



# Developing a Research Engaged School

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University of Strathclyde

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017



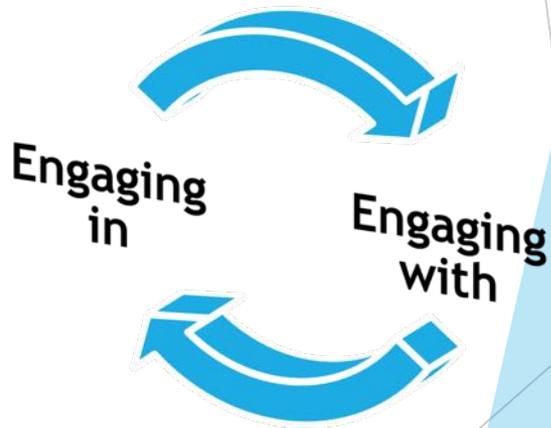
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@Kate\_Wall98 @anna\_d\_beck @JW\_Firth @PhilipTonner

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- ▶ This is to enable those attending to listen back and to share our sessions with colleagues
- ▶ The live broadcast is for colleagues who work across Scotland (and beyond) who were not able to travel to this event
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1. Practitioner enquiry is about learning how to improve
2. Research should ideally be integrated into practice
3. Need to recognise and value different expertise
4. Research should be useful for teaching and learning

# Engaging in and with research



## Engage with

Engage with research (literature and practice)

- New evidence based ideas
- Increase awareness of successful (and not so successful) outcomes
- Codify own practice

## Engage in

Engage in (doing) research

- Find out answers to your questions
- Test out own theories in the real world
- Explore an evidence base to practice and innovation

# Two Key Perspectives in Scottish Context

(Not in competition. Neither is better than the other.)

## Enquiry as Stance

- ▶ An epistemology (a world view)
- ▶ Tied up with democratic purpose and social justice
- ▶ A drive to improve that can be idealistic
- ▶ Informed teacher voice
- ▶ Research secondary to enquiry

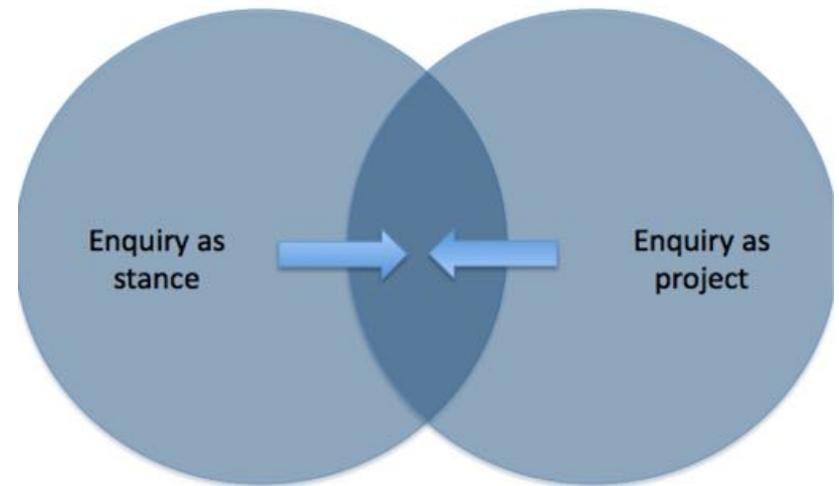
## Enquiry as Project

- ▶ Project based via programme, masters module, school initiative...
- ▶ Often finite and only one cycle of enquiry
- ▶ A strategic finding out
- ▶ Enquiry secondary to research
- ▶ Research model can be dominated by evaluation

Ideas developed in a GTCS think piece available on the GTCS website

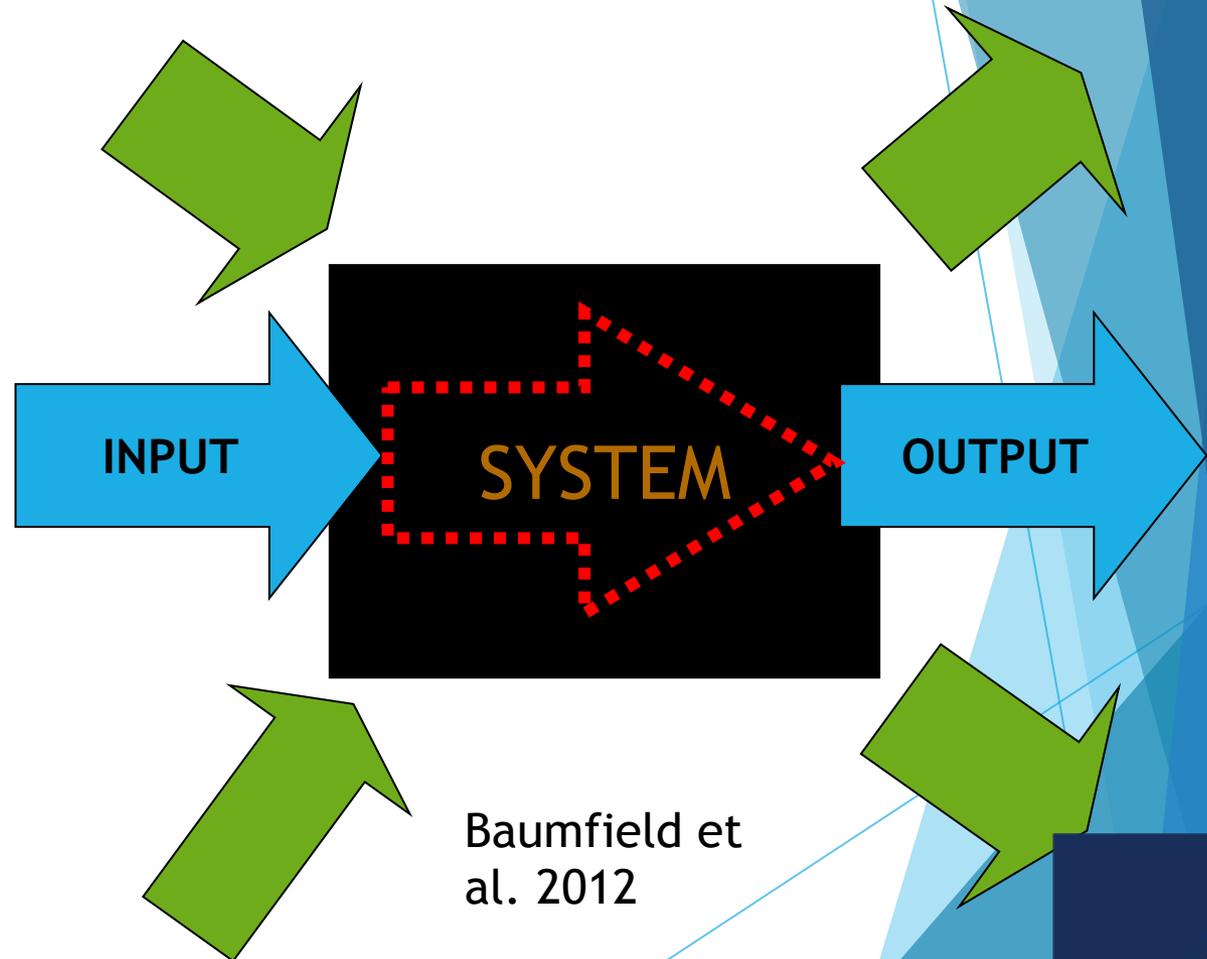
# Becoming a Practitioner Enquirer

- ▶ I see groups of people approaching practitioner enquiry from both of these perspectives.
- ▶ Without access to a sustained, supportive community it can at best breed complacency but at worst it leads to a feeling of dissonance between their ideal and real life experience.
- ▶ Research process should be the common ground...



