



University Centre Shrewsbury

Review of Strategic School Improvement Fund Project

SSIF R1 0184

Reducing the Progress Gap for Disadvantaged Pupils

June 2019

	<i>Page Number</i>
Contents	<i>1</i>
Introduction	<i>2</i>
Overview of the Project	<i>2</i>
Scope of the Review	<i>2</i>
Review Methodology	<i>2</i>
Review Findings	<i>3</i>
Pupil Outcomes	<i>3</i>
Links with other Organisations	<i>3</i>
Positives	<i>3-4</i>
Continuing Initiatives	<i>4</i>
Less Successful – Possible Improvements for future Projects	<i>4-5</i>
Further Comments	<i>5</i>
Appendix 1: SSIF Project Questions for Hub/Teaching School Alliances and Schools	<i>6</i>
Appendix 2: SSIF Summary of Review Meeting discussions with key personnel by question (<i>4 x TSA, 4 x Primary HTs, 2 x Secondary HTs</i>)	<i>7-13</i>
Appendix 3: Contact Details – Project Lead and Hub Leads	<i>14</i>

Report completed by:

Keith Greenwood

Kathryn Arthur

Kevin Nolan

University Centre Shrewsbury

The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Frankwell,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY3 8HQ

01743 297185

enquiries@ucshrewsbury.ac.uk

Introduction

University Centre Shrewsbury were invited to carry out a review of the Strategic School Improvement Project SSIF R1 0184 'Reducing the Gap for Disadvantaged Pupils', a large scale project involving collaboration between four Teaching Schools (St Peter's CE Primary School/North Shropshire Teaching School Alliance, The Priory School/Salop Teaching School Alliance, Marches School/Alliance of Leading Learning, Severn Teaching School Alliance) and two Local Authorities (Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin).

Overview of the Project

The project was a cross-phase collaborative bid building on current established networks using evidence-based strategies to diminish the difference for disadvantaged children within carefully identified schools. The main focus being on three Achievement for All research areas:

1. Leadership

National Leader of Education support to add rigour and raise expectations; Pupil Premium Grant Reviews, leadership coaching to improve capacity and tailor solutions to meet each school's needs.

2. Teaching & Learning

No excuses culture where no child is left behind, improve quality first teaching utilising Growth Mindset and Sutton Trust research; increase pupil independence and involvement in the learning process, utilise Education Endowment Foundation intervention strategies. Emphasis on initial expert-led subject-specific support leading to facilitation of collaboration, building individual school ownership and capacity promoting the development and sharing of best practice, leading to rapid and long term impact.

3. Parental Engagement

Based on 'Achievement for All' structured conversation training to raise engagement.

The project began with 24 schools, 16 primary and 8 secondary, and completed with 23 split equally between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. It was organised in three hubs - one cross-Local Authority secondary hub managed through the Alliance for Leading Learning based at the Marches School, one Shropshire primary hub managed through the North Shropshire Teaching School Alliance based at St Peter's Church of Education Primary and Nursery School, Wem and one Telford & Wrekin primary hub based at the Severn Teaching School Alliance. Schools were identified based on their Department for Education progress data.

Scope of the Review

The scope of the University Centre Shrewsbury review is to highlight the positive impacts of the project, both in terms of pupil outcomes but also in terms of any improved links between organisations and the building of capacity for further collaborations. To highlight the positive aspects of the planning process and operation as well as draw attention to any aspects that were less successful, including suggestions as to how these aspects could be improved in future projects.

Review Methodology

The review methodology was as follows:

1. Initial overview meeting with the project lead.
2. Scrutiny and analysis of all Strategic School Improvement Fund Project documentation
3. Scrutiny and analysis of testimonials
4. Interviews with the four Teaching School Alliances, plus four Primary Schools and two Secondary Schools using key questions (*Appendix 1*)

Review Findings

PUPIL OUTCOMES

Data provided by the project lead and staff from the Teaching School Alliances, Primary and Secondary Schools interviewed demonstrated that the progress gap for disadvantaged pupils in the schools involved in the project relative to disadvantaged pupils nationally have largely met the Key Performance Indicators identified by the Department for Education. Overall 79% have achieved the Key Performance Indicators with Primary Schools demonstrating 100% Reading, 85% Writing and 50% Mathematics. Overall 75% of the secondary schools achieved their Progress 8 Key Performance Indicators.

