentage of pupils receiving 4B or above in KS2 reading/GPS[16] and 4 or above in teacher assessed writing in KS2	Lower compared with higher (continuous variable)
A variable to indicate the school with missing data on KS2 literacy score	No missing data on KS2 literacy score

Coefficients of the regression analysis were converted to effect sizes. Effect sizes present the difference between the intervention group and comparison group. To emphasise that the effects are not causal (given the evaluation design), we use the prefix 'quasi'. The effect sizes were calculated using Hedge's g where the coefficient on the intervention group indicator (the average difference in outcome between the intervention group and comparison group) was the numerator and the pooled standard deviation was the denominator. Confidence intervals for each effect size were also derived by multiplying the standard error of the intervention group model coefficient by 1.96. These were converted to effect size confidence intervals using the same formula as the effect size itself. We also conducted t-tests to compare the mean survey scores at baseline and endpoint for the combined intervention and comparison (matched) sample.

The results of the regression analysis and resultant effect sizes, along with t-tests, are reported in Findings 3 and 4.

Limitations of survey methodology

The baseline and endpoint surveys explored the impact of the Campaign on schools' use of evidence-based literacy practices across a range of topics. While the survey was designed to reflect the evidence-based practices recommended in the EEF guidance at the time of design (summer 2016), the only EEF source available was the draft KS1 guidance. The survey and guidance were developed in tandem, which means that some of the questionnaire items may not reflect the final guidance completely accurately. Although this challenge potentially limited our design, in practice, the KS2 guidance contained very similar recommendations to the KS1 guidance, and we are confident that the KS1 guidance acted as a reasonable guide for assessing outcomes across the primary phase. A specific limitation of the survey design, however, is that we were not able to cover questions about literacy

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[15] To control for any differences between the intervention and comparison group that were already present at baseline.

[16] GPS stands for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.

practice in the early years—particularly around oral language—which means that our measures of literacy practice can only be generalised for KS1 and KS2.

Achieved samples for the intervention and comparison groups were highly representative of the population of NE primary schools (see Appendix B). However, there were two areas in which there were differences between the intervention and comparison groups. At baseline, there was a much larger proportion of missing data for the KS2 literacy score variable[17] in comparison schools (29%) than in NE schools (17%). This difference is explained by a higher proportion of infant schools in the comparison sample. In the matched sample, there was a larger proportion of missing data for the KS2 literacy score variable in comparison schools (30%) than in NE schools (18%). Type of primary school was not one of our sampling variables, so we do not have a particular concern about a higher number of infant than other types of primary school in the comparison sample.

In NE schools, we received a higher proportion of survey responses from literacy coordinators/English subject leaders at endpoint (48%) compared to comparison schools (33%). This may indicate that respondents from NE schools were more likely to have a specific remit for literacy, and in some cases, be less senior than respondents from comparison schools. However, this is unlikely to have contributed to a substantial response bias as all respondents—whether literacy coordinators, headteachers, or assistant headteachers—had sufficient seniority or specialism to provide a picture of literacy practices at the school level.

When comparing survey responses of schools in the NE that had, and had not, received advocacy, we found an underrepresentation of responses to the endpoint survey from schools that were in the lowest quintile of KS2 literacy performance among schools receiving advocacy. This could mean that the responses from schools that potentially could have benefited the most from the advocacy support were underrepresented, and it is possible that the lower participation of low performing schools in the advocacy group may have affected the analysis. However, we think it is unlikely to have affected the results to a great extent.

EEF web data monitoring

Between September 2016 and July 2018, NFER monitored visits to selected pages of the EEF's website and the number of downloads of specific EEF documents.[18] Key pages and resources of interest were the NE literacy Campaign page, the guidance reports, and a series of related literacy resources such as a RAG ('Red, Amber, Green') assessment guide and a discussion questions document. We also monitored visits to the EEF Toolkit, to specific Toolkit pages, and to the Families of Schools Database. The level of interest in these resources is discussed in Findings 4, section 4.2 and in Appendix E. In order to identify how many visits each page received or how many downloads of each document there were each month, with EEF's permission, NFER made use of the comprehensive website data that is recorded on Google Analytics. Google Analytics data can be segmented using numerous characteristics such as age and gender, device used, or past behaviour. For this evaluation we added a separate segment to enable us to find out how many visits or downloads came from the NE.

We monitored Twitter to gain a sense of how widely learning from the Campaign was being disseminated and discussed both in the NE and across the country. In order to do this, and given that the EEF were not using a Campaign hashtag, we used a combination of the basic search function within the social network and the media monitoring service 'Meltwater' to locate content with relevant key phrases. These key phrases are summarised in Appendix E. For some of the searches, we used filters so that only results from specific Twitter accounts would be shown.

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[17] This is average percentage of pupils receiving 4B or above in KS2 reading/GPS and 4 or above in teacher assessed writing in KS2.

[18] Selected in consultation with EEF colleagues.

Limitations of web data monitoring methodology

The web data analysis was valuable in that it allowed us to explore interest in a wide range of the EEF's literacy resources—both those specific to the Campaign and those that were not. Key limitations were that the activity was only able to provide contextual information: there was no means of attributing trends in engagement with EEF resources specifically to the Campaign, although there are some interesting differences between visits from the NE and visits from the rest of the country, which indicate a potential Campaign influence (see Findings 3). A further limitation is that Google Analytics does not provide regional classifications. We used NFER's Register of Schools to identify cities, towns, and villages in the NE in order to create a NE variable. It is possible that the geographical coverage within our variable may be slightly different to other regional descriptions of the NE, although we do not expect these differences to be marked. Finally, a 'NE visit' was registered when an IP address in the NE was used. This means that the NE measure represents physical access from the NE (rather than necessarily indicating that a visitor was based, or worked, in the NE).

Exploration of the feasibility of advocacy and sustainability

In the early stages of the Campaign, the EEF anticipated that more advocates would be funded to support schools in the second wave of provision (R2, 2017–2019) than the first (R1, 2016–2018), so it was decided to focus our case-study work around seven advocates—three in R1 and four in R2 (see the evaluation protocol: University of Nottingham and NFER, 2016). In the event, five R1 advocates were commissioned to work with schools in 2016–2018. As this number was larger than the EEF had anticipated, it was agreed that we should focus more of our case-study effort on the R1 advocates. We therefore re-assigned our resources to conduct four R1 and three R2 case studies.[19]

During 2017, one of the four R1 advocates ceased its involvement in the Campaign for reasons related to insufficient capacity within the advocacy organisation and the already high performance of many schools in its network. By the time this decision was taken, it was too late to substitute an alternative R1 advocacy case study. In the summer of 2017, three R2 advocates were commissioned by the EEF to work with schools from 2017–2019; we included all of these as case studies, therefore, in total, we conducted six advocacy case studies over the course of the evaluation.

Each advocacy case study comprised a meeting with the advocate to explain the evaluation requirements and co-create a ToC for their work in the Campaign, an observation of a training or support event, interviews with strategic and operational leads from each advocacy organisation, and interviews with a school senior leader and the school literacy coordinator in each of three linked schools. Follow-up interviews were conducted with R1 advocates and school literacy coordinators in 2018.

We also conducted two interviews with the EEF NE programme manager, one in 2016 and one in 2017, and an interview with the EEF's strategic campaigns' lead in 2016. For full details see Appendix F.

Limitations of case study methodology

Each advocacy case study comprised interviews with the advocacy organisation plus interviews with a school senior leader and the literacy coordinator (or equivalent) in three of their linked schools—approximately eight interviews in total. Our design was based on the fact that the Campaign was specifically targeted at literacy coordinators or senior leaders with oversight of literacy developments within each school. Given evaluation resource constraints, it was considered appropriate that interviews were conducted at this level only rather than also including teachers or other members of school staff. Most advocates' ToCs aimed to bring about changes in the practices of literacy coordinators, rather than the wider body of school staff, within the initial one to two years of activity (covered by the formative

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[19] One of the five R1 advocates (Advocate 7) was excluded from consideration as a case study on the grounds that its model of provision was atypical and unlikely to be replicated in future. This advocate had a much larger network of schools than all the other advocates (supporting between 98 and 108 schools per term).

evaluation), so this approach was deemed appropriate. However, this does mean that the evaluation rarely captured self-reported intermediate outcomes on teachers within the first two years of implementation, or teachers' views on the effectiveness of implementation within their schools. In practice, a small number of teacher interviews were conducted through the case studies. This was usually because the literacy coordinator was also a school senior leader and recommended that we also spoke to a literacy teacher within the school to gain an additional perspective, or because the main attendee at advocacy events had been a teacher, rather than the literacy coordinator.

Each advocacy case study included three linked schools which were participating in the advocacy provision. For some of the larger advocates, this was a relatively small proportion of the schools they worked with; the findings should, therefore, be considered illustrative rather than representative of schools' experiences.

A further limitation of the design is that, while the research team aimed to follow a systematic approach to recruitment, in practice we often had to adopt a pragmatic approach in order to meet interview targets:

- The evaluation team identified a list of all schools receiving an advocates' support and noted any cluster or partnership groupings. Where there was a cluster/partnership arrangement, we formed the case study around one cluster/partnership of schools so that we could compare different schools' experiences of the same or similar provision. This meant that triangulation of views was feasible, but did mean that some cluster arrangements were not explored.
- We analysed baseline survey responses to identify schools with varying strengths of self-reported literacy provision, then we used this data to draw up a long list of preferred schools within each advocacy area, aiming to achieve some variety in schools' baseline levels of provision across the sampled schools
- We identified a list of possible schools that we wished to approach and/or a cluster that we wished to work with, and then agreed with advocates which schools would be approached for interview according to the extent to which the schools were participating actively in the advocate's events and activities. It was deemed important that there was a reasonable level of engagement so that the schools could answer interview questions effectively.

This process resulted in a case-study achieved sample in which schools were probably slightly more engaged than average, so it is important to acknowledge this limitation.

Findings 1: Advocacy approaches

Key findings summary

The description of advocacy approaches outlined in this findings chapter is based on six advocate organisations for which we had case-study data, which enabled us to make appropriate judgements.

The six advocates (three R1 and three R2) adopted a range of approaches to supporting schools. There were some differences in the nature of the approaches adopted by R1 and R2 advocates reflecting the fact that quite different types of organisation were commissioned as advocates in R1 and R2, and that advocates typically adopted approaches that 'played to their strengths'.

We mapped these approaches onto a continuum, from centrally-coordinated (*advocate-led*) approaches, through *advocate-facilitated* approaches in which advocates supported peer-to-peer learning, to *distributed advocacy* approaches in which schools supported each other to improve. We have used this continuum as an analytical framework in subsequent findings chapters for judging the relative feasibility of different advocacy approaches. We found that:

- *advocate-led* approaches were a feature of both R1 and R2 provision, offered by two specialist literacy training providers;
- *advocate-facilitated* approaches were a feature of R2 provision only, offered by specialist leaders of education (SLEs) through two existing TSA/Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) partnerships; and
- *distributed advocacy* approaches were a feature of R1 provision only, offered by two Local Authority (LA) advocates.

We identified a number of contextual issues that need to be considered when assessing the relative feasibility of each advocacy approach.

- The EEF had different expectations of each advocate, reflecting the nature and size of their organisations, their capacity to support schools in different situations, and their social capital (the extent of pre-existing relationships between the advocate and schools in the NE). Some advocates had more challenging remits than others, which impacted on the ease with which each advocate could achieve impact.
- No one 'type' of provision stood out as being most effective, although some approaches did appear to have more promise than others. There were strengths and weaknesses to all types of provision at all points on the continuum. The strengths of one were often the weaknesses of another, and vice versa.
- Key individuals played an important role, with advocacy often appearing to depend on the strength of an inspirational person or team. This finding has implications for the longer-term sustainability of programmes.

There were some key differences between the rounds, which affected the advocates' early progress, especially in R1.

- R2 advocates benefited from more lead-in time than R1 advocates and from the publication of the KS1 and KS2 guidance documents by the time they started work. This was not the case for the R1 advocates.
- R2 advocates received more start-up support from the EEF, both in terms of developing their bids and in terms of receiving guidance on expectations. R1 advocates noted that they would have welcomed more ongoing input from the EEF during their second year of operation.
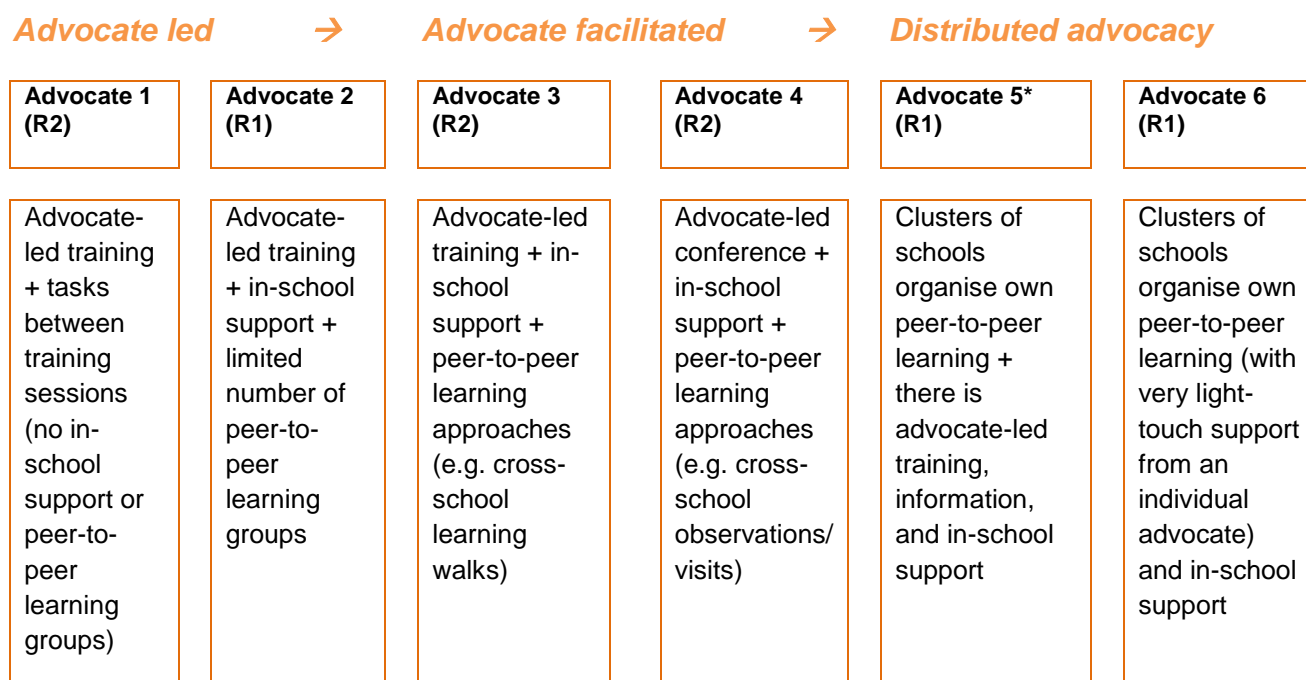
1.1   Description of advocacy approaches

This findings chapter provides a description of the approaches adopted by the advocates. The EEF was happy for advocates to have autonomy because it wanted advocates to adopt the approach they thought would best support the schools (although the EEF provided some challenge to ensure that the advocates' plans were realistic). In order to preserve advocate anonymity, we do not provide detailed descriptions of each advocate's provision in this report. Rather, drawing on advocates' applications to the EEF, the ToCs that we developed with advocates prior to their work commencing (see research design and methods section), and detailed information gathered through case-study interviews and observations, we have developed a 'continuum' of advocacy approaches, which is presented in Figure 1.1 below. This provides a top-level description of the range of advocacy approaches adopted across the Campaign. The continuum is used as an analysis frame for assessing the relative effectiveness of different types of advocacy in varied contexts throughout the report. It is based on the six advocates for which we had case-study data, and for which we could make appropriate judgements about the nature of provision.

We developed a continuum rather than defining 'models' of advocacy provision because each advocate's approach was distinct and multi-dimensional. Although some advocates had certain dimensions of provision in common, we found that other dimensions of their provision were often similar to those of different advocates, which made it challenging to identify two or three discrete 'models' or 'types' of provision: had the number of case studies been larger, grouping advocates into discrete models of provision may have been possible.

The continuum takes the advocate's style of operation as the basis for organisation. At one end of the continuum are advocates that adopted a centrally-coordinated approach with most learning led by the advocate; at the other end are advocates that adopted a *distributed* leadership approach, whereby the organisation of learning was delegated to groups of schools that adopted a variety of peer-to-peer learning approaches.

Figure 1.1: Continuum of advocacy approaches

Advocate led   →   *Advocate facilitated*   →   *Distributed advocacy*

Advocate 1 (R2)	Advocate 2 (R1)	Advocate 3 (R2)	Advocate 4 (R2)	Advocate 5* (R1)	Advocate 6 (R1)
Advocate-led training + tasks between training sessions (no in-school support or peer-to-peer learning groups)	Advocate-led training + in-school support + limited number of peer-to-peer learning groups	Advocate-led training + in-school support + peer-to-peer learning approaches (e.g. cross-school learning walks)	Advocate-led conference + in-school support + peer-to-peer learning approaches (e.g. cross-school observations/ visits)	Clusters of schools organise own peer-to-peer learning + there is advocate-led training, information, and in-school support	Clusters of schools organise own peer-to-peer learning (with very light-touch support from an individual advocate) and in-school support

* Advocate 5 was the most difficult to place on the continuum. Although the provision was primarily organised around a *distributed* leadership model (clusters of schools organised their own peer-to-peer learning), a single lead advocate also maintained a close supportive relationship with the clusters and with individual schools. This model was effectively a hybrid between a *distributed advocacy* and an *advocate-led* approach.

1.2   Context for assessing the feasibility of advocacy

The continuum provides a means of mapping the advocates' provision, and we use it as a framework against which to judge the feasibility of different advocacy approaches in Findings 2, 5 and 6. However, a range of contextual factors also need to be taken into consideration when assessing the impact of different advocacy approaches.

First, the advocates were not all operating on the same basis. At commissioning stage, the EEF emphasised two criteria for prospective advocates: an aim to reach large numbers of schools and a goal to work with schools serving disadvantaged pupil populations. In reality, the EEF allowed flexibility around these criteria in response to different bidders' capacity to undertake this kind of work. As a result, the EEF had different expectations of each advocate, reflecting the nature and size of their organisations, their capacity to support schools in different situations, and their social capital (the extent of pre-existing relationships between the advocate and schools in the NE). This meant that some advocates had more challenging remits than others. The number of schools per advocate ranged from ten (Advocate 1) to 109 (Advocate 7).[20] In the list below, advocates are placed in descending order, with those undertaking more challenging remits towards the top of the list.

- Advocate 5 (R1) responded to the remit to target and work with schools in disadvantaged circumstances, and to work with a large group of schools. This advocate was a local authority (LA) with strong existing links with schools in disadvantaged circumstances and therefore had the capacity and social capital to take on a challenging remit. Further analysis of the advocacy data shows that this advocate worked with a high proportion of schools with high FSM and low pupil attainment, compared to the advocacy average (see p. 22).

- Advocates 1 (R2) and 2 (R1), both training providers, were encouraged to work with schools outside their home territory in order to help the EEF achieve good geographical coverage in the NE. Each only worked with a small group of schools, but they had a challenging remit in the sense that they were attempting to recruit and support schools that were unfamiliar to them. Further analysis of the advocacy data shows that Advocate 2 worked with a high proportion of schools with high FSM, compared to the advocacy average (see p. 22).

- Advocate 6 (R1) responded to the remit to target and work with schools in disadvantaged circumstances and worked with a reasonably large group of schools (52 in Year 1 and 44 in Year 2). This advocate, which was also an LA, was keen, however, to focus its work on an urban area rather than on a geographically-challenging rural area (because schools were easier to recruit and support).

- Advocates 3 and 4 (both R2) were commissioned to work within their pre-existing networks (TSAs), rather than to target new or particularly disadvantaged schools (although Advocate 4 did target a small number of schools outside the TSA and also worked with a high proportion of schools with low attainment, compared to the advocacy average). These advocates worked with relatively small groups of schools with which they were already familiar.

Case-study interviews and observations showed that there were strengths and weaknesses to provision at different points on the continuum. Typically, no one form of provision shone out as being 'most' or 'least' effective, although some did appear to have more promise than others. For example, provision that was 'expertise rich', and *distributed advocacy* approaches that sought to create self-improving structures for the embedding of evidence-based literacy practices, were at quite different ends of the continuum and had different advantages and disadvantages—the advantage of one type typically being the disadvantage of the other. This contextual issue is explored further in Findings 5 and its implications are discussed in the report's conclusion.

Finally, across all types of advocacy, key individuals had an important role. Advocacy often appeared to depend on the strength of an inspirational person or team (Advocates 1, 2 and 5 are good examples of approaches led or facilitated by individuals that the schools found inspiring). While these advocates

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[20] Details of the numbers of schools each advocate worked with are presented in Findings 2, Table 2.2.

were highly respected by schools and offered provision based on extensive expertise, this finding has implications for the longer-term sustainability of programmes. There will always be long-term resource needs among schools that rely on external expertise for support (see Findings 6).

1.3 Differences between Round 1 and Round 2 advocates

There were some differences in the nature of the approaches adopted by R1 and R2 advocates. This reflects the fact that quite different types of organisation were commissioned as advocates in R1 and R2, and that advocates typically adopted approaches that 'played to their strengths'.

- *Distributed advocacy* approaches were a feature of R1 provision only. The organisations that adopted these approaches were both LAs. Both built on their existing relationships with schools and approaches to school improvement, encouraging schools to form in clusters to support self-improvement.

- *Advocate-facilitated* approaches were adopted by two R2 advocates. Both were school-based advocates, operating through their existing TSA/MAT networks. These advocates utilised already strong networks of schools and ways of working to build in new learning and practices. School-based advocates were commissioned in R2 only.

- *Advocate-led* approaches were adopted by one R1 and one R2 advocate. Each was a training provider, not located in the area that it was supporting. These advocates publicised their training offers to schools and encouraged enrolment. This form of provision was the only type to feature in both rounds of provision.

We found a number of finer-grained similarities and differences between advocacy approaches, which were present across rounds of provision rather than being unique to one round or the other (these are explored in Findings 5). We also found some key differences in the experiences of R1 and R2 advocates, which affected their success in early implementation. Specifically, the R2 advocates benefitted from a later start, which provided more time for preparation and learning from R1.

- The R2 advocates had more lead-in time than the R1 advocates. At the point of their commissions, the EEF KS1 and KS2 guidance documents were already published, whereas the KS1 guidance was in draft form and the KS2 guidance had not been drafted when the R1 advocates were commissioned.

- The R2 advocates benefitted from preparation work with the EEF. Specifically, they received support with the bid development process and with clearer advocacy expectations. This was partly a response, on the part of the EEF, to a lack of capacity in the region and a willingness to support potential advocates to develop an offer. It was also because the EEF recognised that it needed to set clearer expectations from the start than it had with R1.

- This meant that R2 advocates[21] benefited from:
    o rapid school recruitment;
    o a swift start in September 2017; and
    o an informed start, including the ability to take account of the EEF guidance in learning content and resource planning.

- Some R1 advocates said they experienced a falling-away of EEF support in Y2 and would have welcomed more ongoing input, although the EEF regional programme manager noted that, when support was offered, advocates did not always have the time or capacity to engage.

In summary, advocates adopted a range of approaches to support schools to make evidence-informed developments in their literacy provision. Approaches ranged from *advocate-led* training to self-improving peer-to-peer school support networks. The following findings chapters consider the relative feasibility of these different approaches. It is important to remember that advocates were not all appointed with the same brief, with some having more challenging or extensive remits than others. Additionally, as we explore in sections 2.4.3, 5.4, and 6.3, a distinction needs to be made between the

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[21] With the exception of Advocate 1, which did not start work with schools until January 2018.

'advocacy approach' and the 'advocate' as a key individual or team. These contextual factors are critical and highlight the complexity of making judgements about effective, replicable, or sustainable advocacy approaches.

The different implementation experiences of R1 and R2 advocates illustrate some key learning points for the EEF. These include the importance of:

- building appropriate lead-in time to scale-up activities;
- allowing time for the development of resources (such as the main evidence-based guidance documents on which the scale-up effort relies);
- allowing time to 'train' advocates and build relationships within the region;
- maintaining ongoing guidance and support; and
- encouraging advocates to plan effectively for a long-term programme from the outset in order to promote a continuation of energy and momentum.

Clearly the EEF had an imperative to initiate the Campaign quickly and there was not the luxury of a lengthy period of lead-in time for development activity. The EEF did support R1 advocates during start-up, especially by running large-scale conferences with advocates for schools. In this respect, there was support for fast action and implementation. As Fullan comments, a sequence of 'ready, *fire*, aim' can be more fruitful and realistic than the more typically anticipated sequence of 'ready, *aim*, fire', with the experience of implementation giving rise to learning about the desired direction of travel, rather than vice versa (Fullan, 1993). That said, it was undoubtedly more difficult for the R1 than the R2 projects to establish their programmes in the absence of the full suite of guidance materials.

Findings 2: Advocacy reach and participation

Key findings summary

- NE schools that received advocacy support had a significantly higher proportion of FSM pupils on average than NE schools that did not receive such support. This suggests that the advocates were reaching the types of schools that the EEF was targeting.

- Collectively, the advocates worked with 389 schools from 2016 to 2018. The number of schools per advocate ranged from ten (Advocate 1) to 109 (Advocate 7).

- Attrition was low. Only two advocates saw a reduction in the number of schools worked with over the course of the evaluation, while two advocates increased the number of schools they were working with.

- R2 projects achieved higher rates of participation than R1 projects in their first year of operation (91% over one year for R2 schools compared to 63% for R1 schools over two years). However, R2 advocates worked with smaller numbers of schools on average (29 per term compared with 66). Without ongoing monitoring it is not possible to know whether the relative success of R2 advocates will be sustained in the academic year 2018/2019.

- After increases in activity in the early terms of each academic year, there was a falling-away in school participation in both R1 and R2 advocacy activities across the monitoring period, to the end of 2018.

- EEF conferences were typically a start-up activity at the beginning of each academic year (Terms 1 and 4), although there was more ongoing EEF conference activity in Year 2 than had been the case in Year 1.

- R1 schools' attendance at cluster/network events reduced from Term 2 onwards. This pattern was less pronounced among the R2 schools from Terms 4–6.

- One-to-one support for schools took place relatively infrequently across the entire monitored period for both R1 and R2 schools.

- Each advocate had a different pattern of reach. Advocates achieving the highest levels of average participation in activities (relative to the size of their networks) were Advocate 5 and Advocate 2 (R1) and Advocate 3 (R2).[22]

- Advocates experiencing the greatest stability in participation were Advocate 5 (R1) and Advocates 3 and 4 (R2). These advocates had the greatest social capital in the NE. This suggests that historic working relationships between advocates and schools had an important bearing on the advocates' relative success in achieving reach.

This findings chapter provides a description of the number of schools taking up—and remaining involved in—advocacy support, the relative success of the advocates in achieving high rates of school participation in their activities, and the types of activities that achieved greatest participation. We monitored eight advocates from September 2016 to July 2018.[23] R1 projects were monitored for the whole of this period. R2 projects were monitored from September 2017 to July 2018. The findings are based on data collected through termly management information (MI) returns supplied by the advocates for the following periods of time.

- R1 advocates—six terms of MI data from September 2016 to July 2018. Although formally involved across the first three terms, one advocate carried out little to no activity during this period and ceased to be involved thereafter. This advocate is labelled 'discontinued' in Table 2.2. Advocate 2 started work in Term 2, so data is available for this advocate for five terms only.

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[22] Although Advocate 2 had a much higher rate of reach in Year 1 than in Year 2.
[23] Including one advocate that ceased to be involved in the Campaign in Year 1.

- R2 advocates—three terms of MI data from September 2017 to the end of July 2018. Advocate 1 started work in Term 2, so data is available for this advocate for two terms only.

Before reporting on the detail of school participation and the relative reach of each advocate, it is important to reflect on the extent to which the advocates managed to target the types of schools that the EEF intended—schools serving the most disadvantaged pupils. The measure used was FSM Ever6 (2016).[24] In 2016, primary schools in the North East had relatively high levels of pupils with Ever6FSM (30.4%, compared with 25.4% nationally).[25] We compared percentages of FSM pupils in NE schools according to whether they did, or did not, receive advocacy at any point between 2016 and 2018. Table 2.1 shows that schools in receipt of advocacy had a higher proportion of FSM pupils on average (34%) than schools not in receipt of advocacy (29%). As the difference was statistically significant, this suggests that the advocates were reaching the right type of schools.

Table 2.1: Average FSM status in advocacy and non-advocacy schools in the NE region

Advocacy condition	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Advocacy	34.3	269	20.4	0.0	80.4
Non advocacy	28.7	633	19.8	0.0	77.8
Total	30.4	902	20.1	0.0	80.4

We also looked at the Ever6FSM and KS2 profiles of the schools working with each advocate. Most advocates were working with schools with relatively high proportions of disadvantaged pupils with a range of KS2 performance in literacy. Three of the seven advocates stood out. Each represented one of the three different advocacy approaches outlined in Figure 1.1. This demonstrates that all advocacy types had the potential to work with schools in challenging circumstances.

- Advocate 2 (R1) had a larger number of schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils.
- Advocate 4 (R2) had a larger number of schools with low attainment in KS2 literacy.
- Advocate 5 (R1) had a larger number of schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils and low attainment in KS2 literacy.

Table 2.2 provides data about: the number of schools taking up advocacy support, the relative success of the advocates in achieving high rates of participation in their activities, and the types of activities that achieved greatest participation. It shows that the eight advocates worked with 389 schools in total during the monitoring period, with the number of schools per advocate ranging considerably from ten (Advocate 1) to 109 (Advocate 7). Each term, advocates had the opportunity to add or remove schools from their MI returns. We provided them with a spreadsheet containing a pre-populated list of their schools based on their previous termly return. Advocates were asked to remove or add schools each term as appropriate to ensure that enrolment figures remained accurate. The figures in Table 2.2 show that the number of schools working with advocates changed very little on a term-by-term basis for most advocates. Recorded changes included:

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[24] Pupils recorded in the school census known to have been eligible for FSM in any of the previous 6 years as well as those first known to be eligible in 2016.
[25] Source: https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data

- Advocate 5 (R1) worked with an increased number of schools in the second year of activity (63 schools in Term 3 and 88 schools in Term 4). All 88 schools were retained across Terms 4 to 6.

- Advocate 4 (R2) recorded a slight growth in the number of schools worked with (from 25 schools in Term 4 to 27 in Terms 5 and 6).

- Advocate 6 (R1) saw a reduction in the number of schools worked with in the second year of activity (from 53 schools in Term 3 to 44 in Term 4).[26]

- Advocate 1 (R2) saw a reduction in the number of schools worked with, from 16 schools in Term 5 to ten schools in Term 6.

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[26] This number was consistent across Terms 4 and 6, although we did not receive a return in Term 5.

Table 2.2: Advocates' reach through different types of activity

Round	Advocate no.	Autumn 2016									Spring 2017									Summer 2017								
		N of schools worked with	Schools involved in at least one activity		Schools attending EEF conferences		Schools attending cluster/network events		Schools receiving 1-1 support		N of schools worked with	Schools involved in at least one activity		Schools attending EEF conferences		Schools attending cluster/network events		Schools receiving 1-1 support		N of schools worked with	Schools involved in at least one activity		Schools attending EEF conferences		Schools attending cluster/network events		Schools receiving 1-1 support	
Round 1	5	62	49	79%	46	74%	17	27%	7	11%	63	52	83%	0	0%	50	79%	14	22%	63	42	67%	0	0%	41	65%	7	11%
	2	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	23	21	91%	1	4%	21	91%	0	0%	23	21	91%	9	39%	11	48%	19	83%
	6	52	36	69%	29	56%	26	50%	0	0%	53	27	51%	0	0%	27	51%	0	0%	53	18	34%	5	9%	7	13%	9	17%
	Discontinued	44	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	44	7	16%	0	0%	7	16%	0	0%	44	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	7	98	58	59%	46	47%	27	28%	11	11%	109	80	73%	0	0%	80	73%	9	8%	97	78	80%	30	31%	69	71%	4	4%
	ALL	**256**	**143**	**56%**	**121**	**47%**	**70**	**27%**	**18**	**7%**	**292**	**187**	**64%**	**1**	**0%**	**185**	**63%**	**23**	**8%**	**280**	**159**	**57%**	**44**	**16%**	**128**	**46%**	**39**	**14%**

Round	Advocate no.	Autumn 2017									Spring 2018									Summer 2018								
		N of schools worked with	Schools involved in at least one activity		Schools attending EEF conferences		Schools attending cluster/network events		Schools receiving 1-1 support		N of schools worked with	Schools involved in at least one activity		Schools attending EEF conferences		Schools attending cluster/network events		Schools receiving 1-1 support		N of schools worked with	Schools involved in at least one activity		Schools attending EEF conferences		Schools attending cluster/network events		Schools receiving 1-1 support	
Round 1	5	88	52	59%	47	53%	33	38%	7	8%	88	57	65%	47	53%	21	24%	4	5%	88	62	70%	47	53%	46	52%	0	0%
	2	24	16	67%	14	58%	7	29%	5	21%	24	13	54%	7	29%	8	33%	0	0%	24	11	46%	9	38%	6	25%	5	21%
	6	44	41	93%	0	0%	41	93%	6	14%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	16	36%	0	0%	16	36%	0	0%
	7	108	77	71%	62	57%	50	46%	24	22%	107	30	28%	5	5%	22	21%	8	7%	107	20	19%	0	0%	18	17%	5	5%
	ALL	**264**	**186**	**70%**	**123**	**47%**	**131**	**50%**	**42**	**16%**	**219**	**100**	**46%**	**59**	**27%**	**51**	**23%**	**12**	**5%**	**263**	**109**	**41%**	**56**	**21%**	**86**	**33%**	**10**	**4%**
Round 2	1	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	16	16	100%	0	0%	16	100%	0	0%	10	10	100%	0	0%	10	100%	0	0%
	3	32	32	100%	32	100%	31	97%	0	0%	32	32	100%	0	0%	32	100%	0	0%	32	27	84%	23	72%	24	75%	0	0%
	4	25	25	100%	25	100%	0	0%	19	76%	27	25	93%	25	93%	0	0%	13	48%	27	12	44%	0	0%	8	30%	11	41%
	ALL	**57**	**57**	**100%**	**57**	**100%**	**31**	**54%**	**19**	**33%**	**75**	**73**	**97%**	**25**	**33%**	**48**	**64%**	**13**	**17%**	**69**	**49**	**71%**	**23**	**33%**	**42**	**61%**	**11**	**16%**

Table 2.2 also shows that rates of participation varied by advocate and by term. We took the EEF's requirement of advocates as our basis for measuring rates of participation (reach). When advocates signed their contracts with the EEF, the expectation was that each school in each advocates' network would be involved in at least one kind of activity per term. Table 2.2 shows that this target was challenging to meet. On average:

- across the R1 advocates, the rate of school participation across two years ranged from 70% (Term 4) to 41% (Term 6); the average rate of participation across all advocates over both years of provision was just under two thirds (63%); and

- across the R2 advocates, the rate of participation was stronger: 100% of schools attended at least one event in Term 4, 97% in Term 5, and 71% in Term 6.[27] The average rate of attendance across all advocates over the year was 91%. However, the average number of schools supported by R2 advocates was less than half that of R1. In Term 4, the average numbers of schools each advocate worked with were 66 (R1) and 29 (R2).

2.1   School participation, by activity

After consulting with the EEF and advocates about the type of activities they had planned, we included three types of activities in the MI returns. This section reports on participation in each of these activities, in turn, by Round.