# Misleading dominant model of research

- ▶ Evaluation
- ▶ Intervention
- ▶ Measure
- ▶ Impact
- ▶ Control
- ▶ Input/output
- ▶ Generalisation
- ▶ “What works”

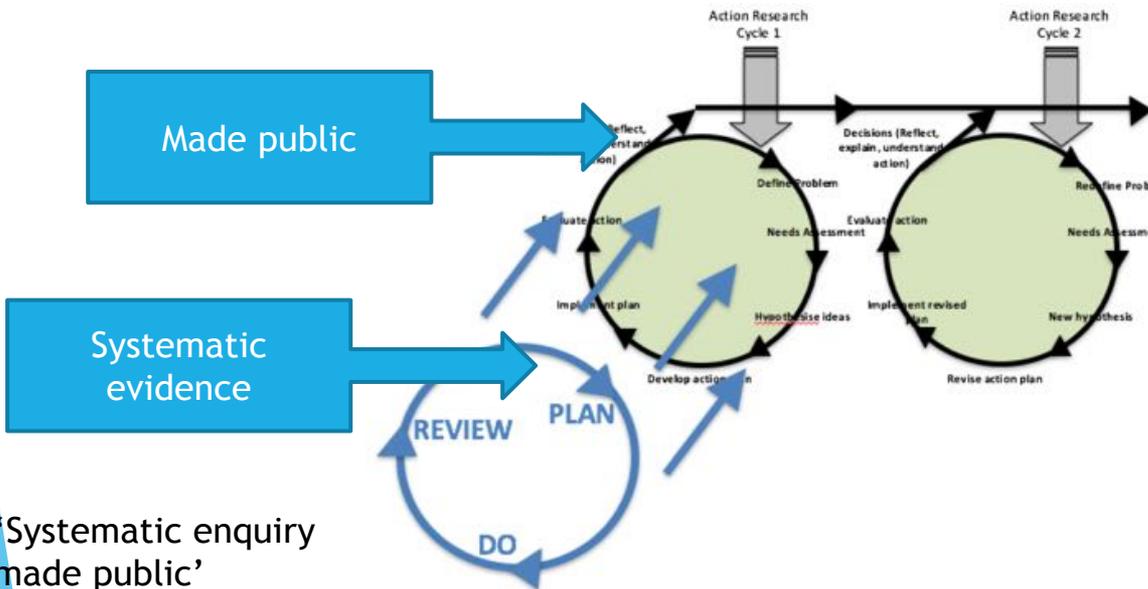


Baumfield et al. 2012

# The intent of practitioner research

- ▶ To address student need (Timperley 2008)
- ▶ To improve educational outcomes
- ▶ To support practitioners' insight and understanding of practice (pedagogic and methodological)
- ▶ To facilitate practitioners' reflective and strategic thinking (metacognition as methodology for professional learning: Portilho and Medina 2016)
- ▶ To be the foundation for dialogue (with colleagues, students, researchers, policy makers)

# Practitioner Enquiry as cumulative process



‘Systematic enquiry made public’  
(Stenhouse 1981)

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# Creative approach to evidence

- ▶ Start research conversations with a practice base
- ▶ See schools and other educational organisations as data rich environments
- ▶ Opportunities for quantitative, qualitative and mixed data collection, synthesis and analysis
- ▶ Remove barriers to what might be considered as 'proper' evidence - what is enough evidence to convince you?

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## Opportunities to engage with

Make research accessible

Use of research to explain 'why'

Research leads

Support further study

Opportunities to share

Special interest groups

Reading groups



# Don't forget other practitioners' research

**WAYS OF PROMOTING A PRO-ACTIVE SKILLS CURRICULUM IN YEAR 6**  
Paula Ross  
Marlborough Primary School, Cornwall  
What are the optimum ways of promoting a pro-active skills curriculum in order to positively impact on children's learning, teacher skills and pupil motivation?

**Increasing Boys Access To Writing Through The Outdoor Environment**  
Emily McDonald and Melanie Scull  
Hazelbury Infant School, Enfield

**PROJECT FOCUS**  
The Campaign for Learning's Learning to Learn in Schools Phase 3 Evaluation  
Summary - May 2007

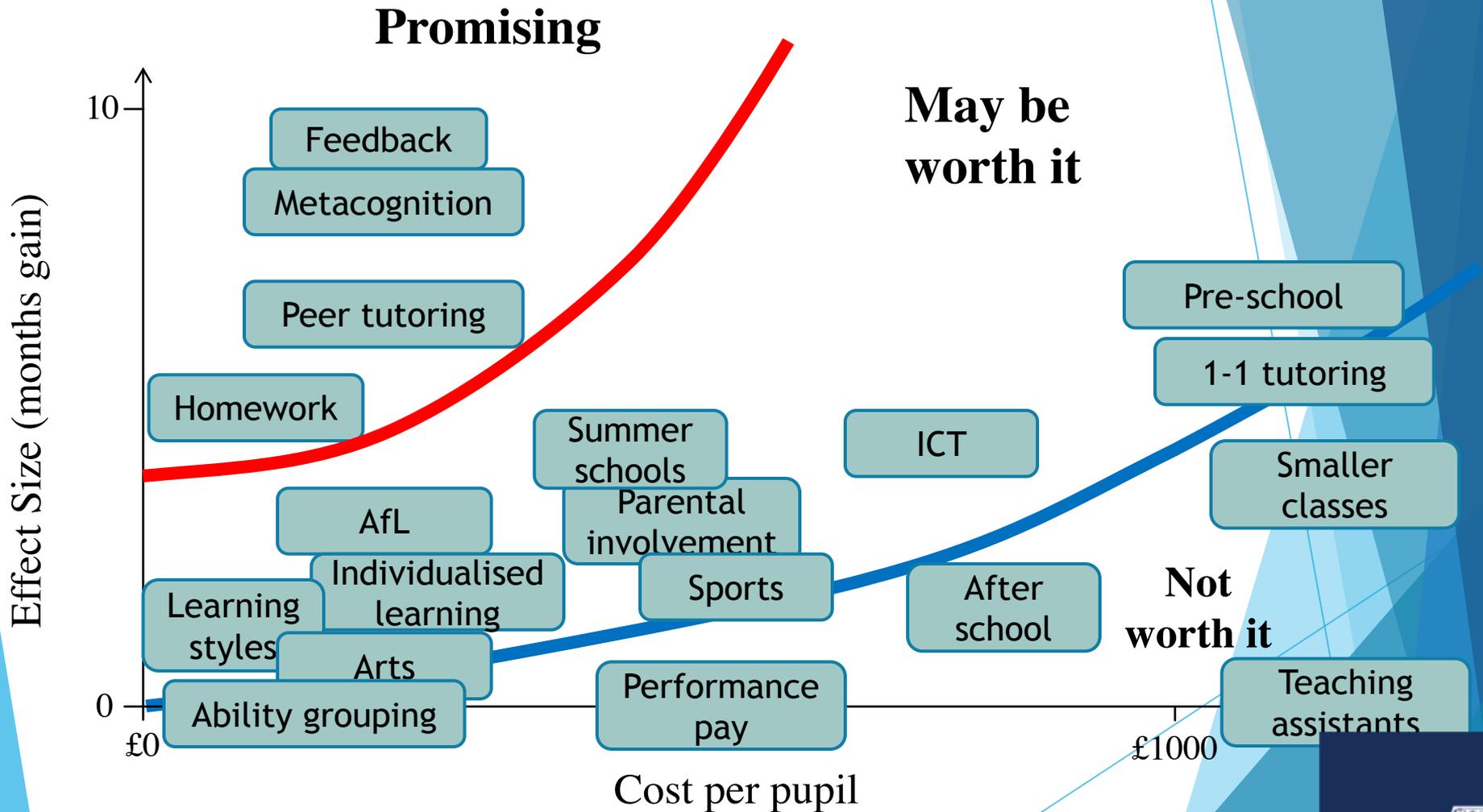
**Using Formative Assessment Strategies to Improve Children's Writing or 'Nobody's Brain is Ever Full Up'**  
Ann Mulcahy and Elaine Saini  
Wilbury Primary School, Enfield

**LEARNING TO LEARN IN SCHOOLS PHASE 4 AND LEARNING TO LEARN IN FURTHER EDUCATION**  
March 2010  
Kate Wall, Elaine Hall, Vivienne Baumfield, Remedios, Ulrike Thomas, Lucy Tiplady, Carl Towler and Pam Woolner

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# Overview of value for money – EEF toolkit



# BLOOMS TAXONOMY



Share the language of critique  
and enquiry

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# Creating a Practitioner Enquiry Culture

**The Principle of Autonomy:** the locus of control should be with the enquirer. They should be able to decide on the topic, the question, the evidence and the findings; however, these choices should be justified in relation to their perceptions of their pupils' needs regularly within a supportive community.