Comments regarding the improvements in Teaching & Learning were verified by data showing that at least 85% of the teaching of disadvantaged children was rated good or better in over 80% of the project schools.

The level of focus from staff at all levels on the progress of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils has increased significantly. This is evidenced through the Professional Partner reports, the attendance at Professional Development days, the use of Pupil Premium Grant reviews/action plans and interview comments.

There has been a significant amount of targeted and focussed work to increase and support parental engagement. Interviewees spoke very positively about this work. Parent Engagement Plan Policies are now routine in project schools.

Pupil attitudes to learning have been enhanced and are verified through pupil voice, and school observations of behaviour and engagement.

LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The use of Professional Partners to coach, monitor and challenge has been a very well-received and successful element of the project. Those acting as professional partners have developed their skills and through the need to engage some Headteachers in the role, increased capacity across both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin has been built.

There has been considerable collaboration between both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Authorities as well as between the four Teaching School Alliances. This has developed and strengthened the ability of both the Local Authorities and the Teaching School Alliances to work strategically and with each other. It has also had the effect of allowing skilled professionals working in the various locations to become more widely known and utilised.

Improved links with the Maths Hub have been established and these are expected to develop further.

Collaboration between the schools involved in the project has increased significantly and interviewees comment that there are plans for this to continue. It has provided opportunities for more strategic planning for Continuing Professional Development with schools combining resources and sharing Inset days.

POSITIVES

The use of 'coaching' and particularly the 'Coach in a Box' was widely recognised as being an extremely positive element allowing school leaders time for reflection and strategic thinking. It was seen as an investment in professional development and the benefits were evident across the project.

The project allowed for the positive reinforcement and affirmation that school policies and practice were working and successful. This was emphasised through the professional partners, the meetings between schools and the joint Continuing Professional Development events. The professional development days and focussed Continuing Professional Development including mental health training was valued.

The Pupil Premium Reviews have been received very favourably and the use of the research evidence has been valued. The Pupil Premium Review has focused schools' attention not only on raising the attainment of low performing pupils, but also the more able disadvantaged pupils who are at risk of underachievement too.

The Continuing Professional Development provided for staff, and the release opportunities, during the course of the project were considered to be very valuable, especially for less experienced teachers. Skill levels were improved for all staff.

The collaborative planning of the project across both Local Authorities, the four Teaching School Alliances and the schools including the provision of a clear Memorandum of Understanding with commonly understood priorities allowed an investment in both the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and all levels of staff.

Strong leadership of the project with clear, measurable impact on both attitudes and learning.

The professional development of those taking on the role of Professional Partners was recognised by both existing National Leaders of Education, Local Leaders of Education and recently trained Headteachers. The frequency of their visits to schools providing support, coaching and challenge was a critical element to the project being successful.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

The initial planning work in submitting the project bid, together with associated elements such as creating the Memorandum of Understanding, selecting and training professional partners, creating links/contacts with other schools and staff is all now in place and ready to be extended to future projects.

A network of senior leaders has been created to share practice and measure impact.

Identification of new focal points for future (and wider) development e.g. English hub (based around phonics and reading) has led to new schools, not involved in the initial project, becoming engaged.

Opportunity being scheduled in Autumn Term 2019 to see the legacy of the project and share new ideas, the Teaching & Learning developments will be promoted via the four Teaching School Alliances and both Local Authorities.

The parental engagement work is continuing.

LESS SUCCESSFUL – POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

Initial 2016 progress data from the Department for Education wasn't found to be the most helpful or accurate.

The project was scheduled for five terms which meant that the data for the final report didn't include the KS2 and Progress 8 outcomes from the summer term 2019. The schools, Teaching School Alliances and Local Authorities will still be looking at this information.

Possible over-monitoring in terms of data collection, the timing of the termly progress report wasn't ideal as some information wasn't available. Consequently Professional Partners needed to make return visits and seek further information from school leaders. PPs who were consultants and not salaried through schools needed to provide extra time which although they fulfilled it professionally, they didn't receive remuneration for their extra time. Generally, this wasn't as efficient a process as it might have been. Consider a more simplified monitoring process.

Timescales for information were often very tight which impacted upon schools and professional partners.

The guidance provided for action planning and expected outcomes could be made clearer from the outset.