- **EEF conferences**—training events or conferences that were partly or wholly organised by the EEF. Whole-network conferences organised by advocates (without EEF input) were incorporated into the 'cluster/network events' category, rather than this category, in the MI returns.
- **Cluster/network events**—training events, meetings, or conferences that were organised by advocates, or by advocates' partners or schools within their networks, for groups of schools.
- **One-to-one support**—direct support, over and above regular communications, provided by advocates to individual schools.

Figures 2.1a (R1) and 2.1b (R2) show the relative role of each of the three main types of activity (EEF conferences, cluster/network events, and one-to-one support) aggregated across all advocates active in that Round.

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[27] The figure for Term 4 represents only two advocates: Advocate 1 was not operating in Term 1.

Figure 2.1a: Take up of advocacy, by activity and term, Round 1 advocates
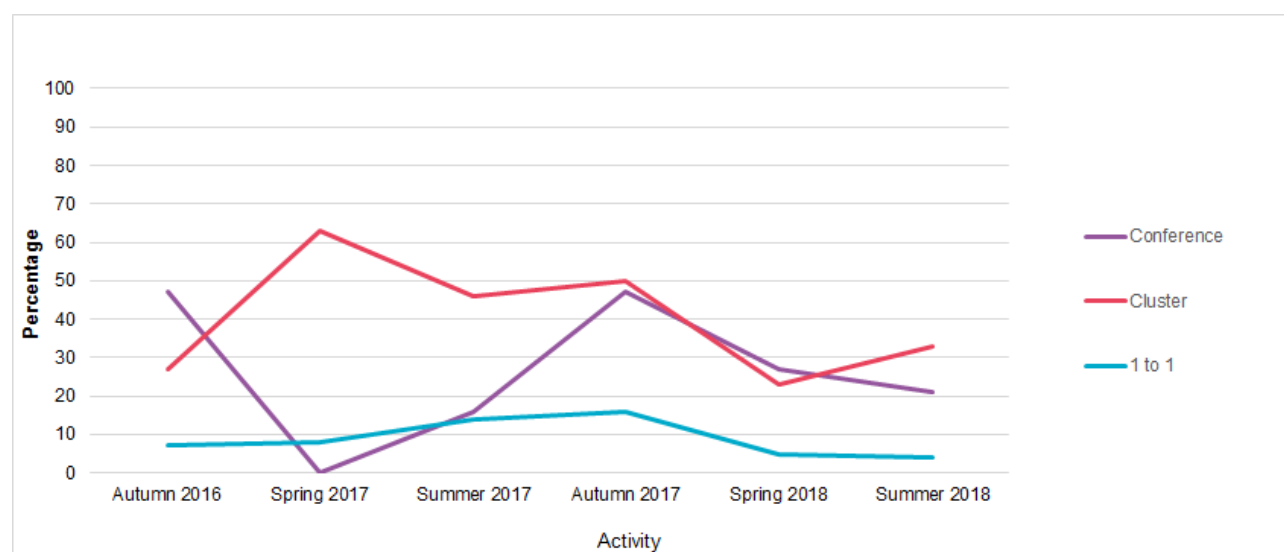
Figure 2.1b: Take up of advocacy, by activity and term, Round 2 advocates
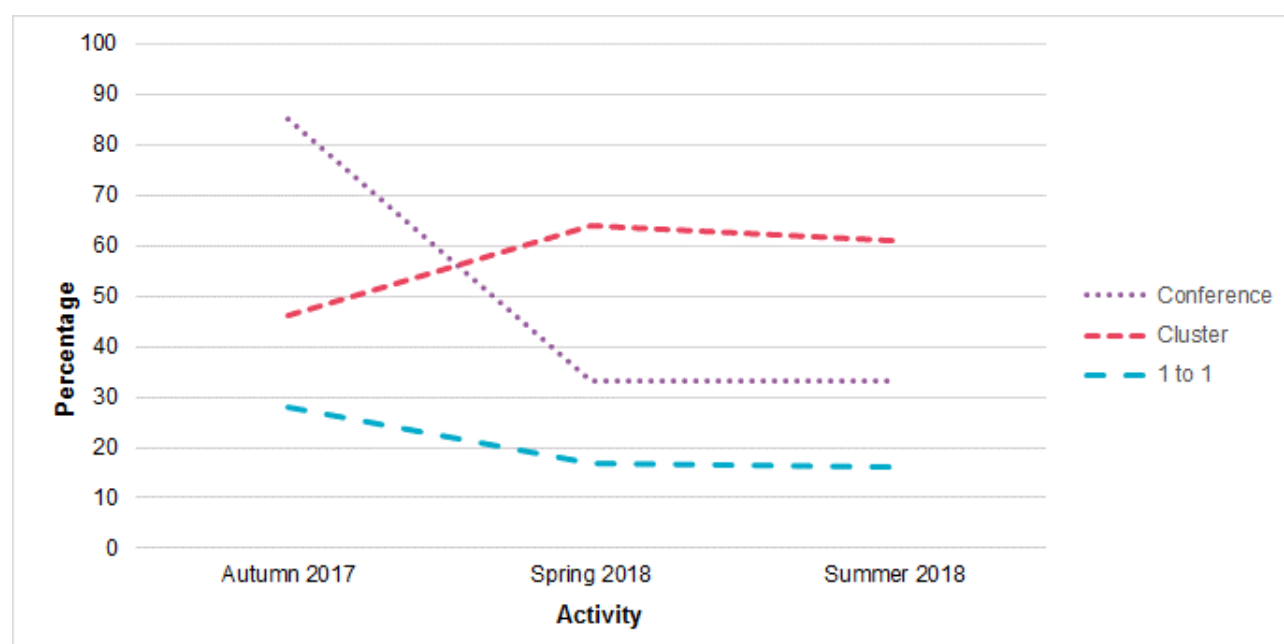
2.1.1   EEF conferences

Round 1 (Figure 2.1a)

EEF conferences were the main route to engagement with schools in Terms 1 and 4—the start of each academic year. Most advocates held conferences, supported by the EEF, for all schools in their networks. These conferences served the purpose of launching the Campaign, explaining the principles of the EEF guidance (KS1 in Year 1 and KS2 in Year 2), and outlining the support offer for schools. In Term 1, just under half of the 256 schools registered for advocacy support (47%) and attended an EEF conference. In Term 4, this figure was very similar (47% of 264 R1 schools registered for advocacy support). Not surprisingly, these figures reduced in the intervening periods when EEF conferences were either not offered (for example, in Term 2), or were organised for specific groups of schools rather than for a whole advocacy area (for example, in Terms 5 and 6).

Round 2 (Figure 2.1b)

The Round 2 advocates' returns present a similar picture—showing a peak in EEF conference activity in Term 1 (autumn 2017). A higher rate of attendance was apparent among R2 than R1 schools in their respective first terms of activity (autumn 2016 for R1 and autumn 2017 for R2). In fact, 100% of the 57 participating R2 schools across the two advocates that were operating at this point[28] attended an EEF conference in Term 1. The numbers of schools involved in Term 1 of R2 provision were very small by comparison to Term 1 of R1 provision however, so comparisons in rates of attendance must be treated with caution.

2.1.2   Cluster/network events

Round 1 (Figure 2.1a)

Attendance at cluster/network activities fluctuated across the evaluation period. This type of activity was slower to launch than conferences, as might be expected. Just over one quarter of schools (27%) were involved in a cluster or network activity led by an advocate or one of their partners in Term 1, but, once the Campaign was underway and practical activities with schools began, this grew substantially to almost two thirds (63%) in Term 2. However, from this point, apart from two small termly increases, the overall rate of participation in cluster/network activities fell. In Term 5 the rate of attendance was less than one quarter of schools (23%) and in Term 6, this had risen slightly to just under one third (33%). This mirrors the overall pattern of school take-up of advocacy support outlined above where, after a peak in the rate of attendance in Term 4, there was a general falling in attendance up to the end of the evaluation period.

Round 2 (Figure 2.1b)

The pattern of R2 attendance at cluster/network activities was similar to the first year of R1 attendance. In the first term, only 46% of schools were involved in this activity (although this was a higher proportion than seen in R1 schools at the same point of their development). This level of attendance increased to 64% in the second term and remained fairly consistent at 61% in the third term. These are average rates of attendance across just three providers and mask some substantial differences in rates of attendance at cluster/network activities at advocate level. Cluster/network events were a more important feature of provision by Advocate 1 (a training provider) and Advocate 3 (a TSA) than they were of Advocate 4 (another TSA; see Table 2.1). This illustrates that the type of activity most commonly offered by advocates and engaged in by schools was not necessarily closely connected with advocacy type. In the case of Advocate 4, one-to-one support was a more common form of activity (see below).

2.1.3   One-to-one support

Round 1 (Figure 2.1a)

One-to-one support for individual schools was not a high intensity component of most advocates' provision. For the first two terms, Advocate 5 and Advocate 7 were the only advocates to offer this form of support. In Term 3 it was becoming more commonplace, with Advocate 2 and Advocate 6 also recording one-to-one support sessions. The rate of uptake of one-to-one support increased slightly more in Term 4. However, from that point onwards it dropped off. Figure 2.1a shows that the overall proportion of schools receiving one-to-one support from their advocates fluctuated only slightly from 7% in Term 1, through 16% in Term 4, to 4% in Term 6.

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[28] Advocate 1 did not start work until Term 2 and had no EEF conferences as part of its offer.

Round 2 (Figure 2.1b)

The rate of uptake of one-to-one support was higher among R2 than R1 schools, with Advocate 4, a TSA, particularly favouring this approach. However, the numbers of schools involved in R2 were smaller than R1, and one-to-one support still remained the least common form of activity. Initially, over one quarter of schools took part in one-to-one support (28% in the first term of activity). However, this fell to 17% in the second term, and 16% in the third. Such support was time-consuming and costly, and often required schools to be proactive in identifying their support needs. This meant that the support was slow to become established, or dwindled in intensity (see Findings 5.4.2 for further details).

2.2 School participation, by advocate

The advocates each had very different patterns of school participation. Figure 2.2a shows the relative proportional reach of each R1 advocate. Each line represents an advocate and shows the extent to which it achieved the goal of involving schools in its network in at least one event or support activity per term. It is important to note that each advocate's percentage reach figure is based on a different number of enrolled schools, with some advocates (for example, Advocate 5) working with much larger numbers of schools than others (for example, Advocate 1).[29] The dotted line shows that, across all advocates, after a small increase in activity at the beginning of Year 2, there was a falling-away in advocates' reach to the end of the evaluation period.

Figure 2.2a: Advocates' proportional reach, by term, Round 1 advocates*
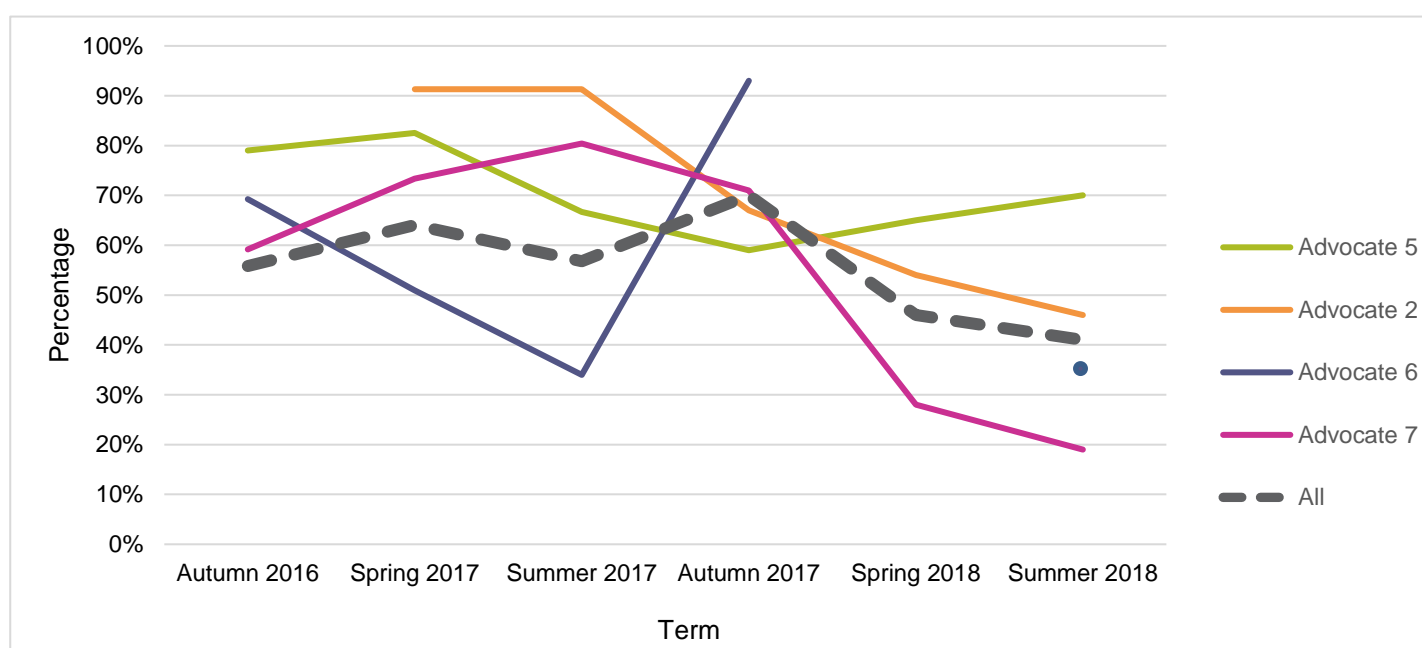
* Data was missing for Advocate 6 in Term 5 (Spring 2018).

The case studies provided a number of potential explanations for this falling-away in advocates' reach over the first two years of the Campaign. These included:

- a change in the nature of advocacy activities, from initial input activities focused on large numbers of schools (such as conferences and training events) to more individualised activities

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[29] Each term's proportional reach figure is based on the number of schools that each advocate had on its register in that specific term.

where schools worked independently to implement the advocated practices within their settings;

- a narrowing in focus, from initial broad coverage of a range of literacy topics that were potentially relevant to all schools, to more specific areas of focus, which were more relevant to some schools' identified needs than those of others;
- a view, in some schools, that the support offered was not sufficiently relevant to their needs or interests, leading to disengagement (this issue is explored further in section 6.4);
- challenges in engaging primary schools in activities during the spring and summer terms of each academic year due to national assessments and end-of-year activities; and
- variability in the advocates' capacity over the course of the Campaign.

2.2.1   Advocate 5

The number of schools within Advocate 5's network was stable across Year 1 (62/63). In Year 2, this was one of the few advocates to expand its network, with the number of schools rising to 88 in Term 4 and then remaining stable through to Term 6. This advocate achieved the highest reach of all the R1 advocates in addition to working with increased numbers of schools in Year 2. On average, 71% of schools attended at least one event per term across the two years, with rates ranging from 83% in Term 2 to 59% in Term 4.

2.2.2   Advocate 2

Advocate 2 was active from Terms 2–6. It had a stable number of schools in its network (23 in Terms 2 and 3, rising to 24 across Terms 4–6). This advocate achieved a similarly high level of reach to Advocate 5 (70% on average). However, this was accounted for mainly by a high level of participation in Year 1 (91% of schools engaged in at least one event in each of Terms 2 and 3). This figure fell to 67% in Term 4, 54% in Term 5, and 46% in Term 6.

2.2.3   Advocate 6

The number of schools within Advocate 6's network reduced in Year 2. Across Terms 1–3, the number was between 52 and 53, but across Terms 4–6, it was 44. The reasons for this fall in attendance are not clear or easy to interpret. This advocate achieved a moderate level of reach (on average, over half (57%) of schools attended at least one event per term), but the profile of attendance was variable (as shown in Figure 2.2a), with the average masking some substantial differences across terms. Rates of attendance ranged from 69% in Term 1 through 93% in Term 4 to 36% in Term 6.

2.2.4   Advocate 7

Advocate 7 had the largest number of schools in its network and this number varied more than for the other advocates (ranging from 97 schools in Term 3 to 109 in Term 2). The number of schools was relatively constant across Year 2, with 107–108 schools involved per term. Although this advocate saw a consistent growth in the proportion of schools engaging with its offer across Year 1 (59% in Term 1, 73% in Term 2, and 80% in Term 3), the reverse was true in Year 2 (71% in Term 4, 28% in Term 5, and only 19% in Term 6).

Figure 2.2b shows the relative proportional reach of each R2 advocate, creating a comparison with the R1 projects during their first year of operation. The dotted line shows that, across the three R2 advocates, after a small increase in activity after the first term, there was a falling-away in advocates' reach to the end of the year. This summary should be treated cautiously and should not be interpreted as a trend given the limited timespan over which these advocates had been operating when the data was gathered. The figures are also influenced quite heavily by one of the advocates (Advocate 4), as the following sections show.

Figure 2.2b: Advocates' reach by term, Round 2 advocates
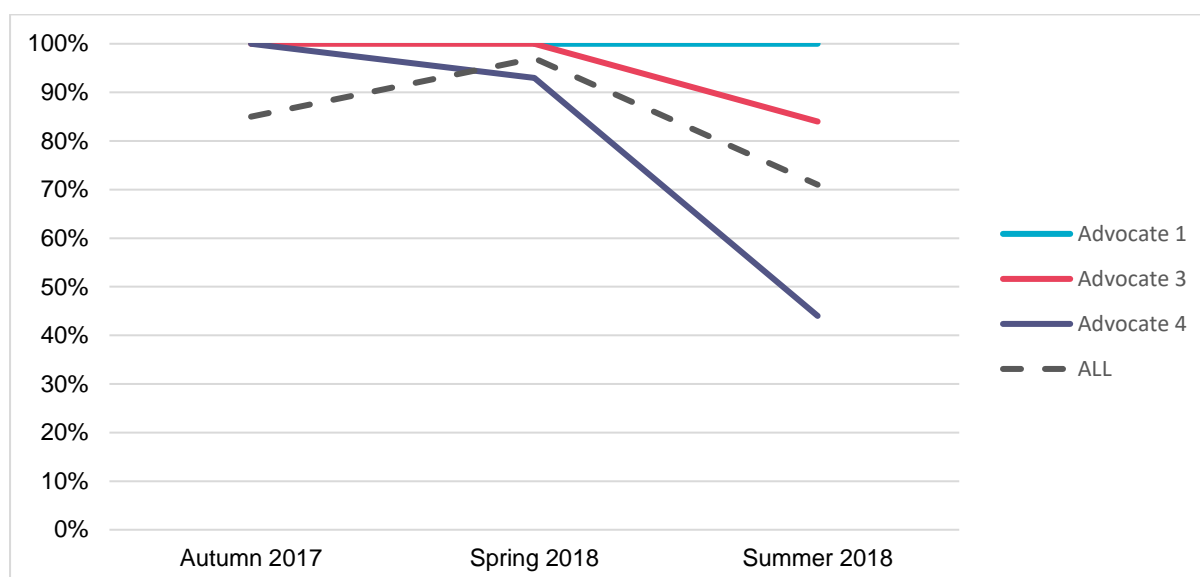
2.2.5 Advocate 1

Advocate 1 was the smallest of the advocates in terms of reach, having only 16 schools in its network in Term 5. This number reduced to just ten in Term 6. This advocate recorded maximum attendance across its two terms of activity. Its sole form of engagement was through network events led by a core team. EEF conferences and one-to-one support were not features of its provision. The reasons for the fall in the number of schools attending provision in Term 3 are difficult to determine, but case-study data suggests that these may be related to a sense, among some schools, that the training was insufficiently tailored to their needs, or that the time commitment was too great because it required schools to release two staff members for a significant amount of training.

2.2.6 Advocate 3

This advocate had a stable number of schools in its network (32 in each of Terms 4–6). It achieved a very high level of reach over its first year of operation (95% on average). Its model was a mixture of EEF conferences and network events and activities. Conference attendance was very high in Terms 4 and 6 (100% and 72% respectively—there was no conference attendance in Term 5), while network attendance was both consistent and high, ranging from 97% in Term 4, through 100% in Term 5 to 75% in Term 3. There was no one-to-one school support within this advocacy model.

2.2.7 Advocate 4

Advocate 4 had a stable number of schools in its network (25 in Term 4 and 27 in Terms 5 and 6). Its average reach was relatively high (79% across the three terms), but the pattern of reach was less consistent than for the other two R2 advocates falling from 100% in Term 4 through 93% in Term 5 to 44% in Term 6. Conference attendance was high in Term 4 (100%), but thereafter was low (25% in Term 5 and zero in Term 6), which is not surprising given that conference attendance was typically a start-up activity. Cluster/network events were not a major focus (only in Term 6 was there any such activity and 30% of schools took part). One-to-one support was the main focus of activity, making this advocate different from the others. The rate of take-up fell quite sharply from 76% in Term 4 to just 11% in Term 6, however.

As explored at the start of section 2.2, this finding appears to reflect the changing nature and focus of Advocate 4's support. Support began with a conference covering multiple literacy themes which was generally attended by two or more staff from each of the participating schools. Subsequent support

tended to involve individual schools' literacy coordinators in one-to-one sessions with the advocate, lesson observations of advocates' practices, and bespoke conference workshops in response to schools' common needs. These activities had a more refined focus and were not necessarily perceived by all schools to support their specific literacy priorities. Furthermore, some of the planned activity for Term 6, including follow-up one-to-one sessions and a further large-scale event bringing schools together, had not yet taken place, partly because schools needed more time to implement the identified literacy practices.

2.3 School participation, by staff role

We collected data on event attendees in each term according to their role/seniority. The following tables provide figures for R1 advocates in Terms 1–3 and for R1 and R2 advocates combined in Terms 4–6.

2.3.1 EEF conferences

Table 2.3 shows that rates of attendance at EEF conferences were higher in Year 2 (Terms 4–6) than in Year 1 (Terms 1–3). This is partly explained by the fact that R1 and R2 schools are combined in this table because some Round 1 advocates ran EEF conferences in both years. Clearly, the lower rates of attendance in Terms 2–3 and 5–6 reflect a lower level of conference activity in these terms.

Table 2.3: Attendance by grade, or combination of grade, in at least one EEF conference

	Term 1	Term 2[30]	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Senior leader	61	1	1	32	6	16
Literacy coordinator	27	0	19	58	28	35
Classroom teacher	0	0	3	20	4	2
Senior leader + literacy coordinator	25	0	13	43	23	17
Senior leader + classroom teacher	0	0	1	12	2	10
Literacy coordinator + classroom teacher	0	0	2	22	11	11
Senior leader + literacy coordinator + classroom teacher	0	0	5	0	4	1
Total no. of schools	113	1	44	187	78	92

Across the two years, literacy coordinators (LCs) were the main attendees at EEF conferences (344 schools sent their LC to EEF conferences, alone or with other members of staff). The second largest group was senior leaders (273 schools sent a senior leader, alone or with others), while the smallest group was classroom teachers (110 schools sent a classroom teacher, alone or with others). This suggests that most events were drawing in the staff that the Campaign had intended as its primary audience—LCs. High rates of SLT attendance, particularly at start-of-year launch events in Terms 1 and 4, also suggest that senior endorsement was being achieved at appropriate points in the Campaign's development. Very few schools sent classroom teachers to EEF conferences alone (29).

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[30] As Figure 2.1a shows, there were no EEF conferences in Term 2. This explains the virtually null rate of attendance shown in this table.

This is encouraging given their strategic importance and the need for attendees to return to their schools to discuss strategy and options for embedding the learning following attendance.

2.3.2 Cluster/network events

Attendees at cluster/network events varied across the two years covered by the evaluation. Despite the fact that Terms 4–6 cover data for seven advocates, overall rates of school attendance are slightly lower in this period than in Terms 1–3. This reflects the findings outlined in Figures 2.1a-b and 2.2a-b, showing an overall fall in advocates' reach over the duration of the evaluation.

Table 2.4   Attendance by grade, or combination of grade, at at least one cluster event

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Senior leader	33	59	18	26	12	12
Literacy coordinator	27	100	59	90	43	45
Classroom teacher	-	12	19	16	22	19
Senior leader + literacy coordinator	1	34	17	16	12	22
Senior leader + classroom teacher	-	4	10	15	15	9
Literacy coordinator + classroom teacher	-	7	15	23	14	17
Senior leader + literacy coordinator + classroom teacher	-	7	8	2	11	18
Total no. of schools	61	223	146	188	129	142

The pattern of attendance at cluster events, by role, was very similar to that for EEF conferences, with LCs again being the primary attendees. Across the two years, 588 schools sent their LC to cluster events, alone or in combination with other members of staff, 361 schools sent a senior leader, alone or in combination, while 263 schools sent a classroom teacher, alone or with others. Only 88 schools sent classroom teachers to events alone, although this became more commonplace over time. Conversely, the number of schools sending senior leaders alone fell over time. This suggests that the advocates were developing their network provision appropriately, with a move from strategy to practical application as the Campaign matured. Section 5.3.3 provides case-study findings that illustrate this point.

2.4 Advocates' social capital

Analysis of case-study and interview data provided some explanation for the relative rates of reach achieved by the advocates. We found that the advocates could be categorised in three groups according to the degree of 'social capital' they had already established in the region and with the schools they aimed to recruit and support.

2.4.1 Advocates with low social capital

Two of the advocates had limited history of working with schools in the region and were not locally based but were selected because of their particular expertise in literacy. Both found it difficult to recruit schools to their programmes and to establish a relationship with participating schools. Advocate 2 (R1) and Advocate 1 (R2) both needed considerable support from the EEF to build up a base of schools to

work with, although, once the initial recruitment challenge had been addressed, both achieved high rates of engagement from their small numbers of participating schools. Interviews with schools in Advocate 1's network showed that relationships and trust were able to grow quickly because, although this advocate had limited social capital, it was perceived to have a high level of *credibility* and *expertise*. One school interviewee described themselves as having 'utter faith' in this advocate's literacy pedagogy expertise.[31] Advocate 2 was able to take advantage of support from the head of a TSA, who promoted the offer among alliance schools and aided recruitment. One school interviewee commented that this advocate 'has had very good feedback from everyone'. Both advocates adopted an *advocate-led* approach, primarily based around specialist centralised training.

2.4.2   Advocates with high social capital

Advocates 3 and 4 (both R2) had very strong and long-established relationships with the schools they were supporting. In both cases, the advocates were teaching professionals who offered support through an existing school partnership (of which they were a part) such as a TSA or multi-academy trust (MAT). Advocate 3 had a history of undertaking practice observations and working with Key Stage leads across the MAT, while all schools taking part in Advocate 4's offer already participated in regular CPD and networking groups led by the advocate. These advocates faced few difficulties in recruiting schools (although the number of schools they worked with was smaller than most of the R1 advocates). They both achieved high levels of school participation, although Advocate 4 did not retain its initially high level of reach across all three terms. Case-study evidence suggested that this was because, following initial conferences, which adopted a broad focus, this advocate focused on specific content elements (for example, lesson demonstrations of reciprocal reading), which not all schools felt offered sufficient additionality to their current practices. Both advocates adopted a *facilitated* model of provision—that is, their approach was designed to directly facilitate peer-to-peer learning.

2.4.3   Advocates with moderate to high social capital

Two of the R1 advocates were organisations with long histories of supporting school improvement in the region. However, they differed in the extent to which the individuals who led each offer were familiar to schools. The strategic lead for Advocate 5 was very well known to the schools whereas Advocate 6 was less familiar. Both operated a *distributed advocacy* model of provision where schools were organised into small groupings or 'clusters', each with a school-level facilitator who coordinated learning and activity among schools in the group. The strategic lead for Advocate 6 operated a fairly arms-length policy, enabling these small school groupings to manage their own learning; but the strategic lead for Advocate 5 retained close personal contact with the schools and provided support for the clusters, in addition to enabling them to facilitate their own learning.

The reach figures show that Advocate 5 achieved the highest level of school participation of all the R1 advocates and also increased the number of participating schools in Year 2. Advocate 6 achieved a moderate, and much more variable, level of reach by comparison.

It is not possible to make firm judgements based upon just two cases, but it appears that the input of a highly regarded individual within an otherwise *distributed* model contributed to the effective reach achieved by Advocate 5, whom one school interviewee described as 'fantastic, really high quality'. The longer-term sustainability of a model that relies on the input of a key individual is questionable, however (see Findings 6).

A high level of social capital is not just an important prerequisite for recruitment; it also positively impacts on the strength of ongoing relationships which, in turn, influence retention and reach. Across the case studies, it was the advocates with the highest levels of pre-existing social capital that saw the greatest consistency in school participation and the highest levels of proportional reach (Advocates 3, 4 and 5).

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[31] This advocate had very high rates of attendance among the schools that it recruited and retained, but did suffer some attrition in its second term of operation.

These advocates all based their models around some form of facilitation of peer-to-peer learning. Their approaches were not centrally controlled, nor totally *distributed*. Strong existing relationships with the schools in their networks appear to have contributed to the success of these approaches.

It is not always possible to build on social capital when scaling up evidence, however—indeed, the greatest need is often apparent in schools that are not well networked with 'experts' or other schools. In these situations, capacity needs to be built and this is challenging. We found evidence that relationships and trust can grow quickly where there is limited social capital if the advocate is perceived to have a high level of *credibility* and *expertise*. Additionally, the support of a well-networked organisation or network of schools can also be enlisted to boost participation.

Findings 3: Promise—changes in school literacy practices

Key findings summary

Overall, there was a mixed picture with regard to schools' perceived adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes, showing developments in some specific aspects of literacy during the evaluation period.

- Survey data showed increased adoption of evidence-based teaching of reading comprehension and catch-up support in the NE schools that responded to our survey compared to comparison schools. The responding NE schools represented both those that had, and had not, received advocacy support.

- But survey data showed no difference between intervention and comparison schools in terms of the adoption of evidence-based practices for teaching writing composition, handwriting, a balanced and blended approach to reading (balancing decoding and reading comprehension strategies as appropriate to the age of the pupil), or diagnosing children's literacy needs.

- The case studies suggested that schools valued the Campaign and advocacy support for providing knowledge about evidence-based literacy programmes. This was reported to be leading to the adoption of evidenced-based literacy practices and programmes.

The Campaign and advocacy was perceived to show considerable promise in increasing schools' capacity and resources to support good practice in literacy in terms of high quality literacy teaching, the use of data and assessments to diagnose pupils' needs and target provision, promoting high expectations for all pupils, literacy development planning, and literacy professional development.

- Survey data showed increased capacity and resources for good practice in literacy in NE schools compared to comparison schools.

- Case-study interviewees (advocates and senior school staff in three of their linked schools) reported positive outcomes for subject and pedagogical knowledge, and to some extent for literacy leadership and school-to-school partnership working.

We found no association between whether or not NE schools had received advocacy support and any of the outcome measures for evidence-based literacy practices (reading comprehension, writing composition, and catch-up support) or on schools' capacity for good practice in literacy. Due to the sample size, it was not possible to refine this analysis further to consider factors such as schools' levels of engagement with the advocacy support, the length of time over which they had received advocacy, or the nature and quality of the support they had received.

This findings chapter summarises evaluation evidence on the influence of the Campaign on schools' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and schools' capacity for good practice in literacy provision. It draws on survey questions about schools' literacy practices as covered in the EEF guidance materials (including decoding, reading comprehension, writing composition, handwriting, catch-up support, and diagnosing children's literacy needs) and their capacity to support good practice in literacy. It also summarises case-study interviews exploring the perceived impact of advocacy support on schools' adoption of evidence-based practices and programmes.

3.1   Adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes in the NE

3.1.1   Survey findings

As described in the research design and methods chapter, the survey explored the impact of the Campaign on schools' use of evidence-based literacy practices across a range of areas. The survey

was designed to reflect evidenced-based practices recommended in the KS1 guidance because this was the only EEF source available at the time of developing the survey. Although this potentially limited our scope of questioning, and the relevance of the survey beyond KS1, we were aware of the likely content of guidance for the other Key Stages in advance of publication and were able to use this in phrasing the questions. In practice, the KS2 guidance contained very similar recommendations to the KS1 guidance and we are confident that the KS1 guidance acted as a reasonable guide for assessing outcomes across the primary phase, although less so for the early years foundation stage. The questions explored evidence-based literacy approaches in relation to a balanced and blended approach to reading (Q2), reading comprehension (Q3), handwriting strategies (Q4), writing composition (Q5), diagnosing pupils' needs (Q6), and catch-up support and structured interventions (Q7, Q9 and Q11). The survey questions can be viewed in Appendix A.

In this section we report the analysis of the responses to the survey. As outlined in the research design and methods chapter, factor analysis identified three literacy practice composite measures which reflect best practice in literacy teaching:

- reading comprehension (selected items from Q3);
- writing composition (selected items from Q5); and
- catch-up support (selected items from Q7 and Q11).

Please see Appendix D for a summary of the individual survey items that made up these composite literacy measures. The other survey questions that did not load onto any specific factors are reported as single items in the following sections.

We ran regression analysis on the matched sample of responses from schools that completed the survey at both baseline and endpoint (N = 400) to compare whether there were any differences in scored responses over time for intervention and comparison schools after controlling for background characteristics of the schools. It is important to note that both intervention and comparison schools were sent copies of the EEF's guidance reports, therefore, the comparison group must be considered 'active', and any reported differences indicative of activities that were underway in the NE region specifically. The analysis revealed differences between intervention (NE schools) and comparison schools for reading comprehension and catch-up support. These differences were found to be statistically significant. But there was no evidence that there were differences between the two groups when writing composition was considered. A summary of results of all the survey analysis is provided in Appendix G.

For **reading comprehension**, there was a positive association between the intervention group and the outcome measure. This was found to be statistically significant. When we compared the average response scores at baseline and endpoint for the combined (matched) sample of intervention and comparison schools, we found that both intervention and comparison schools showed significant improvement in using evidence-based practices for teaching reading comprehension during the Campaign period (p = 0.021). However, the regression analysis revealed that intervention schools showed greater improvement than comparison schools over time, with an effect size of 0.24 (95% CI: 0.05, 0.42, p = 0.014).[32] (Basic frequencies of all responses to Question 3 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Table C3i and C3ii of Appendix C).

For **catch-up support**, there was also a positive association between the intervention group and the outcome measure. This was found to be statistically significant. When we compared the average response scores at baseline and endpoint for the combined (matched) sample of intervention and comparison schools, we found no significant change over time in the use of evidence-based practices for literacy catch-up support during the campaign. However, the regression analysis revealed that

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[32] CI = confidence interval. All effect sizes where we found an effect of the intervention are discussed in relevant sections of the report.

intervention schools showed greater improvement over time than comparison schools, with an effect size of 0.25 (95% CI: 0.06, 0.44, p = 0.011). (Basic frequencies of all responses to Question 7 and 11 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Tables C7i, C7ii, C10i and C10ii of Appendix C).

For **writing composition**, there was no association between the intervention and this outcome measure. Although both intervention and comparison schools overall showed significant improvement in using evidence-based practices for teaching writing composition during the Campaign period when we compared the mean survey response scores at baseline and endpoint (p = 0.006), there was no evidence of difference between intervention and comparison schools in the extent of this improvement. (Basic frequencies of all responses to Question 5 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Tables C5i and C5ii of Appendix C).

As noted, the survey was devised prior to the publication of the EEF literacy guidance reports. While all attempts were made to design a survey that reflected the emerging guidance principles being developed by the EEF, it is possible that the survey aligned more closely with the guidance recommendations associated with reading than with those associated with writing or other aspects of literacy practice. This may have contributed to the differences reported above. An alternative, and more plausible, explanation for the difference between reading and the other outcomes is that many NE schools focused their energies on improving **reading** outcomes. Findings from the advocacy case-studies indicate that the teaching of reading comprehension was commonly identified as a priority area for schools and, consequently, formed a particular focus of advocacy support. Writing composition was less frequently identified by interviewees in schools as a key focus. It is possible, therefore, that, while the Campaign had positive effects on reading practices and catch-up support, an over-emphasis on these aspects of provision meant that there was less attention paid to adopting evidence-based approaches for other elements of the literacy curriculum.