**The Principle of Disturbance:** Relevant questions and the process of trying to answer them is likely to cause extra thinking as the complexity and connections within the classroom become more obvious. The enquirer has to be prepared for dissonance.

**The Principle of Dialogue:** Practitioner enquiry is not effective as a solitary activity, but rather it needs an ongoing process of shared thinking and codification against group understandings.

**The Principle of Connectivity:** Practitioner enquiry becomes more doable when we see the productive connections it has with normal teaching and learning practice.

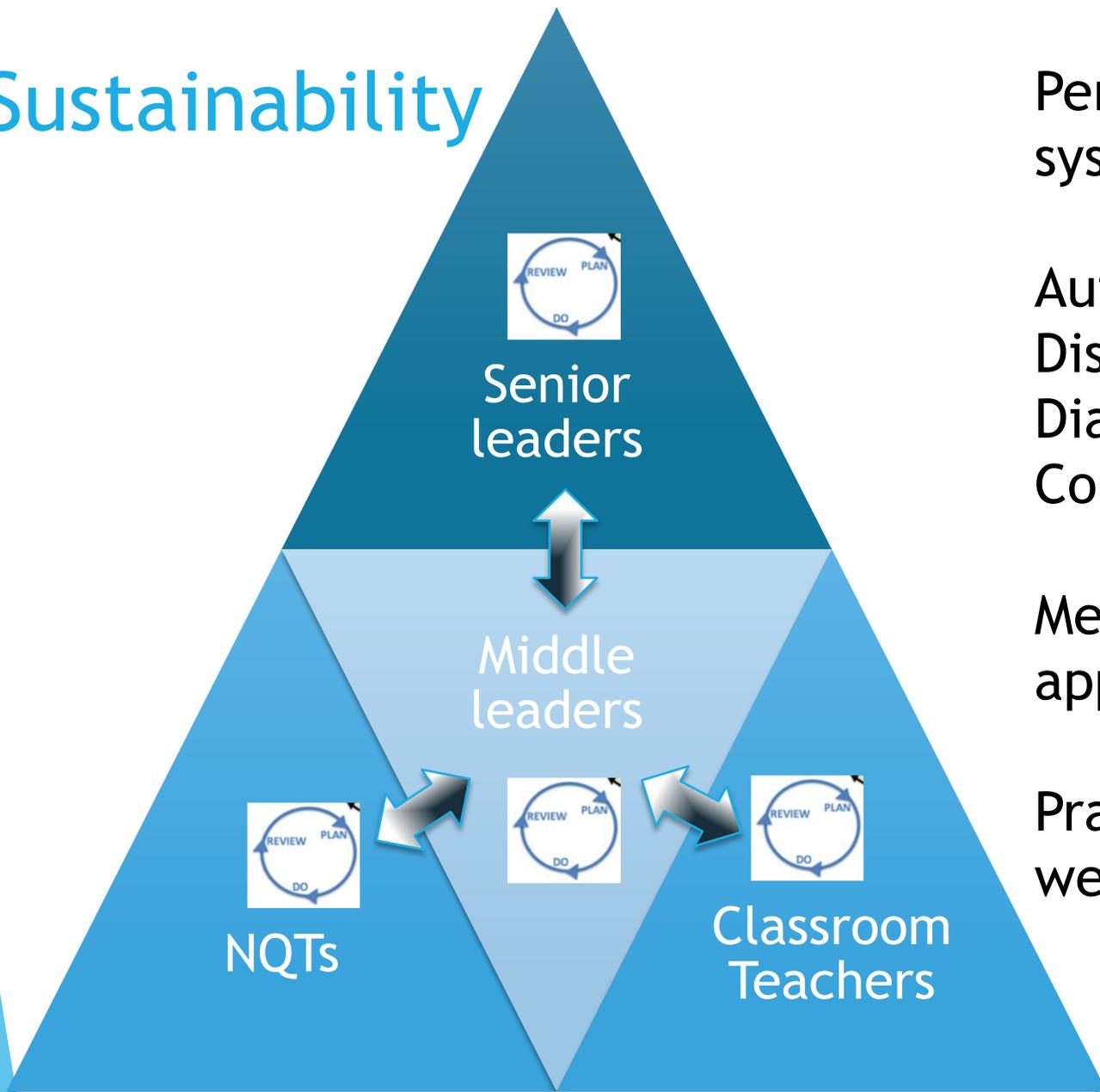


Wall and Hall 2017

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# Sustainability



Personal and system level

Autonomy  
Disturbance  
Dialogue  
Connectivity

Metacognitive approach

Practice what we preach...

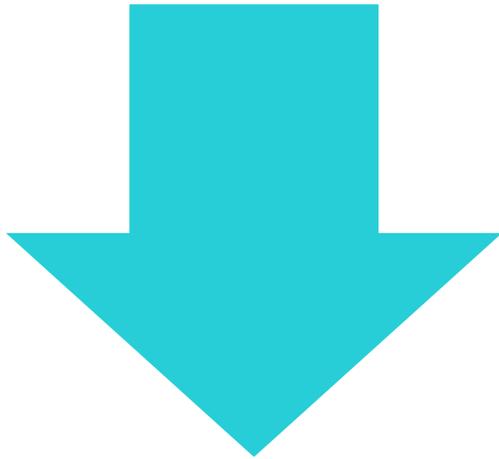


# The policy context for the research engaged agenda

Anna Beck

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# Context: A shifting policy landscape



**Donaldson's Vision 2011**  
Empowered, autonomous,  
reflective, enquiring, critical,  
'agents of change'



**NIF, Governance Reform,  
Education (Scotland) Bill 2018**  
Measuring pupil, teacher and  
school performance  
Data, evidence, accountability



# Donaldson's vision: teachers as researchers



“The most successful education systems invest in developing their teachers as **reflective, accomplished and enquiring professionals...** who have the capacity to **engage fully with the complexities of education** and to be **key actors in shaping and leading educational change**” (p. 4).

“[Teachers] need to develop **expertise in using research, inquiry and reflection as part of their daily skill set.** Outstanding teachers **use research and data to identify areas for improvement and take direct action to address underperformance**” (p. 70).

“extended professionals are agents of change, not passive or reluctant receivers of externally-imposed prescription”

Donaldson (2011, p. 18).