The amount of management time required to co-ordinate the project is significant and needs to be considered as part of the initial planning of the project, possibly employ a dedicated project manager.

FURTHER COMMENTS

Professionals involved have a 'pride' in what has been achieved through the project

Supporting letter (*See below*) detailing the broader benefits of the project to facilitate a culture change

7th March 2019

Dear Mr Nurser

I have been a professional partner as part of the SSIF disadvantaged project, linked to one of our own Trust schools in Telford. I wanted to write and inform you of what the project has really achieved that sits outside data gains.

Each term we have submitted our monitoring reports but they have directed feedback in a very data driven way and I think it is important for you to know the true impact of the project. In summary, the project has changed the mind-set of all staff within the school from the highest level of leadership to administration staff. When I first started work at the school they tracked performance of disadvantaged learners as a 'that's what we have to do' process but there was no clear intervention programmes at academic or pastoral level.

The project provided quality professional partner time, outstanding CPD and a level of accountability that brought about change. The culture of the school is now one of finding solutions for closing the gap, creation of robust monitoring systems, engaging with parents and listening to the needs of disadvantaged learners.

The initiatives embedded within the school vary from low level purchase of alarm clocks to improve punctuality to major whole school teaching and learning changes. I fully understand the SSIF criteria will measure the project on data outcomes and at present the school looks to be achieving above the thresholds, however, it is the mind set and culture shift of staff alongside the softer data around disadvantaged learners. Student views are that the school fully supports all aspects of their education but importantly their lives which was not a view shared at the start of the programme.

What a huge impact, both for the current students and for the years to come.

Yours sincerely



Paul Roberts

Principal

All the comments made during the interviews have been summarized and ranked by the number of references and can be seen in more detail in appendix 2.

SSIF Project: Questions for Hub/Teaching School Alliances and Schools



TO HELP WITH DISCUSSION AT OUR MEETING, PLEASE CONSIDER YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

- 1. What do you consider to be the positive impacts of this project? Highlighting:**
 - a. Pupil Outcomes**
 - i. Academic data**
 - ii. Attendance/Punctuality**
 - iii. Pupil attitude to learning**
 - b. Improved links between organisations**
 - i. What links have been created, with who, and most importantly to what effect?**
 - c. What has been planned for the future based on the links you have made?**
- 2. What do you consider to be the positive aspects of the planning process for the project?**
- 3. What do you consider to be the positive aspects of the on-going operation of the project?**
- 4. Thinking about the project overall, what were the less successful aspects and how would you improve these for any future project?**
- 5. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the project and your involvement in it?**

Appendix 2

SSIF Summary of Review Meeting discussions with key personnel by question

(4 x TSA, 4 x Primary HTs, 2 x Secondary HTs)