We also conducted regression analysis using the matched sample (N = 400) on a number of individual survey questions about schools' evidence-based literacy practices. These questions did not load onto any of the factors, but were still of interest. We found **no evidence of association** between being in the intervention group and outcomes on evidence-based teaching of a blended and balanced approach to reading (Q2), handwriting (Q4), or diagnosing children's literacy needs (Q6).

For a **blended and balanced approach to reading** (balanced approach to decoding and comprehension strategies as appropriate to the age of the pupil), there was no evidence of improvements in evidence-based practices during the Campaign period for intervention and comparison schools overall when we compared mean baseline and endpoint scores. In the regression analysis, we found no evidence of differences between intervention and comparison schools' use of this evidence-based practice (basic frequencies of all responses to Question 2 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Tables C2i and C2ii of Appendix C).

For **handwriting**, there was no indication of improvements in evidence-based practices during the Campaign period for intervention and comparison schools overall based on the mean baseline and endpoint scores. In the regression analysis, we found no significant differences between intervention and comparison schools' use of evidence-based practices to teach handwriting (basic frequencies of all responses to Question 4 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Table C4 of Appendix C).

For **diagnosing children's literacy needs**, there was no indication of improvements in evidence-based practices during the Campaign period for intervention and comparison schools overall based on the mean baseline and endpoint scores. The regression analysis showed no significant differences between intervention and comparison schools' use of evidence-based practices in diagnosing children's literacy needs (basic frequencies of all responses to Question 6 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Table C6 of Appendix C).

These findings are somewhat surprising in that there was considerable scope for the Campaign to make a difference to these aspects of practice, particularly to handwriting and effective diagnosis of children's literacy needs, because at baseline we found only modest levels of evidence-based practices. However, as we discuss in section 3.1.2, there is suggestion from the case-study interviews that handwriting and assessment were less common foci of literacy developments among the schools receiving advocacy support, which may provide some explanation for this lack of impact. These neglected areas may indicate an area of promise for future years of the Campaign.

Overall, we found no evidence of developments in evidence-based literacy practices in comparison schools that were greater than those in intervention schools: either intervention and comparison schools improved to equal degrees, or intervention schools improved more than comparison schools. This finding suggests that there were signs of increasing use of evidence-based literacy practice in schools in the NE and in other regions during the Campaign period, but that the extent of developments in intervention schools around evidence-based teaching of reading and catch-up support would have been less likely to occur in the absence of the Campaign and advocacy.

In addition to the analyses described above, we conducted further regression analysis on the composite outcome measures from **intervention schools only** (N = 241; 99 with advocacy and 142 without advocacy) to see if there was evidence of additional outcomes for NE schools receiving Campaign *and* advocacy support, as opposed to receiving just Campaign support. We found no association between whether or not a school had received advocacy support and the three composite outcome measures—reading comprehension, writing composition, and catch-up support The results of this analysis are presented in Appendix G. Although we know that the achieved sample of schools in the NE was representative of NE primary schools (see Appendix B), we checked to see whether there was any response bias in advocacy versus non-advocacy respondents (that is, differences in the type of schools responding to the survey at both time points) which could help to explain this finding. The analysis included the following school characteristics:

- school type (sponsored academy, converter academy, local authority maintained, foundation, voluntary aided, and community);
- KS2 literacy attainment;
- Ever6FSM;
- English as an additional language;
- special educational needs; and
- schools' responses to Question 8a in the baseline survey—as an indicator of the school's use of research evidence.

For the advocate model, the only significant characteristics were for schools in the lowest quintile of KS2 literacy performance to be less likely to have completed the endpoint survey than the other schools, and for foundation schools to be more likely than other school types to have completed the endpoint survey.[33] In the non-advocate model, none of the characteristics were significantly related to completing the endpoint survey. From this, we conclude that it is possible that the lower participation of low-performing schools in the advocacy group may have affected our ability to detect a difference in the outcome measures, but we think it unlikely that this has affected the result to a great extent.

The finding that there was no association between whether or not a school had received advocacy support and their literacy outcomes is contrary to the ToC and does not align with case-study evidence, which showed that schools which engaged with the advocacy reported a number of positive experiences of advocacy (discussed in section 3.1.2 below). Although the survey findings could be taken as evidence of a lack of effectiveness of advocacy, there are a number of alternative explanations that should be considered. Due to the relatively small sample size, we had to conduct this analysis on a fairly simple, binary measure of 'receiving advocacy' or 'not receiving advocacy'. The analysis is therefore unable to

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[33] Note that there were only 14 foundation schools in this analysis.

give any indication of the extent of schools' engagement with advocacy support, the length of time over which they were receiving advocacy, or the nature and quality of the support received. Where case-study interviewees reported positive experiences, their schools had typically had substantial involvement with their advocates. Nevertheless, the survey finding does suggest that where the Campaign was positively associated with schools' evidence-based practices, this coincided with Campaign activity, both with and without advocacy. This finding, which is discussed in detail in the conclusion to this report, may have implications for how the EEF works with local partners to support schools to implement evidence-based practices in the future.

Finally, we asked survey respondents a question about which published literacy programmes their school had used in the previous two academic years (Question 9). The survey provided a list of options and allowed respondents to enter details of up to two additional programmes that they had used under the category 'other'.[34] Responses are shown in Table 3.1, giving a snapshot of the prevalence of these literacy programmes between 2014 and 2018. The Table shows that, broadly speaking, the same literacy programmes have remained popular with schools during the period 2014–2018, with similar proportions of respondents identifying these programmes at both time-points. Grammar for Writing, Fresh Start, and Reading Recovery were slightly more popular at baseline (2016), while Accelerated Reader and Catch up Literacy© were more popular at endpoint (2018).

Table 3.1: Literacy programmes used as reported at baseline and endpoint

In the last two academic years which, if any, of the following published programmes has your school used to support children's literacy?	Baseline %	Endpoint %
Talk for writing (Primary Writing Project)	59	56
Read, Write Inc. phonics (Ruth Miskin Training)	46	45
Lexia Reading (Lexia UK)	29	28
Grammar for writing (Exeter University)	19	13
Fresh start (Ruth Miskin Training)	17	12
Reading recovery (Reading recovery)	17	13
Accelerated reader (Renaissance Learning)	16	24
Catch up literacy© (Catch up literacy)	8	12
Philosophy for Children (Sapere)	7	9
Nuffield Early Language Intervention (I CAN)	2	3
Changing mindsets (University of Portsmouth)	1	2
Success for all literacy (Success for all UK)	0	1
Curiosity Corner (Success for all UK)	0	0
Using self-regulation to improve writing (Calderdale Excellence Partnership)	0	1
My reading coach (Mindcorp)	0	-
Quick Reads (Text project)	0	1
Reading Reels (Success for all UK)	0	-
Other	17	19
No response	6	7
Total	**N = 649**	**N = 612**
More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.		

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[34] The EEF provided the list of programmes, based on previous surveys, to identify which literacy programmes were most commonly used by primary schools. These are not necessarily evidence-based programmes, although many of them have been subject to an EEF trial with promising results.

> *A total of 607 respondents answered at least one item in this question in 2016.*
> *A total of 567 respondents answered at least one item in this question in 2018.*
> *Source: NFER North East Scale Up Baseline Survey 2016 and Endpoint Survey 2018.*

Overall, the survey findings reveal a rather mixed picture of the success of the Campaign and advocacy in supporting schools' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes; there are suggestions of success in relation to reading comprehension and catch-up support, but not for other aspects of literacy practice and no evidence of advocacy providing additionality in terms of schools adopting evidence-based practices.

3.1.2   Case-study findings

Case-study interviews with each advocate and with literacy coordinators and senior leaders in each of three of their linked schools provide illustrations of schools' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes. It should be noted that the number of case studies is small (six) and that the 18 schools included in these case studies may have been particularly well engaged, therefore findings are not intended to be representative of all schools in the NE receiving advocacy and wider Campaign support.

Schools' literacy goals

Across the advocacy case studies, school senior leaders generally identified literacy development goals that were fairly broad and focused on the ultimate aspiration to raise literacy attainment. For instance, they typically identified an issue with attainment in literacy, perhaps in a particular aspect of literacy such as reading, writing, or spelling, or with a particular year group. Schools varied in the extent to which they had analysed specific issues that may have been contributing to poor attainment and progress. However, all schools had some form of development target around literacy. Most schools, therefore, approached the advocacy offer with an openness to receiving a range of evidence-based and good-practice ideas to support their developments in literacy. The advocacy support itself, tended to align and assimilate well with schools' identified needs and broader development plans. There was no suggestion from interviewees that support was 'bolted-on' or in any way detrimental to other areas of development within their schools. Several schools had more focused goals, aiming to address specific areas of practice, such as to improve the teaching of reading comprehension approaches or to introduce more consistent teaching of spelling strategies. This finding suggests that schools had differing needs both for the support required in the process of identifying areas for literacy development, and in terms of the content and nature of support they wanted from the advocate. Hence, schools valued support that was tailored to their individual school needs through either a broad offer that enabled schools to access the aspects most relevant to their needs, or a more customised offer that was responsive to their specific needs.

Most schools reported making, or intending to make, some changes to their practice as a result of the advocacy support. Improvements were commonly focused on reading comprehension, improving the breadth and quality of literature covering a variety of genres, media, and topics, and improving reading skills—often through extended discussion of texts and activities to broaden pupils' vocabulary. This finding helps to explain the survey responses discussed above (in section 3.1.1), which showed improvements in evidence-based practices for teaching reading in intervention schools. There were also case-study examples of schools introducing evidence-based changes to spelling and writing practices, as well as approaches to developing underlying language, speaking, and listening skills, and literacy assessment, although these areas were less commonly identified.

Schools' practice changes

Changes to practice tended to align with the guidance recommendations, although some recommendations were adopted more commonly (for example explicit teaching of comprehension skills—questioning, summarising, and predicting) than others (for example, assessing pupils' needs and using appropriate interventions). Adoption of evidence-based practices and programmes included the use of specific evidence-based programmes such as Read Write Inc. Phonics, Reciprocal Reading, and Accelerated Reader. Although these were not explicitly referenced in the guidance, they are identified in the EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit ('the Toolkit') as evidence-based interventions that incorporate elements of the EEF guidance in their designs.

Changes to practice ranged from adaptation of existing approaches (for example, teaching spelling strategies explicitly rather than conducting spelling tests) to strategic redirection (for example, implementing an evidence-based programme across the school; see the example in Box 3.1 below). In most cases, the teacher directly involved with the advocacy support (usually the school's literacy coordinator) had disseminated information to colleagues within their school. Developments were typically taking place within that individual's classroom, but in some cases were also influencing colleagues' practices. R1 schools had generally made the greatest progress in adopting evidence-based practices and programmes. However, this seems to have been purely a result of having had longer for the evaluation to follow schools into the second year of their involvement. In the first year of practice for R2 schools, there were comparable (and even more advanced) plans for adoption of evidence-based practices and programmes. Overall, this suggests that adopting evidence-based practices and programmes takes considerable time.

Box 3.1: Adoption of reciprocal reading

A school working with Advocate 2 initially identified an issue with pupils' reading comprehension. Pupils had the technical skills to decode and read texts but they could not talk about what they had read to demonstrate depth of understanding and comprehension. The school attended some initial training with the advocate and then, through one-to-one support, identified an interest in the reciprocal reading approach. The advocate provided whole-school training on reciprocal reading, which prompted teachers to reflect on why pupils were not benefiting from existing guided reading practice and how a more explicit and distinctive teaching of comprehension strategies could help to address this.

The reciprocal reading approach concentrates on four aspects of text comprehension: prediction, summarising, clarifying, and questioning. It is an approach that aligns with the EEF's literacy guidance recommendations on explicit teaching and modelling of reading comprehension strategies and shows evidence of promise in EEF trials.

The literacy coordinator trialled the reciprocal reading approach and then it was implemented in all classes across the school within existing guided reading sessions. The four parts of the approach were displayed on classroom walls with examples and explanations. The school monitored the implementation by teachers videoing their lessons to evaluate their teaching and the pupils' responses, and the literacy coordinator offered ongoing support for implementation through staff meetings and informal discussions.

The literacy coordinator reported substantial improvements and accelerated progress among Year 6 pupils in their KS2 practise assessments. The pupils were reported to be engaged by the texts and confident to discuss and analyse their meaning. The literacy coordinator felt that reciprocal reading was preparing Year 6 pupils effectively because it was a thorough and analytical approach. By it referring explicitly to aspects of comprehension that pupils were expected to demonstrate, pupils became familiar with this terminology. Staff felt that pupils were more enthusiastic about reading than previously and they were reported to be displaying increasingly sophisticated vocabulary in their discussion of books.

The school planned to embed reciprocal reading further by outlining it as a prominent focus in the literacy action plan, time-tabling dedicated times for the activity, and re-evaluating the implementation process to ensure staff were deploying the approach consistently and effectively, and providing further support and training, if necessary. The literacy coordinator described how direct, high-quality, tailored training from the advocate was critical to successful implementation of this evidence-based approach:

> *What helped was the whole-staff training. It wouldn't have worked if I had to come back and deliver the training second hand. It's really important that the training comes from someone who knows the technique inside out. Staff commented after the CPD day how much they had enjoyed it and how interested they were by it and I think that sparked something in some of them. Without that input from [the advocate] I doubt whether it would have taken off at all.*

Perceived impacts on pupils

Some interviewees reported that there were early signs of impacts on pupils as a result of the evidence-based literacy approaches they had implemented. Impacts were identified in terms of increased engagement with reading, enhanced breadth and sophistication of vocabulary, improved ability to discuss and interpret meaning from texts, improved early speech and language skills, extended and higher quality writing, and literacy attainment.

One literacy coordinator/senior leader from Advocate 4's network described some of these outcomes for pupils in their school:

The teaching of reading comprehension strategies is more focused, it's more specific. [Before], you could talk to a child about the text they'd read and ask quite general, closed questions of what were the characters in the story. But we are getting them to dig deeper; make predications, infer how a character might be feeling from clues in the text. The children are using the terminology, so they're saying: 'I predict that Sam will run away from home because he has argued with this Mum'. The teaching is a lot more focused because we're modelling that to the children and giving them the opportunity to apply it to their work.

The example in Box 3.2 provides a further illustration of how teachers perceived an evidence-based literacy practice to be having a positive impact on pupils.

Box 3.2: Adoption of a framework for developing speech and language in the early years

A school working in Advocate 3's network had identified a need to develop pupils' speech and language skills as some pupils were not achieving their Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) goals and displayed considerable gaps in their oracy skills. The advocate introduced the school to an evidence-based framework for assessing and supporting pupils' early speech and language development using a range of activities. Following training and demonstrations from the advocate, the school implemented the framework and regarded it as fully embedded within the literacy practices of the school.

The headteacher suggested that the framework had helped them to identify gaps in children's needs that they were otherwise unaware of because these were the intermediary developmental indicators underpinning the skills required for the EYFS—such as memory capacity and skills in ordering information. The introduction of this approach had reportedly been a 'lightbulb moment' for staff, providing practical ideas for how to support children with early speech and language difficulties, as the literacy coordinator described:

What this training has provided is the logic and reasoning behind why some children can't speak, what those barriers are, and how we can break them down. For me, it has made me re-evaluate and re-think my planning and my teaching strategies for those children. It has made a massive difference on my CPD in terms of understanding speech development and how I can support a wide range of speech difficulties, whether it is speech sounds or initial sounds—things that I didn't know much about and I can now use them confidently to support children.

The literacy coordinator reported 'massive' progress for pupils with SEN and the headteacher gave two specific examples of pupils for whom the improved provision had been 'life-changing' in supporting their early language development and enabling them to more fully access other areas of the curriculum. The headteacher explained:

Some of the target children whom we identified achieved Good Levels of Development [GLD is the expected standard of achievement by the end of the EYFS] *and this has been a big shock to the teachers. [The advocated approach] has really developed [the pupils'] visual and auditory skills and it's play-based, so they've loved it.*

Progress towards anticipated outcomes

Advocates outlined a number of anticipated outcomes of their support in their ToCs (see research design and methods chapter). These are outlined below and were identified in all advocates' ToCs:

- teacher outcomes, focusing on evidence-based literacy teaching practices, assessment, diagnosis, and targeting support to meet pupil needs, and embedding practices across the curriculum;

- pupil outcomes, including pupil engagement, attainment, and literacy skills;

- capacity outcomes, to develop teacher confidence and knowledge, middle leadership, and school improvement capacity, and school-to-school and partnership working; and

- research engagement outcomes, for instance to develop teachers' understanding of research evidence and to increase participation in educational trials.

Progress towards teacher and pupil outcomes is discussed further below. Progress in relation to improving capacity is discussed in section 3.2. Progress in terms of use of research evidence is explored in section 4.1 of Findings 4.

There were signs—from case-study interviewees' comments—of progress towards teacher and pupil outcomes in terms of improved literacy teaching, particularly focused on reading comprehension and catch-up, and improved pupil engagement with literacy. Some of the other intended outcomes of the advocacy were less evident from interviewees' feedback, such as developments in the assessment and diagnosis of pupil needs, and embedding literacy practices across the curriculum beyond discrete literacy sessions. However, there were some examples of progress in this regard, for instance, where the practices advocated focused on identifying specific gaps in pupils' literacy development.

The majority of case-study interviewees were positive that the advocacy support had met their needs and was helping them to make progress in adopting evidence-based literacy practices. Some of these interviewees reported that they were in the relatively early stages of this process and felt there was more to do to spread, embed, and sustain practices. This was more typically reported among schools working with R2 advocates that had only relatively recently begun developments in practice, although there were instances of schools working with R1 advocates that had made only slow progress and were yet to reach the embedding phase of their selected developments.

Although most school staff felt that they had benefited from the advocacy support, two interviewees working with different advocates felt the advocacy support was not meeting the schools' needs or helping them to progress. In both cases this was because the practices advocated were deemed not to be relevant because the schools were already using similar approaches. Interestingly, these schools were involved in an *advocate-led* and an *advocate-facilitated* approach, both of which employed individualised needs analyses that informed the advocate's subsequent offer of support to all participating schools. The finding that these approaches did not meet the schools' needs highlights the challenge for advocates of providing a responsive and tailored offer of support to schools based on a generalisation of school's individual needs. Advocates' approaches to needs analysis is discussed further in Findings 5.

3.2   Increased school propensity for good practice in literacy

3.2.1   Survey findings

Factor analysis of survey questions generated a composite measure, which we labelled *school propensity for good practice in literacy*. Five survey items that reflected evidence-based practice (from Question 11) loaded reliably onto this factor, providing a measure of capacity whereby schools scored highly for being well-equipped in aspects of provision such as quality literacy teaching, the use of data and assessments to diagnose pupil needs and target provision, and promoting high expectations for all pupils (see research design and methods chapter and Appendix D for further details of this analysis and the items that loaded to this factor).

We ran regression analysis on the measure to compare whether there were any differences in scored responses over time for intervention and comparison schools. The regression analysed the responses from the matched sample of 400 schools which completed the survey at both baseline and endpoint (basic frequencies of all responses to Question 11 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Tables C10i and C10ii of Appendix C).

The regression model included the score for the school propensity for good practice in literacy measure at endpoint as the dependent variable, regressed on the independent variables as presented in Table 3 of the research design and methods chapter.

Overall, the survey results showed no significant change during the Campaign in their capacity for good practice in literacy, based on analysis of mean survey responses at baseline and endpoint. However, when split by condition, the regression analysis showed that intervention schools showed significantly greater improvement than comparison schools. This means that there was a significant positive association between the intervention and school propensity for good practice in literacy, with an effect size of 0.19 (95% CI: 0.01, 0.37, p = 0.043).

We also conducted regression analysis using the matched sample on a further survey question that did not load in the factor analysis, about schools' resources for literacy. This included aspects such as literacy development planning and literacy professional development (see Question 10 of the survey in Appendix A). Overall, the intervention and comparison groups together showed no significant change between baseline and endpoint in their resources for literacy. However, the regression analysis showed a significant positive association for the intervention group; intervention schools showed greater improvement during the Campaign period in terms of their resources for literacy, with an effect size of 0.28 (95% CI: 0.10, 0.51, p = 0.003;[35] basic frequencies of all responses to Question 10 at baseline and endpoint can be viewed in Table C9 of Appendix C). A summary of results of all the survey analysis is provided in Appendix G.

In addition to the analyses described above, we conducted further regression analysis of responses to this question from **intervention schools only** to see if there was evidence of additional outcomes for schools receiving Campaign *and* advocacy support, as opposed to those in the Campaign area but not receiving advocacy support. We found no association between whether or not a school had received advocacy support and the schools' capacity for good practice in literacy. Given the fact (reported earlier) that lower-performing schools in receipt of advocacy were less likely to complete the endpoint survey, we cannot rule out the possibility that this may have reduced our ability to detect the impact of advocacy, but we think this is unlikely to be the main reason for this finding. See Appendix G for a summary of these results.

Taken together, these survey findings suggest that the Campaign was showing considerable promise in increasing schools' capacity for good practice in literacy and their resources for literacy in terms of quality literacy teaching, the use of data and assessments to diagnose pupil needs and target provision, promoting high expectations for all pupils, literacy development planning, and literacy professional development.

3.2.2 Case-study findings

Analysis of case-study data supported the findings from the survey, with interviewees identifying a number of perceived capacity improvements as a result of working with advocates and the EEF. The advocates' ToCs showed their intention to impact on various aspects of school capacity, including teacher knowledge and confidence, literacy leadership capacity, and school-to-school and school-partnership capacity.

Interviewees across all six case-studies identified improved teacher literacy knowledge and understanding of good literacy teaching practices as a result of their involvement with advocates and the EEF. This outcome was most commonly reported for members of staff directly involved in the advocacy offer, which was usually, but not always, the literacy coordinator. However, literacy coordinators often played a role in disseminating learning to colleagues to support whole-school-level change. One literacy coordinator/senior leader within Advocate 5's network explained the benefits for their own and colleagues' literacy knowledge, particularly in teaching writing:

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[35] All effect sizes where we found an effect of the intervention are discussed in relevant sections of the report.

> *My knowledge is improving and I share this with staff all the time. They are getting more confident in teaching English; I can see that when I go to observe them in their lessons. They are excited about the changes.*

Interviewees from four of the six case studies described some developments in terms of literacy leadership capacity. The advocacy support had reportedly helped literacy coordinators to refine literacy development aims and plans and had provided opportunities for literacy coordinators to lead on the implementation of specific programmes and whole-school developments, and therefore required them to exercise their skills of change management. For example, literacy coordinators gained experience of engaging senior leader support, delivering training to colleagues and modelling practice, revising planning documents, and monitoring and reviewing the implementation process. One literacy coordinator/senior leader within Advocate 2's network described the leadership opportunities afforded through their involvement in the advocacy:

> *We as literacy leads rarely have time to work together so one of the valuable things to come out of this project is that it has given us time to do things together and plan. Having time outside of school to think about how we are going to plan for change and implement it.*

There were also examples of improved school-to-school support and networking capacity with advocacy providing opportunities for schools to work together and support each other. Some interviewees suggested that because relationships had been established between schools as a result of involvement in the Campaign, this would increase capacity for collaborative working in the future. One literacy coordinator/senior leader within Advocate 6's network explained:

> *It's brought us together as a partnership and we use each other for ideas. For me that's been a life line, it's been vital to have that outside link. Particularly because we're in an RI [Ofsted 'Requires Improvement'] school it's been crucial. It's given us the thinking that's happening at the moment, what we have to do and how to implement it. That support from the partnership was crucial and really helpful.*

Another aspect of this school-to-school and partnership capacity building was the development of literacy expertise in lead schools. This was found in *advocate-facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches rather than in *Advocate-led* approaches. For instance, the lead schools involved in one *distributed* (Advocate 6) and one *advocate-facilitated* (Advocate 40 approach described developing their skills in: facilitating coaching conversations to identify needs; auditing provision; coordinating development activities with other schools; and developing their awareness and knowledge of evidence-based literacy approaches and programmes (such as specific evidence-based interventions, greater familiarity with the EEF Toolkit and increased awareness of the value of evidence in informing decision making). Interestingly, these outcomes were often a result of direct contact with, and support from EEF, as well as the opportunity to implement and develop some of these skills in practice (for example, opportunities to support a literacy coordinator in another school through an audit process). Some interviewees suggested that these leads were well placed to facilitate school-to-school working in the future beyond the lifetime of the Campaign having developed their capacity to provide such support through their involvement in the advocacy and with EEF.

3.3   School factors facilitating evidence-based practices

The case studies revealed a number of school-level factors that interviewees felt had facilitated the adoption of evidence-based practices and programmes. These included:

- senior leader support for staff engagement with the advocacy and implementation of the advocated practices, including both pedagogical support for the value of the approach in improving teaching and learning, and practical support and resources to enable the changes, such as release time for staff, opportunities for CPD, opportunities for cascading/peer learning, and supporting colleagues through modelling practice;

- literacy coordinators taking responsibility for leading and coordinating changes to practice within their schools;

- staff meetings and development opportunities within schools to disseminate the advocacy training/support;

- accessing additional training on specific teaching approaches and strategies to support further understanding and accurate implementation of programmes and practices;

- amending literacy planning documents, such as improvement plans and schemes of work, to reflect the new approach and embed this within the schools' practices; and

- engaging staff in trialling, adapting, and reviewing literacy approaches to promote understanding of the approach, as well as supporting ownership and opportunities to tailor the approach to the schools' specific needs based on feedback from staff and pupils.

In Findings 5, we explore the advocate-level factors that have been central to effective provision and which have enabled or hindered the positive outcomes discussed in this findings chapter.

To conclude this section, the evaluation has revealed significant positive effects of the Campaign on schools' use of evidence-based practices to teach reading comprehension and provide catch-up literacy support. We also found significant positive effects of the Campaign on schools' capacity and resources to support good practice in literacy. Together, these findings indicate the considerable promise of the Campaign in supporting schools to use evidence-based and best practices in their teaching of literacy. These positive effects identified through the survey analysis are also reinforced by numerous accounts of practice changes, developments in knowledge and understanding of evidence-based literacy approaches, and increased pupil engagement with literacy, identified in the case-studies. These are very encouraging findings.

However, we did not see these positive effects in all aspects of literacy practice. In terms of practices associated with writing—a balanced and blended approach to reading, handwriting, and diagnosing pupils' literacy needs—the practices of schools in the NE appeared no more evidence-based than those in the comparison group in other regions. Insights from the case studies suggested this could be because these aspects of literacy practice were a less prominent feature of schools' literacy priorities. This finding could also be taken as an indication of more widespread national increases in engagement with evidence-based practices, potentially influenced by the national availability of the guidance recommendations. Nonetheless, these findings suggest that the additionality of the Campaign and advocacy in the NE was more apparent in relation to some aspects of evidence-based literacy practices than others.

Finally, the survey analysis did not indicate any additional benefits for schools involved with advocacy, whereas the case-study interviews provided largely positive accounts of changes brought about through advocacy support. This apparent contradiction is discussed further in the conclusions section.

Findings 4: Promise—use of research evidence

This findings chapter summarises the evaluation evidence on the impact of the Campaign on schools' use of research evidence to inform their literacy practices. It draws on survey questions about research use and awareness of EEF resources, case-study interviews exploring experiences of advocacy support for evidence-based practice, and web-analysis of engagement with the EEF's online resources.

Key findings summary

There were signs that the Campaign and advocacy support were showing promise in increasing schools' uses of research evidence to inform decisions about their literacy practices.

- Survey data indicated that research evidence had a greater influence in schools' decision-making in NE schools than in schools in other areas. However, there was no association between whether or not NE schools had received *advocacy* support and the prominence of research evidence in their decision making.
- Case-study data revealed that those school leaders and literacy coordinators in the NE who were interviewed valued research evidence and used evidence to inform and validate changes to literacy practice.
- Survey data also showed that schools in the NE were more aware of EEF literacy guidance documents and of EEF trials of education interventions than schools located in other areas.
- Case-study data suggested that recipients of advocacy support were generally familiar with EEF literacy guidance (particularly KS1) and that some had used it to identify areas for development. In a small number of cases, case-study teachers and senior leaders reported being more aware of the EEF Toolkit and EEF trials than they were before the Campaign.

However, at this stage in the Campaign, the potential for longevity of this impact beyond the Campaign period is uncertain because:
- survey data showed that research-evidence remains a fairly minor influence on schools' decision-making relative to other sources of information; and
- case-study data suggests that schools have limited capacity to access research evidence directly and that some form of mediation of evidence for practical application in the classroom is likely to remain necessary.

The monitoring of EEF web resources suggested that the Campaign had some success in sparking initial interest in, and use of, the Campaign website and resources but that this generally dwindled over the course of the Campaign, with the exception of the KS2 Guidance, which saw a spike in use later in the Campaign period. This is not surprising as it was not published until later in the campaign period. There is also a suggestion that the Campaign may have been driving up schools' use of EEF resources in the NE.

4.1 Use of research evidence to inform literacy practices

4.1.1 Use of research evidence in decision-making: survey findings

The survey included a question designed to help us understand the sources that schools drew on when deciding on their approaches to literacy teaching. The question was based on the Research Use Survey (RUS) developed by NFER with the EEF and piloted in 2014 (Nelson *et al.*, 2017; Poet *et al.*, 2015). Respondents were asked to identify a school-wide approach they had used within the previous two years to support children's progress in literacy, and then asked to identify the three most influential sources of information in identifying the approach from a list of pre-categorised options (see questions 8a, b and c of the survey in Appendix A). Table 4.1 provides details of the items that formed this question. The highlighted items are those that were scored as 'research engaged' and entered into the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). We only scored items that were unequivocally evidence-based for

EFA, although we recognise that, in some cases, other items (such as 'ideas or interventions from other schools') may also be evidence-based.

Firstly, when comparing average response scores at baseline and endpoint for the combined (matched) sample of intervention and comparison schools, we found a significant increase in their use of research evidence in decision-making during the Campaign period (p = 0.002).

We conducted regression modelling on a matched sample of 400 responses from baseline and endpoint to explore the differences in the responses of the two groups to this question over time after controlling for background characteristics of the schools.

The regression analysis revealed a significant positive association between the intervention and the influence of research evidence, even after controlling for background characteristics, with an effect size of 0.32 (95% CI: 0.13, 0.51, p = 0.001). This means that intervention schools improved more than comparison schools in the ranking of research evidence alongside other sources of information and advice in school decision-making. This supports the ToC assumption that the Campaign was positively associated with raising schools' awareness of the evidence base on effective literacy practices, and drawing teachers' attention to the importance of considering what the research says when deciding on strategic and pedagogic priorities. A summary of results of all the survey analysis is provided in Appendix G.

However, when we look at the overall pattern of frequency responses to this question at endpoint, we can see that, compared to other sources of information and advice, research evidence played a relatively minor role in schools' decision-making. Table 4.1 below displays the distribution of all 612 schools' responses to this question at endpoint. Responses that we expect to see if evidence-informed decision-making is taking place are highlighted grey. The table shows that research evidence was not among the four most common influences on decision-making, and that training and CPD, and ideas from the respondent's own school and other schools, were much more influential. This finding is consistent with other studies on the use of research evidence (see, for example, Coldwell *et al.*, 2017; Nelson *et al.*, 2017).

Table 4.1: Sources of influence on schools' decision making

Which of the following were the three most influential in identifying the literacy approach/es you identified?	All responses at endpoint (%)
Information gathered through training/CPD which was based on something other than academic research	43
Ideas or interventions generated by me or my school	42
Ideas or interventions from other schools	40
Advice/guidance from local organisations which was based on something other than academic research	29
Online evidence platforms or databases (e.g. the EEF/Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit)	20
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based)	20
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on teacher experience (paper or web based)	18
Information gathered through training/CPD which was based on academic research	9
The promotional materials of a commercial supplier	8
Advice from national organisations (e.g. DfE, Ofsted, exam boards)	7
Advice/guidance from local organisations which was based on academic research	5
Don't know	2
Other response which was based on something other than academic research	2
Other response which was based on academic research	0
No response	1
N = 612	

More than one answer could be given, so percentages sum to more than 100.
The table includes respondents that ticked three response options or fewer, as per the question instructions. It includes responses to question 8a and filter questions 8b and 8c. A total of 602 respondents answered the question at endpoint.
Source: North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

We conducted further regression analysis on survey responses from **intervention schools only** to see if there was evidence of a greater influence of research in schools receiving Campaign *and* advocacy support, as opposed to receiving just Campaign support. We found no association between whether or not a school had received advocacy support and the prominence of research evidence in their decision-making. For a summary of results, please see Appendix G.

4.1.2   Use of research evidence in decision-making: case-study findings

In case-study interviews there were also signs that the Campaign was leading to greater awareness of the evidence base among schools receiving advocacy support in the NE. All the advocates had specified in their ToCs the goal to raise teachers' awareness of research evidence and there was evidence that this outcome was being achieved, at least in part and in relation to the specific literacy practices encouraged by the advocates. School interviewees said how much they valued, and were reassured by, the knowledge that the advocated literacy approaches were evidence-based. This often motivated the teachers to take the practices forward to make changes to their practice and helped them to justify to senior leaders and colleagues within their schools that the approaches were likely to be worth trying—as one literacy coordinator/senior leader within Advocate 1's network (an *Advocate-led* approach) explained:

> *Everything that they [the advocate] advocate is backed up by research; it's not just somebody selling something, it's actually been looked at, researched and proven and so we can go back into school confident about what we are suggesting.*

An important aspect of the credibility of the approaches was also that there was a strong theoretical underpinning that aligned with teachers' existing understanding and expert knowledge; hence, the theoretical basis of literacy pedagogy was a convincing aspect of the evidence base for teachers. Exploration of the theoretical basis for literacy teaching had reinforced, and prompted reflection on, teachers' beliefs about children's language acquisition and developmental stages.

On the other hand, there were also some examples from the case studies that schools that would have appreciated *more* support from their advocates to navigate research evidence and a clearer direction on which approaches to literacy pedagogy are supported by empirical evidence. As one literacy coordinator, who was also a senior leader, in Advocate 6's network (a *distributed advocacy* approach) suggested:

> *That's what I thought this would involve a little bit more, having the EEF behind it; that it would be more evidence based, rather than 'oh we fancy that, that looks good fun'. I was hoping that this would help me […] access more information about what has been proven to be effective and what hasn't. I'm inundated with emails saying 'Need an English intervention? Try this!', and I needed some way to sift them. It [the advocacy] is helping to some extent because we're sharing knowledge and expertise, but I think we probably need wider expertise, and that's the point; when you're a class teacher getting all that knowledge is a huge job.*

There were some signs from the case-study interviews that teachers and senior leaders were potentially more likely to use research evidence in the future to inform their decision making as a result of the advocacy support and greater exposure to the evidence base during the Campaign. For instance, as a result of the advocacy support and explicit training on the EEF Toolkit, one literacy coordinator/senior leader working within Advocate 4's network (an *advocate-facilitated* approach) explained that they were seeking research evidence to help inform the development of the school's marking practice and policy:

> *It's raising our experience and understanding of using the EEF research. It's informed and improved my professional knowledge and improved my wider reading of education by tapping into that research. I've looked on the EEF website for any research they have to do with marking. So it was flagging up that resource is there and how we can best use it.*

However, in most cases it was questionable from the interviews how sustainable these impacts on schools' use of research evidence would be in the future without the continued injection of research knowledge and evidence-informed practices from the advocates, the EEF, or other organisations able support this work. Some interviewees admitted that they would be unlikely to have time to sift through the evidence themselves, and said this was why they had valued this function being fulfilled by the advocates. Even with the support of advocates, teachers tended not to engage directly with the evidence base themselves as this was generally mediated by advocates. This finding highlights the

important role of evidence mediators/brokers who work between evidence-producers and practitioners to support the implementation of evidence, reinforcing messages in the existing evidence base on the important role of intermediaries in mobilising knowledge (Becheikh *et al.*, 2009; Campbell and Levin, 2012; Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014; Sharples, 2013).