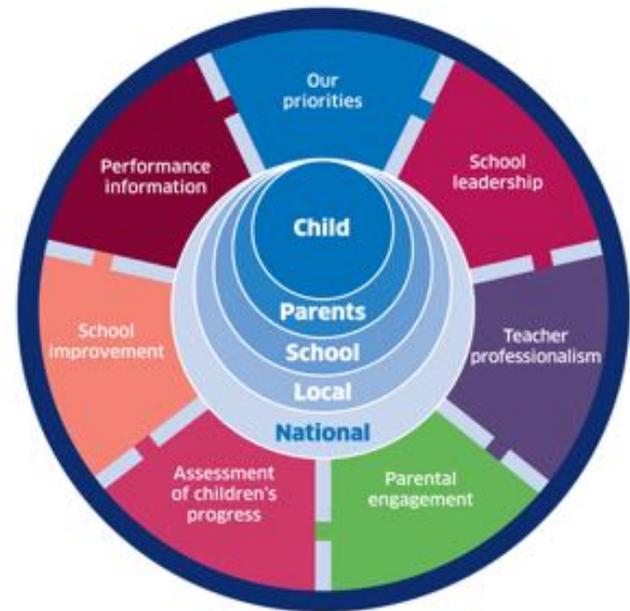
There is an **urgent need** to challenge the narrow interpretations of the teacher's role which have created unhelpful philosophical and structural divides, and have led to **sharp separations of function amongst teachers, teacher educators and researchers.**

If we are to learn from some high-performing systems around the world and foster a **research-informed profession**, more has to be done to facilitate **knowledge exchange between schools and universities.**

Putting Donaldson's vision  
into practice: partnership

# National Improvement Framework (2016-2018)

- “We want all new teachers to develop as enquiring professionals” (2018, p.11)
- Data gathered on children and young people’s progress is essential (2018, p.16)
- This will provide us with information on the effectiveness of moderation processes and therefore the consistency of teacher judgement” (2016, p. 13)
- Evaluating learning, teaching and assessment and the quality of what goes on in classrooms (2018, p.19)



# Education Governance (2017, 2018)



**EMPOWERING TEACHERS,  
PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES  
TO ACHIEVE  
EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY  
IN EDUCATION**  
A LEARNING REVIEW



- More ‘freedom’ to schools, but more responsibility to head teachers
- Increased data on children’s progress
- Increased school inspection by Education Scotland
- Increased data on teacher performance
- Clear accountability structures
- “We will streamline and enhance professional learning to ensure a coherent package of learning for teachers”

# A Research Strategy for Scottish Education (2016) - delivering the NIF

“We will aim to foster greater communication between **teachers and researchers.**”

Potential options include the creation of research champions at a school and local authority level, development of local and national events to share research practice, collaborative research with the teaching profession and establishing a research forum.

This would not only enable the more **effective dissemination of research, but allow practitioners to be more effectively engaged in the research process”**

# Teacher research engagement

FROM RESEARCH AWARENESS TO TEACHER-  
RESEARCHER

Jonathan Firth

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# Teachers & research - background

- ▶ As the Donaldson report (2011) stated, “*Any expectation that initial teacher education will cover all that a new teacher needs to know and do is clearly unrealistic*” (p.34)
- ▶ Engagement in **research/enquiry** can play a CPD role.
- ▶ Can lead to better understanding of learning processes which are counterintuitive.

# Aim

- ▶ What is the **aim** of teacher research?
  - ▶ To prompt teachers' reflection on their classroom practice?
  - ▶ To develop research-related skills?
  - ▶ To prompt engagement with research more broadly?
  - ▶ To find things out and share them more widely?
  - ▶ To develop more effective teachers?
  - ▶ ...something else?



Engage

Apply

Research

- ▶ Viewing research as a process, from initial engagement, via applying research in practice to active research projects.
- ▶ Teachers are already at various stages in that process.
- ▶ Group-based peer mentoring approaches.

## Problem

- A. Lack of time
- B. Access to ethics procedures
- C. Access to journals
- D. Access to funding
- E. Skills, including planning, conducting and writing up
- F. Publication opportunities

## Possible solution

- A. Research/enquiry as self-directed CPD
- B. School-based board/university partnership
- C. GTCS database/ university partnership
- D. List, provide or advise on funding
- E. Workshops on skills as part of LA-wide CPD processes
- F. Advise on or provide

# One model: “SURE”

- ▶ SURE or “School and University Research Enquiry” is a research group comprising
- ▶ 3 Glasgow-based school teachers
- ▶ 4 University of Strathclyde staff

Teacher-initiated

Initial focus on attainment, PEF funding,  
parental engagement.

Made use of University ethics approval process.

Currently carrying out a research study with intention  
to publish and follow up.



# Establishing Hutchesons' Centre for Research: a reflection

Dr Philip Tonner FRSA, FSA Scot  
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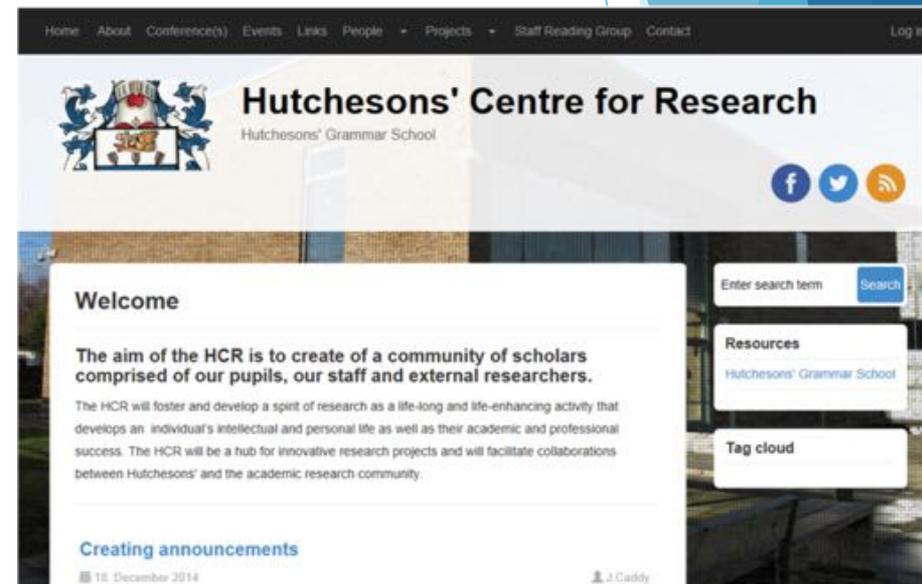
# The Hutchesons' Centre for Research (HCR)

The aim of the HCR was to:

*to create of a community of scholars comprised of (our) pupils, staff and external researchers.*

Collegiate structure:

- ▶ Director, Executive Board,
- ▶ Academic Advisory Panel,
- ▶ Project Researchers.



# Activities

What did the Centre do?

*The HCR drew together existing activities while creating new opportunities.*

Research projects:

- ▶ Pupil Projects - the Independent Research Paper.
- ▶ Staff Projects - important CPD implications.
- ▶ External Projects - research collaborations (example, Philosophy and Museums project).

# Project researchers - pupils

- ▶ Pupils - the Independent Research Paper.
- ▶ What our pupils said:

*I have gained a lot from this process of researching and writing my IRP. It has taught me how to write mathematical papers, something which will help me at University.*

*As you decide yourself when to work and how much to do it is a feeling of independence which is not usually felt in school, with no parents or teachers pushing you for deadlines.*

# Project researchers - staff

## ► Staff - research projects.

Example: Head of Geography.

Title: Researching the barriers to education globally.

### Research aims of project:

1. To engage pupils in their communities in research into local barriers to education.
2. To gather and disseminate pupil research projects online
3. To present the results of this research as educational resources suitable for schools (so that other schools might follow this example).
4. To identify ways in which these barriers to education might be further broken down.

# CPD: My PRD and the HCR

Hutchesons' Centre for Research			
Research Project Preliminary Proposal			
Proposer's name	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
Telephone number	<input type="text"/>	Discussed with HoD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Title of project	<input type="text"/>		
Research aims of project	<input type="text"/>		
Brief description of project	<input type="text"/>		
	<small>(Up to 300 words)</small>		
Background information	<input type="text"/>		

# Project researchers - external

## ▶ External Researchers

Example:

- ▶ Dr Victoria Harrison,
- ▶ Philosophy & Education, University of Glasgow.

