**Improving literacy attainment levels of disadvantaged pupils by increasing reading comprehension of children at KS1 to KS3, through Inference Training.**

**Overview**

Throughout pupils learning from KS1 through to KS3 there was a demonstrated regression period in the year following transition to a new key stage where pupils reading comprehension levels were not sufficiently developed to cope with the change in reading challenges. This effect was demonstrated with the KS2 results which directly followed the change in curriculum in 2015. It became apparent that pupils were reading through recognition of words rather than comprehension. This effect was most prevalent among disadvantaged pupils in schools we are proposing to support.

The purpose of the programme was to develop pupils reading fluency and comprehension across all Key Stage levels 13. With a focus on ensuring comprehension was sufficiently improved to allow pupils to read to learn, rather than continually learning to read.

The project aimed to: Upskill teachers to be able to better identify comprehension problems; Provide teachers with the tools to develop pupils reading comprehension to better progress through KS levels and beyond, and; Embed the processes for identifying and addressing gaps within the local schools to create a sustainable model for future provision. This included all teachers at primary level and those within the English department at secondary level.

By embedding this methodology through primary and into secondary education, and developing an understanding of the importance and effectiveness of this approach amongst teachers across all supported schools, this project aimed to raise the attainment in KS1 and KS2 SATS, and ultimately GCSE.

Ultimately this programme aimed to facilitate a change in pupils, seeing them progress from 'learning to read' through to 'reading to learn' and therefore adaptable to challenges they faced as they progressed through the school system.

**Good practice to share with others interested in running school improvement projects to ensure projects deliver the intended outcome.**

It is essential to have senior leader capacity for the strategic leadership, line management and support of the project manager. This senior leader also needs to have experience of leading similar large scale projects across a number of schools – often this is someone with Teaching School/MAT or Local Authority experience. This role supplements the project manager role. In reality the leadership of the project is more akin to 1.5 FTE.

Ensure that you have experienced financial support in place. The project needs

the expertise of a business manager to provide financial models and ensure that HR processes are in place (part-time staff or staff released from schools can create contractual issues). Further financial support is essential to track expenditure and process the high volume of transactions.

Outstanding and flexible administrative support is essential, this person must have the ability to forge relationships quickly, gain and create trust and inspire confidence.

**Sustainability measures taken by projects to ensure improvement are sustained beyond the funding period.**

This project has taken the following steps to ensure sustainability post-project:

- Evaluations
    - Term 1 – half term evaluation to capture success and impact of transition plans. Termly evaluation, reporting on practice and developments.
    - Evaluations sent to project manager, analysed, feed in to network meetings
- Network meetings:
    - Termly network meetings. Named colleagues from Primary and Secondary schools to lead the meetings. Cross phase and/or separate phase meetings.
    - Minutes- discussions and actions reported to SSIF project manager, monitored.

- Current schools:
    - Refresher and for new colleagues/subject areas for schools currently working within the SSIF project. Opportunity to observe practice in school currently in project.
        - Term 1:1: Pedagogy and fiction book study including observation of practice in school – refresher and for new colleagues, primary and secondary. In school data collection
        - Term 1:2: Pedagogy and non-fiction book study including observation of practice in school – refresher and for new colleagues, primary and secondary. Quality Assurance Fluency training.
        - Term 2:    Peer reviews – schools within project to 'QA' each other.
        - Term 3:    Data collection.
- Teaching Assistants/librarians/volunteers:
    - Term 1:
        - Central training for TAs, librarians, adult volunteers in current schools, primary and secondary
        - Central training for primary children (4-5 children in each

- school) to support younger readers in school
        - Central training for secondary children/ambassadors/sixth formers (approx. 6 per school) to support younger readers in school.
- Literacy focus:
    - Focus per term - eg supporting children to become independent readers – applying inference strategies independently/less teacher-led
        - Eg critical reading, academic literacy, effective questioning, writing skills
- Leadership:
    - Term 1: How to evaluate effectively - Leaders will have an acute awareness of the importance of evaluating effective practice and how to support less effective teaching in their capacity as English Leader. They will understand that in order to evaluate the quality of teaching effectively they must consider their judgements of teaching 'over time' and that no isolated element of monitoring provides a true reflection of teaching practice. English Leaders will also develop an understanding of what to 'look at' not 'look for' and how to effectively support teaching and learning by using planning, data, work scrutiny, lesson observations, speaking to learners and learning walks.
    - Term 2: Improving Teaching - Following on from effectively evaluating English across their school, Leaders will understand how to hold teachers to account and provide constructive feedback which will help support colleagues to improve.  They will consider what effective practice looks like within their school and how to share this successfully understanding the importance of involving peers/colleagues to drive their own professional development (using the philosophy of 'High challenge, High support, Low Threat') and how sharing 'good' practice is a fundamental aspect of school improvement.
    - Term 3: Action Planning - Leaders will have a clear understanding of targets and actions going forward in order to maintain best practice in their school. They will also produce a self-evaluation document, which will set measurable targets in-line with their own School Development Plan priorities.
- Open door policy:
    - Schools within project to open doors to each other to discuss, share strengths and concerns, observe good practice. Windows of opportunity per term.
- Other work to support sustainability:
    - Transition: Report re transition from Sheffield Park Academy and All Saints
    - Parental involvement:   Work supporting parental involvement – booklet for schools and parents
    - Collaboration: Directory of Leads' names for collaboration
    - Teaching and Learning Inference strategies: Directory of strategies to support RfI
- Development of Inference:

- o Planning from July 2019 and throughout term 1 to roll out Inference to schools outside the SSIF project. Planning to use the expertise within current SSIF schools – open door opportunities, developing networking, Quality Assurance team, buddying with new schools, for example.
- o Organisation of colleagues to lead, training venues, marketing, team of colleagues to support