In spite of the fact that schools in receipt of advocacy valued the evidence on effective literacy practices, case-study interviews revealed similar messages to those identified from the survey about the relatively minor influence of research evidence in school decision-making in comparison to other sources of influence. Several interviewees said that, although they valued research evidence, learning about good practice from other teachers and schools in similar circumstances was more influential. This is not necessarily a negative point; indeed, if the school providing learning was using evidence-informed approaches, then this could be a positive example of evidence-informed peer learning. The extent to which this was regularly the case is unclear, however. The following quotation from a literacy coordinator/senior leader working within Advocate 2's network (an *advocate-led* approach) reinforces findings from the RUS (Nelson *et al.*, 2017):

> *Working in a school is a massive juggling act and teachers are very unwilling to try something unless they know it's worked in schools local to us with the same kind of children, and the ease of use for some of these things and how they can be adopted into our routine. We don't rely on research so much; [school network] meetings are used to share ideas and resources, that's our main source of information.*

4.1.3   Use of EEF resources: survey findings

The endpoint survey asked respondents about their awareness of the EEF Toolkit, KS1 and KS2 literacy guidance documents, and trials of educational interventions. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 below display the distribution of responses to two of these survey questions where we identified differences in responses from all responding intervention and all responding comparison schools.

Figure 4.1: Endpoint survey—schools' awareness of EEF literacy guidance reports
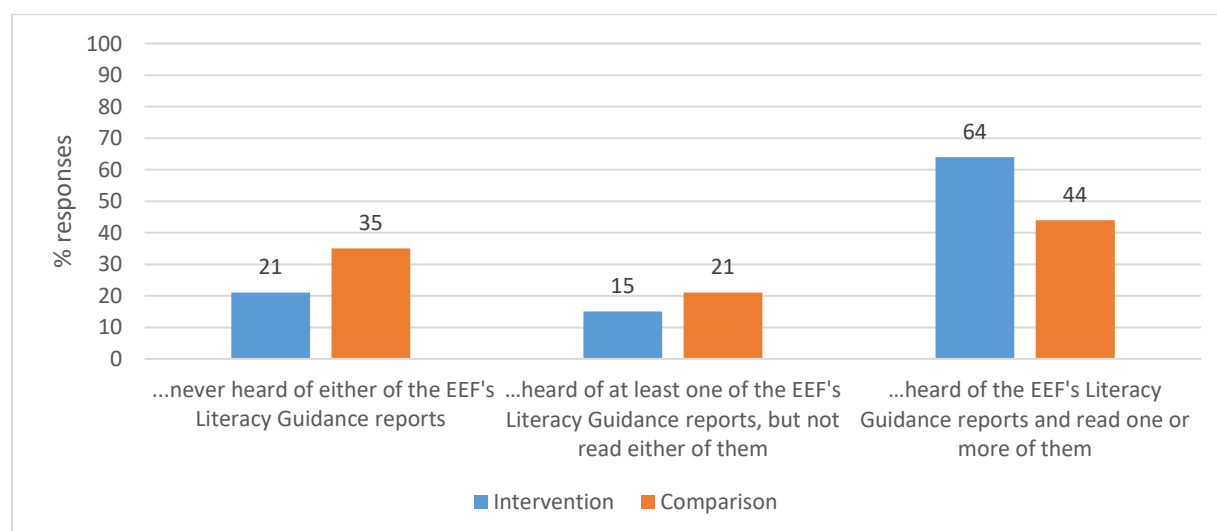
Figure 4.2: Endpoint survey—schools' awareness of EEF trials
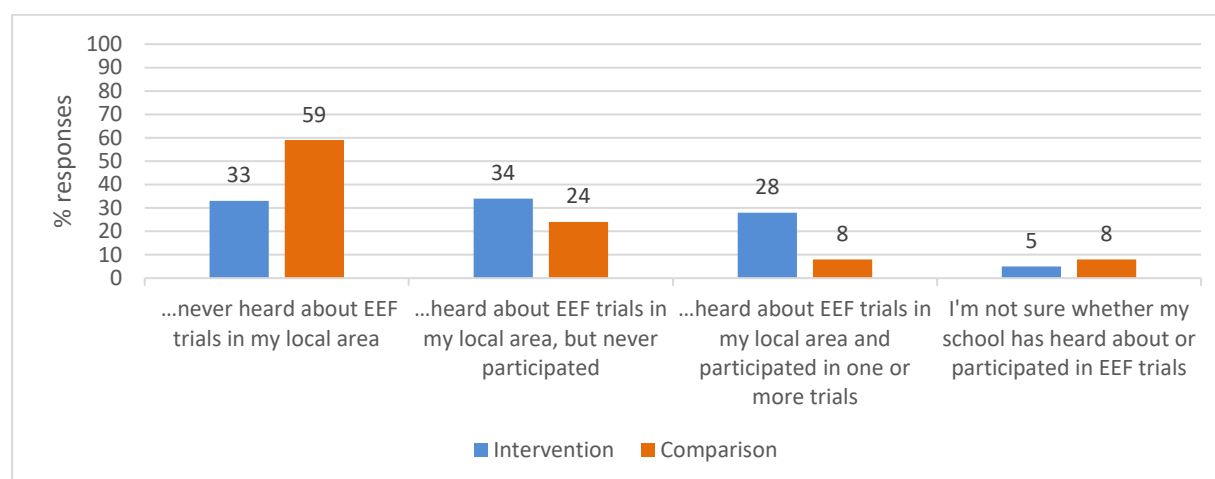
We ran chi-square tests to compare the responses from intervention (N = 352) and comparison schools (N= 258) at endpoint and found:

- significantly more respondents from intervention schools than comparison schools had heard of the EEF Literacy guidance reports and read one or both of them (p = <0.001); and
- significantly more respondents from intervention schools than comparison schools had heard about EEF trials and participated in one or more (p = <0.001).

These findings indicate that the schools in the NE were more likely than comparison schools to be aware of EEF literacy guidance documents and to be aware of, and participate in, EEF trials. We found no statistically significant difference in awareness and use of the EEF Toolkit between intervention and comparison schools however. It might be expected that this was because schools in both the intervention and comparison groups already had a high level of awareness of the EEF Toolkit relative to other EEF resources, but this does not appear to have been the case. While 41% of schools reported that they had 'heard of the Toolkit and accessed the webpage' (see Appendix C, Table C11), this compares with 55% who said that they had heard of the guidance reports and read one or both of them (see Appendix C, Table C12). The guidance reports were therefore both better known than the Toolkit and more likely to be used by intervention than comparison schools.

4.1.4 Use of EEF resources—case-study findings

The findings from the case-study interviews support the survey findings in that the schools receiving advocacy support in the NE generally appeared well informed about the literacy guidance, and to a lesser extent the Toolkit and trials.

Most case-study participants were familiar with the guidance (particularly the KS1 guidance), agreed with the principles put forward, and found it useful and relevant. They used the guidance most in the initial stages of reviewing literacy practice and identifying areas for development, often with the support of advocates (see Box 4.1 below for an example of this process). Interviewees said that the guidance was little used beyond this initial stage because it was too theoretical and broad and required considerable additional information about how to implement the recommendations in practice, which was where the advocate was able to contribute. The timing of the publication was a key factor in the extent to which it was used as a 'starting point' for review and development of practice: teachers were

far less familiar with the KS2 literacy guidance and Early Years guidance documents as these were not available at the time that either R1 or R2 schools were reviewing their practices and identifying foci for development as part of the advocacy support.

Box 4.1: Using EEF literacy guidance to identify areas for development in schools

Two schools working in Advocate 4's network valued the opportunity to review literacy practices in their schools using the EEF's literacy guidance and the support of advocates. The schools each took part in one-to-one meetings with an advocate to work through an audit process structured around the guidance recommendations, taking each recommendation in turn and exploring the school's current practice, strengths, and areas for development. Through this process, the schools each identified two focus areas and sought the advocate's support in identifying training and development opportunities and evidence-based interventions and approaches. They also drew on their own expertise in effective literacy teaching to develop practice in order to fully achieve the recommended practices. One literacy coordinator commented on the value of using the guidance in this way:

> *It really focused our attention and made us very reflective on the practice at the time within school and our future goal and where we wanted the school to be. It was the opportunity for [the advocate] and I to sit together, without the noise of the school day and interruptions, and concentrate on what we wanted to progress. Especially linked to the guidance report that the EEF produced, we could attach things that we wanted to do to recommendations in that guidance—so it helped to focus our attention.*

On the basis of this process, these schools had purchased new assessment resources and evidence-based literacy programmes (such as Accelerated Reader and Read Write Inc. Phonics), signed up to EEF trials of promising literacy programmes on developing children's handwriting, and accessed additional training on teaching reading comprehension strategies. A senior leader in one of the schools commented on the importance of using the EEF literacy guidance and research evidence when focusing on the aspects of literacy development that were likely to lead to the greatest improvements in outcomes:

> *They* [advocates and EEF] *have been absolutely inspirational in making us stop and think without rushing off down one hole like a rabbit, and thinking very carefully about expenditure and time. We've been very careful about what we've chosen to do as a result of the audit and conferences* [provided as part of the advocacy support] *and I think we are really on the right track.*

Although the survey results showed no statistically significant difference between intervention and comparison schools with regard to awareness and use of the EEF Toolkit, there were signs from the case-study interviews that the Campaign and advocacy support had had a positive impact on teachers' awareness of the EEF Toolkit. This was the case particularly where the advocate's support had involved explicit use of the Toolkit and demonstration of the information available and how it could be used. One literacy coordinator/senior leader from Advocate 4's network (an *advocate-facilitated* approach) described an increased appreciation of the evidence base:

> *Being involved in the scheme* [advocacy support] *opens your eyes to other things, especially the evidence-based reviews and things like that, to say: 'This is effective and we know it's effective because we've done it in these schools in these places.'*

Similarly, several schools were involved in EEF trials of literacy interventions (such as Reciprocal Reading, Accelerated Reader, and Helping Handwriting Shine) and for some, this was clearly a result of information and signposting from the advocate. This provides further indications of the promise of the Campaign and advocacy in increasing schools' engagement with, and use of, research evidence as envisaged in the Campaign ToC.

4.2   Wider promise: access of EEF's evidence-based resources

As well as exploring schools' uses of research evidence through the surveys and case studies, we also tracked the EEF's Campaign website statistics using Google Analytics and monitored social media (Twitter) traffic related to the Campaign in order to evaluate schools' wider interests in, and uses of, the EEF's evidence-based sources. We took June 2016 as the baseline monitoring month, as this was the first full, non-school holiday month prior to the Campaign's launch in September 2016; then we tracked website and social media traffic monthly from September 2016 through to July 2018.

Graphs showing the range of engagement across all schools in England and the NE are provided in Appendix E. Where a graph relates to downloads or views of a specific EEF resource, the start date varies according to when that resource was launched.[36]

4.2.1   Campaign page visits

The average monthly number of visits to the Campaign webpage nationally was relatively low at 110. Figure E1, Appendix E shows that, after a period of high interest in the page from autumn 2017 to spring 2018 (a high point being 245 views in November 2016 following the launch of the KS1 literacy guidance) there was a reduction in page views through to January 2018, when there was another, smaller, spike in interest. After this, there was a falling away in interest to the end of the monitoring period. The autumn to spring periods in both years (2016/2017 and 2017/2018) recorded the greatest interest, with the summer months having the smallest number of visits. The first year (2016/2017) had a higher number of visits, on average, than the second (2017/2018). Overall, there was not a clear pattern of growth in interest in the Campaign page as might have been hoped.

However, the average proportion of visits from the NE to the Campaign page was high compared to the average proportion of NE visits to the EEF's other webpages—amounting to 21% of all visits to the Campaign webpage on average across both years.[37] Like the findings from the survey data, this shows that the targeting of the Campaign in the NE appeared to be having an impact in driving schools in the NE to view the Campaign web page in higher proportions than they viewed the EEF's other webpages and resources.

4.2.2   Downloads of Campaign resources

This section refers to downloads of PDF resources. These resources were also available in interactive formats, access of which are discussed in section 4.2.3 below. Downloads of campaign resources since November 2016 are shown in Appendix E, Figures E2a-d. The resources were introduced from October 2016, so we used November as the baseline month for activity monitoring. The headline finding is that, across the two years, there were few downloads of Campaign PDF resources and no overall pattern of growth. The exception was the KS2 guidance, which saw an increase in downloads from November 2017 to March 2018. It should be noted that as part of the Campaign, all schools were mailed copies of the report and advocates also had access to physical copies of the reports, which may have affected these numbers. However, given that copies were sent to school leaders, the low number of downloads does indicate limited use by teachers of the Campaign PDF resource.

KS1 guidance

The average monthly number of downloads of the KS1 literacy guidance was 41. Figure E2a shows that downloads were high in November 2016 (as we might expect following publication of the KS1 guidance), but then fell with the exception of some small monthly increases. The percentage of

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[36] The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance report, 'Preparing for Literacy' was not published until June 2018 and therefore is not included in the analysis.
[37] The proportion of NE visits to the EEF's other webpages, such as the Teaching and Learning Toolkit and the Families of Schools Database, was between 2% and 3%, on average.

downloads of the KS1 guidance in the NE was more mixed than was the case for Campaign page views. On average, 8% of downloads were from the NE.

KS2 guidance

The KS2 guidance was published in April 2017 and we started monitoring it in May. The average number of downloads per month across the monitoring period was just 29 and the number of downloads of this resource in the NE was also very small. However, Figure E2b shows that there was a substantial increase in interest in the KS2 guidance from November 2017 through to March 2018, when there were 103 downloads. The reasons for this timing are unclear.

Discussion questions document and RAG self-assessment guide

The average numbers of downloads of the EEF discussion questions document and RAG self-assessment guide were very small at just nine and twelve downloads per month, respectively (see Figures F2c and d). There was most interest in these documents during earlier months of the Campaign around the launch of the KS1 guidance. Overall, access of these resources was very low and there was no pattern of growth. The numbers of NE downloads were too small to comment on.

4.2.3 Quality of interactions with guidance documents

In addition to downloadable PDF versions of the KS1 and KS2 guidance, the EEF website enables visitors to browse web-based versions of these resources. We monitored the average time spent on page for these documents from May 2017.[38] The average time (in minutes and seconds) spent on page each month for the KS1 and KS2 guidance is provided in Appendix E, Figures E3a and E3b.

KS1 guidance

Figure E3a shows that views of the web-based KS1 guidance were much higher in number than downloads of the PDF document, with an average number of views per month of 956. Unlike the decline in downloads of the PDF, there was an overall growth in interest in the web-based KS1 guidance in the later months of the Campaign. The number of NE views each month ranged from just eight to 56, a small proportion of the total at just over 2%. Figure E3a shows that the average time spent on page was promising for a web-based document (one minute 13 seconds). This suggests that visitors were taking time to scan the document (rather than immediately bouncing away from it), but were not engaging with it in great detail. Time spent on page by visitors from the NE was, on average, a little longer (one minute 18 seconds), although the range of interaction time was wider.

KS2 guidance

Figure E3b shows that views of the web-based KS2 guidance were considerably higher in number than downloads of the PDF version, and higher, on average, than views of the web-based KS1 guidance. The average number of views per month was 1,415. Unlike other resources, there was not an obvious falling away in interest in this resource post publication. The number of NE views each month ranged from 12 to 58, a similarly small proportion to views of the KS1 web guidance, at just over 2% on average. The average time spent on page fluctuated more than for the KS1 guidance (from 40 seconds in June 2017 to two minutes 51 seconds in April 2018), but the monthly average was very similar (one minute 17 seconds). Time spent on page by visitors from the NE was higher than the KS2 'all views' average and the KS1 NE average at one minute 31 seconds. This is explained mainly by a very large increase in browsing time in April 2018 (five minutes 37 seconds). While we cannot provide evidence to explain the reasons for this increase, there were two events that took place at this time—an EEF webinar about the guidance and a large EEF conference for school governors. These may have had an influence.

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[38] We were not able to monitor bounce rates because the EEF's Google Analytics were not set up to enable this analysis.

Browsing time was also relatively high among NE visitors in May and June 2018. It is not clear why there was more scrutiny of the guidance from visitors in the NE in these months.

4.2.4   Social media monitoring

We tracked Twitter over the period 1 Sept 2016 to 31 July 2018 using the handles and keywords shown in Appendix E which related to literacy, the NE, and the Campaign. The results are shown in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3: Summary of Twitter activity over the Campaign period
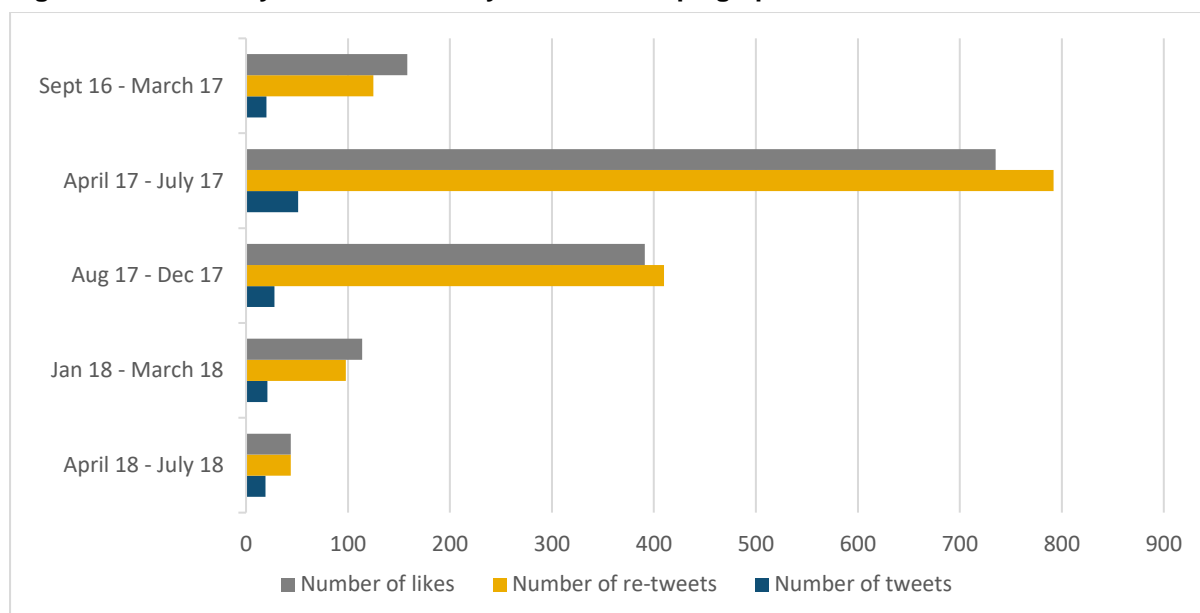
There was a large growth in Twitter activity between April and July 2017, but this was not sustained. In fact, there was a consistent reduction in the number of tweets, retweets, and likes after this point, with the period April to July 2018 showing the lowest level of activity to date. Typically, tweets were of a 'broadcast' nature, relating to the launch of the various EEF guidance documents, or to Campaign activities, and were generally generated by the EEF itself, the advocates, or the Research Schools. Conversations between teachers were less common, suggesting that the Campaign did not generate a great deal of dialogue across social media.

To sum up the findings, evidence from the survey, web-monitoring, and case-study interviews suggested that the Campaign had a positive impact on schools' use of research evidence. Schools in the NE were more likely than non-NE schools to use research evidence to inform their literacy decisions, and were more likely to visit the EEF Campaign webpage. Web-monitoring indicates that a larger number of visitors were attracted to the Campaign website in the first year of activity (2016/2017) than in the second (2017/2018). This complements the case-study finding that the guidance was typically used as a 'starting point' for review and development of practice rather than as an ongoing implementation resource. However, the proportion of visits from the NE to the Campaign webpage was high across the whole Campaign period, indicating that the specific targeting of the Campaign in the NE was having an impact in maintaining interest in it.

Evidence from the web monitoring and case-study interviews suggested that schools' use of research-evidence may diminish over time without the continued emphasis of the Campaign to mediate evidence for practical application in the classroom. The specific contribution of advocacy to bringing about this outcome was mixed; the evidence from the survey and case-study sources was inconsistent. For some

schools, advocacy appears to have played an influential role in their understanding and use of evidence, but for others, research evidence was a less explicit and prominent feature of the advocates' support.

Findings 5: Feasibility

Key findings summary

Overall, advocates were highly regarded by schools and the EEF; they each had particular strengths in specific areas.

- Advocates differed in the formality of needs assessments they conducted/facilitated (from use of EEF diagnostics to group discussions). *Advocate-led/facilitated* approaches were more likely than *distributed advocacy* approaches to use EEF diagnostic tools.

- *Advocate-led/facilitated* approaches were more likely to support needs diagnosis at the individual school level. It was more common for schools in these areas to have individual school-level action plans. Advocates that adopted a *distributed advocacy* approach generally supported schools to conduct generic needs analyses at group/network level. In some cases, it was difficult for these schools to find common priorities for focus.

- Few of the advocates had a strong focus on monitoring the progress of the schools they were working with. Progress reporting was largely anecdotal due to time/budget limitations.

- Advocates generally used the EEF guidance as a starting point for leading literacy practice change (R1 advocates used it quite frequently in 2016/2017, but appeared to do so less explicitly in 2017/2018).

- There was substantial divergence in the extent to which the guidance was referred to and used by advocates (with some having it as a central, and others as a peripheral, focus). The EFF permitted this varied focus, however the provision may have been more effective with a stronger steer on expectations regarding fidelity to the guidance recommendations.

- Two of the advocates covered all of the guidance themes reflecting the diverse range of literacy support needs among the schools they were working with. The others provided training or support on specific guidance recommendations (or sub-themes) such as reading, spelling, or writing, closely aligning with their substantive expertise and key school priority areas.

- The extent of advocates' implementation support for schools differed. Some advocates expected to receive more implementation input and tools from the EEF. Advocates' ability or willingness to develop their own tools (or adapt existing ones), reflecting the guidance, varied due to capacity (including resources) and expertise (such as their pedagogical knowledge).

- Advocacy demands a wide range of skills and capabilities (including knowledge and expertise in literacy, practice experience, ability to engage with schools/teachers, and organisational skills).

- All of the advocates had strong interpersonal 'people' skills; they were reportedly good communicators/facilitators, built trust and rapport quickly, and related well to others. They were perceived to have credibility.

- Advocates used a range of approaches to support school improvement. There was variation in their ability to blend existing expertise with EEF's evidence, and to implement the guidance. *Advocate-led/facilitated* approaches were stronger on supporting evidence-based literacy learning. This was more challenging in *distributed advocacy* approaches, where there was a tendency for schools to share practice experiences, rather than evidence-based practices.

- The programme management capabilities of advocates differed—they generally provided a good range of well-structured, timely activities; most facilitated school-to-school learning and maintained engagement. In *distributed advocacy* approaches, however, there was sometimes confusion about where responsibility lay, and in *advocate facilitated/distributed advocacy* approaches, some cluster/partnership leads had insufficient time to support others, especially where the level of input

> to support individual schools was more than initially anticipated, or where cluster leads had no dedicated time for the role.
>
> - The biggest skills gap for advocates was provision of challenge. This was apparent across all advocates, but especially the within *distributed advocacy* approaches.
>
> - The effectiveness of advocacy approaches is contingent upon the specific needs and stage of development of the school.

The Campaign model assumes that guidance + advocacy + evidence-based literacy interventions has greater impact than guidance + advocacy, which has greater impact than guidance alone (see the introduction for the Campaign ToC, Figure 1). As noted earlier, the EEF produces a range of tools and resources for schools.[39] These include tools such as the Teaching and Learning Toolkit and the Families of Schools database, evidence-based guidance reports on a range of themes, and details of EEF-funded projects which have shown promising impact when first trialled. These resources, which include the literacy guidance reports, are available to all schools nationally. NE schools are unique in that, in addition to having access to the guidance reports, many were also in receipt of advocacy support through the Campaign. Advocates had a remit to deliver and facilitate a range of activities such as meetings and events to encourage schools to engage with the EEF's guidance and resources, audit and gap analysis, in-school coaching, school-to-school support, and signposting to evidence-based interventions and trials to support implementation.

As discussed in Findings 3, because all schools in England had access to the guidance reports, our school survey provided a measure of the intermediate outcomes of place-based support in the NE specifically, rather than of the Campaign as a whole. Quantitative data analysis showed a number of positive outcomes for NE schools indicating that the place-based nature of support had promise. In this findings chapter, we explore what we learnt about the specific Campaign element of advocacy support during the first two years of the Campaign, including perceptions of what worked, what didn't, and why, through analysis of qualitative case-study data (for further information about qualitative methods and analysis, see the research design and methods chapter and Appendix F).

The continuum of advocacy outlined in Findings 1, Figure 1.1 is used throughout this findings chapter as a framework against which to judge the feasibility of different advocacy approaches. (As noted previously, EEF exerted little or no influence over the approaches advocates decided to adopt). In the final section we also provide an overview of the key ingredients of, and barriers to, feasible advocacy. We know from previous research (Miles *et al.*, 1987; Saxl *et al.*, 1989) that advocacy demands a wide range of skills and capabilities.

The following sections consider the role of advocates in relation to the main areas of activity envisaged by the EEF:

- support for diagnosis;
- fidelity to the literacy guidance;
- leadership of implementation; and
- interpersonal, school improvement, and programme management skills.

5.1   Quality of advocacy: support for diagnosis

One of the key aspects of the advocate's role in relation to this Campaign was to work with schools to audit their current provision in order to diagnose need to inform action and support. This encompasses two of the key skills identified by Saxl *et al.* (1989), namely organisational diagnosis and managing the

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[39] See the EEF's practical tools webpage: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/

work of school improvement. This section examines the processes and systems advocates adopted to help schools meet their goals. It covers:

- how advocates supported needs analysis and action planning; and
- how advocates monitored schools' progress.

5.1.1   How did advocates support needs analysis and action planning?

There was variation in the formality and depth of needs assessments across advocates. Approaches varied from use of EEF diagnostic tools to informal group discussions. Advocates that adopted *led/facilitated* approaches were most likely to support needs diagnosis at the individual school level. It was more common for schools in these areas, for example, to have individual school-level action plans related to the advocacy support and intended outcomes. At the time of the case-study interviews some of these schools were in the process of putting these plans into action.

Differences between R1 and R2 advocates—previously highlighted in Findings 1, section 1.3—meant it was more difficult for R1 advocates and schools to formulate their action plans due to an initial lack of clarity about the Campaign and the advocacy support offer. Advocate 5, for example, described engaging with the advocacy support at this time as a 'leap of faith' for schools. The scope of the auditing for R1 schools was also affected by the lack of availability of the EEF literacy guidance documents in the first year. These challenges were acknowledged by the EEF's regional programme manager:

> *Ideally, the advocates and schools would have liked all three guidance documents ready to use from the start. They only had KS1 to start with in September, and it was published extremely close to the launch of their work with schools so they didn't have enough time to get to grips with it.*

A few of the advocates that adopted *led/facilitated* approaches used EEF's auditing tools, linked to the guidance, to achieve systematic and detailed assessments of schools' strengths and weaknesses in literacy teaching and learning. The benefit of using these tools was highlighted by Advocate 2, which had no prior relationship with local schools before the Campaign. The audit data enabled the advocate to quickly gain an understanding of support needs and plan a programme of training activities mapped to schools' key priory areas. The EEF auditing tools were also used by Advocate 4, which had existing relationships with participating schools but less experience of supporting needs analysis. Training and support from the EEF was critical to this advocate achieving a systematic and rigorous approach—see the example in Box 5.1 (below).

The ability to support the creation of bespoke action plans was possible for advocates with *facilitated* approaches (where there was input from SLEs) and with *advocate-led* approaches, where literacy training experts provided an element of one-to-one in-school support and/or where they were working with a smaller number of schools (for example, this made it easier to provide some individual attention at group events). Schools particularly valued the opportunity to identify their own priority areas and plan for how they would utilise the support from the advocate to achieve change in their particular setting. As one literacy coordinator within Advocate 4's network said, '[It has] been crucial for us, unpicking where we are going rather than being told where we need to improve.' Highlighting the importance of schools' involvement in action planning for achieving longer-term sustainability, a literacy coordinator working with Advocate 2 explained, this approach had encouraged ownership and commitment to continue:

> *When this* [Campaign] *ends and the support from* [the advocate] *is removed, this all means something to you and you want carry on with it. It's not something that you've been told to do that you'll no longer prioritise once it's over.*

Two of the advocates that adopted an *advocate-led/facilitated approach* worked with schools to identify needs and plan at the individual pupil level (by identifying 'case-study' or 'target' pupils, for example)

with the intention of implementing approaches and then monitoring outcomes for these individuals. One was Advocate 3, which adopted a *facilitated* approach and worked with school practitioners to implement a framework to identify children's readiness for literacy acquisition. Teachers were asked to focus on a small number of children in the first year of advocacy support before broadening out the approach across their settings.

This had benefits for some teachers who felt this made implementation more manageable; however, it felt restrictive to others. A senior leader within the advocate's network said:

> *We were given an action plan to create and we needed to target three children. It was initially helpful to target three children but in reality you start to think about how this could work with other pupils […] it has narrowed its impact in some ways but hopefully when it is rolled out further this will be meeting our needs.*

As highlighted in Findings 3, however, despite auditing at an individual level, not all schools' needs were met by advocates. In some cases, this was because the advocate devised a programme of support based on a diagnosis of needs common to most (but not necessarily all) schools; in other cases, this was because schools did not fully engage with or take up the offer of individual school visits which was the main vehicle for bespoke provision.

Box 5.1: How one advocate achieved effective needs analysis and planning

In designing a support offer, Advocate 4 wanted to undertake detailed needs assessments in order to provide a tailored programme to individual schools. The SLEs delivering advocacy support had limited experience in carrying out literacy audits and so they accessed training from the EEF's regional programme manager prior to undertaking work with schools. The advocate was keen to ensure that headteachers and literacy leads had sufficient time to complete the audit away from their settings so carried out the activity at the launch event. The advocate decided to adapt the EEF's auditing tools for use with participating schools, 'because it [the audit tool] was being filled out there and then at the launch it had to be focused and tailored enough so it wasn't too tick-boxy'.

There was a high degree of customisation of the advocacy support based on the needs analysis. Schools were matched to individual SLE advocates based on their areas of expertise. SLE advocates then carried out one-to-one audit meetings with the literacy coordinator in each school using the audit information to tailor their discussions. They reviewed in detail the schools' practices in relation to each of the guidance recommendations and developed a bespoke written action plan. The advocate initially anticipated that schools would want to focus the support on writing, however from the audits it was clear that reading was a greater priority. The process of identifying schools' needs through the audit enabled the advocate to adapt the content of its CPD and conference events to maximise their relevance to participants. As one of the advocates explained:

We needed to go out and really get to know the schools well because we could predict certain things that we would want to work on across the two TSA schools, but that's not really relevant to all the schools; [and] they may have something different they want to get out of it.

Advocates that adopted *distributed* approaches generally supported individual schools to conduct needs analyses at a fairly generic level across a school group or network. Once presented with the guidance at initial launch events or meetings, school attendees worked together or in small groups to map out their development needs, feeding back on the results of RAG ratings against the guidance,[40] priority areas identified in existing action/development plans, and areas for improvement identified by Ofsted or through schools' own analysis of their assessment data. An example of this kind of 'top level' approach was adopted by Advocate 6, working with literacy coordinators in an established local partnership with a pre-identified literacy priority area based mainly on schools' KS2 assessment results. A senior leader working with this advocate described how detailed auditing was viewed as unnecessary as the group of schools was keen to move to action quickly:

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[40] Using Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) colours in a traffic light system to rate practice or performance.

> *We all went along to the first meeting [with the advocate] knowing what we wanted to prioritise. When schools are doing their SDPs* [school development plan] *and their SEFs* [self-evaluation forms] *we already have that priority of need in place so we all went ready and armed with that.*

The difficulty in this case was that the priority area(s) identified were fairly broad (for example, 'to improve reading') making the move to planning actions and implementation challenging. This appeared to stem from a needs analysis that lacked sufficient depth to enable the advocate and schools to unpick specific aspects of reading practice that could be attributing to poor literacy attainment. Advocate 5, also adopting a *distributed advocacy* approach, implemented a two-stage audit process. Schools initially audited their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the KS1 guidance and this data was used by the advocate to devise a training programme based on common areas of need. A senior leader found the process useful but felt it lacked sufficient depth, commenting: 'It didn't bring up anything that we didn't already know.' Schools in this advocate's network were then brought together into clusters primarily based on geographical proximity and carried out a group audit. This highlighted a diverse range of literacy support needs among the schools involved in one of the clusters, sometimes making it difficult to establish shared objectives and common goals to focus on. As a consequence, some teachers disengaged from the school-to-school support, perceiving that it would have little relevance for their needs. These teachers were reported to have preferred to access the *advocate-led* training element which directly related to their schools' priorities. For other teachers, however, the group-level needs diagnosis was helpful in identifying:

- other local schools with similar support needs; and
- literacy leads with particular areas of expertise across the network, which led to effective collaborative working.

There was variation in the existence and depth of action plans resulting from audit/needs analysis among schools supported by advocates adopting a *distributed advocacy* approach. For example, a group of schools supported by a cluster lead informally agreed development goals and these were noted in the minutes of a meeting. In another example, schools working in clusters updated their existing individual literacy action plans. A senior leader working within Advocate 6's network explained that they updated an existing plan to avoid unnecessary duplication:

> *Our own school development plan highlights areas of strength and weakness in literacy so we were already aware of those areas of need but the audit did help us to drill down and we adapted the school development plan as a result.*

5.1.2   How did advocates monitor schools' progress?

Monitoring is an important means of ensuring that schools are making intended progress, that support methods are proving effective, and school engagement is being maintained. This is supported by research (McLaughlin, 1990), which identifies the importance of 'adaptive implementation' facilitated by timely feedback, identification, and correction of 'errors' and building broad-based commitment to a project.

Formal progress monitoring was not a major focus for any of the advocates, possibly because it was not an explicit EEF requirement; instead, there was an assumption that senior leaders and/or literacy leads would self-monitor and evaluate through existing school systems and processes, such as reviews of literacy action plans and SDPs with SLT and governors. Two of the advocates (one adopting a *facilitated* and the other a *distributed advocacy* approach) included progress monitoring in their ToC, however there were no discernible differences between these two advocates and the others in their prioritisation of, or approach to, monitoring. All of the advocates recognised the value of progress monitoring although some were concerned about taking on this role themselves due to the potential (negative) impact this could have on their relationships with schools, their lack of confidence, experience

and skills in this area, and the time/budget limitations (particularly for those with a brief to work with large numbers of schools).

Because most advocates did not monitor progress themselves, their knowledge and understanding of schools' progress towards implementation was typically based on anecdotal feedback from teachers (including feeding back on gap tasks; see section 5.2 for details) when they came together at training events and meetings.

Around half of the advocates incorporated school visits in their offers, and while these were not typically designed for monitoring purposes, advocates were able to use these opportunities to observe and appraise individual schools' progress in greater depth. Two of the advocates that adopted *advocate-led/facilitated* approaches—Advocates 2 (R1) and 4 (R2)—set out to monitor action plans during follow-up school visits. Advocate 2 faced challenges in getting schools to take up this offer in the second year of provision, so opportunities for monitoring were limited. Advocate 4 had similar plans to conduct follow-up visits in its second year of delivery but was keen to stress that this offer was optional to schools and so expected take-up to vary. Some of the advocates were also able to gauge progress on an *ad hoc* basis if they came into contact with participating schools as part of their wider roles within a TSA or LA, for example. In such situations, advocates were able to offer advice to support implementation or encourage participation where school engagement with the advocacy support had appeared to tail off. Findings 2 shows that there was attrition, or falling rates of participation, across two of the three R1 advocates in their second year of provision. It may be that, had progress monitoring been better established, the decline may have been halted.