## ▶ Project:

**Philosophy and Museums: ethics, aesthetics and ontology** *research conference involving external academics, museum curators, Hutchesons' staff and pupils.*



# Research Fellowship

- ▶ Partnership with the School of Education, University of Strathclyde.
- ▶ Established a funded research fellowship enabling a member of university staff to work in school one day a week for a number of months.

# School based research

- ▶ Research seminar(s)
- ▶ Dissemination of research
- ▶ Research placements/researchers in residence
- ▶ Conference(s)
- ▶ University partnerships - Research Fellowship
- ▶ Accessing funding and fellowships
- ▶ Community of scholars
- ▶ Ethos and culture of research
- ▶ Staff Continuous Professional Development
- ▶ Networking Dissemination of results

# *Findings: Hutchesons' Centre for Research (Anna Beck)*

## Barriers to doing research: time and space

“Time”

“Just time”

“Time and  
teacher  
workload”

“Time!”

“At the moment it’s quite hard to have enough **engaged and interested people** who have a bit of time.”

“Time is always going to be a big barrier.”

# Teacher research: is it just part of being a teacher?

“If you view teachers as people who just go and deliver content in a classroom, then that’s a very narrow and limited view of what they should be. Not to say that every teacher needs to be a researcher, but **I don’t think there should be an assumption that they’re not**, and that research can only be done by people in white coats or whatever.”

“I think that [research] fundamentally improves teaching. There’s no question about that in my mind, you can’t really differentiate between the two”

“I don’t necessarily see it as additional and I would love to see it as integral to my job. **But the reality is, it would be seen as additional.** By other teachers and the system.”

# Different understandings of research and enquiry

“To be research, it has to contribute to our understanding more broadly rather than making me a better professional. I think that is a different aim. It might make me a better professional to do it, but I don’t know that that’s the aim.”

“I wouldn’t count myself as a researcher because I’ve read however many articles, studies and databases. No. If I was to take the information I was reading and implement it on a practitioner enquiry basis to widen that out, then yes. **But not just having a look.**”

# Teacher researcher identities: Where do you go?

“If you do a PhD straight after your first degree and then you go into academia, you’ve got a pathway... Whereas if you’re a teacher engaged in research, **I don’t think there’s an obvious destination**, really. Perhaps that’s a barrier... ”

“Is there enough to hold teachers in a school who are engaged with research, and to feel that they’re actually working towards something? Or do people perhaps feel, **oh, well, I will need to make a move, I will need to become university staff.**”

# Barriers to doing research: agency and structure

“There’s very strong characters in teaching and changing their minds can often be difficult. **Even when the evidence is sitting right in front of you...** I would want somebody to sit up and pay attention to [my research]. I wouldn't want to finish that research and then find that five years down the line we're all just carrying on as we were.

I'm not in a position to make changes. I'm a classroom teacher, I'm not a promotive member of staff, so **I don't have that power.**”

“Although there's individuals on board with the concept of research, **I don't believe they would be on board all the time with the results of that research.** They would only be on board if they had already agreed with the results before the research was done.”

# Recommendations

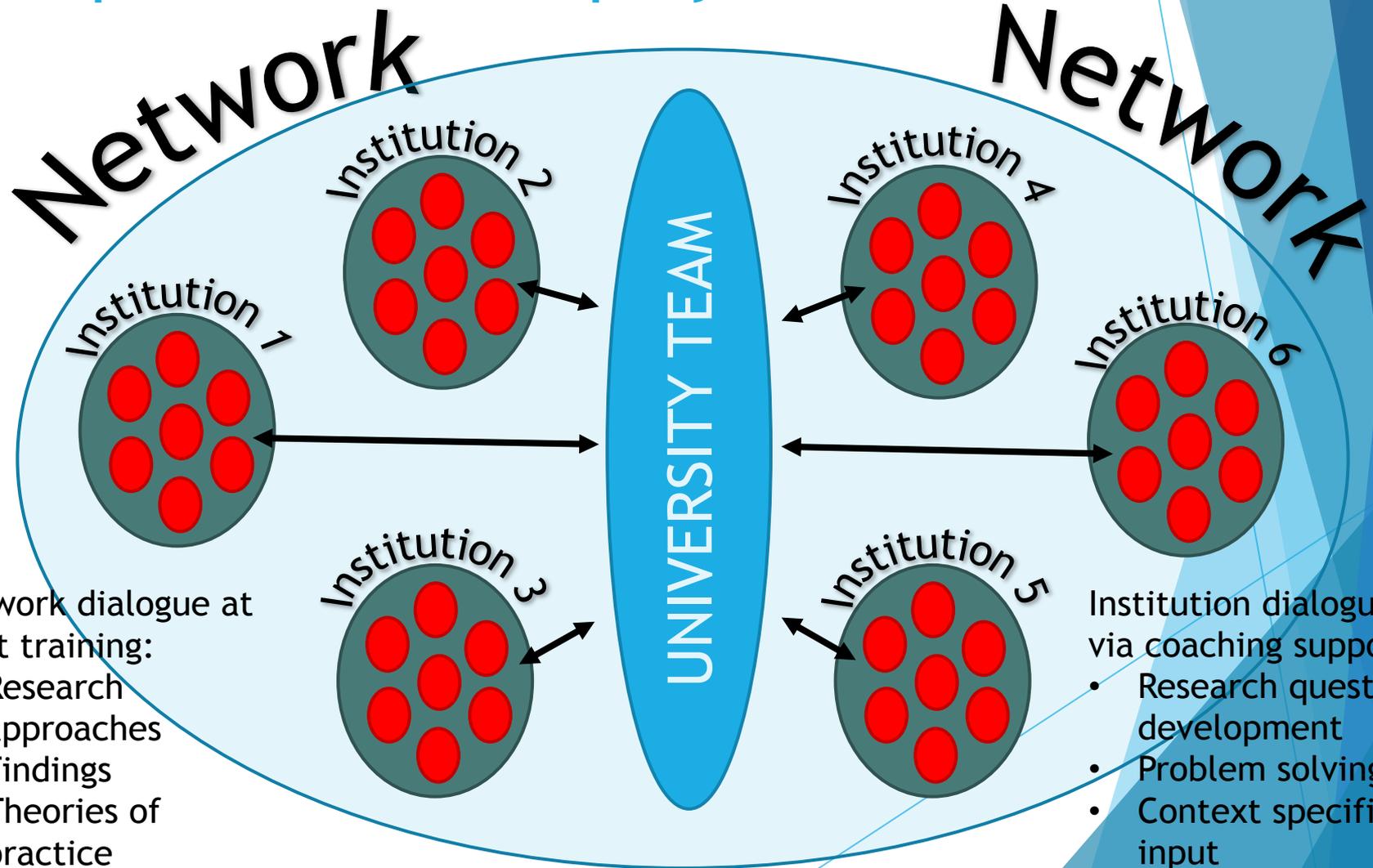
- ▶ Time and space: how do we do this?
  - Greater support for teachers to engage in research
  - Potential for closer relationships with higher education
  - Supportive networks of teachers engaging in research
- ▶ Should not be viewed as an ‘add-on’ - part of being a teacher
- ▶ A clear pathway to retain teachers within schools
- ▶ Is it for me? Conversations around what constitutes research and who can do it - shared vision
- ▶ **Teacher agency: the ability to act on enquiry and research**