Analysis: SSIF Review PUPIL OUTCOMES – ACADEMIC DATA – ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY/ATTITUDE 1A	
Ranked by number of references:	
9	➤ Progress 8 gap in maths and English was narrowed in 2017-2018 / Improvements to KS1 reading and writing are evident from data. / EYFS assessments and phonic screening data is in line with national expectations EYFS assessments and phonic screening data is in line with national expectations / At KS2, reading has improved with 23% more pupils attaining national standards / At KS2, there has been a small improvement in mathematics, with 4% more pupils attaining national standards/ Progress 8 gap narrowed in 2017-18 more than previous year. Biggest reduction in maths (attainment gap down from 9% to 6%) but English also improved/79% KPIs met overall (Primary) 100% Reading / 87% Writing / 53% Maths – all based on progress/75% KPIs met overall (Secondary) (See detailed information in DfE report)/ Tracking data in primary was done using various methods already in place in the schools
7	➤ The programme funded a TLR to focus on attendance and punctuality, to very positive effect, e.g. focused individual conversations with parents and pupils, leading to improved attendance and punctuality on the tracking system/The target for attendance is 96.5%. While this has not yet been met, actual attendance is close to this target (96% in 2017, 95.83 in 2018). The attendance of pupil premium and SEND pupils, at 95%, is close to the school average/ The poorest attendance is among YR and Y1 children. Have started to address this using targeted interventions./ Attendance improved; PP better than non-PP/ School commenced weekly snapshot on attendance. Detailed picture of week's attendance focussed on PP in Y7 and Y8. This resulted in individual conversations with parents AND pupils./ Although previously part of School action plan, attendance and punctuality did improve with increased focus. New, efficient EWO/ Attendance & Punctuality: Was noted as part of reviews, where it was an issue it improved, the PP looked at individual cases
7	➤ The SSIF project gave different strategies to use for improving teaching and learning, particularly for the higher ability disadvantaged children. A 'Scholars Programme' club was set up for these children to add value to their learning/ Coaching in a Box training for staff resulting in – greater self-reflection; identifying individual strengths. This has had a major impact on maths teaching and learning, with emphasis on staff training with the maths adviser; revision of the calculation policy; 80% of children across the school have more secure knowledge of division and subtraction strategies/ Strong school belief that "quality first teaching" is the key to all pupil improvement. Including, and especially Pupil premium./ Extra focus on PP and disadvantaged which promoted feeling of extra accountability in teachers/ Pupil attitudes improved by reintroduction of Kagan approach./ Gave new ideas and provided a culture change – especially for schools with low PP numbers/ Revision sessions – Saturday school attended by both PP and non-PP pupils
6	➤ Good work on parental engagement./ Parental engagement programme which identified "problem/vulnerable" pupils for attendance and/or behaviour. The focus was led by SLT; termly meetings with parents. This led to identifiable improvement on using a school tracking system./Received input from primary professional on parental communication and the way to develop it further/ Working on greater parental engagement in reading, this to be led by English department/ School had prior strength of parental engagement (55%) Key target wasn't really applicable, although having to respond to target ensured data was tracked more closely./Parental engagement work was well received and effective
4	➤ Funded home support for disaffected pupils/ Staff have had attachment and trauma CPD; hence, staff have a better understanding of pupil's emotional needs, resulting in improved responses to needs and better pupil attitudes./ Attitude – school tracking and measuring indicates no difference in score between PP and non-PP/ A strategy for measuring attitude to learning rates was set up. Pupils engaged proactively with this process.
3	➤ Increase in frequency of monitoring of pupil data/ Scores-data all recorded in response spreadsheet./ Data improvement during full year of project. Helped by progress check every 3 weeks
1	➤ Pupil improvement strategies were previously in place.
1	➤ The SSIF project supported and supplemented the improvement strategies
1	➤ Pupils with poor literacy were provided with 25 minutes structured reading time each day
1	➤ A number of pupil improvement strategies were previously in place; SSIF project supported and supplemented these.
1	➤ Every lesson observation has a focus every time on disadvantaged pupils. School reports good improvement in disadvantaged pupil progress and attitude.
1	➤ Gave support and challenge – some ethos changes evident

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – PUPIL OUTCOMES

1. Academic progress data met the agreed DfE KPI targets
2. Improvements in attendance and punctuality for disadvantaged pupils evidenced
3. The quality of Teaching & Learning was improved
4. Parental engagement strategies were further developed and effective
5. Pupil attitudes to school were improved