Overall, the learning from an analysis of advocates' approaches to needs analysis, planning, and monitoring indicates that the school context is highly important. Advocates need to be pragmatic, and provide needs analysis tools where schools require them. For those schools where a need has been identified, and further auditing and planning activities might affect engagement, it is perhaps more beneficial to move straight to delivery, or at least to work with schools' existing delivery plans to ensure they are evidence-based. Effective advocacy:

- supports schools to achieve an adequate understanding of their needs, whatever the basis, and to develop specific plans for addressing these; and
- reviews and monitors progress towards implementation to ensure that schools are making adequate progress and are remaining engaged; advocates may need to give a clearer rationale to schools about the purpose and value of monitoring to encourage take up and commitment.

5.2   Quality of advocacy: fidelity to the guidance

Determining the viability and validity of implementation fidelity is a crucial process in the scale-up of any intervention or programme. The NE literacy campaign is not a codified intervention, however, and the guidance documents were described by the EEF's regional programme manager as 'an umbrella for schools to focus their efforts on' rather than a manual. Therefore, in judging fidelity we looked for evidence that advocates and schools were drawing on the key principles in the guidance document(s) when deciding on approaches and/or developing resources. Where advocates chose to focus on specific elements of the guidance, we explored whether this was a result of identified need or expediency. The following sections set out advocates' views of the guidance documents and explore the ways in which they were implemented.

5.2.1   Views of the guidance

As described earlier, the EEF produced three literacy guidance documents for KS1, KS2, and the early years which were published during the first two years of the Campaign. The guidance documents provided a focus for changes to schools' literacy practices. However, as the guidance was still being developed by the EEF during the start-up phase, this led to some initial difficulties for R1 advocates in

developing and communicating their offer to schools. It also limited the scope of auditing (see section 5.1.1 above). This was less of an issue for R2 advocates who had access to both the KS1 and KS2 guidance from the outset. The early years guidance was produced late in the second year of the Campaign, so none of the advocates were able to refer to the evidence base for teaching literacy in the early years, as presented by the EEF, when developing their support. One of the advocates adopting a *facilitated* approach did, however, have an early years strand. The EEF commissioned this advocate because their specific offer (training and support for schools to implement a framework for assessing literacy readiness) was informed by evidence.

The advocates were mostly positive about the guidance. Some were more familiar with the evidence base than others but overall the recommendations aligned well with their own views and personal experiences of effective literacy practice. This meant that advocates generally felt able and confident to promote the content of the guidance to schools. Reflecting on how valuable it was that the guidance had personal resonance, a cluster facilitator in Advocate 6's network said:

> *I think it's very important [that] as an advocate it doesn't feel foreign to my own beliefs and role as a teacher. Every single one of those [guidelines] I feel comfortable with; not only does the research say that* [this is what works] *but my own experience and my core values reflect that as well.*

Advocates did, however, have mixed views about certain aspects of the guidance. While some found the documents 'sufficiency broad' and 'user friendly', others felt the content was too 'top level' and more suited to an academic, rather than a practitioner-based, audience, and this hindered their ability to communicate it effectively to teachers. As Advocate 5 said: 'It's too easy for schools to say, "I already do that."' Just one advocate was sceptical about certain elements of practice recommended in the guidance, believing that these conflicted with some of the research evidence they were familiar with. This meant that they did not embrace the content of the guidance in its entirety.

Some level of preparation was required by all advocates to familiarise themselves with the details of the guidance and, as referred to above, R2 advocates had longer for this than R1 advocates. One R2 advocate considered itself lacking the confidence to leading literacy change within schools and requested additional support from the EEF to strengthen understanding of the evidence base prior to undertaking the work.

The EEF had intended that it would be the producer of the evidence ('the what'), and as change management specialists, the advocates would provide implementation support for schools ('the how'). However, all of the advocates felt the guidance would have been more useful, for themselves and schools, if the EEF had included further exemplification of the messages within the documents and provided a suite of accompanying implementation resources. There were some examples where advocates developed implementation tools for schools. For example, Advocate 5 took time to make the content of the KS1 guidance more 'user friendly' before sharing it with teachers, while clusters of schools in Advocates 6's network reportedly developed tools based on the guidance with their facilitators. In Advocate 4's network there was a flow of knowledge from SLEs to schools, and vice versa, with the advocate picking up ideas which it then used or shared with other schools (although this was more of an incidental outcome rather than an intended feature of their approach). Overall, however, the level of co-construction of implementation resources was limited during the first two years of the Campaign. It is important to recognise that the Campaign is still evolving and that the bank of accompanying resources is likely to continue to develop over the coming years, with anticipated input from advocates, schools, and the EEF.

5.2.2   Use of the guidance

Throughout the Campaign there was substantial divergence in the extent to which advocates referred to and used the guidance. For some it had a central focus, while for others it was more peripheral. Most advocates used the guidance as a starting point for leading literacy practice change. R1 advocates

were interviewed at two time-points over the course of the evaluation and it was apparent that the guidance was used quite frequently by them in their first year, for example, at launch events and to support diagnosis of need (see section 5.1.1) but referred to less explicitly in their second year. That said, advocates generally remained committed to the guidance throughout the Campaign, signposting to the guidance documents in their various communications and contacts with teachers and ensuring that training and resources (where these were developed) aligned to the principals of the guidance—although this was not always communicated to schools. (Section 5.3.1 covers implementation resources in further detail).

Two of the advocates (adopting distributed and facilitated approaches) provided training or support covering all of the guidance recommendation themes—for both KS1 and/or KS2. This was typically because the schools they were working with had a wide range of literacy support needs. Some of these advocates found aspects of the guidance more challenging to support than others however (an example given by one advocate was delivering high quality interventions). While all of the themes were included in their support offer to some extent, the depth of coverage varied. The implication of this was that, for some schools, the support provided was not always directly relevant and for others it lacked sufficient depth. Three advocates initially introduced the guidance as a whole at initial launch events, but went on to provide support related to specific guidance recommendations or sub-themes such as reading, spelling, or writing. These advocates selected specific guidelines or themes as a focus of their support offer, either in response to schools' identified needs (Advocate 6), or to align with their own strengths and areas of expertise. One advocate was given discretion by the EEF to stray from the specifics of the guidance on the grounds that they had particular subject expertise and were a long-standing provider of literacy CPD. Where they did deviate from the guidance, advocates made seemingly intelligent adaptations. Some of the participating schools, however, were hesitant about employing some of the techniques suggested by this advocate, particularly when the advocate recommended using drama and art as a key strategy to raise literacy attainment. This advocate experienced some attrition in school participation, which may have been influenced by schools' concerns in this regard. The advocate that focused its support on the early years was unable to link its support to particular Campaign themes or recommendations as the early years guidance was not published until the end of the second year of the Campaign. This advocate aligned its advice with the evidence in the EEF's Early Years Toolkit instead.

There was no clear relationship between the type of guidance coverage (for example, broad or detailed focus) and whether needs diagnosis was carried out by advocates at school or group level (see section 5.1). There was, however, a general pattern across the advocates: those that that focused on *facilitating* learning (including Advocate 5, which had a hybrid *advocate facilitated/distributed advocacy* approach) rather than *leading* learning from the centre, or completely *distributing* it, were most likely to view the guidance as having a central focus in their work and to cover all aspects of it. As reported in Findings 4, schools in the NE were significantly more likely than schools across the rest of England to have accessed and read the guidance reports. Case-study interviewees had generally found the reports useful and relevant, especially in the early planning stages, but thereafter tended to rely on their advocate to help them to apply the guidance. Schools generally reported that advocates were very familiar with the detail, providing additionality by interpreting it for schools. One literacy coordinator within Advocate 4's network described the benefits of working with an intermediary as follows: 'It's good to get the advocate's guidance on the guidance.' The type of coverage of the guidance by advocates (central or peripheral) did not appear to affect teachers' understanding/value of the evidence base significantly. This is likely to be because most schools required considerable additional information about how to implement the recommendations in practice.

5.3   Quality of advocacy: leadership of implementation

The following sections explore how advocates supported schools to implement the key aspects of the literacy guidance through:

- tools and resources;
- theory and practice support (training and peer support models); and
- cascading and within-school support structures.

5.3.1 Tools and resources

As noted in section 5.2.1, most of the advocates found the guidance challenging to implement in a practical way and were expecting the EEF to provide more implementation input and tools in order to move beyond providing initial continuing professional development (CPD) and learning opportunities to supporting teachers with implementation. *Advocate facilitated* approaches were generally stronger in the production of implementation resources (such as teaching and learning materials). This varied among other advocates due to the extent of their pedagogical knowledge and capacity. Where advocates developed new resources, these typically included schemes of work (SOWs), lesson plans, and teaching sequences. They also shared existing tools and resources including training materials, core texts, the EEF Toolkit, details of evidence-based interventions, and materials relating to the evidence base. Schools were most likely to use 'ready to implement resources' from advocates, for example, where SOWs or lesson plans were provided without the need for too much adaptation.

Lieberman (2001) identifies one of the most difficult transactions for a change-agent as providing a vision for others while at the same time encouraging the group to participate in modifying and shaping the vision. As described in section 5.2.1, co-construction of resources was rare. Occasionally, advocates developed resources with teachers. This included, for example, one LA advocate with a *distributed advocacy* model that trialled new resources with cluster leads 'to ensure they are fit for purpose'. The resources were amended in light of their feedback before being shared with all participating schools, which was reported to have worked well. It was important that advocates achieved the right balance when providing resources: some schools required more, yet others felt overwhelmed by the quantity and range provided making it difficult to decide what to implement and distribute to colleagues.

Over half of the advocates delivered active (teaching) support such as co-delivery, teaching demonstrations, and modelling of practice and resources so that teachers were able to see activities 'in action' before repeating them with their pupils. Over half of the advocates also undertook school visits to develop action plans, deliver training, or observe teachers' practice. *Advocate facilitated* approaches tended to provide more 'active' support to schools because they were well placed to do this through their TSAs/MATs.

5.3.2 Theory and practice support (training and peer support)

As discussed in Findings 1, advocates had three main types of engagement with schools: conferences, cluster/network meetings, and one-to-one support. All of the advocates provided or facilitated schools' access to formal training sessions (including workshops and conferences) on various topics related to the guidance. Training was delivered by the advocates themselves and/or external speakers/trainers (including the EEF). Schools generally valued the formal training received, for example, commenting on the academic rigor and quality, but often these sessions required follow-up and applied support to enable differentiation to meet individual school needs. It was also important that advocates maintained momentum between support activities; for example, through online forums or email groups, e-newsletters, and tasks for participants to complete between training sessions (gap tasks; see the example in Box 5.2).

Inter-school collaboration offers a potential means of supporting schools to implement pedagogical changes. Armstrong (2015) has identified a number of conditions that foster effective inter-school collaboration, including strong leadership, well-defined and robust structures and processes, a history of collaboration, clear communication, and a sensitivity to context. All advocates provided or facilitated opportunities for teachers to engage in school-to-school support/collaboration in varying degrees including peer observations, learning walks, networking events, and informal discussion opportunities

(both face-to-face and online) to share ideas and resources. For some advocates (particularly those that *led*) this was a minor focus whereas for others (adopting *advocate facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches) it had a much more central importance. School-to-school support featured strongly in *advocate facilitated/distributed advocacy* approaches and where there were established networks of teachers with similar priority areas working in similar school contexts.

Teachers particularly valued opportunities to observe how colleagues had implemented the advocate's strategies and tools in their settings and to share ideas about 'what works' from their own practice (although sometimes these were not backed by any research evidence of effectiveness). In supporting schools to implement an evidence-informed approach to teaching early literacy, Advocate 3, a TSA, provided formal CPD sessions followed by opportunities for participating schools to observe an outstanding early-years teacher who had experience of implementing within their MAT. Describing the key features of their approach, the advocate said:

> *We talk to [the participating schools] about the theory, the ethos and the principals and then they go to see [the teacher who has experience of implementing this approach] and she shows them how she does it, plans it, and the activities she uses. People have found that multi-level approach quite useful. I have been there as well to add any theoretical information that they might need.*

Box 5.2: How an advocate supported schools to implement evidence-based reading practices

Advocate 1 is a literacy CPD provider offering a long-standing, extended CPD literacy programme that it adapted to make explicit links with the EEF's guidance. The programme consists of eight whole-day training sessions (four per year). The support also includes access to the advocate's website of resources for the two years of the programme and a course anthology (with further reading), texts and teaching sequences (lesson plan resources), and an online forum for participants to communicate between sessions. The advocate also provides a bank of materials to enable participating teachers to implement the approaches explored in the training sessions with the aim of influencing whole-school change:

> *The focus has been on changing practice within classrooms and supporting teachers in how to engage and disseminate to others so that their own practice might leak out to others* (Advocate).

In supporting schools to implement evidence-based approaches in reading practices, the advocate focused on the guidance recommendation of balancing phonics and comprehension. The training session involved a balance of theory and practical activities. The advocate introduced a high quality text and demonstrated how this could link to a phonics activity, 'all the time exploring why teachers need to do it that way, what children would gain from that, and the research behind it'. Teachers were provided with a copy of the text, the teaching sequence, and handouts with references to the evidence-based theory. The advocate demonstrated practical ideas in the training session, running through the type of activities that teachers could undertake with their pupils with the participants themselves (some examples included poetry on the wall, treasure boxes, and imagery of poetry). This was appealing to teachers. As one remarked, it meant that they were able to 'pick it up and do exactly the same thing'.

To encourage implementation, the advocate also created an expectation that the programme would involve applying the ideas and techniques in practice. Participants were required to complete gap tasks with colleagues or individually in between training and support activities, which emphasised to schools that their progress toward implementation was being reviewed. As the advocate stated:

> *At the beginning of each training day we have established those routines and there is onus on them to have something to say and demonstrate; they can take photos or bring examples.*

All schools had re-run the advocate's training (to different extents) for their colleagues in school and had made some changes across the whole school. One teacher, however, was aware that other schools were not implementing the ideas because they did not deem them relevant (for example, they were viewed as being overly focused on art or drama); and some approaches, such as the teaching sequences, required adaptation for implementation (for example, by reducing the number of lessons the sequence was taught over). Interviewees suggested that, to encourage schools to implement, the advocate could have provided further evidence in the form of case-studies, with data explaining how literacy results had improved as a result of the suggested approaches.

Schools were generally more successful at implementation where a range of support activities were provided covering both theory and practice.

5.3.3   Cascading and within-school support structures

The advocacy support was primarily targeted at literacy coordinators and members of the SLT in order to influence whole-school change. Some advocates also provided opportunities for other school staff to engage, for example, by allowing others to attend repeat, second-year training sessions (Advocate 5) or to accompany literacy coordinators on learning walks at other schools (Advocate 3). Advocate 1, that adopted a *led* approach, required two members of staff attend its training sessions in order to support implementation across different classes and year groups or Key Stages. This advocate also provided specific ideas during the sessions for teachers about how to engage SLT members and governors to gain their support with implementation.

There was generally a lack of clarity from all advocates around expectations for implementation. There was an assumption that the tools and resources, as well as the knowledge gained through theory and practice support, would be disseminated though schools' existing mechanisms such as staff meetings, with some literacy coordinators reporting that this was an effective strategy. Some advocates made resources accessible to schools between formal training/support sessions via online portals, websites, or e-newsletters to facilitate wider information-sharing within school. Attempts by teachers to replicate the advocate's training sessions themselves to colleagues was evident in some schools, however there were mixed views on the value of this from both advocates and teachers. Some interviewees, for example, perceived that quality and effectiveness was diluted when this happened. Commenting on the whole-school training delivered by Advocate 2, a senior leader said:

> *It wouldn't have worked if I had to come back and deliver the training second hand. It's really important that the training comes from someone how knows the technique inside out. Staff commented after the CPD day how much they had enjoyed it and how interested they were by it and I think that sparked something in some of them; without that input from [the advocate] I doubt whether it would have taken off at all.*

5.4   Quality of advocacy: advocate's interpersonal skills

The advocacy role is challenging in general (Lieberman, 2001; Miles *et al.*, 1987; Saxl *et al.*, 1989) and there were particular requirements for advocates working in the Campaign. The literacy guidance requires interpretation and application to practice, as discussed earlier. There is also a requirement to move beyond the delivery of CPD, to develop teachers' conceptual learning, leading to implementation and ultimately whole-school change. Advocates displayed and utilised a wide range of interpersonal, school improvement, and programme management skills, with some advocates stronger in some areas and less so in others. Key people played a central role, with advocacy often seeming to succeed or struggle on the strength of an inspiring individual or team. This makes considerations about the replicability and sustainability of some of these approaches difficult (see Findings 6). The following sections include consideration of the skill areas of effective educational change agents identified by

Miles *et al.* (1987) and Saxl *et al.* (1989), especially their ability to establish trust and build rapport, to deal with the process, to manage the work of school improvement, and to build the capacity to continue (also discussed in Findings 6). We used these as a frame for considering the advocates' skills.

5.4.1   Advocates' interpersonal 'people' skills

All of the advocates demonstrated effective interpersonal skills. Teachers particularly valued their knowledge and expertise in literacy and their experience and ability to engage with schools and teachers. Some of the advocates, particularly the specialist training providers, did not have prior relationships with participating schools, yet they built trust and rapport quickly with teachers. Although the advocates that adopted *facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches worked locally, they did not necessarily have established relationships or connections with participating teachers either; therefore, all of the advocates needed to undertake some form of relationship building, which they generally did well. Advocate 1 (a training provider) said:

> *One of the challenges is that I'm not in the area; I'm not an advocate that is local to the schools. I'm working with that challenge at present because we work across the country; it will be different to advocates that can go into schools and work as consultants and see the children, and so on.*

Despite some advocates not having pre-established relationships with schools, there were virtually no reports of any resistance to working with them, according to school interviewees (though not that the case studies focused on schools that did engage with the advocacy). One exception is provided in Box 5.3. In this case, initial resentment turned to appreciation and commitment.

Box 5.3: From resentment to commitment

A small school in Advocate 5's network had identified challenges in teaching children spelling. A senior leader described how they had initially resented being involved in advocacy but had later come to value the initiative due to its relevance and the quality of the resources. The school received a letter from the LA inviting them to participate. The senior leader felt that the school was 'told' to get involved because their Key Stage results were slightly low. The school felt compelled to take part because the letter said that if they declined they would have to explain why. This interviewee explained how this had affected their attitude to taking part:

> *When I first started the training I was angry, thinking, 'Why am I here wasting my time being told to do this?' […] I was bitter, twisted, and angry and I felt a lot of people in my cluster were too. The only time I started to feel the training was starting to mean something to me is when the training focused on oracy, transcription, spelling, and reading. And [the advocate] gave us so many resources and I thought, 'I'm enjoying this, this is brilliant: this is what I need, I need resources and strategies.' I came back from the training and I came off my literacy timetable for a fortnight and I trialled everything that [the advocate] provided.*

The senior leader was so enthusiastic about the training that they persuaded the other staff to adopt the new literacy approaches. Looking ahead, the literacy coordinator hoped that in five years' time, all the school's teachers would have embedded the skills and practices taught by the advocate, and that schools in the cluster would continue to support each other.

Feedback from school staff and researcher observations showed that advocates typically demonstrated interpersonal ease and were effective at creating positive climates for learning. They were confident and approachable, authoritative without being authoritarian, and managed to achieve a good balance between expert, trainer, and colleague. School staff highlighted the engaging style of advocates: this was achieved by their passion and enthusiasm for the role and their ability to relate well to others. It worked well, for example, where advocates shared personal anecdotes and recognised and empathised with some of the challenges of teaching generally (workload, accountability, and so forth) and showed that they understood some of the challenges specific to the local context (such as the disadvantaged local communities and the low levels of literacy of children on entry to school). One senior leader described the skills of their advocate as follows:

More than anything it's the passion, all of them have such a passion for what they're doing. I take my job really seriously, so it's wonderful when you meet others who take teaching children to read as seriously as you do. Authenticity, passion, and they are just so knowledgeable. They are humble enough to say: 'I'm not sure I can help you on that, but I know someone who will', which is again really honest. It's not gimmicky or trying to sell you something; it's steeped in pedagogy and research, it's really authentic. You don't feel like, 'Oh I hope this is right?' You feel like you are definitely on the right track.

5.4.2   School-improvement and programme management capabilities

Advocates used a range of approaches to support school improvement. There was variation, however, in their ability to blend existing expertise with the EEF's evidence, and to implement the guidance. Advocates that adopted an *advocate-led* approach were strongest on supporting evidence-based literacy learning based on a 'literacy expert' approach. These advocates demonstrated high levels of literacy pedagogy expertise and competence in providing training for schools and tended to be highly regarded by the schools they worked with. A literacy coordinator working with a specialist training provider (Advocate 2) said:

[The advocate] has gravitas and that is the difference between the teachers delivering this training back in school and [the advocate] doing it. Trying to replicate training is really difficult; [the advocate] has the knowledge and experience that we don't have yet so it would have been less likely to have had an impact in school if we had replicated the training ourselves.

We found, however, that an unintended consequence of this approach was that it sometimes nurtured dependency among schools that expected the advocates to be proactive in leading the work. For example, Advocate 2 (a R1 advocate) took the lead on delivering training in the first year, and then asked schools to identify their specific needs and make contact for one-to-one support in the second year. This advocate struggled to encourage schools to take up the offer in the second year of provision. We also found that there was an un-met appetite on the part of the schools supported by these advocates to work with and learn from other schools.

The two *distributed advocacy* models supported school improvement in a very different way. The advantage of their approaches was that they provided a structure for school self-improvement which had the potential to be more sustainable than the *advocate-led* approaches. However, the weakness of these approaches was that the evidence often became lost in a more general sharing, among schools, of practice experience. Advocate 5, for example, attempted to tackle school improvement in two ways —via a self-improving model of school-led 'clusters' backed by expert input from the LA. There was a tendency, however, for the clusters to share practice experiences, regardless of whether or not they were evidence based, and it was the direct support from the advocate, rather than the cluster meetings, which appeared to have the greatest impact. There was also sometimes confusion about responsibility and 'who was in charge' (the advocate or the cluster lead) and in one advocacy area there was concern that the perceived hierarchy of the cluster (and the appointment of a 'lead') may have had a negative impact on the engagement of some schools. Where advocates and cluster leads demonstrated a wide range of interpersonal skills or had a complementary skill set, this was a powerful approach (see the example in Box 5.4) but where the relationship was not so strong this led to deficiencies.

As noted in section 5.1.1, advocates supported schools with change management by facilitating audit activities (to help schools define needs and identify appropriate programmes or practices to implement) and, to varying extents, to develop implementation or action plans. Monitoring was something that happened rarely across advocates and the biggest skills gap was the provision of challenge, for example, engaging hard to reach teachers/schools, confronting non-participants, or driving forward action where progress had slowed. This was particularly apparent in the *distributed advocacy* approaches. The EEF did not set performance measures because advocates had not developed pre-specified programmes. This meant there was no clear incentive or specific expectation for advocates to challenge schools. The EEF provided training to partnership leads on how to manage school-to-school consultations, yet it was not clear to what extent they were able to put this into action.

> **Box 5.4: How one advocate built trusted and effective relationships with schools**
>
> The facilitated approach adopted by Advocate 3 involved two advocates with complementary skills. Employed by the MAT with a specific role to support early years provision, the advocates each took responsibility for different elements of the support. One of the advocates had a strategic overview and drew on previous longstanding experience of working as an early years practitioner, as well as current knowledge of supporting schools and nurseries in the local area to improve (this included, for example, providing direct training and support, managing literacy projects, and facilitating school networks and partnerships). The broader work of the advocate meant they were aware of wider cultural and capacity issues which enabled them to approach implementation issues knowledgeably. This advocate said:
>
> > *I know [the schools] and I get to know what things they need in terms of training and that is how I have developed relationships. It gives me a good overview of what the training needs are across the schools in the area.*
>
> The three linked schools had all worked with this advocate previously and had built trusted and respected relationships. Teachers commented on the high levels of passion this advocate had for their work and to improve the outcomes of children—this was a key factor in their willingness to engage with the advocacy offer. A senior leader said: 'There is an excellent relationship there, [the advocate] wants to make a real difference to the kids [and] wants them to make as much progress as we do.'
>
> The other advocate had a background in primary teaching and speech and language therapy and they led on the delivery of training. Working previously as an independent consultant, this advocate developed a framework for developing children's literacy in the early years. Through the advocacy, schools were being supported to implement the framework in their settings through CPD-style training days, some in school support, and peer-to-peer learning (for example, via learning walks). School feedback showed that a key feature of the support was this advocate's subject knowledge and expertise. The advocate's previous teaching experience and understanding of the challenges of the role was beneficial. Few of the participating schools had worked with this advocate before and this shared understanding helped to build relationships. Teachers were particularly keen to learn from an advocate that had personal experience of implementation. A senior leader explained: '[The advocate] has lots of real life examples of what she has done with particular children and how she has applied the strategies she is teaching us.' This advocate's ability to effectively blend the delivery of the theory behind the framework with practical support for implementation shone through. One literacy coordinator said:
>
> > *The advocate knows we are not experts and this is [the advocate's] field of expertise; she would never make us do something we didn't feel confident about. She is very professional in that way and will support until we feel totally confident in trialling [the framework approach]. She will also adapt things and think of different ways we can do something so it works in our setting.*

5.5   Key ingredients of, and barriers to, feasible advocacy

Throughout this findings chapter we have highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of advocates' in relation to supporting needs diagnosis, implementing the guidance, leading school improvement, and programme management. In this final section, we provide an overview of the key enablers and barriers to effective advocacy at the advocate provider level. We also consider key contextual factors relating to schools and the EEF that were seen to influence advocates' success.

5.5.1   Key advocacy-level factors

Features of effective and less effective advocacy included:

- **Senior leadership commitment**. Where there was strong commitment, advocates were able to move more swiftly to action. Sometimes, however, advocates did not involve the right people in schools. A small number of interviewees identified a lack of senior leadership team support as a barrier. For example, one advocate had recommended that a member of the SLT should take part in training but this had seldom happened. This appeared to be an isolated case and it is possible that the EEF's strategy of obtaining formal approval and financial contribution from school leaders helped to minimise the risk that school leaders would limit the impact of advocacy. Although it was generally believed that literacy coordinators and SLTs had a key influence on the likelihood of whole-school change, the inclusion of other members of staff created the conditions for effective embedding of practice.
- **Clarity of purpose and a clearly defined end goal for schools**. One of the strongest enablers was whether participants felt that their involvement was improving their practice and would lead to improved results for their pupils. Some interviewees were not convinced of the relevance of particular activities recommended by advocates. For example, one case-study interviewee stated that the advocate had not introduced any new or more effective literacy practices than those already in place. Advocates that were able to effectively drive change undertook detailed needs analysis (usually at the individual school level) and adapted their support offer accordingly.
- **Support that met specific school needs**. Bespoke support was more appealing to schools than 'generic training'. Similarly, support which involved 'tweaks to practice' rather than 'radical changes' was more likely to be taken on by schools, although if these 'tweaks' were insufficient to lead to meaningful evidence-based changes in practice and impacts on outcomes, then, arguably, the advocacy was not likely to be effective. The 'perfect mix' from a school's perspective appears to occur when schools are able to accept the recommended practices as being simultaneously effective, different to their existing practices, and ideally not requiring radical reform.
- **Provision of regular and ongoing communication and support**. This was critical for maintaining momentum and engagement. In some cases, however, the capacity of the advocates was a barrier. Advocacy worked well when the right people had sufficient capacity to make use of available funding, or were able to delegate appropriately.
- **Willingness to convert evidence-based guidance into practical tools and resources**, ideally in partnership with schools. There were differences between advocates in the extent to which they actively adhered to or promoted the evidence versus drawing on their existing expertise. For some advocates, their knowledge of the evidence base was a limiting factor, while others lacked the personal skills (confidence) and qualities in facilitating co-construction with schools.

5.5.2   Key school-level factors

School conditions that facilitated or hindered effective advocacy included:

- **Culture and orientation towards research evidence**—particularly the extent to which senior leaders and participating teachers' valued research evidence or perceived the advocacy offer to be relevant—was a factor: advocacy thrived where senior leaders encouraged and enabled participation (for example, by releasing teachers to attend training) and where teachers themselves were proactively engaged, prioritised implementation, and supported others in their settings to use new resources and embed new practices. The barrier here was the additional associated workload, particularly to engage in collaborative activity.
- **Characteristics such as size and location**. Teachers in small rural schools sometimes found engaging with advocacy a challenge, for example, if it involved extended travel time (for example, to a central training venue) or where it included participating in clusters or networks with other schools with very different features (for example, located in cities or areas with very high economic disadvantage or high levels of EAL pupils). This led to difficulties in establishing shared objectives and common goals. The ability to network and collaborate with schools in close proximity was effective in supporting implementation, particularly where teachers had opportunities to observe each other's settings and practices.

5.5.3   Key EEF-level factors

EEF-level factors that facilitated or hindered effective advocacy are discussed below.

A mutually-supportive relationship

There was generally a good functional relationship between the EEF and the advocates, with the EEF as supplier and the advocate as delivery agent. Advocates felt their role was distinct from the EEF's and that they were able to act with autonomy.

Sufficient planning and lead-in time

In the second year of the Campaign, the EEF was able to anticipate the support that R2 advocates would need, and also had the KS1 and KS2 guidance in place. There was therefore time for the EEF and the R2 advocates to undertake preparation work (including learning from the experiences of R1 advocates). This included support with bid development and setting expectations for advocacy, which led to swift school recruitment and a quicker start for R2 than R1 advocates. This lead-in time was not available for the R1 advocates and the full set of guidance materials was also not published. The three R1 advocates thus found it challenging to develop their offer while simultaneously getting to grips with the content of the KS1 guidance, and the scope of their auditing and action planning was limited as a result.[41] Some of the advocates perceived that schools had low levels of awareness of the Campaign. The EEF's communication with schools about the Campaign could, potentially, have been more effective to facilitate engagement with the advocacy support.

Effective training

Feedback from both advocates and schools was that the training provided by the EEF was highly beneficial, particularly where it related to the guidance and the literacy evidence base. An advocate adopting a facilitated approach said, 'The support we've had from the EEF, as well as top quality resources, has been phenomenal.' As noted in section 5.2.1, most advocates would have liked more

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[41] It should be noted that it was always the EEF's intention to develop the guidance over the first two years of the Campaign whilst also exploring advocacy models.

detailed guidance from the EEF on implementation and had an expectation that the EEF would 'supply' them with more tools and resources. The limited co-construction of resources suggests that there was insufficient 'buy-in' to this concept from the outset and that the EEF might have benefited from providing greater clarification of the role and the requirements relating to this specific aspect.

Effective communication

Communication between the EEF and advocates was productive, professional, and helpful, however there appeared to be a lack of clarity regarding expectations about the nature and level of the EEF's involvement with advocates. After initial input there was a perceived falling-away of EEF support. Some advocates would have welcomed further contact but recognised that capacity was a limiting factor. The level of communication and support was not necessarily an issue for advocates who were experienced in operating autonomously (although some level of monitoring may have been helpful); however, other advocates, particularly those with less knowledge and understanding of the evidence base, would have welcomed more ongoing input. There were also limited opportunities to facilitate the sharing of learning among advocates. Some had made direct links themselves in order to do this.

Qualitative analysis of interview data has revealed that there were strengths and weaknesses to all types of advocacy at all points on the advocacy continuum. The strengths of one were often the weaknesses of another, and vice versa. Evidence from our relatively small number of advocacy case studies suggests that advocacy requires different types of expertise: subject, pedagogical, and change management, which is a difficult mix to achieve. The requirements of advocacy also depend upon the specific needs and stage of development of the school.

There are a number of messages for the EEF. Where possible, it is desirable, and most effective, to publish key resources in advance of advocacy work commencing. It is also important to be very precise with advocates about the expectations of their role (particularly around co-construction of tools and resources and about the extent to which fidelity to the guidance recommendations is expected—we found some examples of straying from the guidance recommendations across our case studies). Ongoing support and more progress monitoring would help to keep these issues under close review. Different organisations and individuals have very different types of expertise and it is important to be mindful that achieving a perfect balance of expertise from any one organisation is likely to be challenging and it should be expected that there will often be a trade-off between evidence-based knowledge and change-management experience.

Findings 6: Sustainability

Key findings summary

- The EEF planned for sustainable advocacy in relation to affordability, senior leadership endorsement, and building on existing networks.
- Most of the schools within our case studies felt that the advocacy was affordable but some schools and advocates felt the costs were not sustainable and/or had limited their participation during the Campaign.
- Most of the schools within our case studies had 'scaled out' their involvement by spreading the recommended literacy pedagogy to other teachers in the same schools. There was little evidence during the evaluation period of 'scaling up' (that is, to teachers in other schools).
- There was greater prospect for sustainability of the literacy pedagogy promoted through the Campaign than of a commitment to adopting evidence-based practice in literacy.
- All school staff we interviewed in our case studies said they valued the advocates and would like to continue working with them in future, but few schools had yet made any concrete plans for sustainability.
- *Advocate-led* approaches appeared to be less sustainable than *advocate-facilitated* or *distributed advocacy* approaches because it was difficult for schools to build their own development programmes without support from a network of schools or access to outside expertise. Schools taking part in *advocate facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches were more positive about their future involvement in developing their literacy practices, but several thought that they would need support in organising/leading the development and access to literacy expertise. There was some suggestion that TSAs might provide a structure for sustainability.
- The key barriers and enablers of sustainability were affordability and access to support from other schools and experts. A few interviewees mentioned a lack of senior leadership support as a barrier. The main motivator for sustainability was whether the participants thought their involvement was improving their literacy pedagogy and would improve pupils' results.
- The prospects for sustainability were greater where the initiative was working with an existing network of schools with the commitment, funds, and capacity to lead evidence-based literacy developments in future.
- The use of advocates within the Campaign appears to have potential for scalability to schools in other areas, although it is a relatively resource-intensive approach requiring careful attention to multiple components of the structure and implementation of advocacy support over time. The fact that engagement with provision reduced across a number of the advocates over time (see Findings 2) also suggests that the sustainability of advocacy may be in question.

6.1   Introduction

This findings chapter focuses on the sustainability of the Campaign, with a particular focus on the role of advocacy. The chapter primarily considers sustainability rather than scalability, given the relatively early stage of development of literacy changes within participating schools. The aspects of the Campaign that were intended to be sustainable were improvements in literacy pedagogy and the use of research in informing literacy practices. First, we set out the key components of sustainability, then we present the evidence on the sustainability of the Campaign.

6.1.1   Aspects of sustainability

Ensuring the sustainability of educational initiatives has been recognised as a considerable challenge for policymakers and school leaders (see Fullan 2005; Hargreaves, 2002; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2009; Lemke and Sabelli, 2008). According to Hargreaves (2002) there are five key and interrelated characteristics of sustainable educational change. These are:

1. improvement that sustains learning, not merely change that alters schooling;
2. improvement that endures over time;
3. improvement that can be supported by available or achievable resources;
4. improvement that does not impact negatively on the surrounding environment of other schools and systems; and
5. improvement that promotes ecological diversity and capacity throughout the educational and community environment.

<div align="right">(Hargreaves, 2002, p. 193.)</div>

Although we did not set out to collect evidence on all of these characteristics of the Campaign, we are able to comment on some of them drawing on the evidence from the six advocacy case studies. However, it is premature for the evaluation to assess whether the improvement has the capacity to endure over time, given that it had only been in place for one year (in the case of R2 advocates) or two years (in the case of R1 advocates) by the end of the process evaluation.

6.1.2 Improvement that sustains learning

Turning to the first characteristic of sustainability identified by Hargreaves (2002), the Campaign was intended to sustain learning. It did so by investing in deep learning through teacher development and partnership working between the EEF, advocates, and groups of schools, rather than by dictating specific structural changes, though the extent of this was evident to different degrees within the case studies (see Findings 5 for further information on the feasibility of different advocacy approaches). The Campaign focused not only on 'what works' in literacy teaching and learning, but also on 'why' it works.