# The Learning to Learn Project England 2003-2011

Case study 3

# A School University Partnership practitioner enquiry network



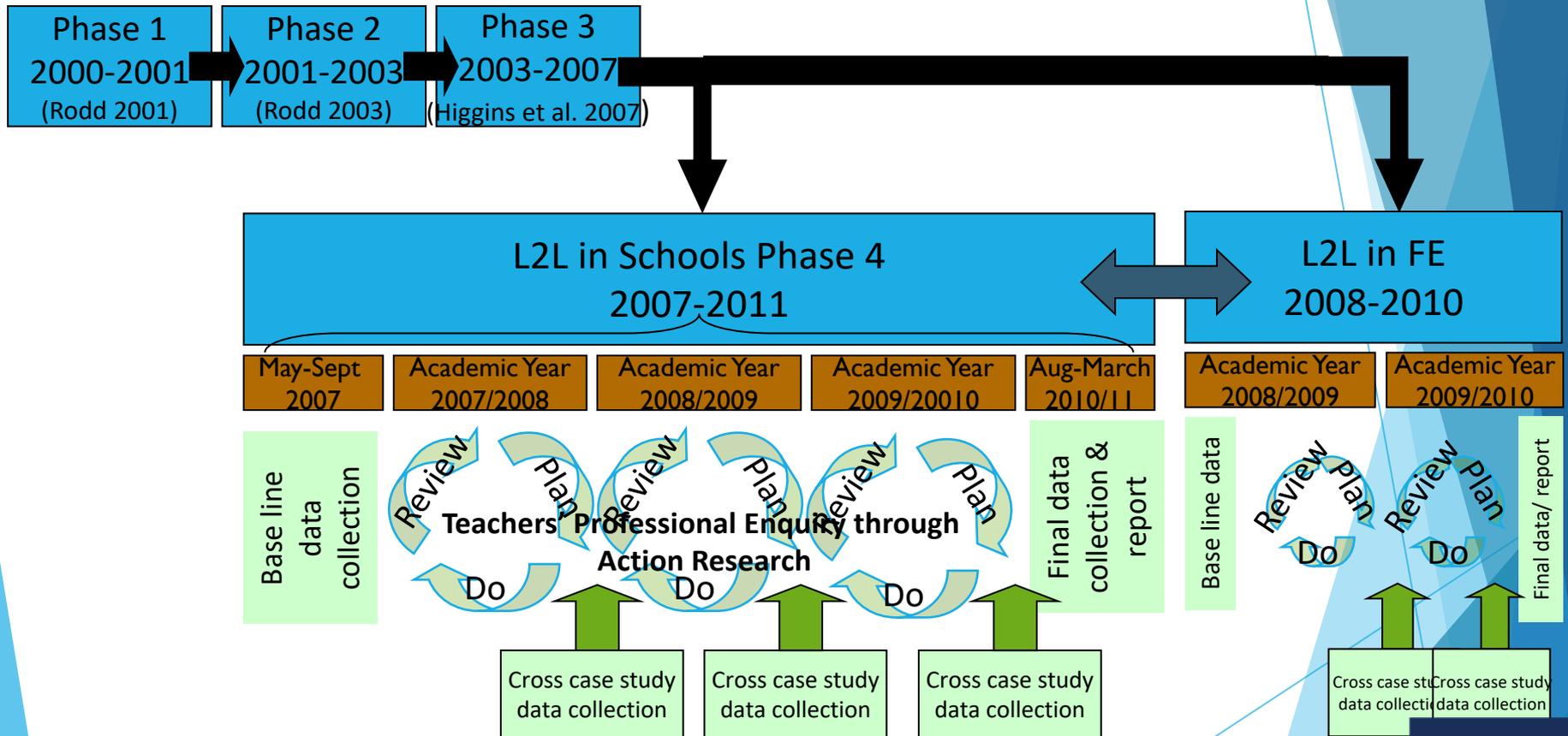
Network dialogue at joint training:

- Research approaches
- Findings
- Theories of practice

Institution dialogue via coaching support:

- Research question development
- Problem solving
- Context specific input

# The Learning to Learn Research Project





Community

A group of people prepared to listen to each other, share experiences and act as critical friends

A focus on thinking about learning; experiences and perceptions of the learning process

Metacognition

Enquiry

An emphasis on asking questions and trying to find out the answers

# Another example: a classroom enquiry moves across the school

- ▶ Wilbury Primary School, Enfield: Phase 3
- ▶ Formative/peer assessment in Year 2 writing



Children in the two intervention classes showed better attitudes and dispositions to writing than children in the four control classes. Their writing scores improved significantly (effect size of **0.76**).



The project extends to one experimental class per year group and while writing scores continue to improve, there is more variability. More fine-grained analysis discovers that there is a clear link between success and classes where there was a greater emphasis on speaking and listening.

- ▶ Cycle 3:



This led to a whole-school focus on children's speaking and listening skills, centred around giving them the language and ability to talk about their own learning. This led to improved attainment as well as improved classroom interaction and behaviour. A key factor was that teachers were knowledgeable and enthusiastic about L2L approaches.



**Formative Assessment in Year 2 Writing**  
Ann Mulcahy and Elaine Saint  
Wilbury Primary School, Enfield

**PROJECT AIMS**

- To study National Literacy Strategy (NLS) through the application of formative assessment strategies, learn to assess and to improve their own writing
- To study National Literacy Strategy (NLS) through peer assessment, and communicate with others to enhance their learning

**RESEARCH FOCUS**

The research team sets to explore the role of assessment in developing a learning environment. The hypothesis that the teaching and implementation of formative assessment strategies would have a positive effect on the development of children's writing skills.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The most important finding of the project is that the children's writing skills improved significantly. The children's writing skills improved significantly. The children's writing skills improved significantly. The children's writing skills improved significantly.



# Example: Research engaged school

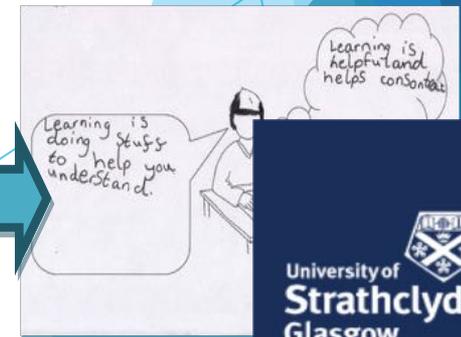
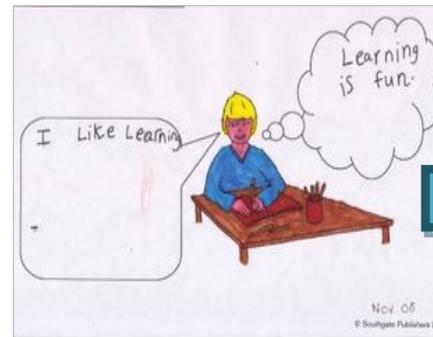
Wooler First School, Northumberland

I couldn't have seen me going on to further study without being involved ... because it's challenging, it's got the constant questioning, constant challenging of what I think about learning and how children learn and it makes me think, it makes me step back and then that makes me think about what I'm doing in the classroom, what we're doing in school and where our school's going.