Analysis: SSIF Review IMPROVED LINKS BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS 1B	
Ranked by number of references:	
12	The headteacher has linked with 2 other schools for joint moderation of assessment in English and maths. This has helped to ensure consistency of judgements and sharing of good practice, viewed as a low cost/high impact strategy/ Moderation sessions with other schools for Ly and Ma, with adviser in attendance. Improved parity of expectations; sharing moderation examples and good practice in assessment; validation of the accuracy of judgements for staff./ Teachers released to visit/work with other schools./ Between SIF bid and MAT, links have been created as well as time created to allow teachers from school to talk to each other/ School Development Plan identifies a commitment to providing each teacher to a half day in another school to develop subject or teaching skills/ Future growth with another Shropshire secondary school with similar characteristics. Contact already established/ Efficient MAT which promoted this anyway./ Gave relevant school lead someone else to talk to outside their own school/ enabled intra-head conversation/ Bringing together Professional Partners and HTs across both LAs/ PPs who were HTs were able to use their skills to drive their colleagues school plans, the outcomes demonstrate that this was well received/ Provided a more forceful view of work
11	➤ The project has broken down barriers between Teaching Schools – more focused support – lots of spin-offs/ LAs – Relationship between 2 x LAs plus relationship between LAs and Teaching Schools improved/2LA leads talking about ways to share practice/ All the Teaching Schools are using Chester University for their School Direct/ It has developed closer relationships between Teaching Schools and the two LAs (Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin)/ Teaching Schools and LAs working together/ Brought everyone together – positive commitment/ Sharing of ideas between Shropshire TSAs and LA/1 st Joint project that drew the 4 TSAs and 2 LAs together – this was very positive/ Retrospectively – the advantages were that TSAs/LAs were more aware of the strengths/resources of each other./ Outcomes are very strong, not just academic data, but also, sustainability, growing people, developing systems
8	➤ The partnership has enabled us to review systems and improve procedures / Better use of internal data for swifter identification of children who are slightly below national standard and need intervention./Pupil progress review meetings were not always being done for all children; this has been improved /Data on learning and progress is now collected and reviewed 3 times each year / Teachers are actively promoting building learning power strategies / Learning taxonomies are reviewed and revisited in staff meetings as part of CPD / Children new to the school are given strategies to promote growth mindset-positive learning attitude-access to learning approaches / Joint monitoring of books and children’s work with staff present.
4	➤ All 24 schools received free tickets to attend the Alliance for Leading Learning’s nationally regarded conference/ Using Teachers from each Hub to present to the National conference plus also delivering 3 or 4 (½ day courses) focused on How to improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils/ Use of National Experts (via Conference) very positive/ One school has worked on reducing workload, changing their marking policy, another school has worked on metacognition, Kagan structures. These are being developed into CPD programmes for others to benefit/ Next Year’s Conference will include staff from project schools
3	➤ Affirmation big factor – we are as good, if not better than them./ Enabled a greater feeling of being part of a “whole”/ Sharing expertise and positive reinforcement from sharing.
2	➤ Ongoing CPD with the Literacy Trust – promoting improved literacy standards through better subject knowledge and teaching strategies/ DfE English hubs set up; school is a lead school for the local hub. Sharing of practice; team teaching; professional dialogue to share strategies for teaching and learning.
1	➤ Links with the SSIF adviser to improve maths
1	➤ Transformed attitudes to learning through internal links set up with pupil engagement
1	➤ Project funded an SLE for English – big effect.
1	➤ Not recognised as having been a focus from the project. School already had plans in place and a partnership with linked primary schools.
1	➤ Teaching Schools invite LAs to their termly meetings – both LAs attend regularly

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – IMPROVED LINKS

1. *Inter-school links have developed significantly*
2. *Positive professional links have been established between the 2 Local Authorities and the 4 Teaching School Alliances*
3. *The improved links between schools has allowed individual strategies to be shared for the benefit of both pupils and staff*
4. *Involvement in the Alliance for Leading Learning conference has facilitated many initiatives beneficial to improved T&L and also allowing teachers’ professional growth*

Analysis: SSIF Review PLANS FOR FUTURE BASED ON ORGANISATION LINKS 1C	
Ranked by number of references:	
9	➤ Professional Partner link to continue./Links with professional partner will continue/links created will be maintained/ Interesting links between schools due to workshops, etc – now committed further funding to keep the professional partners going in./ Now have some very skilled professional partners – need to have a meeting to get these PPs together for future development. – LA are using 2 HTs who became PPs for their CPD/ Contacts across all secondary schools will be used in future to support school improvement/ T&L workshops were most inspiring, TSAs are going to collaborate on project, Shropshire LA will take part alongside Telford & Wrekin/ Both LAs working with the TSAs/ Some follow-up has already been agreed – a funded session using the PPs –sustainability into the new academic year across all Hubs / schools
3	➤ The school has attended, with other schools, a shared CPD opportunity (course on improving maths)./ An informal network of senior leaders has been established to share practice and review impact/ Continued partnership with and support from the Literacy Trust.
3	➤ Continuing with the pupil partnership 'Brilliant Club' / Two projects are continuing and expanding (Language Hubs and SEL work)/ DfE English hub and moderation meetings continuing.
3	➤ Have discussed spreading the practice – information will go on the Teaching Schools' websites and will also be promoted by the two LAs/ Opportunity being scheduled in Autumn Term 2019 to see the legacy of the project and share new ideas / T&L ideas on TSAs websites
2	➤ Setting up a debating group/ Y7 Book Club
2	➤ Attendance weekly snapshot/ Attendance focus developed with EWO
1	➤ Driving literacy forward with staff CPD links
1	➤ Parental engagement programme on-going
1	➤ Interested in links to CPD across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (Interested in possible link to UCS Shropshire CPD developments)