6.1.3 Promoting improvement that endures over time

The EEF intended that improvements in literacy pedagogy and the use of research in informing literacy practices promoted through the Campaign would endure over time. To this end, the EEF deliberately sought to nurture sustainable practice through supporting and developing networks, both within and between schools. Within-school sustainability was encouraged through seeking to involve several members of staff so that the learning could be sustained even if one of the people directly involved subsequently left the school. The EEF also sought school leaders' active endorsement of the initiative in their schools as a requirement for receiving advocacy support. As noted in Findings 1 and 2, the EEF's model paid attention to building social capital between schools by appointing advocates to work with a group of schools located within a specific geographical area of the NE, and by exploiting advocates' existing networks in those areas as far as possible.

However, the EEF's regional programme manager reflected that these strategies were not equally effective in all cases due to mismatches between geographic areas, the location of schools serving disadvantaged populations, the extent of advocates' existing networks, and capacity to provide support. LAs and teaching schools had the strongest existing relationships with groups of schools, whereas the training providers had little or no prior involvement in the designated areas.

In practice, schools in more isolated areas were less likely to receive advocacy support, as were smaller schools that did not always have the capacity to take part in a programme involving several members of staff.

As mentioned in Findings 1 and 5, case-study interviews provided evidence that some schools were supporting each other and building capacity to support other schools in developing their literacy practices. This was most common in the *advocate-facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches but was least evident among schools involved in *advocate-led* approaches (because they did not inherently require schools to collaborate).

6.1.4   Improvement that does not impact negatively on the environment

The Campaign was designed to improve schools' literacy and evidence-informed practices. While it was outside the remit of the evaluation to consider the impact of the Campaign on other schools or systems, we were able to consider the impact of the Campaign on participating schools. Results from the surveys, presented in Findings 3, show that NE schools reported adopting approaches to reading pedagogy that were aligned with evidence-based practice to a significantly greater extent than comparison schools located outside the NE, but did not have significantly better writing composition or pupil diagnosis than comparison schools. Case-study evidence indicated that the majority of schools focused their energies on developing classroom strategies to improve pupils' reading. While we do not know for certain whether or not teachers focused on reading at the expense of other aspects of the curriculum, the survey and case-study findings raise the possibility that an increased focus on reading *could* have drawn the focus away from other areas of literacy, though there was no indication that it did so to the detriment of those other areas.

6.2   Perceived affordability of the Campaign

The EEF intentionally designed the Campaign to be accessible within schools' available resources. The guidance reports were available free of charge from the EEF website and involvement in trials was either free or available at low cost. The EEF decided that schools should be asked for a small financial contribution for advocacy support because they believed that this would encourage engagement and commitment, especially from school leaders. Accordingly, each school paid their advocate between £200 and £500 per year (depending on the advocate) to take part in advocacy support.

Most of the school interviewees perceived their participation in advocacy support to be affordable and to represent good value for money. As one school leader said: 'Schools have budget constraints and haven't got the capability to buy into a SLA [service-level agreement] for literacy—this is why for us this has been fantastic for two hundred pounds.'

However, some schools pointed out that even £200 represented a large investment for a small school and some said that they were unable to afford specific aspects of participation, particularly the cost of staff cover to release teachers to attend training or the cost of purchasing new materials recommended by the advocate. In addition, some interviewees said it was difficult to find the time to attend cluster meetings, particularly if these were held at some distance from their schools.

Advocates had different views on the affordability of their involvement in the Campaign. Some advocates were satisfied with their payment whereas others said that the funding they received was insufficient for the amount of work involved. Some of the advocacy costs were heavily subsidised for participating schools. For example, Advocate 1 normally charged £2,400 for two participants to attend training and for access to a dedicated website and materials (reading books), whereas for the Campaign they received £1,500 per school for two years (£800 from the school and £700 from the EEF). The advocate commented that this was not sustainable and they would not seek to repeat it in future: 'We are doing it because, as a charity, we see it very much as part of our charitable purpose in terms of supporting the aims of the initiative so that's why we are willing to take the hit […] but in terms of sustainability, financially this wouldn't be a sustainable option for us.'

Some advocates said that a lack of funding had limited the quality of their offer, especially in relation to their ability to provide individual support for schools or to monitor schools' progress, which they felt was important to maintain quality. Advocate 3 commented: 'The schools are running with it—but I'm just going on what they report back. I haven't got the capacity, but I would have loved to have gone into each school and observed what is going on.'

Similarly, Advocate 2 reported that the budget was insufficient to provide individual support for planning, implementation, and monitoring beyond their initial action planning with schools. This advocate felt

strongly that funding constraints had limited the potential impact and sustainability of the Campaign in participating schools.

6.3   Sustainability of evidence-based learning and literacy practices

Moving on from the Campaign design, we now consider the evidence for the sustainability of the evidence-based learning and literacy practices promoted through the Campaign. As stated previously, the ability to assess this was limited by the timing of the evaluation (which followed schools for one or two years after they started working with their advocates). However, the interviews with these schools and advocates included questions on the spread of engagement, the extent of school-led change that had already been achieved, and future plans for sustainability.

One of the indicators of sustainability is the diffusion of evidence-based learning and new literacy practices within and between schools. Lemke and Sabelli (2008) describe two kinds scaling in this context: 'scaling out' (that is, including more units in the same organisation) and 'scaling up' (that is, from smaller to larger-scale systems such as other schools which did not receive advocacy support). The evaluation found some evidence of the 'scaling out' of evidence-based literacy practices, as all school interviewees described sharing the information with other staff in their schools. There was less evidence of 'scaling up' through the spread of learning between schools (apart from where this was built into the advocacy approach) or of evidence-based practice more generally. The majority of the schools' comments about sustainability focused exclusively on the literacy learning and practices promoted through the Campaign and made little reference to evidence-based practice, although survey findings presented in Findings 4 do show that NE schools were significantly more likely than comparison schools to have based decisions about literacy teaching approaches on research evidence.

All the school staff we interviewed said they valued the work of the advocates and would like to see their involvement continue in future, but there was little evidence of schools actually planning for the future sustainability of the Campaign (though they may have done so at a later date). Schools in R1 (those in the second year of the Campaign at the time of our last contact) were asked about their plans for sustainability. By that time, few schools had concrete plans in place as to how they would sustain the Campaign's impact once the advocacy work had finished. Some school interviewees expressed doubts about the future sustainability of the Campaign because they could not afford to employ the advocate without the EEF subsidy. As one school literacy coordinator said**:**

> *Because people have seen immediate success, [the advocate] has had quick wins and people have bought into it, the changes will last. We need to do something to sustain the quality of provision the teachers have received. It needs a* [advocate name]. *The learning is so new for lots of people. I'm only just starting to embed it. The teachers aren't yet at the stage of being able to do all this on their own. It needs a* [advocate name].

(Literacy coordinator in Advocacy area 2.)

Interestingly, school interviewees commonly interpreted sustainability in terms of continued reliance on outside experts to drive the activity and provide expertise on best (evidence-based) practice, rather than considering that they could sustain literacy development or the use of evidence-based practice in other ways (for example, through working with other schools or accessing information on the evidence base themselves). Part of the role of an advocate is to help align policies and infrastructure into a cohesive network of supports to sustain effective practice (RAND, 2004). However, not all advocates were in a position to do this or saw it as part of their role. As mentioned in Findings 2, advocacy approaches that rely on the involvement of an inspirational individual are inherently less sustainable than those supported by a team or larger organisation unless the responsibility can be transferred from the individual to other sources of support.

The advocates using *advocate-led* approaches both described how they had encouraged schools to become more proactive in leading their own development, with some evidence of success. Advocate 1

(a training provider) had planned a two-year CPD model to increase the chances of the content becoming embedded in schools but this strategy had affected take-up as some schools were unwilling to commit to a two-year involvement. The advocate had included some course content on how participating teachers can influence change within their schools (for example, by advocating for the school to adopt the recommended literacy practices). One literacy coordinator explained how they had convinced colleagues and senior leaders to adopt the advocate's recommended pedagogy based on deep learning, which was quite different from the school's current approach:

> *Telling my boss, the CEO* [of the school's MAT] *why children aren't doing reading comprehension before Year 2 SATs and showing him that it's because the research says this […] So I've had to persuade teachers but I've also had to persuade my superiors too because there are schools who are hot-housing children for those tests and at the minute getting much better results than us […] I wouldn't have been confident to have those discussions with my superiors before I went on this training [with the advocate].*

<div align="right">(Literacy coordinator in Advocacy area 1.)</div>

As mentioned in Findings 2 and 5, Advocate 2 offered to provide tailored support for each school at no additional charge, but few schools took up the offer. This advocate also encouraged participating literacy coordinators to organise their own meetings in order to develop peer learning and support. These meetings had taken place and were fairly well attended, though one interviewee commented that teacher groups would need ongoing commitment and coordination as such groups had not been particularly successful previously. The advocate made a similar point: 'I believe strongly in school networks but I do think they need external support to focus them […] I have tried to equip subject leaders with the wherewithal to change their practice and to influence others.'

Schools served by advocates offering *facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches were more positive about their future involvement in developing their literacy practices, but several expressed the view that they would need continued access to expertise in order to keep updated on the evidence base. There was a suggestion in two advocacy areas that TSAs might help schools to sustain the learning and the evidence-based approaches promoted by the Campaign. This is illustrated in the example in Box 6.1.

Box 6.1: Sustainability via TSAs

Advocate 3 was a TSA that employed a former teacher turned trainer to deliver an established programme aiming to support children's early speech and language development. The TSA's Director of Early Years explained that it had applied to the EEF as part of a longer-term vision of developing a common approach to literacy across their network of schools. This interviewee felt that the TSA's decision to employ the trainer on a permanent basis would help to ensure the sustainability of the literacy learning in future, both within and outside of the TSA's member schools.

In another case, Advocate 2, a national training provider with limited experience of working in the NE had found it difficult to recruit schools in the designated area. The EEF had enlisted the help of a local TSA to encourage recruitment. The head of the TSA said that they were considering plans for sustainability and hoped to allocate responsibility for ongoing coordination of the work to a partnership head. By the end of the second year, the head of the TSA had had some tentative discussions with the training provider about future plans for continuity following the end of the advocate's contract with the EEF.

6.4   Barriers and enablers to sustainability

The evaluation identified a number of barriers and enablers to sustainability, in addition to those identified in relation to advocacy implementation (see Findings 5). Key conditions that reportedly facilitated or hindered future sustainability were:

- **Costs of continued participation**. Sustainability was more feasible where the costs of participation to advocates and schools were inherently lower or could be supported as part of ongoing activities (such as local authority-funded support for school improvement or existing time and funding allocated by schools for CPD). Cost was a particular barrier to sustainability in cases where the advocate was not covering their costs or the costs to schools were heavily subsidised by the EEF. If schools wished to continue receiving support from these advocates, they would therefore have to pay more for the service or attempt to pool costs with a group of schools.
- **School collaboration**. *Advocate-facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches involved groups of schools working together. These groups were more conducive to future sustainability where they were well-established with similar needs and working together in a structural relationship (such as a MAT or TSA). However, where schools had little history of working together, or were located at some distance from each other, it was more difficult to sustain their involvement, even during the formal advocacy period. It was also more challenging for schools to work together when they felt they needed to focus on different aspects of literacy practice (for example, reading or writing).

The fact that engagement with provision reduced across a number of the advocates over time (see Findings 2) suggests that advocacy activity may be difficult for some schools to sustain over time. As discussed, both schools and advocates commonly identified costs, and a lack of school partnerships or access to expertise, as barriers to future sustainability whereas relevance, quality, and practicality were the main motivators for continued participation. It would be possible for schools to take on responsibility for organising evidence-based activities in future but only with the following ingredients in place: leadership responsibility for the initiative, access to sufficient resources (to pay for staff time and teaching resources), and access to evidence-based literacy expertise.

The prospects for sustainability were higher where there was an existing network of schools with the commitment, funds, and capacity to lead evidence-informed literacy developments in future. Prospects were least good for more geographically isolated schools with less capacity, budget, or access to expertise.

A note on scalability

Scalability may be defined as the ability of a reform to effect deep and consequential change in classroom practice (Coburn, 2003). Coburn identified four interrelated dimensions of **scale:** depth, sustainability, spread, and shift in reform ownership. In the case of the Campaign, the scalability is difficult to assess at this early stage. However, there are a number of factors worth discussing because they are likely to have an impact on the scalability of the advocacy approach adopted in this Campaign.

First, the Campaign focused on an area of learning (literacy) which is fundamental to education. This provided both advantages (including a powerful impetus for change, especially for schools with low attainment in literacy) and disadvantages (all participating schools had well-established literacy policies and practices in place, which may have been a source of inertia or resistance to new approaches).

The relationship between the EEF and the advocates was new, and the EEF's guidance materials did not include implementation tools, so advocates had to devise their own or tailor existing tools and resources to fit the evidence-based guidance. The EEF's regional programme manager explained that the original intention that the advocates and the EEF would engage in a process of 'co-construction' of practical resources for schools did not take place in practice. This interviewee also reflected that in hindsight, the EEF had been insufficiently 'directive' in setting out their initial expectations and monitoring advocates' progress. The implementation tools developed by individual advocates by the

end of Year 2 did not appear to be suitable to spread the initiative to other schools without the involvement of the original advocates who had devised them.

The case studies provided evidence of a shift in the ownership of the literacy reforms from the EEF and the advocates to the schools in the *advocate-facilitated* and *distributed advocacy* approaches, but *distributed advocacy* approaches appeared to be more vulnerable to a loss of commitment to evidence-based practice. The advocates were successful in reaching schools with disadvantaged populations but did not reach schools in isolated areas. There was little evidence of the implementation spreading between schools during the first two years of the Campaign, though it is possible that this may occur at a later stage. Therefore, it appears that the use of advocates within the Campaign has potential for scalability to schools in other areas, but it is a relatively resource-intensive approach requiring careful attention to multiple components of the structure and implementation of advocacy support over an extended period of time.

Conclusion

Hypothesis

The Campaign ToC (Figure 1) hypothesises that social relationships (in the case of this Campaign, in the form of advocacy support) are fundamental to effective knowledge exchange. This formative evaluation has therefore explored the following hypothesis as a route to explaining the promise, feasibility, and sustainability of the Campaign: that *guidance + advocacy + evidence-based literacy interventions* will have greater impact than *guidance + advocacy*, which will have greater impact than *guidance alone*.

We tested this hypothesis through an analysis of the Campaign's intermediate outcomes, after two years of activity, and through analysis of advocacy provision by focusing on four research questions. It is important to be aware that our formative evaluation makes an initial assessment of Campaign outcomes and the feasibility of advocacy. The Campaign still has three years to run and a final impact analysis, due to be undertaken by UCL IoE and the University of Nottingham in 2020/2021, will provide further evidence regarding the Campaign's impact on schools and on pupils' literacy outcomes. It is also important to note that there are some limitations to the formative evaluation design, specifically related to the relatively small scale of the case-study data and the focus on more engaged schools, which means that qualitative findings should be considered illustrative rather than representative (see Research Design and Methods section).

- RQ1: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' adoption of evidence-based literacy practices and programmes (promise and sustainability)?

- RQ2: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on schools' capacity to support good practice in literacy (promise and sustainability)?

- RQ3: What are the outcomes of the Campaign on teachers' use of evidence to inform literacy practices (promise and sustainability)?

- RQ4: 'What works' in effective advocacy and wider campaign provision (feasibility and sustainability)?

Promise

It is a challenge for any programme to have measurable impact on teacher- and school-level outcomes over a one- to two-year period, especially if it is not a codified intervention but rather a set of evidence-based guiding principles supported by practice partners, as was the case in this Campaign. The fact that we observed differences between NE and comparison schools on a number of outcome measures is therefore a positive finding, sufficient to indicate that the Campaign is developing with promise, both in terms of its current architecture, and in terms of the learning and practices which are being established in NE schools. There were *no* occasions in which we observed more favourable outcomes in comparison schools than in NE schools. Table A below summarises the teacher and school outcomes that we observed.

The table shows that, in addition to positive associations between the intervention and a number of outcome measures, there were also improvements among *both* comparison *and* NE schools over time (compared to their baseline position) on a few of the outcomes. Although this finding cannot be attributed to national Campaign activities, it is possible that it contributed, given that a number of practices improved in schools across England *after* the publication of the KS1, and, later, KS2 guidance, which were both available to all schools nationally.[42]

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[42] The EYFS guidance was not published until June 2018 and so is unlikely to have had any effect.

Table A: Summary of intermediate outcomes in NE and comparison schools

	Improvement in both NE and comparison schools	No improvement in either NE or comparison schools	Greater improvement in NE than comparison schools	Within the NE: greater improvement in advocacy than non-advocacy schools**
Outcomes related to RQ1				
Balanced/blended approach to reading	-	✓	-	N/A
*Reading comprehension	✓	-	✓	-
*Writing composition	✓	-	-	-
Fluent handwriting	-	✓	-	N/A
Diagnosing literacy need	-	✓	-	N/A
*Effective catch-up support	-	-	✓	-
Outcomes related to RQ2				
*School propensity for good practice in literacy	-	-	✓	-
School resources to support good practice in literacy	-	-	✓	N/A
Outcomes related to RQ3				
Use of research evidence in decisions about literacy teaching	✓	-	✓	-

* Composite measures (factors).
** This analysis was conducted on the composite measures. It was not conducted on individual survey items, with the exception of questions 8a–d (the use of research evidence in decisions about literacy teaching) as this was the only means that we had of measuring outcomes related to RQ3.

Outcomes related to the adoption of evidence-based literacy practices (RQ1)

Two of the school literacy practices recommended in the guidance were more prominent in NE schools than in comparison schools, even when we controlled for differences between NE and comparison schools at baseline. These were *reading comprehension* and *catch-up support practices* (for a description of the guidance recommendations and how these related to the survey questions, see research design and methods chapter, Table 1). This finding is supported by learning from the school case-studies where we found that reading comprehension was often a chosen focus for schools' literacy developments. In general, there was less focus on improving pupils' writing, and we found no associations between NE schools and either writing comprehension or handwriting practices.

Outcomes related to schools' propensity to support good practice in literacy (RQ2)

We also saw more improvement in NE schools than comparison schools in relation to schools having both the *capacity* and the *resources* to support good practice in literacy. Analysis of case-study data supported these findings, with interviewees identifying a number of perceived capacity improvements as a result of working with advocates and the EEF. These included improved teacher understanding of good literacy teaching practices, especially among members of staff directly involved in the advocacy offer, literacy coordinators disseminating learning to colleagues to support whole-school-level change,

and literacy coordinators developing their leadership capacity. There were also examples of improved school-to-school support and networking capacity, with advocates often providing opportunities for schools to work together and support each other, and with lead literacy coordinators developing their facilitation skills. These benefits were most commonly cited in areas where there was an *advocate-facilitated* or a *distributed advocacy* approach.

Outcomes related to teachers' use of evidence to inform literacy practices (RQ3)

We found evidence that schools in the NE were more positively associated with *using research evidence to inform their decisions about literacy teaching*. This was a less direct outcome of the Campaign than the outcomes related to literacy practices, so it is promising that we detected this difference. There were improvements in responding schools' uses of research evidence to inform their decision making over time, but there was a greater improvement in NE schools than in comparison schools. This finding must be caveated by the fact that, when compared to other sources of information and advice, we found that research evidence played a relatively minor role in schools' decision-making in both NE and comparison schools, albeit a growing one. In summary:

- There was improvement across three of the measured literacy teacher and school outcomes—*reading comprehension*, *writing composition*, and *using research evidence to inform decision-making*—in both NE and comparison schools. It is possible that the national availability of the KS1 and KS2 guidance influenced these outcomes. Exceptions (where there was no measurable improvement in either group) were *using a balanced approach to developing reading (through decoding and comprehension)* and *promoting fluent handwriting*.

- There was a positive association between NE schools and the outcomes *reading comprehension*, *catch up support*, *school propensity for good practice in literacy*, *school resources for good practice in literacy*, and *use of research evidence in decisions about literacy teaching.* There were no occasions when schools in the comparison group were more positively associated with these outcomes than schools in the NE. This suggests that the 'place-based' focus and prominence of the Campaign in the NE had a positive impact on schools in the area.

- There was no emerging evidence, at this early stage of development, of an 'advocacy effect' on the outcomes measured in the survey. We did not find evidence of more positive outcomes, on any of the measures, for schools in the NE receiving advocacy than for schools in the NE not receiving advocacy. This is surprising given how positively most case-study interviewees spoke about their experiences of advocacy support and the changes they had made to their practices as a result, albeit that case studies were small in number and that they were more engaged with the advocacy activities. The number of respondents in the matched survey analysis group was relatively small at 99 advocacy schools and 142 non-advocacy schools and we cannot be absolutely certain that these numbers are representative of the wider populations of schools in each group. The numbers also precluded a more fine-grained analysis by type or advocate, by specific advocate, by length of time support had been offered (R1 vs R2), by dosage, or by advocacy quality. Each of these factors may have helped explain the headline finding.

Overall, the Campaign is showing promise across a number of outcomes. It seems that the place-based nature of the programme has had a bigger impact on outcomes so far than social interaction through advocacy *per se*, meaning that we currently have no evidence from the survey to support the Campaign theory that *guidance + advocacy* will have greater impact than *guidance alone.* Endpoint survey results showed that NE schools were significantly more likely than comparison schools to have *heard about EEF trials and participated in one or more*. This indicates that NE schools were more likely to have received this form of 'direct support' than other schools.[43] A revised Campaign theory, which would need to be tested, could therefore be that *guidance + a place-based focus + evidence-based literacy interventions* has the greatest effect. There is clearly something unique to the way in which the Campaign was introduced, promoted, and supported in the NE, which means that schools in this region

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[43] The EEF use the term 'direct support' to describe schools' involvement in their trials.

have progressed more quickly than schools in other parts of England in developing evidence-based literacy practices. Although survey analysis did not detect an advocacy effect, this does not necessarily mean that advocacy did not contribute to the positive Campaign outcomes, as the following section discusses.

Potential explanations for the NE effect

There are a number of possible explanations for the outcomes described so far. Below, we discuss six possibilities.

1. **The NE effect is explained by something other than the Campaign**. It may be that there are other programmes or interventions operating in the NE (but not in the rest of the country) that account for the differences in outcomes. One strategy that that might be having such an impact is Read North East, a campaign led by the National Literacy Trust. The North East Literacy Forum forms the steering group for this campaign, bringing together eight key organisations in the region, one of which is the EEF.[44] This campaign clearly has prominence in the region and has a key focus on reading, which is one of the outcomes where we saw positive associations for NE schools. The EEF's own Campaign work is closely connected with the work of Read North East, but it is difficult to disentangle the relative effect of each campaign on the results that we have observed. We cannot be absolutely certain that the EEF Campaign is solely responsible for the positive impacts seen in NE schools. It is important to note that, while there are a number of internal impact reviews of the National Literacy Trust, there does not appear to have been an independent external evaluation of their work.[45]

2. **EEF activities in the region are having an effect**. In addition to supporting the advocates, the EEF's regional programme manager has a role in signposting NE schools to EEF trials, as well as disseminating the EEF's evidence-based recommendations across the region more widely. Additionally, the EEF's chief executive and other members of staff have been involved in promoting its work in the region (for example, by working with headteacher groups) and in supporting approaches to evidence-informed practice. The extent to which these interventions and participation in trials have been equal in intensity across the country, as opposed to concentrated in the NE, is unclear, but this may go some way towards explaining the positive NE outcomes described in this report.

3. **Advocacy schools are not representative of all schools in the NE**. Schools receiving advocacy had significantly higher proportions of pupils in receipt of FSM than schools not receiving advocacy. While we cannot directly infer that these schools were less likely to have effective practices than other schools in the region, it was the case that they were in more challenging circumstances. It may, therefore, be that advocacy had a 'balancing' effect, helping these schools to develop their practices so that they rose to a similar standard as those in other NE schools.

4. **There has been 'advocacy contamination' across the NE**. We know from case studies that advocates were often supporting schools outside their formal networks, for example, by inviting them to conferences or events. However, the number of schools not in receipt of advocacy was considerably greater than the group in receipt of advocacy, and there is no indication that the advocates' reach was that extensive. Additionally, any support that non-advocacy schools received would have been lower-intensity in nature than that experienced by advocacy schools and therefore we would not expect the results for both groups to be the same. A related possibility is that the learning emerging in advocacy schools was beginning to spread across other schools in the region as a result of schools working together, sharing practices, and discussing ideas through partnerships and networks. However, given the short timespan over which the advocates operated (especially the R2 advocates), this would have been a surprising result to see so soon at scale.

5. **It is too early to detect advocacy effects**. Schools in our case studies fairly unanimously valued the support they had received from advocates and the advocates themselves performed well in

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[44] https://literacytrust.org.uk/communities/north-east/
[45] See for example: 'National Literacy Trust Network: Feedback and impact 2014-15—evaluation of the network'; 'Impact report 2016/2017'; 'Our impact 2017/2018'; 'Celebrating our impact in our 25th anniversary year'; 'Our approach and impact'.

the role and felt confident about supporting schools to develop evidence-informed literacy practices. Schools believed that the advocates provided additionality to the support and guidance provided by the EEF. It is well known that in-depth support such as that provided by the advocates takes time to embed in schools and to see benefits. It is quite probable, therefore, that it is simply too early to detect advocacy-specific effects. The measure of this will be whether, in 2021, the impact analysis undertaken by UCL IOE and UoN will show different results for schools in receipt of advocacy and not in receipt of advocacy. Given that funding for the advocates is only for two years, this will only be the case if the learning and practices supported by the advocates between 2016 and 2019 are able to be embedded and sustained within advocacy schools after they have finished their work.

6. **The nature of advocacy is so variable that it is difficult to detect a single 'advocacy effect'**. As previous findings chapters have explained, the nature of advocacy varied substantially, with differences in duration of the offer. the number and proportion of schools reached. the intensity of schools' involvement in the various offers. and the style and quality of the advocacy approach. Some approaches appeared to have more promise than others, but it has not been possible to conduct survey analysis at this level of granularity due to the relatively small numbers of schools from each advocacy area that responded to both surveys.

On balance, it seems most likely that a 'NE but non-advocacy-specific' effect can be explained by a combination of factors, including:

- the EEF's promotion of, and support for, evidence-informed literacy practices across the region;

- the fact that an analysis of 'advocacy versus non advocacy' schools masks considerable variation in the quality and reach of different advocacy models (we know that some approaches did show promise, as outlined below);

- the 'readiness' of schools to engage with the advocacy offers and tackle the challenges of implementation; and

- the fact that it is very early for advocacy support to be resulting in detectable improvements in literacy practices across schools, especially schools in disadvantaged circumstances.

These factors do not necessarily mean that the advocacy has been ineffective. Certainly case-study evidence does not support this conclusion, as the section below explains. We also cannot rule out the possibility that the positive effects seen in the NE are the result of other initiatives in the region, such as the campaign promoted by Read North East.

Feasibility and sustainability

Case-study findings showed that all the advocates had a high level of expertise and credibility in the eyes of the EEF and schools, generally securing a good balance between authority and support. All had strong interpersonal skills: they were reportedly good communicators and facilitators, building trust and rapport quickly, and relating well to others—all factors which support the underlying theory that social interaction is important in encouraging people to adopt new ideas and practices. However, the level of funding was relatively small in comparison to the requirement and some advocates had limited capacity to provide tailored, intensive support. No one 'type' of advocacy provision stood out as being most effective (there were strengths and weaknesses in all the advocacy approaches and, to a degree, the type of approach that was most effective depended upon the specific needs and stage of development or the school). Some approaches did appear to have more promise than others. The key features, strengths, and weaknesses of different types of advocacy are outlined in Table B below.

On balance, it appears that the *advocate-facilitated* approaches were developing with most promise. The advocates that adopted these approaches had peer-to-peer support elements in their approaches, with expert practitioners modelling and demonstrating learning approaches for other teachers, coupled with strong advocate facilitation. These are well known features of effective professional development (Teacher Development Trust, 2014). Peer support is important from a sustainability point of view as it creates the climate in which schools can self-improve, while expert support is important for maintaining

momentum and supporting expertise around the evidence base. Advocate 5 (one of the *distributed advocacy* approaches) offered a similar model, although schools were reliant on one key external inspirational individual for their momentum. This may reduce the likelihood of the sustainability of this particular approach in future, even though—within the timespan of the Campaign—it was one of the most effective advocacy approaches on a number of measures (reach, participation, and support offered to schools).

The other advocacy approaches also had many areas of strength, but typically they had more key weaknesses. *Advocate-led* approaches were strong on expertise but tended to lack the capacity to support schools to self-improve within the available funding; *distributed advocacy* approaches struggled to maintain momentum and participation, and also ran the risk of creating a climate for *practice sharing* rather than *evidence-informed practice development*. However, their strength was in supporting self-improving school structures. A key finding from this evaluation is that there is a tension within the Campaign model between a need to input expertise *and* build capacity for school self-improvement. Approaches which manage to capture elements of both are most likely to be successful and sustainable.

Table B: Key features, strengths, and weaknesses of different types of advocacy

	Key elements of reach and support	Strengths of approach	Weaknesses of approach
Advocate-led **approaches** (Advocates 1 and 2)	These advocates worked with relatively small numbers of schools and both saw a falling rate of participation over time. They were not based in the region. They had low social capital initially, but were able to build trust quickly, overcoming their initial recruitment challenges. They supported needs analysis at individual-school level and used the EEF's auditing tools. There was limited evidence of co-construction of implementation resources with the EEF or schools. They typically covered specific (not all) elements of the EEF guidance. The main support model was through training with some gap tasks and encouragement to work with other schools.	Approaches were based on a 'literacy expert' model. Advocates had high levels of literacy pedagogy expertise and competence in providing training. They were highly regarded by schools.	The advocates were not previously known to schools so recruitment was challenging. Advocates were proactive in leading learning, which sometimes nurtured school dependency. There was also an un-met school appetite to work with/learn from other schools. The success of these programmes appeared to rest on the input of a key individual or individuals.
Advocate-facilitated **approaches** (Advocates 3 and 4)	These advocates worked with moderate numbers of schools and had high rates of participation (although both were R2 advocates, so monitoring was over a short period). They were based within pre-existing networks of schools and had high social capital. They supported needs analysis at individual school level and used the EEF's auditing tools. There was some evidence of co-construction of implementation resources with the EEF and schools.	Approaches were based around schools' identified needs. Schools were guided to develop through a range of activities including school-level consultations, cross-site learning walks, and observations. Advocates were SLEs or CPD leads and worked within the schools they were supporting. Their approaches were generally welcomed. Each advocate had a number of practitioners leading the learning, so the 'expertise' did not rest with one or two key individuals. Advocate 3 stands out as achieving high and sustained rates of participation.	Approaches required a high level of social capital and each advocate's network was a pre-existing TSA or MAT. The extent to which these approaches could be replicated is therefore unclear. In some cases, facilitators lacked confidence in the evidence base or in supporting school-level change, and required support from the EEF.

	They typically covered all elements of the EEF guidance. The main support model was through advocates (for example, expert practitioners such as SLEs) inputting theoretical expertise and modelling evidence-based approaches in school.		
Distributed advocacy approaches (Advocates 5 and 6)	These advocates worked with large numbers of schools. One advocate experienced attrition; the other experienced growth. Both were based in the region and were generally well known to schools with moderate to high levels of social capital. Both advocates made efforts to reach schools in disadvantaged circumstances, as requested by the EEF. They supported generic (rather than individual) needs analysis across groups of schools. There was some evidence of co-construction of implementation resources with the EEF and schools. They typically covered specific (not all) elements of the EEF guidance. The main support model was advocate training coupled with school-led practice groups (Advocate 5) and school-led practice groups with minimal advocate support (Advocate 6).	Approaches were based around school-to-school support, with groups of schools working in clusters, facilitated by a school lead. Peer support was strong and schools could tailor learning to their needs. These approaches did not rely on the strength of one or more key individuals (although see note re Advocate 5 in next column). Advocate 5 stands out as achieving high and sustained rates of participation.	When advocates operated at arms-length, schools were sometimes confused about the evidence, or the evidence became 'watered down', and some schools requested an injection of expertise. Other schools were confused about 'who was in charge' (the lead advocate, or the cluster facilitator). Advocate 5 provided two levels of support: clusters with school facilitation; and direct support from the advocate (a key individual). It appeared that it was the direct support from the advocate (who was highly regarded and respected), rather than the school-facilitated cluster meetings, which had the greatest impact. The sustainability of this model may be questionable.

It appears that advocacy approaches, which share key features of the *advocate-facilitated* approaches offered through this Campaign, could have future promise and the potential to be scalable. The Research Schools form an existing network that shares some of the features of the *advocate-facilitated* model and is designed to support evidence-informed school self-improvement. It may be that it could provide a potential network for the scaling of evidence-informed literacy provision. However, there are caveats in this conclusion. Specifically, it should not be assumed that the *advocate-facilitated* approaches can simply be developed and replicated elsewhere with success.

- First, as we saw in Findings 1, the advocates that adopted *facilitated* approaches potentially had the least challenging remit of all the advocates in terms of the schools they were working with. Their support models were based around pre-existing TSA or MAT groups and it is unclear how easily these approaches could be scaled-up to schools that are not so well networked. Both advocates had high levels of social capital with their schools prior to the Campaign, and so were building on a strong base. Their success may be challenging to replicate in areas where prior relationships are weak or non-existent.

- Second, both advocates that adopted a *facilitated* approach were R2 schools and hence had been operating for just over one year. They were also evaluated over a period of less than one year. Both started with promise, but it is not possible to be sure how effectively their approaches will be sustained in the second year of provision, and beyond.

Most schools and advocates had not begun planning for how to sustain the learning and practices developed through the Campaign after the cessation of advocacy. School interviewees commonly interpreted 'sustainability' in terms of continued reliance on external experts to drive the activity and provide expertise on best (evidence-based) practice, rather than considering how they might sustain literacy development or the use of evidence-based practice in other ways (for example, through working with other schools or accessing information on the evidence base themselves). This is a key finding. Even where advocacy has developed in ways that have the potential to sustain evidence-informed learning and practices into the future, this is only likely to happen where schools, and those that support them, actively plan for this and have a desire to ensure that it happens.

The prospects for sustainability were highest where there was an existing network of schools with the commitment, funds, and capacity to lead evidence-informed literacy developments in future. Prospects were least good for more geographically isolated schools with less capacity, budget, or access to expertise.

In conclusion, the Campaign has shown considerable promise in supporting good literacy practice and research use outcomes among teachers and schools. However, there is some ambiguity around interpretation of the results—specifically, understanding why the Campaign appeared to have positive results in the NE, yet did not result in measurable differences between advocacy and non-advocacy schools. The advocacy itself was generally well received by schools in our case studies, and there were some very encouraging practice developments. Advocacy approaches which adopt a *facilitated* style appear to have particular promise, but these approaches (both R2) would need to be evaluated over a longer period to fully understand whether, and how, they continue to have success. Additionally, the circumstances in which they operate must be taken into account in making any decisions about the potential scalability of such approaches.

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Appendix A: Endpoint survey instrument

Below is a copy of the endpoint survey that was sent out to the sample of primary schools in the NE and comparison schools. The endpoint survey is an exact replication of the questions asked at baseline, with the exception of questions 12, 13 and 14 which were only asked at endpoint. Questions highlighted green were intended to represent evidence-based literacy practices, and contributed to the scoring, which was used in factor analysis.

National Primary Literacy Survey

The National Primary Literacy Survey is being sent to primary schools across England to find out about literacy practices and how schools support literacy learning. We would be grateful if you could contribute to this important study by completing this survey. **The survey has 14 questions and will only take about 10-15 minutes to complete**. We will send you a £5 Amazon voucher, or you can elect to make a £5 donation to charity, as a thank you for your contribution. Your responses will inform a project conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), University College London Institute of Education (IOE) and the University of Nottingham on behalf of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

We recognise that many schools are currently developing their literacy practices, but please do answer honestly in relation to your school's **current practice**.