"The jaguar has helped me because it helps me to be ready to do my work or to do sport or listen and learn." (H, Y3 girl)

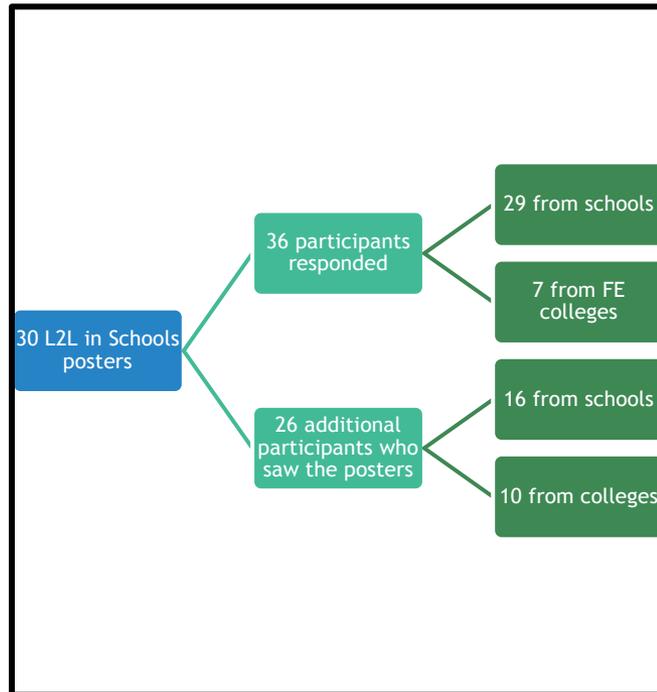
"The elephant helps me look after my work and try my best. It gives me confidence to do things I've never done before." (N, Y3)



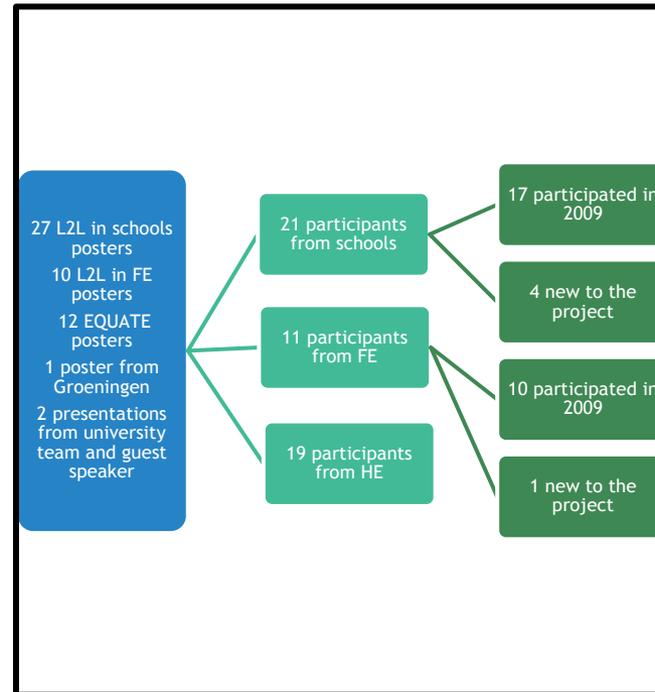
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# Example: the L2L network