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – FUTURE PLANS BASED ON LINKS

1. *Professional partners were highly valued, schools are maintaining their links and further collaboration is planned.*
2. *Initiatives developed during the project have been well received and are continuing.*
3. *Practice developed over the project will be utilised more widely*

Analysis: SSIF Review POSITIVE ASPECTS OF PLANNING PROCESS 2	
Ranked by number of references:	
25	➤ A collaborative approach focused on the school's needs; staff felt ownership of the process/ All staff and governors were involved/ Enabled honest articulation of which aspects were not successful/ Enabled 'unpicking' of who owned improvement responsibilities and who should be accountable, leading to clear implementation of improvement processes/ Sharing best practice (senior and middle leaders and support staff) / Planning for the project enabled CPD to be built in/ Meeting others facing same challenges/ Discussions at senior level – planning the project in advance – memorandum of understanding/ Getting everyone's buy-in, key principles./ Common understanding about what everyone is getting from the project/ Building capacity in leadership teams – investment in their future/ Focus on the clarity of the KPIs – allowing schools to be flexible with framework – dedicated money to release teachers (No cost to schools) staff meeting time/ Commonly understood priorities, universally celebrated purpose. It was the right thing to do, all agreeing, collective minds, resourcing identified/ Opened up many eyes to the benefits of collaborative support, school to school support and improved relationships/ Lots of ideas and strategies shared in T&L, leadership strategies/ Strong collaboration between schools/ Collaboration between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin was massively improved – everyone had to attend reviews, relationships strengthened, all made contributions/ Planning of the project was a really creative process – lots of ideas paired down to what would work – simple plans – kept to strategies known to work/ Respect for HTs – strategies were not imposed – an empowering model/project manager role was crucial/ HTs in the project felt there was real value to the work they were doing - £16k per school although not overly generous, was a catalyst/All came on board –effective collaboration – opportunity to see other schools / Investment in themselves – personal coaching – setting their own goals/ Hub model was very success – it allowed, within parameters, for Hubs to 'get on with it' – another project could easily be set up using the same system/ No issues regarding 'Data Protection – GDPR' as the Memorandum of Understanding allowed the sharing of all information – this MoU could be adapted for any future project/ All Hubs are mobilised and ready to go for any future project
11	➤ Intensive coaching model was beneficial/ Creation of "thinking time". Coach in a Box good; face to face better/"Coach in a box" training. A lot of opportunities for self-reflection; thinking about individual strengths as a leader; intensive coaching model/ "Coach in the Box" very appreciated – "all about ME"/ School used DH's in planning and developing – great CPD and succession planning/ Provision of thinking time. N.B. Prof Partner also claimed personal improvement from meetings./ Utilising the educational research on parental engagement, Quality of T&L, raising aspirations, coaching. The use of 'Coaching in a box' given to all professional partners/ Going into schools, building relationships – feeling collectively that they are making a difference./ T&L developments were well received by secondary schools/ Coaching to Leaders – 'Coach in a Box' was excellent/'Coach in a Box' – was extremely well-received and valuable
7	➤ Clear, measurable impact on attitudes and learning/clear targets set/ Clear direction from the SSIF partner/ Strong leadership from the SSIF lead, with supportive and focused guidance linked in with the school development plan./ Evidence that this was useful learning for staff. Focus on disadvantaged ensured more consideration/ Appropriate school leader pairing – challenge but understanding!/ The problem over capacity to support 24 schools through just 3NLEs (Shropshire) 0 NLEs (Telford & Wrekin) was solved through using LA information about key HTs who could pick up capacity – this was excellent professional development for these HTs
4	➤ Detailed planning for provision for PP children/ Increase focus of all staff on PP pupils (50%). More explicit commentary on PP progress./ Belief that PP are seen as individuals/PP review very valuable
2	➤ Book clubs were set up/ Finance for Literacy for PP children; Book Club formed, books purchased and pupils met to discuss their reading; led by Y10 for Y7
2	➤ Good work on parental engagement./ Specific Parental engagement training – all given time for SSEs / LLEs
1	➤ Time manageable
1	➤ Close scrutiny of the curriculum and teaching and learning experiences.
1	➤ Time provided by HT to read with ALL PP pupils. Increased knowledge of child, ability and attitude. Linked with those children who had a good class teacher made improvement, others not so successful
1	➤ Importance of honesty.