Please complete the survey either on paper or online at
https://surveys.nfer.ac.uk/uc/EFLS18_ML/ **at your earliest convenience.** If completing the **paper** survey, please use black ink and return the survey in the pre-paid envelope provided. If completing **online**, when prompted, please simply enter this survey password number to log in to the survey: xxxx

Your answers will be treated confidentially, which means that you and your school will not be identified in any reports produced from this research. Your personal details and responses will not be shared with anyone outside NFER, the IOE or the University of Nottingham and no one within your school will be able to see your answers. Our privacy notice provides information about how we will lawfully process your personal data:
https://www.nfer.ac.uk/EFLS

£5 Amazon vouchers will be mailed to schools after the May half term.

If you have any queries about the completion of these questions or would like further information about the processing of your personal data or the evaluation, please contact Keren Beddow on 01753 637338 who will be happy to help or email national-literacy-survey@nfer.ac.uk.

Background

1. What is your main role within the school?

(Please tick one box only)

English/Literacy Subject Leader/Coordinator	☐
Headteacher	☐
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	☐
Phase, team or year group leader	☐
SENCO	☐
Classroom teacher	☐
Other (please specify)	☐

Section A – About your school's literacy practices

Questions about reading

2. Please indicate below the degree of focus that your school places on phonics (decoding) versus reading comprehension in each of the following year groups.

Please answer this question in relation to all children across each year group, not just those needing additional support.
(Please tick one box in each column)

Our focus is…	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
…entirely on phonics	☐	☐	☐	☐
…mainly on phonics	☐	☐	☐	☐
…slightly more on phonics than on reading comprehension	☑	☐	☐	☐
…equally on phonics and reading comprehension	☑	☑	☐	☐
…slightly more on reading comprehension than on phonics	☐	☑	☑	☐
…mainly on reading comprehension	☐	☐	☐	☑
…entirely on reading comprehension	☐	☐	☐	☐

Not applicable (we do not have this year group in our school)	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Thinking now of the whole of key stages 1 and 2 (as applicable in your school), how effectively do you think most teachers in your school use the following approaches to develop children's <u>reading comprehension</u>?

Please answer this question in relation to all children across these key stages, not just those needing additional support.

*(Please tick <u>one box in each **row**</u>)*

	Very effectively	Effectively	Moderately effectively	Not very effectively	Not at all effectively
Encouraging children to read for pleasure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asking children to predict what comes next in a story	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asking questions to check children's understanding of what they have read	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encouraging children to read quietly to themselves	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asking children to summarise what they have read	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asking children to imagine alternative scenarios	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encouraging children to read aloud in class	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encouraging children to read with expression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encouraging children to do word searches/word puzzles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encouraging children to use a variety of words and phrases in their spoken language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Questions about writing

4. From the list below, please identify <u>up to three</u> of the most important strategies to your school when supporting children's <u>handwriting</u>.

Please answer this question in relation to all children across <u>all</u> year groups, not just those needing additional support.

*(Please tick <u>up to **three**</u> boxes)*

We teach handwriting discretely in a separate session for the whole class ☐

We enable children to practise their handwriting regularly across all areas of the curriculum ☑

We provide feedback on the neatness of children's handwriting ☐

We provide feedback on the fluency and/or speed of children's handwriting ☑

We make sure that children write well with a pencil before progressing to a pen ☐

We ensure that handwriting practice is a motivating experience for children ☑

We provide feedback on children's progress towards using cursive script ☐

We make sure that children develop an effective (tripod) grip of a pencil or pen ☐

5. To what extent do most teachers in your school use the following strategies when developing children's <u>writing</u>?

Please answer this question in relation to all children across <u>all</u> year groups, not just those needing additional support.

(Please tick <u>one box in each row</u>)

	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all
Demonstrating how children should structure a piece of writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching children the components of composition (i.e. drafting, editing and revising)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children writing spontaneously, without structuring in advance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children practising drafting their writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching children the names of grammatical terms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children practising combining sentences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inviting the authors of children's literature to talk to children about their work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children learning lists of spellings for homework	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children sharing their composition and getting feedback from peers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reducing the amount of 'hands on' support they give to individual children as children become competent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Questions about support for children who are struggling

6. When a child appears to be falling behind in literacy, what is the <u>first thing</u> most teachers in your school do?

(Please tick <u>one box only</u>)

Monitor the situation for a few weeks to see if the child's progress improves	☐
Provide additional reading or writing support in the classroom and monitor how the child responds	☐
Provide additional reading or writing support outside the classroom and monitor how the child responds	☐
Use an evidence-based intervention and monitor how the child responds	☐
Use a formal or informal assessment to identify the nature of the child's difficulty	☐
Encourage the child's parents to support his or her reading or writing at home	☐

7. To what extent does your school currently use the following approaches to support children who are struggling with literacy?

(Please tick <u>one box in each row</u>)

	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all
We make all lessons as engaging and interesting as possible for the children	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All adults who provide catch-up support for children have a secure understanding of literacy pedagogy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We support the children to work hard and develop resilience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All adults who provide catch-up support for children have received specific training or coaching in the intervention used	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When children work with an adult outside the classroom, the content is usually different from work taking place in class	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We use a structured programme of phonics for children who need additional support with decoding text	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section B – Influences on your school's literacy practices

8. Please name in the box below an approach that you have used across the whole school within the last two years to support children's progress in literacy.

8a. Which of the following were most influential in identifying this approach? Please select <u>up to three</u> of the most important sources from the list below.

(Please tick <u>up to three</u> boxes)

Ideas or interventions generated by me or my school	☐
Ideas or interventions from other schools	☐
Advice/guidance from local organisations (e.g. local authority, multi-academy trust, university, teaching school alliance)	☐ → Go to Q8b
Advice from national organisations (e.g. DfE, Ofsted, exam boards)	☐
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based)	☐
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on teacher experience (paper or web based)	☐
The promotional materials of a commercial supplier	☐
Information gathered through training/CPD	☐ → Go to Q8c
Online evidence platforms or databases (e.g. the EEF/Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit)	☐
Don't know	☐
Other (please say what)	☐

If you ticked 'Advice/guidance from local organisations', please go to Q8b

If you ticked 'Information gathered through training/CPD', please go to Q8c.

If you <u>did not</u> tick either of these two options, please go to Q9.

8b. If you answered 'advice/guidance from local organisations' to Q8a please indicate, from the list below, what the advice/guidance was based on. *(Please tick all that apply)*

The experiences/practices of a local network or consortium of schools	☐
The expertise of a consultant or adviser	☐
National or regional directives, legislation or recommendations	☐
Research conducted by academics or independent researchers	☑
Analysis of local or national data	☐
I'm not sure	☐
Other (please say what)	☑

8c. If you answered 'information gathered through training/CPD' to Q8a please indicate, from the list below, what the training/CPD was based on. *(Please tick all that apply)*

National directives or exam board information	☐
Research conducted by academics or independent researchers	☑
Ideas from my school (e.g. internal INSET)	☐
Ideas from other schools	☐
Expertise of an external consultant or programme provider	☐
I'm not sure	☐
Other (please say what)	☑

Q9. Schools vary in their use of published literacy programmes. In the academic years 2016-17 and 2017-18, which, if any, of the following published programmes has your school used to support children's literacy?

(Please tick <u>all that apply</u>. If you have already named one of the listed programmes in answer to a previous question please tick it again here.)

Accelerated reader (Renaissance Learning)	☐	Philosophy for Children (Sapere)	☐
Catch up literacy (Catch up literacy)	☐	Quick Reads (Text project)	☐
Changing mindsets (University of Portsmouth)	☐	Read, Write inc. phonics (Ruth Miskin Training)	☐
Curiosity Corner (Success for all UK)	☐	Reading recovery (Reading recovery)	☐
Fresh start (Ruth Miskin Training)	☐	Reading Reels (Success for all UK)	☐
Grammar for writing (Exeter University)	☐	Success for all literacy (Success for all UK)	☐
Lexia Reading (Lexia UK)	☐	Talk for writing (Primary Writing Project)	☐
My reading coach (Mindcorp)	☐	Using self-regulation to improve writing (Calderdale Excellence Partnership)	☐
Nuffield Early Language Intervention (I CAN)	☐	Other (please specify)	☐

Section C – About your school's support for literacy

10. Below are some statements about <u>school resources</u> for literacy. Which of the following are true in your school?

(Please tick <u>all that apply</u>)

Children who are struggling with literacy are supported as much by teaching assistants (TAs) as by teachers	☐
Children who are struggling with literacy are frequently supported through IT-based resources rather than by teachers	☐
All our staff (teachers and TAs) know the details of the school's literacy plan/strategy	☑
We review our approaches to our literacy provision at least twice per year	☑
All our staff (teachers and TAs) are involved in implementing the school's literacy plan/strategy	☑
Our literacy CPD is based on training sessions that stand alone (i.e. they do not require follow-up activities)	☐
Our literacy CPD is related to day-to-day classroom practice	☑

11. Below are some statements about literacy practices. How well equipped do you feel your school is to…?

(Please tick <u>one box in each row</u>)

	Entirely equipped	Very equipped	Quite equipped	Not very equipped	Not at all equipped
Provide high quality teaching for literacy as a first step to helping children achieve?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop the skills of your staff to provide catch-up interventions to children?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provide intensive literacy support for all children who need to catch up?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Minimise the need for catch-up interventions through effective whole-class teaching?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use performance data and assessments to diagnose problems and target intensive support?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Challenge assumptions about low capabilities of disadvantaged children?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ensure that all children achieve their potential, regardless of home background?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Critically evaluate academic research on literacy to assess its quality?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D – About the Education Endowment Foundation's resources

The Sutton Trust/Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit ('the Toolkit') is a web-based resource which provides an accessible summary of research on teaching 5-16 year olds.
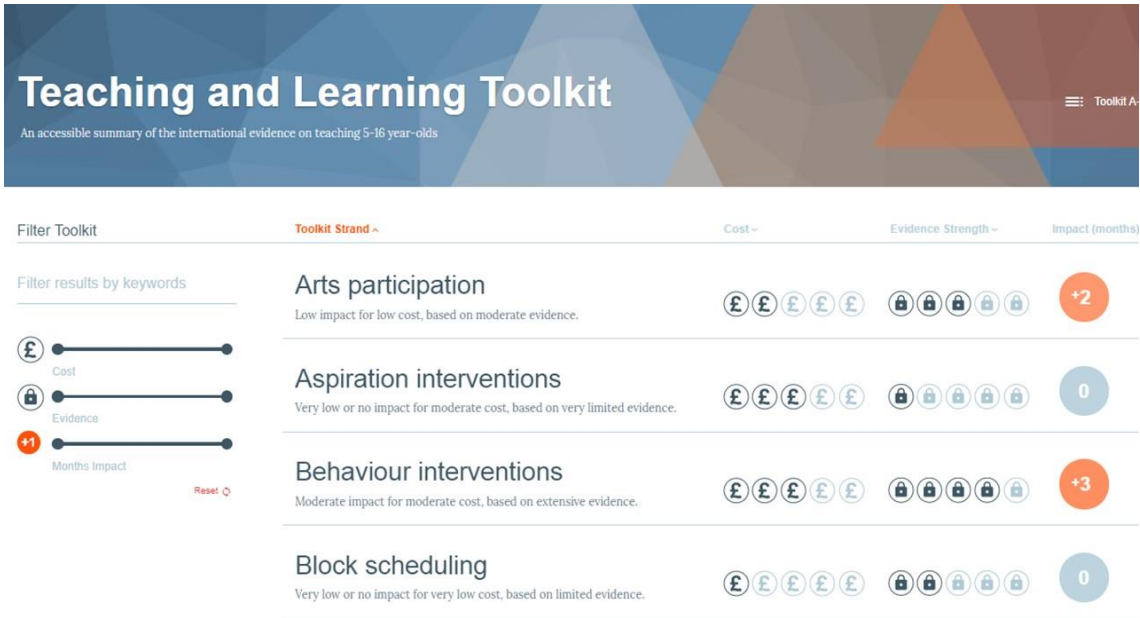
12. Before this survey I had…

(Please tick one box only)

…never heard of the Toolkit ☐

…heard of the Toolkit, but never accessed the webpage ☐

…heard of the Toolkit and accessed the webpage ☐

The EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports offer practical evidence-based recommendations for improving literacy practice in Key Stages one and two.
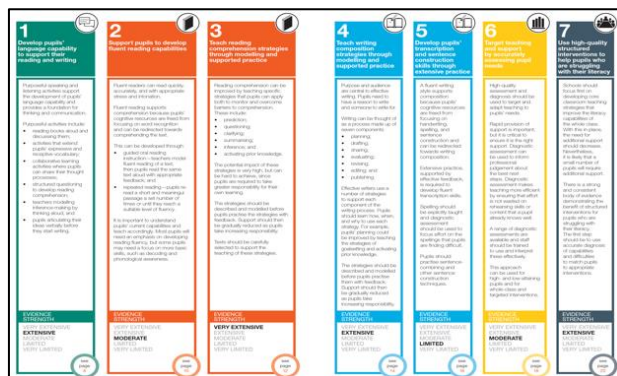
13. Before this survey I had…

(Please tick <u>one box only</u>)

…never heard of either of the EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports ☐

…heard of at least one of the EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports, but not read either of them ☐

…heard of the EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports and read one or both of them ☐

The EEF funds randomised controlled trials of promising education strategies and programmes to test their impact and generate evidence of 'what works'. They recruit volunteer schools across the country to participate in these trials, including in your local area.
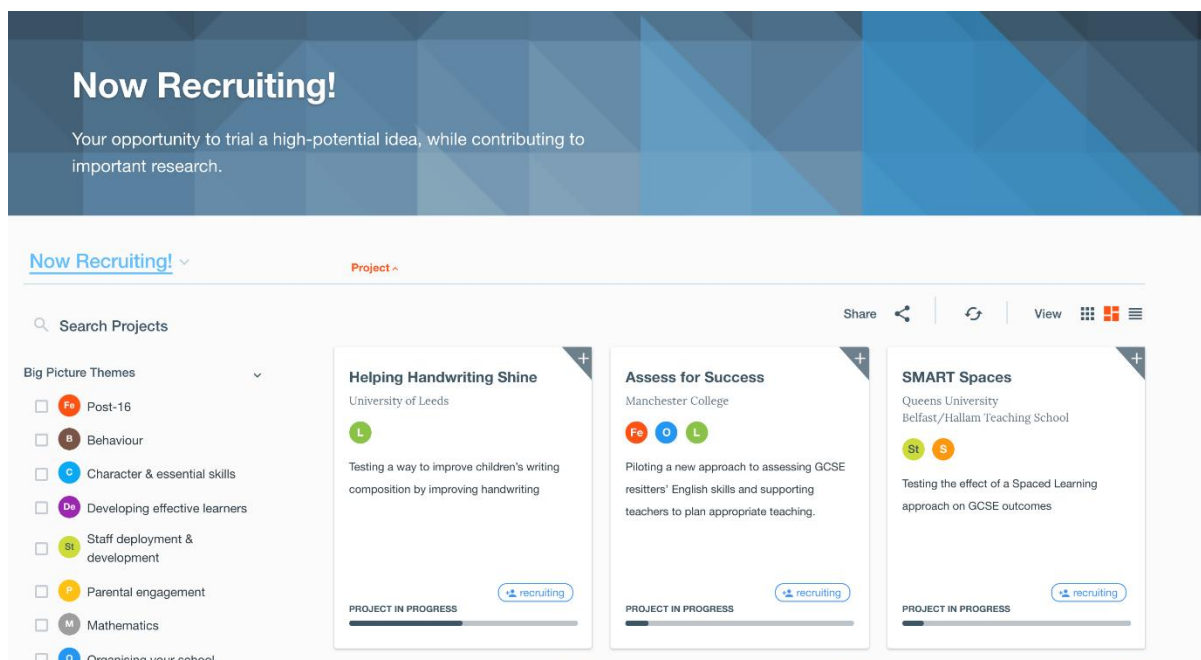
14. Before this survey I had…
(Please tick <u>one box only</u>)

…never heard about EEF trials in my local area	☐
…heard about EEF trials in my local area, but never participated	☐
…heard about EEF trials in my local area and participated in one or more trials	☐
I'm not sure whether my school has heard about or participated in EEF trials	☐

Incentive choice and personal details

15. As a small 'thank you' for completing this survey we would like to offer you one of the following. Please indicate which you would prefer:

(Please tick one box only)

£5 Amazon voucher	☐
£5 donation to Cancer Research UK	☐
£5 donation to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)	☐
£5 donation to the National Children's Hospices UK	☐
£5 donation to Royal National Lifeboat Institution	☐
£5 donation to Oxfam	☐
£5 donation to Help for Heroes	☐
£5 donation to Alzheimer's Society	☐
£5 donation to British Red Cross	☐
Prefer not to receive an incentive	☐

16. If you selected '£5 Amazon voucher' please provide your email address and name below so that we can send you the voucher:

Email address:

Forename:

Surname:

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey.
Please return this survey in the pre-paid envelope provided to:
NFER
The Mere
Upton Park
Slough
SL1 2DQ

Appendix B: Sample representation

Summaries of the sample representation on five variables are displayed in Tables B1, B2 and B3. We found a good level of alignment across five stratification criteria at baseline, endpoint and with the matched sample, both between intervention and comparison schools, and with the population of NE schools, which was used for matching purposes. The only differences to note include:

- At baseline a much larger proportion of missing data for the KS2 literacy score variable[46] in comparison schools (29 per cent) than in NE schools (17 per cent). This difference is not explained by a higher proportion of infant schools in the comparison sample.
- In the matched sample a larger proportion of missing data for the KS2 literacy score variable in comparison schools (30 per cent) than in NE schools (18 per cent).

Table B1 **Baseline sample representation: Intervention and comparison samples at baseline compared with the population of NE primary schools**

Stratification criteria		Intervention school sample (NE) %	Comparison school sample %	Population of NE primary schools %
School type	Academy Converter	9	13	11
	Academy Sponsor led	3	2	3
	Community School	52	54	49
	Foundation School	11	12	11
	Free Schools	0	0	0
	Voluntary Aided School	21	14	21
	Voluntary Controlled School	5	5	5
	Total	100	100	100
FSM entitlement	Lowest 20%	14	18	14
	2nd lowest 20%	13	11	14
	Middle 20%	16	20	17
	2nd highest 20%	20	21	20
	Highest 20%	36	28	36
	Missing data	1	1	1
	Total	100	100	100
SEN status	Lowest 20%	15	18	17
	2nd lowest 20%	16	13	15
	Middle 20%	16	15	16
	2nd highest 20%	17	24	20

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[46] This is average percentage of pupils receiving 4B or above in KS2 reading/GPS and 4 or above in teacher assessed writing in KS2.

	Highest 20%	35	29	31
	Missing data	1	1	1
	Total	100	100	100
EAL status	Lowest 20%	41	33	39
	2nd lowest 20%	27	28	29
	Middle 20%	15	20	16
	2nd highest 20%	10	14	11
	Highest 20%	6	4	5
	Missing data	1	1	1
	Total	100	100	100
KS2 literacy score	Lowest 20%	16	12	16
	2nd lowest 20%	14	12	15
	Middle 20%	15	13	16
	2nd highest 20%	16	13	16
	Highest 20%	20	21	19
	Missing data	17	29	19
	Total	100	100	100
		N=388	**N=261**	**N=870**

Table B2   Endpoint sample representation: Intervention and comparison samples at endpoint compared with the population of North East primary schools

Stratification criteria		Intervention school sample (NE) %	Comparison school sample %	Population of NE primary schools %
School type	Academy Converter	10	12	11
	Academy Sponsor led	3	2	3
	Community School	54	54	49
	Foundation School	13	10	11
	Free Schools	0	0	0
	Voluntary Aided School	16	18	21
	Voluntary Controlled School	4	3	5
	Total	100	100	100
FSM entitlement	Lowest 20%	14	15	14
	2nd lowest 20%	13	13	14
	Middle 20%	16	22	17
	2nd highest 20%	21	21	20

	Highest 20%	37	29	36
	Missing data	0	0	1
	Total	100	100	100
SEN status	Lowest 20%	15	19	17
	2nd lowest 20%	16	10	15
	Middle 20%	17	17	16
	2nd highest 20%	19	23	20
	Highest 20%	31	30	31
	Missing data	1	0	1
	Total	100	100	100
EAL status	Lowest 20%	41	33	39
	2nd lowest 20%	26	27	29
	Middle 20%	18	22	16
	2nd highest 20%	9	13	11
	Highest 20%	7	5	5
	Missing data	0	0	1
	Total	100	100	100
KS2 literacy score	Lowest 20%	16	15	16
	2nd lowest 20%	15	15	15
	Middle 20%	18	12	16
	2nd highest 20%	16	13	16
	Highest 20%	16	19	19
	Missing data	18	26	19
	Total	100	100	100
		N=352	**N=260**	**N=870**

Table B3   Matched sample representation: Intervention and comparison samples matched at baseline and endpoint compared with the population of North East primary schools

Stratification criteria		Intervention school sample (NE) %	Comparison school sample %	Population of NE primary schools %
School type	Academy Converter	9	12	11
	Academy Sponsor led	4	1	3
	Community School	53	60	49
	Foundation School	14	9	11
	Free Schools	0	0	0

	Voluntary Aided School	17	14	21
	Voluntary Controlled School	3	3	5
	Total	100	100	100
Free-school meal entitlement	Lowest 20%	15	16	14
	2nd lowest 20%	11	13	14
	Middle 20%	17	19	17
	2nd highest 20%	21	21	20
	Highest 20%	37	29	36
	Missing data	0	1	1
	Total	100	100	100
SEN status	Lowest 20%	14	20	17
	2nd lowest 20%	16	9	15
	Middle 20%	19	17	16
	2nd highest 20%	17	24	20
	Highest 20%	33	30	31
	Missing data	2	1	1
	Total	100	100	100
EAL status	Lowest 20%	41	31	39
	2nd lowest 20%	25	30	29
	Middle 20%	17	20	16
	2nd highest 20%	8	14	11
	Highest 20%	7	4	5
	Missing data	0	1	1
	Total	100	100	100
KS2 literacy score	Lowest 20%	15	10	16
	2nd lowest 20%	15	13	15
	Middle 20%	17	12	16
	2nd highest 20%	17	12	16
	Highest 20%	18	23	19
	Missing data	18	30	19
	Total	100	100	100
		N=241	**N=159**	**N=870**

Appendix C: Survey frequency responses at baseline and endpoint

Below is a series of tables providing percentage frequency response rates to all baseline and endpoint survey questions. Responses highlighted grey are those that were considered good practice for scoring purposes.

Table C1: What is your main role within the school? (Q1)

	Baseline %		Baseline overall %	Endpoint %		Endpoint overall %
	Intervention	Comparison		Intervention	Comparison	
English/Literacy Subject Leader/Coordinator	47	41	**44**	48	33	**42**
Headteacher	23	24	**23**	20	28	**23**
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	24	23	**23**	26	27	**27**
Classroom teacher	3	10	**6**	5	7	**6**
Phase, team or year group leader	3	0	**2**	1	2	**2**
SENCO	1	2	**1**	0	1	**0**
No response	<1	<1	**<1**	<1	1	**1**
Total	**N = 388**	**N = 261**	**N = 649**	**N=352**	**N=260**	**N = 612**

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016 and Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C2i: Please indicate below the degree of focus that your school places on phonics (decoding) versus reading comprehension in each of the following year groups (Q2 baseline)

	Entirely on phonics %	Mainly on phonics %	Slightly more on phonics than on reading comprehension %	Equally on phonics and reading comprehension %	Slightly more on reading comprehension than on phonics %	Mainly on reading comprehension %	Entirely on reading comprehension %	Not applicable (we do not have this year group in our school) %	No response %	Total %
Year 1	6	40	35	14	0	0	0	2	2	100
Year 2	0	4	17	48	22	4	0	2	2	100
Year 3	0	0	1	11	38	38	3	3	5	100
Year 4	0	0	0	3	10	55	23	3	6	100
N = 649										

A series of single response questions. Due to round percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 646 respondents gave at least one response to these questions. Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016.

Table C2ii: Please indicate below the degree of focus that your school places on phonics (decoding) versus reading comprehension in each of the following year groups (Q2 endpoint)

	Entirely on phonics %	Mainly on phonics %	Slightly more on phonics than on reading comprehension %	Equally on phonics and reading comprehension %	Slightly more on reading comprehension than on phonics %	Mainly on reading comprehension %	Entirely on reading comprehension %	Not applicable (we do not have this year group in our school) %	No response %	Total %
Year 1	6	42	32	15	0	0	0	2	2	100
Year 2	0	3	11	44	28	7	0	2	2	100
Year 3	0	0	1	7	33	44	4	4	6	100
Year 4	0	0	0	1	8	52	28	4	6	100
N = 612										

A series of single response questions. Due to round percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 608 respondents gave at least one response to these questions. Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C3i: How effectively do you think most teachers in your school use the following approaches to develop children's reading comprehension? (Q3 baseline)

	Very effectively %	Effectively %	Moderately effectively %	Not very effectively %	Not at all effectively %	No response %	Total %
Encouraging children to read for pleasure	24	49	24	2	0	0	100
Asking children to predict what comes next in a story	35	54	10	0	0	0	100
Asking questions to check children's understanding of what they have read	34	54	11	0	0	0	100
Encouraging children to read quietly to themselves	22	50	24	3	0	0	100
Asking children to summarise what they have read	11	48	34	5	0	1	100
Asking children to imagine alternative scenarios	7	36	43	13	0	1	100
Encouraging children to read aloud in class	16	47	31	5	0	0	100
Encouraging children to read with expression	29	54	16	1	0	0	100
Encouraging children to do word searches/word puzzles	5	25	43	23	3	1	100
Encouraging children to use a variety of words and phrases in their spoken language	19	46	27	7	0	0	100
N = 649							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 648 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016.

Table C3ii: How effectively do you think most teachers in your school use the following approaches to develop children's reading comprehension? (Q3 endpoint)

	Very effectively %	Effectively %	Moderately effectively %	Not very effectively %	Not at all effectively %	No response %	Total %
Encouraging children to read for pleasure	23	52	23	2	0	0	100
Asking children to predict what comes next in a story	34	57	9	0	0	0	100
Asking questions to check children's understanding of what they have read	34	58	8	1	0	0	100
Encouraging children to read quietly to themselves	24	49	24	2	0	0	100
Asking children to summarise what they have read	13	47	36	4	0	0	100
Asking children to imagine alternative scenarios	7	37	44	11	0	0	100
Encouraging children to read aloud in class	17	48	30	5	0	0	100
Encouraging children to read with expression	27	54	17	1	0	1	100
Encouraging children to do word searches/word puzzles	4	24	46	22	3	1	100
Encouraging children to use a variety of words and phrases in their spoken language	17	49	29	5	0	0	100
N = 612							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 612 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C4: Please identify up to three of the most important strategies to your school when supporting children's handwriting (Q4)

	Baseline %	Endpoint %
We teach handwriting discretely in a separate session for the whole class	70	66
We enable children to practise their handwriting regularly across all areas of the curriculum	59	54
We make sure that children write well with a pencil before progressing to a pen	52	57
We provide feedback on the neatness of children's handwriting	42	37
We make sure that children develop an effective (tripod) grip of a pencil or pen	38	46
We provide feedback on children's progress towards using cursive script	19	18
We ensure that handwriting practice is a motivating experience for children	13	12
We provide feedback on the fluency and/or speed of children's handwriting	3	5
No response	1	0
	N = 639	**N = 598**

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.
A total of 636 respondents answered at least one item in this question at baseline and 597 at endpoint.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016 and Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C5i To what extent do most teachers in your school use the following strategies when developing children's writing? (Q5 baseline)

	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	No response	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Demonstrating how children should structure a piece of writing	41	52	6	1	0	1	100
Teaching children the components of composition (i.e. drafting, editing and revising)	29	49	18	2	0	0	100
Children writing spontaneously, without structuring in advance	3	20	50	24	2	0	100
Children practising drafting their writing	11	43	37	8	0	0	100
Teaching children the names of grammatical terms	44	47	8	0	0	0	100
Children practising combining sentences	24	54	20	1	0	0	100
Inviting the authors of children's literature to talk to children about their work	5	12	29	39	14	1	100
Children learning lists of spellings for homework	27	37	19	10	5	1	100
Children sharing their composition and getting feedback from peers	22	43	29	5	0	1	100
Reducing the amount of 'hands on' support they give to individual children as children become competent	13	52	30	4	1	0	100
N = 649							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 647 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016.

Table C5ii To what extent do most teachers in your school use the following strategies when developing children's writing? (Q5 endpoint)

To what extent do most teachers in your school use the following strategies when developing children's writing?	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	No response	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Demonstrating how children should structure a piece of writing	44	48	8	0	0	0	100
Teaching children the components of composition (i.e. drafting, editing and revising)	31	49	19	1	0	0	100
Children writing spontaneously, without structuring in advance	4	15	50	28	2	0	100
Children practising drafting their writing	13	45	35	5	0	1	100
Teaching children the names of grammatical terms	44	45	10	0	0	0	100
Children practising combining sentences	23	56	18	2	0	0	100
Inviting the authors of children's literature to talk to children about their work	4	9	31	40	15	1	100
Children learning lists of spellings for homework	26	35	25	9	5	0	100
Children sharing their composition and getting feedback from peers	20	47	27	5	0	0	100
Reducing the amount of 'hands on' support they give to individual children as children become competent	11	55	31	3	0	0	100
N = 612							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 612 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C6 When a child appears to be falling behind in literacy, what is the first thing most teachers in your school do? (Q6)

	Baseline %	Endpoint %
Provide additional reading or writing support in the classroom and monitor how the child responds	59	62
Use a formal or informal assessment to identify the nature of the child's difficulty	14	14
Use an evidence-based intervention and monitor how the child responds	10	6
Monitor the situation for a few weeks to see if the child's progress improves	7	8
Provide additional reading or writing support outside the classroom and monitor how the child responds	7	7
Encourage the child's parents to support his or her reading or writing at home	1	2
No response	1	0
	N = 649	**N = 612**

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016 and Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C7i To what extent does your school currently use the following approaches to support children who are struggling with literacy? (Q7 baseline)

	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	No response	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
We make all lessons as engaging and interesting as possible for the children	53	42	5	0	0	0	100
All adults who provide catch-up support for children have a secure understanding of literacy pedagogy	19	48	29	4	0	0	100
We support the children to work hard and develop resilience	35	50	14	1	0	0	100
All adults who provide catch-up support for children have received specific training or coaching in the intervention used	22	42	26	8	1	0	100
When children work with an adult outside the classroom, the content is usually different from work taking place in class	10	25	35	24	5	1	100
We use a structured programme of phonics for children who need additional support with decoding text	44	37	14	3	1	0	100
N = 649							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 649 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016.

Table C7ii To what extent does your school currently use the following approaches to support children who are struggling with literacy? (Q7 Endpoint)

To what extent does your school currently use the following approaches to support children who are struggling with literacy?	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	No response	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
We make all lessons as engaging and interesting as possible for the children	47	46	7	0	0	0	100
All adults who provide catch-up support for children have a secure understanding of literacy pedagogy	19	48	27	5	1	1	100
We support the children to work hard and develop resilience	35	50	15	0	0	0	100
All adults who provide catch-up support for children have received specific training or coaching in the intervention used	20	43	28	7	1	0	100
When children work with an adult outside the classroom, the content is usually different from work taking place in class	7	24	39	25	4	1	100
We use a structured programme of phonics for children who need additional support with decoding text	38	39	17	5	2	0	100
N = 612							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 611 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: NFER North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C8 Which of the following were the three most influential in identifying the approach you named above? (Q8a baseline)

	%
Ideas or interventions generated by me or my school	48
Information gathered through training/CPD which was based on something other than Academic research	44
Ideas or interventions from other schools	43
Advice/guidance from local organisations which was based on something other than Academic research	27
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based)	17
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on teacher experience (paper or web based)	15
Online evidence platforms or databases (e.g. the EEF/Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit)	12
Information gathered through training/CPD which was based on Academic research	12
The promotional materials of a commercial supplier	9
Advice from national organisations (e.g. DfE, Ofsted, exam boards)	8
Advice/guidance from local organisations which was based on Academic research	5
Don't know	4
Other response which was based on something other than Academic research	2
Other response which was based on Academic research	0
No response	1
N =	**648**
More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100. This table only includes respondents that ticked three boxes or less, as per the question instruction A total of 644 respondents answered at least one item in this question. Source: North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016.	

Please note that the responses to Question 8a at endpoint, and Question 9 at baseline and endpoint, are displayed in the main report in Findings 4.

Table C9: School literacy resources (Q10)

Which of the following are true in your school?	Baseline %	Endpoint %
Our literacy CPD is related to day-to-day classroom practice	84	87
Children who are struggling with literacy are supported as much by teaching assistants (TAs) as by teachers	80	80
All our staff (teachers and TAs) are involved in implementing the schools' literacy improvement plan/strategy	76	69
All our staff (teachers and TAs) know the details of the school's literacy improvement plan/strategy	63	66
We review our approaches to our literacy provision at least twice per year	59	55
Our literacy CPD is based on training sessions that stand alone (i.e. they do not require follow-up activities)	12	8
Children who are struggling with literacy are frequently supported through IT-based resources rather than by teachers	8	9
No response	0	0
	N = 649	N = 612

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.
A total of 647 and 612 respondents answered at least one item in this question at baseline and endpoint respectively.
Source: North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016 and Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C10i: How well equipped do you feel your school is to… (Q11 baseline)

	Entirely equipped %	Very equipped %	Quite equipped %	Not very equipped %	Not at all equipped %	No response %	Total %
Provide high quality teaching for literacy as a first step to helping children achieve?	23	64	13	0	0	1	100
Develop the skills of your staff to provide catch-up interventions to children?	13	52	32	3	0	1	100
Provide intensive literacy support for all children who need to catch up?	9	47	37	6	0	1	100
Minimise the need for catch-up interventions through effective whole-class teaching?	10	55	32	2	0	1	100
Use performance data and assessments to diagnose problems and target intensive support?	32	53	13	1	0	1	100
Challenge assumptions about low capabilities of disadvantaged children?	26	55	17	1	0	0	100
Ensure that all children achieve their potential, regardless of home background?	31	52	16	1	0	1	100
Critically evaluate academic research on literacy to assess its quality?	8	32	43	14	2	1	100
N = 649							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 647 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: North East Scale-Up Baseline Survey 2016.

Table C10ii: How well equipped do you feel your school is to… (Q11 endpoint)

	Entirely equipped %	Very equipped %	Quite equipped %	Not very equipped %	Not at all equipped %	No response %	Total %
Provide high quality teaching for literacy as a first step to helping children achieve?	21	64	16	0	0	0	100
Develop the skills of your staff to provide catch-up interventions to children?	11	49	35	5	0	0	100
Provide intensive literacy support for all children who need to catch up?	11	36	43	10	1	0	100
Minimise the need for catch-up interventions through effective whole-class teaching?	12	50	34	3	0	0	100
Use performance data and assessments to diagnose problems and target intensive support?	31	52	15	2	0	0	100
Challenge assumptions about low capabilities of disadvantaged children?	27	51	19	2	0	0	100
Ensure that all children achieve their potential, regardless of home background?	29	50	19	1	0	0	100
Critically evaluate academic research on literacy to assess its quality?	10	32	41	16	1	0	100
N = 612							

A series of single response questions.
Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.
A total of 612 respondents gave at least one response to these questions.
Source: North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C11: Awareness and use of EEF Toolkit (Q12 endpoint only)

Before this survey I had…	Endpoint only %
…never heard of the Toolkit	32
…heard of the Toolkit, but never accessed the webpage	27
…heard of the Toolkit and accessed the webpage	41
No response	0
	N = 612

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.
Source: North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C12: Awareness and use of EEF Literacy Guidance reports (Q13 endpoint only)

Before this survey I had…	Endpoint only %
…never heard of either of the EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports	27
…heard of at least one of the EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports, but not read either of them	17
…heard of the EEF's Literacy Guidance Reports and read one or both of them	55
No response	0
	N = 612

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.
Source: North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Table C13: Awareness and engagement with EEF trials (Q14 endpoint only)

Before this survey I had…	Endpoint only %
…never heard about EEF trials in my local area	44
…heard about EEF trials in my local area, but never participated	30
…heard about EEF trials in my local area and participated in one or more trials	20
I'm not sure whether my school has heard about or participated in EEF trials	6
No response	0
	N = 612

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.
Source: North East Scale-Up Endpoint Survey 2018.