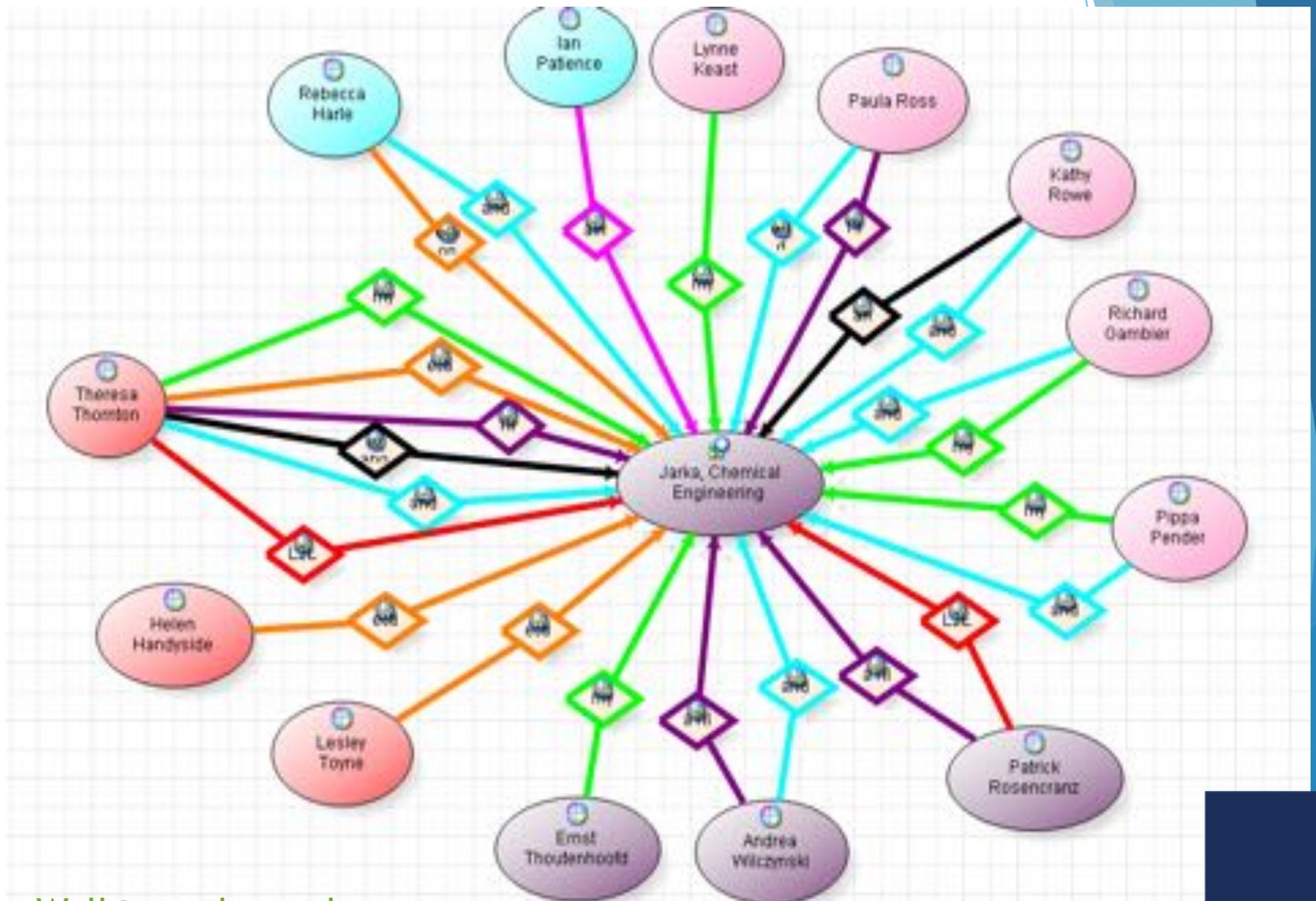
## 2009 Residential



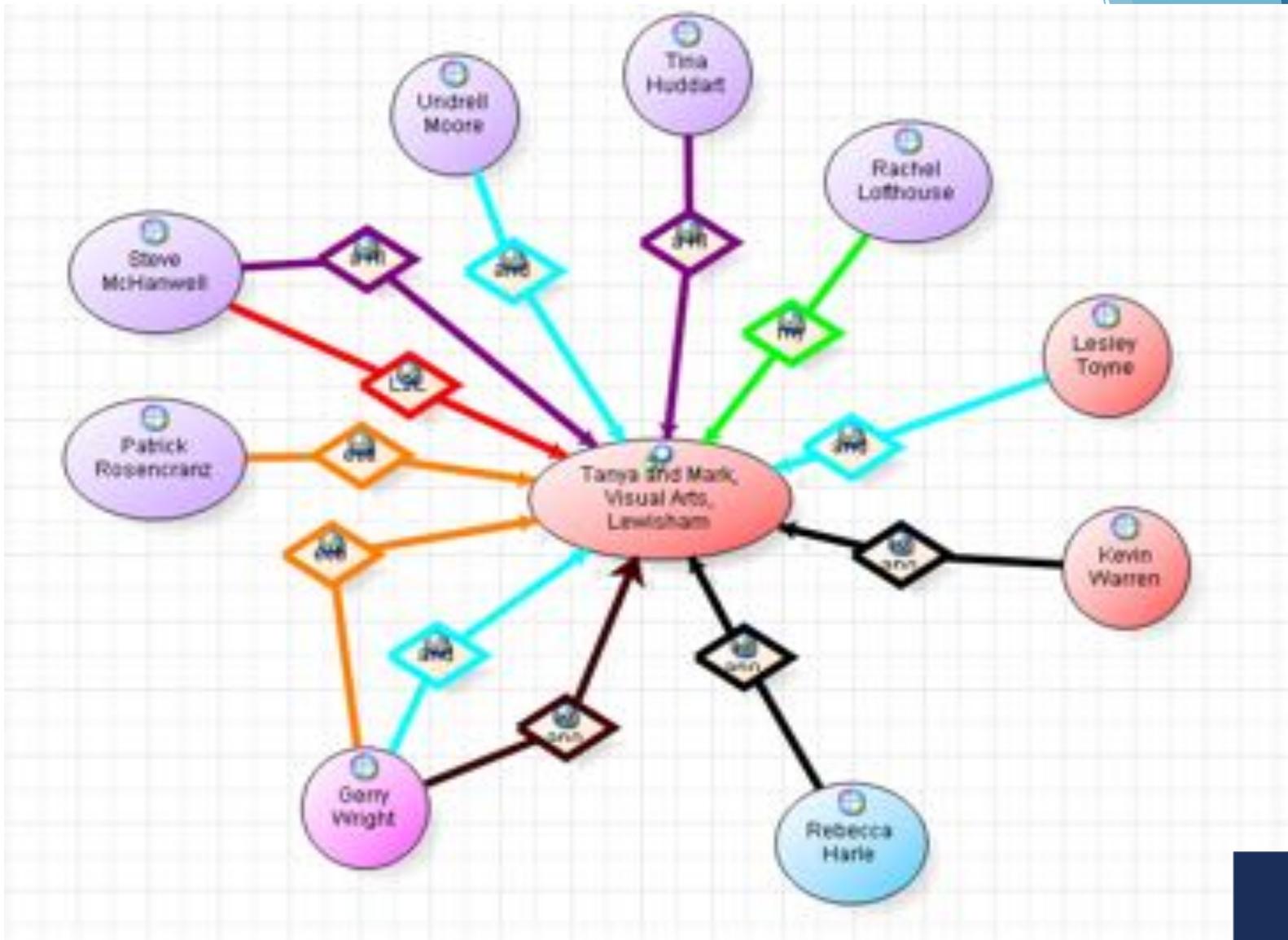
## 2010 Residential



Transfer of professional learning across contexts via Residential conference posters



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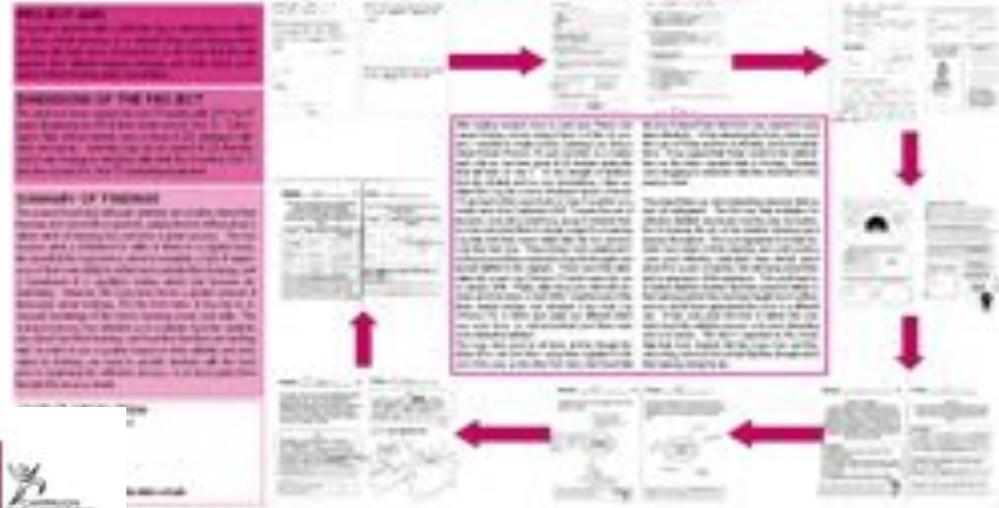
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 @kate\_Wall98



**DEVELOPING WEEKLY LEARNING LOGS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' REFLECTION ON LEARNING**  
 Alison Whelan  
 Tytherington High School, Cheshire



Can the use of a weekly Learning Log help students reflect on their learning and improve motivation and awareness of learning?



# Developing expertise

Professional learning essential for effective student learning

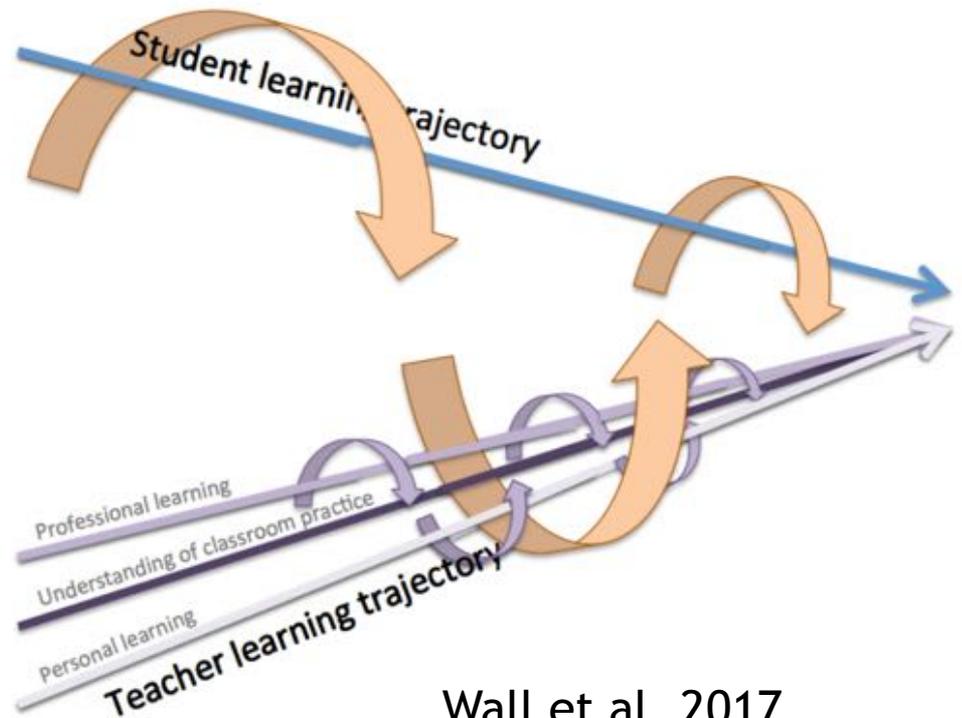
A time and space to prioritise talk about what works in learning and teaching

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# Conceptual framework showing relationship between enquiry and learning trajectories

- ▶ This relationship is improved if:
  - ▶ The focus of the enquiry is learning (increases metacognitive potential)
  - ▶ The enquiry intent is shared and jointly owned
  - ▶ Dialogue is supported between all participants
  - ▶ The tools used are catalytic (Baumfield et al 2009)



Wall et al. 2017

# Mirror Effect

- ▶ Classroom learning
  - ▶ Metacognitive pedagogies
  - ▶ Enquiry based learning
- ▶ Professional learning
  - ▶ Reflective practice cycle
  - ▶ Practitioner enquiry cycle
  - ▶ Metacognitive as a methodology for professional learning (Porthilo and Medina 2016)
- ▶ Coaching/ facilitation
  - ▶ Role of university in project
  - ▶ Role of teacher in classroom

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# Concluding thoughts

- ▶ Shared understanding, purpose and vision
- ▶ Flexible model: make it 'fit' to your context and needs
- ▶ Build new networks with HE and other organisations: expertise, time and resource
- ▶ Collaboration: within and across schools
- ▶ Don't forget: it is all about learning (teachers and students)