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – POSITIVE ASPECTS OF PLANNING PROCESS

1. *Collaborative planning across both LAs, TSAs, and schools using commonly understood priorities allowed an investment in both the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and staff at all levels.*
2. *The coaching model utilising 'Coach in a Box' was extremely successful*
3. *Strong leadership with clear measurable impact on attitudes and learning*
4. *Professional development for those taking on the role of professional partners*
5. *Pupil premium reviews and subsequent planning was beneficial*

Analysis: SSIF Review POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE ON-GOING OPERATION OF THE PROJECT 3	
Ranked by number of references:	
9	➤ Positive view of having a critical friend and a co-operative coaching system/ Sharing of coaching outcomes with other schools/ Retaining links and contact with other schools/teachers/ Conversations with professional partner – critical friend/ Strength of relationship with Professional Partner/ Professional partners and HTs were the key to the project success/ PP were coaching and supportive – challenge where necessary/Project manager role was crucial/ Flexibility – the way in which PP met with HTs then sourced appropriate LLE or resource/support/ Forging good relationships – better understanding of each other for pupil benefit
6	➤ Extra professional development days added value to teacher's CPD/ Coaching and mental health training/ Emotional literacy CPD has been implemented. This has enabled early identification of children with mental health issues. Risk assessments have been completed accordingly./ Provided good staff CPD e.g. giving presentations to others./ CPD for less experienced staff – two NQT and one RQT both progressed over project. All thinking of future promotion as target./ Workshops / Links between schools developed relationships between schools
3	➤ Network of Shropshire HTs supporting each other's work/ Review of the strategic role of other leaders and proactive support with this/ Tightening of SLT accountabilities and contributions to raising achievement
3	➤ Positive view of the improvements in teaching and learning/ HT greater awareness of allowing "thinking time"/ Validation of existing school practice.
2	➤ More focused monitoring of PP/ Moderation across school
2	➤ An English hub was developed and is carrying on / Maths training is continuing
2	➤ Financial systems / monitoring systems: Used what was required via DfE document, kept consistency/ Financial Management: Central pot – distributed to each of the 3 Hubs, then the Hub dealt with each of their 8 schools – very successful – Hubs had ownership
2	➤ Scrutiny Panel was very important – improved the consistency and quality of the reports, LAs could bring along their issues./ Project lead met with the professional partners on a termly basis

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE ON-GOING OPERATION OF THE PROJECT

1. *Professional partners were critical to the project – coaching and supportive with challenge as required.*
2. *Professional development days and various CPD including mental health training was valued.*

Analysis: SSIF Review LESS SUCCESSFUL ASPECTS AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