Appendix D: Survey items comprising the composite measures (factors)

Table D1 provides a summary of the survey items that made up each of the composite measures. Questions that carried a score are highlighted green in the survey shown in Appendix A. Some points to be aware of are as follows: distractor items (non-green items in Appendix A) were not included in the factor analysis; where 'correct' questions were answered on a Likert rating scale, response options were scored 0 = 'not at all effective' (or equivalent) to 4 = 'very effective' (or equivalent) giving a score range for each correct question item. For multiple choice questions, we awarded a score for each 'correct' item selected. In this way, a score range was created for each item/question. Item 7e was reverse scored so that 0 = 'to a very large extent' and 4 = 'not at all'.

Table D1   Factor measures, survey items and reliability

Factor	Survey question items	Chronbach's Alpha	
		Baseline	Endpoint
Reading comprehension	Q3b – Asking children to predict what comes next in a story	0.78	0.76
	Q3c – Asking questions to check children's understanding of what they have read		
	Q3e – Asking children to summarise what they have read		
	Q3f – Asking children to imagine alternative scenarios		
	Q3j – Encouraging children to use a variety of words and phrases in their spoken language		
Writing composition	Q5a – Demonstrating how children should structure a piece of writing	0.74	0.75
	Q5b – Teaching children the components of composition (i.e. drafting, editing, and revising)		
	Q5d – Children practising drafting their writing		
	Q5f – Children practising combining sentences		
	Q5i – Children sharing their composition and getting feedback from peers		
Catch-up support	Q7b – All adults who provide catch-up support for children have a secure understanding of literacy pedagogy	0.79	0.81
	Q7d – All adults who provide catch-up support for children have received specific training or coaching in the intervention used		
	Q11b – How well equipped do you feel your school is to develop the skills of your staff to provide catch-up interventions to children		
	Q11c – How well equipped do you feel your school is to provide intensive literacy support for all children who need to catch up		
School propensity for good practice in literacy	How well equipped do you feel your school is to…	0.83	0.84
	Q11a …provide high quality teaching for literacy as a first step to helping children achieve		
	Q11d …minimise the need for catch-up interventions through effective whole-class teaching		
	Q11e …use performance data and assessments to diagnose problems and target intensive support		
	Q11f …challenge assumptions about low capabilities of disadvantaged children		
	Q11g …ensure that all children achieve their potential, regardless of home background		

Appendix E: Wider promise: access of EEF's evidence-based resources
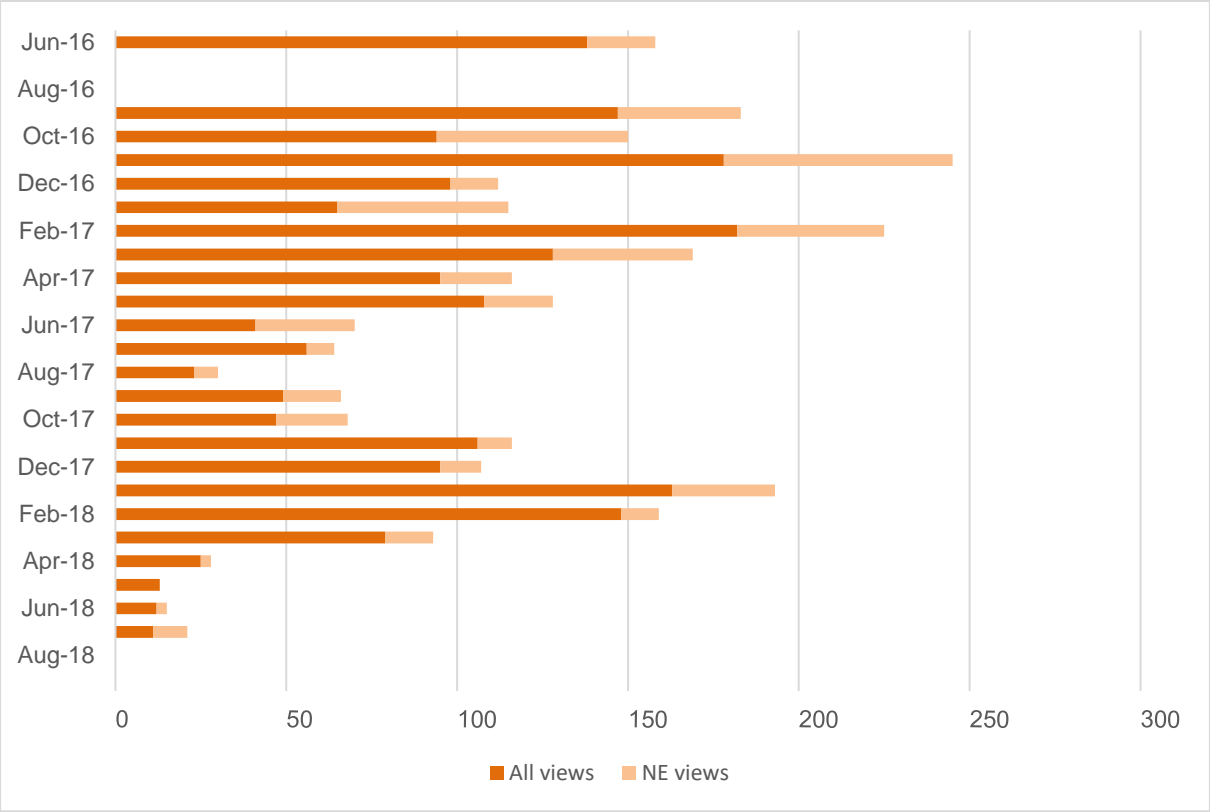
Figure E1 Number of visits to main campaign page

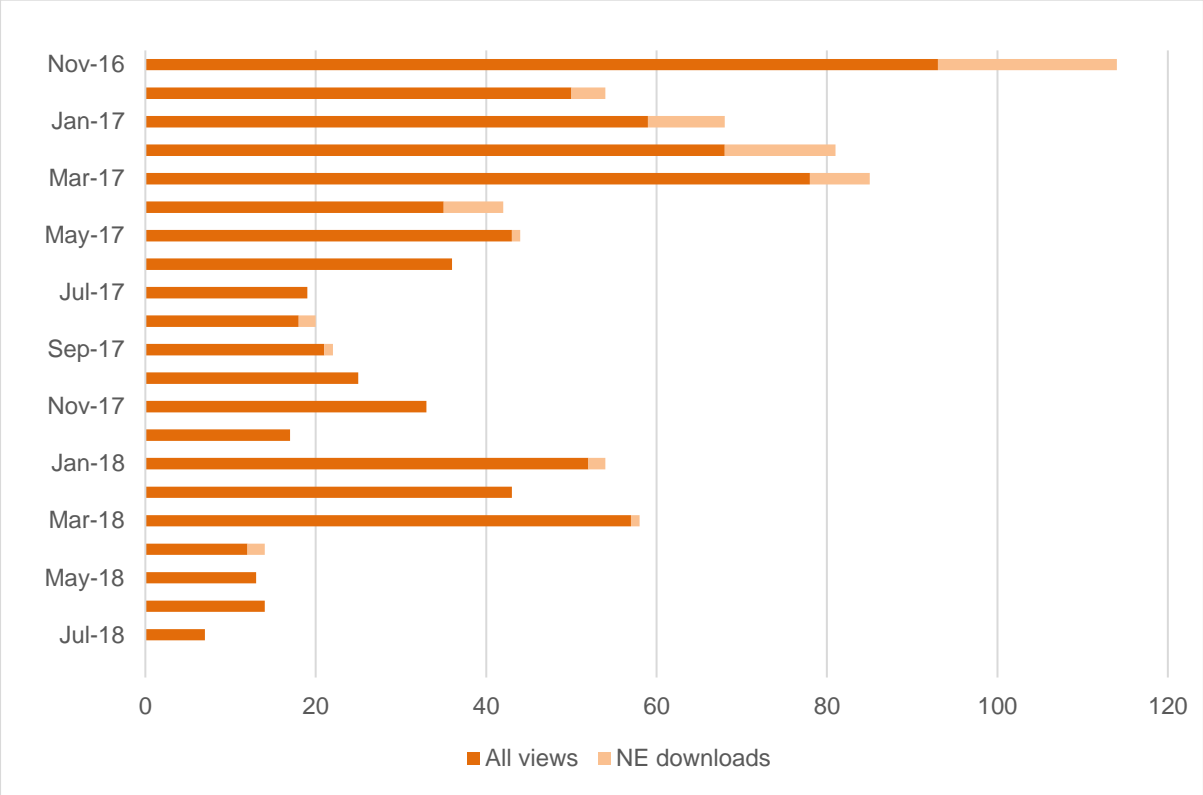**Figure E2a – Number of downloads of Key Stage 1 literacy guidance**

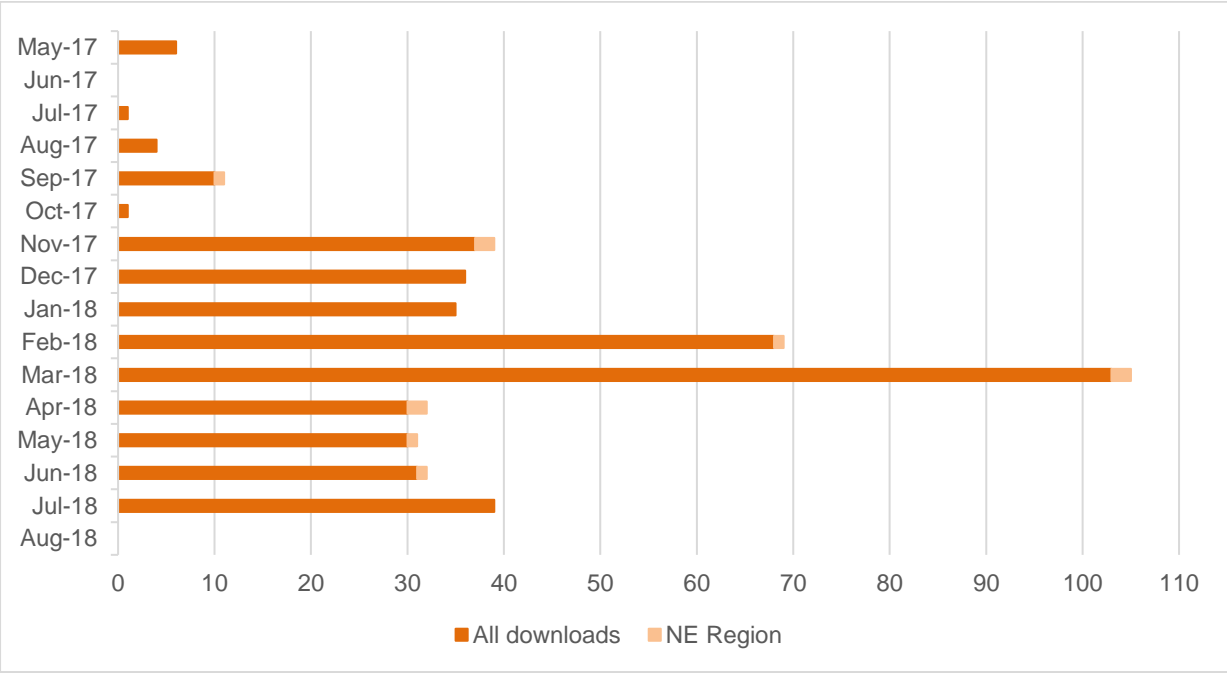**Figure E2b – Number of downloads of Key Stage 2 literacy guidance**

Legend: ■ All downloads ■ NE Region

Figure E2c – Number of downloads of discussion questions document

Legend: ■ All downloads ■ NE downloads
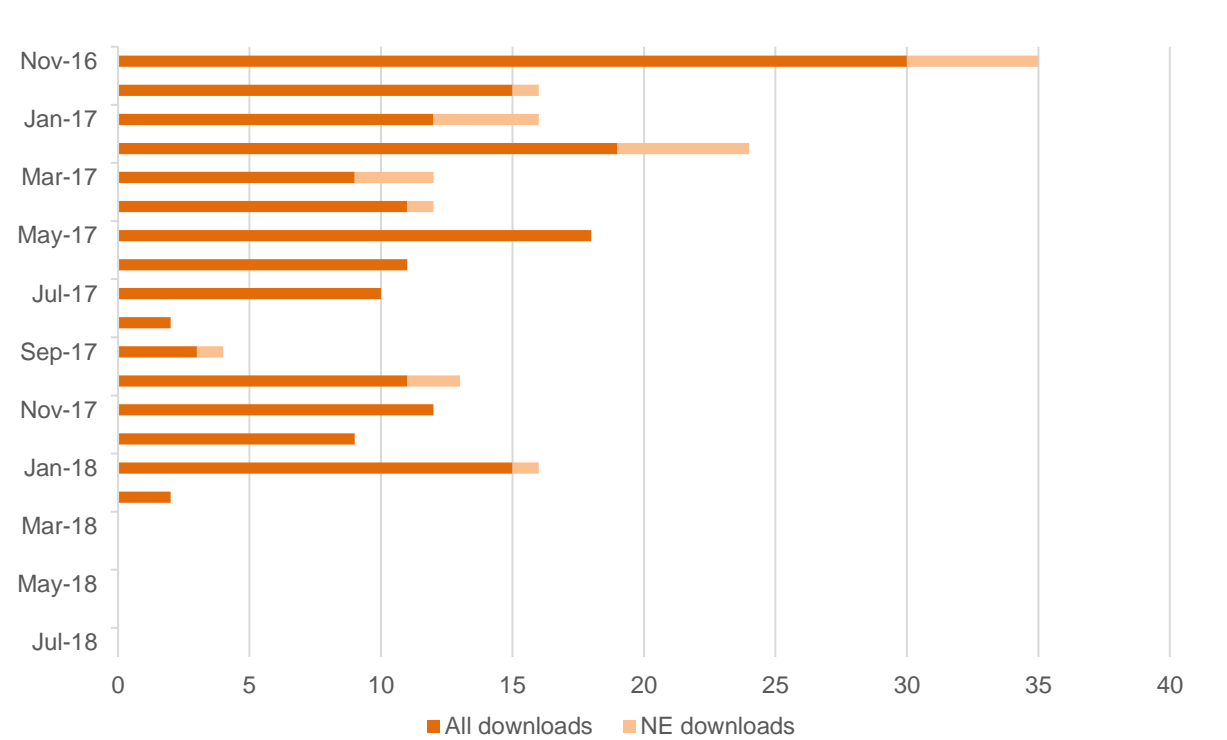
Figure E2d – Number of downloads of the RAG self-assessment guide
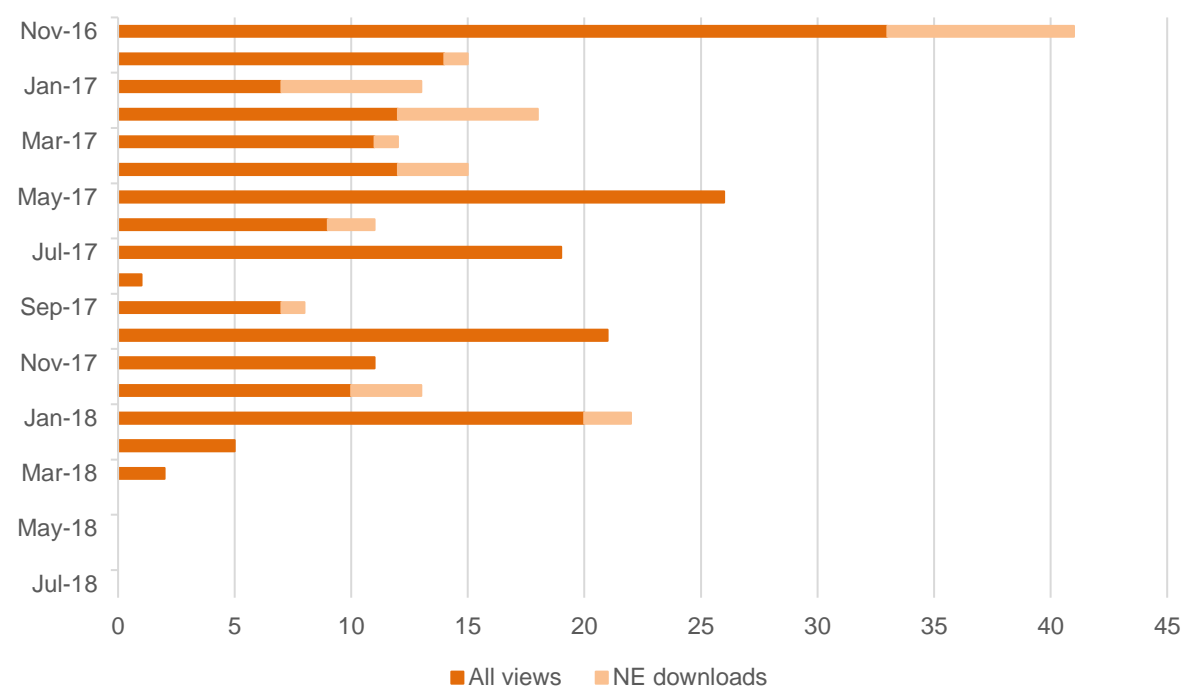
Figure E3a Average time on page – Key Stage 1 guidance
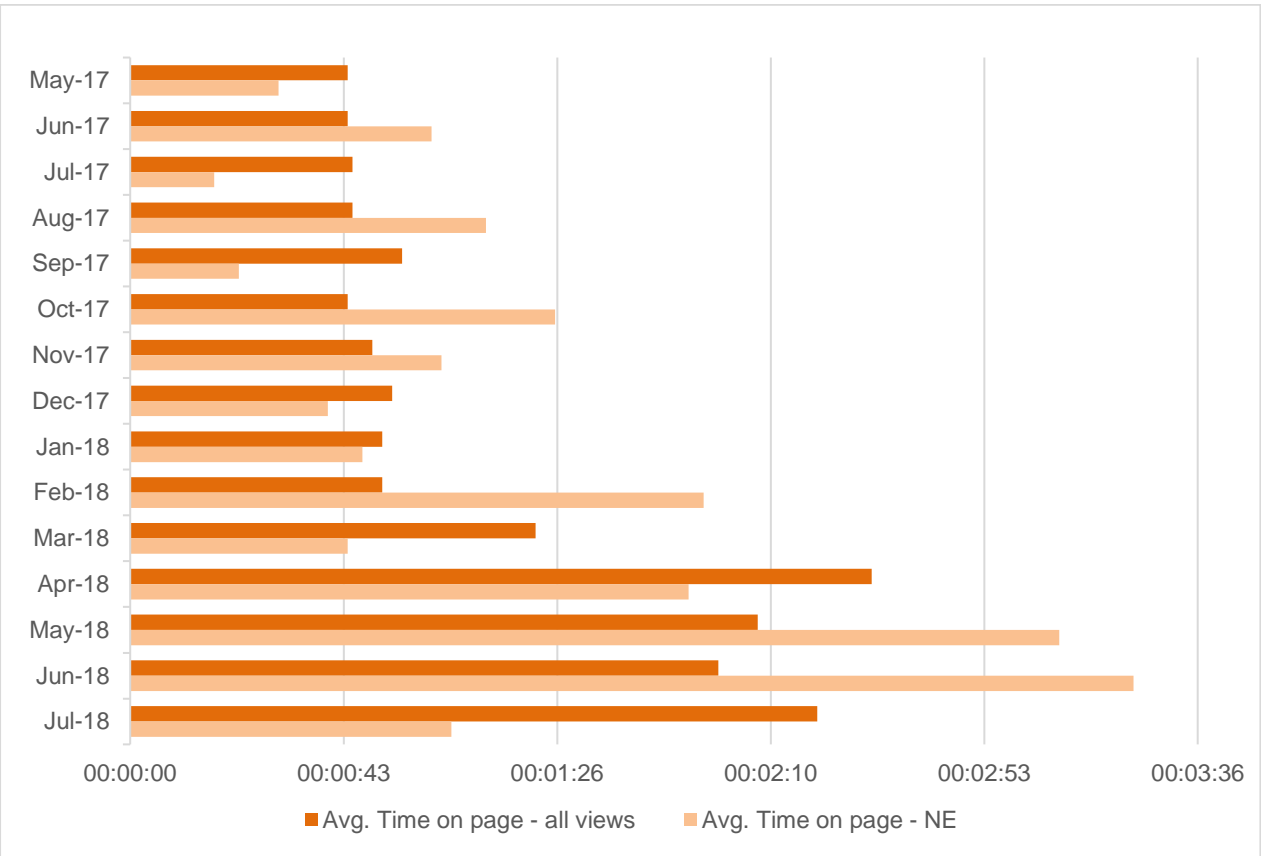
Figure E3b Average time on page – Key Stage 2 Guidance
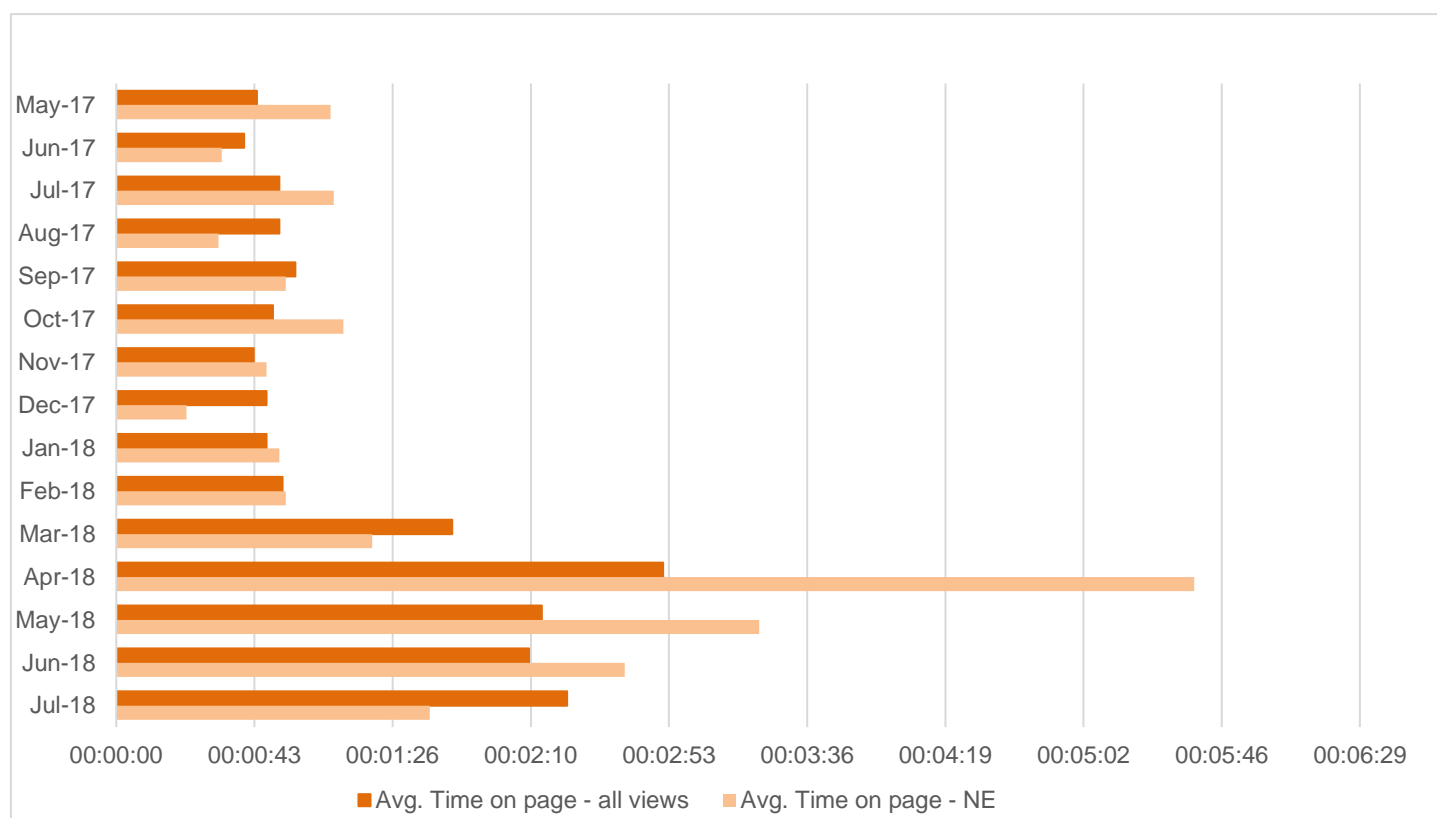
Twitter handles and keywords used for monitoring purposes

- "**campaign**" from the following specified accounts: @NAHTnews, @NatlGovsAssoc, @Ofstednews, @NUTonline, @The_UKLA, @ASCL_UK, @Literacy_Trust, @clpe1, @TheKeySL, @EducEndowFoundn, @RedcarCleveland, @northumberlands, @DurhamCouncil, @kyraresearch, @AspirerRS, KCCResearchSch, @HuntResearchSch, @SandResearch

- "**evidence**" from the following specified accounts: @NAHTnews, @NatlGovsAssoc, @Ofstednews, @NUTonline, @The_UKLA, @ASCL_UK, @Literacy_Trust, @clpe1, @TheKeySL, @EducEndowFoundn, @RedcarCleveland, @northumberlands, @DurhamCouncil, @kyraresearch, @AspirerRS, KCCResearchSch, @HuntResearchSch, @SandResearch

- "**guidance**" from the following specified accounts: @NAHTnews, @NatlGovsAssoc, @Ofstednews, @NUTonline, @The_UKLA, @ASCL_UK, @Literacy_Trust, @clpe1, @TheKeySL, @EducEndowFoundn, @RedcarCleveland, @northumberlands, @DurhamCouncil, @kyraresearch, @AspirerRS, KCCResearchSch, @HuntResearchSch, @SandResearch

- "**North east campaign**" from all Twitter accounts; "**Literacy campaign**" from all Twitter accounts; "**Transforming Tees**" from all Twitter accounts; "**EEF Literacy**" from all Twitter accounts; "**Scale-up campaign**" (returned no results from the list of specified accounts, but was too broad a search term for all Twitter accounts); "**Research**" returned no new results outside those already identified.

Appendix F: Qualitative data collection and analysis

We conducted six advocacy case studies (three R1 and three R2) over the course of the evaluation. Each case study contained the following components:

- an observation of an advocacy training or support event

- two semi-structured interviews with individuals from the advocacy organisation[47] (conducted either face-to-face or by telephone) this typically included an advocate with a strategic overview of the support as well as an advocate directly involved in delivery including school-based cluster leads

- six semi-structured interviews across three schools linked to the advocate. In each of the three schools we conducted an interview with a school senior leader or their equivalent, and an interview with the literacy coordinator, or appropriate alternative teacher. These interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by telephone

Across the six advocacy case studies, we conducted 16 interviews with advocates and 33 interviews with schools senior leaders and literacy coordinators, or their designated alternatives. We also conducted two semi-structured telephone interviews with the EEF NE programme manager (one in 2016 and one in 2017) and a single telephone interview with EEF's strategic lead for campaigns in 2016. These methods were selected as they offered both breadth and depth, and the scope to provide triangulated information on advocacy from the schools', EEF's and advocates' perspectives. A potential limitation of the design is that we did not routinely collect information from teachers or other members of school staff. However, given that the Campaign's priority focus was literacy coordinators, and given evaluation resource constraints, we decided that this approach was sufficient to provide the level of data required. Research questions were allocated carefully across the different methods for best return. The research team devised interview schedules in collaboration with EEF and structured questions around the three domains (promise, feasibility and scalability) and the 18 dimensions of effective change agents (see research design and methods chapter for details). There were slightly different versions of the schedules to reflect the different roles of interviewees. Further detail on each of the methods follows.

Observations of an advocacy training or support event

Researchers attended a training or support session delivered by each of the advocates. This allowed the team to document advocates' approaches and the extent of their fidelity/adaptation of the guidance. We were also able to observe the levels of engagement and interaction among participating schools.

Interviews with advocates

We first interviewed R1 advocates in spring 2017. The interviews covered: details of their advocacy model, their approaches to working with schools to provide advocacy support in their first year of operation (the first year of the Campaign), and mechanisms for sustaining effective literacy practices in schools. In the second year we interviewed R1 advocates again in summer 2018. These interviews covered: any changes to their advocacy model or approaches to working with schools to provide advocacy support; any changes to how they worked with EEF; details of how the literacy guidance was being implemented across schools and the perceived impacts that it was having; and the extent to which the advocacy support was helping to sustain effective literacy practices in schools through the spread of evidence-based learning and improved literacy practices.

Interviews with R2 advocates were carried out in summer 2018. The interviews covered: details of their advocacy model, their approaches to working with schools to provide advocacy support in their first

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[47] There was only one advocate representative from Advocate 2.

year of operation (the second year of the Campaign) and mechanisms for sustaining effective literacy practices in schools.

Interviews with school senior leaders and the literacy coordinators

Schools were selected according to sampling criteria (see Research Design and Methods chapter) and in consultation with advocates to reflect a range of school contexts and stages of their literacy development journey. We first interviewed the school senior leader and the literacy coordinator in three R1 advocate-linked schools in spring 2017 (the first year of the Campaign). All of the schools had engaged in advocacy support by the time of the interviews. The interviews covered: their relationship with the advocate, details of the advocacy provided to the school, and views on sustaining effective literacy practices in school. Literacy coordinators from R1 advocate-linked schools were interviewed again in summer 2018 (the second year of the Campaign), these interviews covered: their experiences of being part of the Campaign, their school's literacy focus, progress to date, barriers and facilitators, and impact and legacy.

Interviews with school senior leaders and the literacy coordinators in three R2 advocate-linked schools were conducted in summer 2018. The interviews covered: their relationship with the advocate, details of the advocacy provided to the school, and views on sustaining effective literacy practices in school.

Interviews with EEF

In the first year of the evaluation, interviews with the NE programme manager and campaigns' strategic lead covered the rationale for an advocacy model, details of working with R1 advocates and sustaining effective literacy practices in schools. In year 2, the interview with the NE programme manager covered: details of working with the R2 advocates, R2 advocates' approaches to working with schools and sustaining effective literacy practices in schools, as well as progress in R1 advocates' second year of operation.

Data processing and analysis

Over the course of the evaluation a total of 52 interviews were conducted. Interviews were audio-recorded (with the interviewees' permission) to ensure that quotations were accurately reported. Interviewers wrote up their notes into a standardised template. Data was then analysed using consistent coding templates across the research team. Through detailed analysis workshops, robust criteria were developed for assessing the strength of advocacy across the three domains/18 dimensions, and individual judgements were verified by other members of the team.

Advocacy dimensions explored in the research

Miles *et al.* (1987) identified 18 key skills required of educational change agents, which they grouped into six skill clusters: trust and rapport building; organisational diagnosis; dealing with the process; resource utilisation; managing the work of school improvement and building the capacity to continue. The researchers noted that the relative importance of these skills will vary for different programmes and contexts.

The research team used these six skill clusters to develop observation frames and interview questions for the Campaign evaluation.

The 18 key skills are:

1. Interpersonal ease: relating simply and directly to others

2. Group functioning: understanding group dynamics, able to facilitate teamwork

3. Training/doing workshops: direct instruction, teaching adults in a systematic way

4. Educational general (master teacher): wide educational experience, able to impart skills to others

5. Educational content: knowledge of school subject matter

6. Administrative/organisational: defining and structuring work, activities, time

7. Initiative-taking: starting or pushing activities, moving directly towards action

8. Trust/rapport-building: developing a sense of safety, openness, reduced threat on the part of clients, good relationship-building

9. Support: providing nurturing relationships, positive affectionate relationships

10. Confrontation: direct expression of negative information, without generating negative affect

11. Conflict mediation: resolving or improving situations where multiple incompatible interests are in play

12. Collaboration: creating relationships where influence is mutually shared

13. Confidence-building: strengthening a client's sense of efficacy, belief in self

14. Diagnosing individuals: forming a valid picture of the needs/problems of an individual teacher or administrator as a basis for action

15. Diagnosing organisations: forming a valid picture of the needs/problems of a school as an organisation (including its culture) as a basis for action

16. Managing/controlling: orchestrating the improvement process; coordinating activities, time and people; direct influence on others

17. Resource-bringing: locating and providing information, materials, practices, equipment useful to clients

18. Demonstration: modelling new behaviour in classrooms or meetings.

Appendix G: Summary tables of survey analysis results

Table G1 and G2 below display the quasi-effect sizes for the survey outcome measures discussed throughout the report. Quasi-effect sizes have been calculated based on the co-efficients of the regression analysis. Given the evaluation design, the effect sizes are described as 'quasi' and should not be interpreted as causal effects.

Table G1: Survey outcome measures – NE and comparison schools

Outcome	n (intervention)	Mean (95% CI) (intervention)	n (comparison)	Mean (95% CI) (comparison)	Hedges g (95% CI)	p-value
Balanced/ blended approach to reading (Q2)	237	2.11 (1.97 - 2.26)	158	2.11 (1.93 - 2.30)	-0.01 (-0.22 - 0.19)	0.909
Reading comprehension	237	14.86 (14.56 - 15.15)	158	14.14 (13.69 - 14.59)	0.24 (0.05 - 0.42)	0.014
Writing composition	237	15.23 (14.91 - 15.55)	158	14.89 (14.44 - 15.33)	0.00 (-0.18 - 0.19)	0.969
Fluent handwriting (Q4)	237	0.74 (0.67 - 0.82)	158	0.67 (0.57 - 0.77)	0.14 (-0.07 - 0.14)	0.183
Diagnosing literacy need (Q6)	237	0.71 (0.51 - 0.90)	158	0.46 (0.26 - 0.66)	0.12 (-0.08 - 0.32)	0.234
Effective catch-up support	237	11.20 (10.88 - 11.51)	158	10.39 (9.93 - 10.85)	0.25 (0.06 - 0.44)	0.011
School propensity for good practice in literacy	237	15.54 (15.22 - 15.86)	158	14.82 (14.33 - 15.31)	0.19 (0.01 - 0.37)	0.043
School resources to support good practice in literacy (Q10)	237	2.98 (2.85 - 3.11)	158	2.62 (2.44 - 2.80)	0.31 (0.11 - 0.51)	0.003
Use of research evidence in decisions about literacy teaching (Q8)	237	0.68 (0.58 - 0.79)	158	0.47 (0.36 - 0.58)	0.32 (0.13 - 0.51)	0.001

Table G2: Survey outcome measures – advocate and non-advocate NE schools

Outcome	n (Advocacy)	Mean (95% CI) (Advocacy)	n (comparison)	Mean (95% CI) (comparison)	Hedges g **(95% CI)**	p-value
Reading comprehension	97	14.56 (14.12- 14.99)	140	15.06 (14.66-15.47)	-0.17 (-0.43-0.08)	0.177
Writing composition	97	15.29 (14.83-15.74)	140	15.19 (14.75-15.63)	-0.04 (-0.30-0.22)	0.783
Effective catch-up support	97	11.13 (10.68-11.58)	140	11.24 (10.81-11.68)	-0.08 (-0.33-0.17)	0.529
School propensity for good practice in literacy	97	15.26 (14.78-15.74)	140	15.73 (15.30-16.16)	-0.07 (-0.31-0.17)	0.572
Use of research evidence in decisions about literacy teaching (Q8)	97	0.81 (0.63-1.00)	140	0.59 (0.47-0.71)	0.14 (-0.12-0.40)	0.301

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