Ranked by number of references:	
11	➤ Data collection requests were unwieldy. Could do with streamlining./ Timing of monitoring reports – 4 weeks before the end of term didn't allow full report which meant catch up next report – more work! The final reports near the end of the project improved this issue – the issue was irritating for HTs and PPs as they ended up being asked for more information/ Initial monitoring forms weren't specific enough for PPs – needs tightening up/ Light touch monitoring for a longer period/ How many layers of monitoring are required – unnecessary level of scrutiny/ DfE form is difficult, unwieldy/ Could more money have gone to schools with a simplified monitoring process?/ DfE data wasn't as accurate as it could have been. It was all based on 2016 data/ DfE Bureaucracy could be improved – late information, short timescales/ Sending in inspectors to audit – not well received – over monitored by DfE/ Data from 2016 not reliable enough / The timescale was an issue – sometimes the DfE required things to be evaluated that had either not been started or completed – then on occasions the DfE needed different information and PPs needed to go back to schools – this wasn't too much of an issue for salaried PPs, but for some independent PPs it was an issue of cost (They did it anyway – without extra payment) – there was often a pressure of time and occasionally information was required for the next day and some PPs were also Ofsted inspectors and involved in inspections- when brokering professional support have some finance available for flexibility – ensure PPs understand in advance the parameters of their work
5	➤ The criteria for the project was possibly overly prescriptive – but the DfE wanted this/ Possible lack of flexibility in the allocation of money and the way in which schools could use the money/ Need to confirm sustainability – DfE seem to have missed out, but schools/TSAs/ are focussing on ongoing School Improvement/ Guidance on Action Planning and expectations could have been clearer – some of this wasn't in the original DfE plan – More standardised Action Planning Process from the start/ The original bid was the most complex part of the process – initially difficult to understand the requirements – tight timescale – cross-phase bid meant less knowledge of each other initially
4	➤ Timing – 5 terms not enough/ Project should have been longer – 5 terms not enough, possibly 15 terms with 2 x ½ day monitoring per term/5 Terms wasn't enough – should have at least been 6 to allow two data cycles. The project will analyse this data for themselves/ Timing of the 5 terms finishing at Easter wasn't ideal – didn't allow for 2 full yrs worth of pupil outcome data to be analysed. This is happening, but NOT as part of the project – PPs are back in next term (Autumn 2019) reviewing
3	➤ One school dropped out – should this have been allowed – maybe the LA should have been involved in saying the school needed to remain in the project – one head went off sick – acting HT took over/ If schools commit via MoU they should remain- difficult to enforce/ Felt that everyone was enthused and the project provided an excellent outcome, however, one school dropped out, maybe they should have been replaced
2	➤ Improving the learning days. Interesting to attend but not clear how the content of the days linked to focused aspects of the project. The brief was too broad. Workshops didn't deliver as well as anticipated and not rooted in the project terms of reference/ Conference days for the cluster tended to be oriented towards secondary, according to staff feedback.
2	➤ Success indicators given to schools – no involvement in creation/ Funding tied to these indicators with insufficient flexibility
1	➤ More whole-staff development
1	➤ More support for careers development, particularly for disadvantaged children.
1	➤ Importance of pairing with other leaders, the challenger
1	➤ Greater frequency of meetings; some long gaps.
1	➤ Possible improvement – Identification of 'How many children met the project criteria?' Who do you include? Parameters?
1	➤ Pupil Voice: re attitude there has been a significant improvement, this is anecdotal. Learning behaviours – possibly should have all used an agreed survey
1	➤ Include some successful schools to provide guidance on their strategies for improvement
1	➤ Would have liked there to be more sharing between the 24 schools – not sure how well the information gained has been shared – maybe a final conference with benefits shared and case studies available via a portal

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – LESS SUCCESSFUL ASPECTS AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

1. *Data collection could be streamlined, initially the timing of the monitoring reports didn't allow for all aspects to be reported causing increased work.*
2. *Timescales were often very tight which impacted upon schools and professional partners*
3. *Guidance on action planning could be improved*
4. *The 5 term project length was questioned as it didn't allow two complete academic year's data to be analysed.*

Analysis: SSIF Review ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	
Ranked by number of references:	
3	➤ Pride in something that has made a difference to children – spin offs to curriculum etc / Individual satisfaction and pride
1	➤ In-depth planning and 5 terms of support were beneficial overall and had a positive impact. Biggest impact was on teacher's subject knowledge and consequently confidence.
1	➤ Coaching training received, and on-going, has made a difference in the school.
1	➤ Valued support from the English and Maths consultant and sharing good practice emanating from this support.
1	➤ Additional funding provided time for closer scrutiny of needs of PP children, with additional reviews to identify their learning needs and provide accordingly.
1	➤ Understand the professionalism of colleagues, their dedication to children / benefits of working with HTs
1	➤ Flexibility has been the key – outcomes need to be met

TOP REVIEW COMMENTS – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- 1. Professionals involved have a 'pride' in what has been achieved through the project*

Contact Details – Project Lead and Hub Leads

Overall Project Lead and Shropshire Primary Hub

Ian Nurser: North Shropshire Teaching School Alliance

St.Peter's CE Primary and Nursery School, Shrubbery Gardens, Wem SY4 5BX

ian.nurser@empowertrust.co.uk 01939 211140

Telford and Wrekin Primary Hub

Heather Davies: Severn Teaching School Alliance

The Bridge School, Waterloo Road, Hadley, Telford, TF1 5NQ

heather.davies@taw.org.uk 01952 387237

Secondary Hub

Sarah Longville: Alliance of Leading Learning

Marches School, Morda Road, Oswestry, SY11 2AR

longville.s@mmat.co.uk 01691 664415

Salop Teaching School Alliance

Michael Barratt: The Priory School, Longden Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9EE

principal@tpstrust.co.uk 01743 284000