



Education
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Foundation

Ashford Teaching Alliance Research Champion

Evaluation report and executive summary

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This project was jointly funded by the EEF, the Department for Education and the Mayor's London Schools Excellence Fund.



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About the evaluator

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Executive Summary

The project

The Ashford Teaching Alliance (ATA) Research Champion project ('the programme') was a pilot intervention aimed at developing teaching expertise and practice by promoting the use of educational research in decision-making and teacher practice. The programme ran for one academic year (2014/2015) in five schools within the ATA. Delivery was led by a 'Research Champion', a senior teacher based at one of the schools who worked with research leads, other teachers, and senior leaders to promote engagement with research evidence. The programme had four key components: 'audits' of needs and research interests for individual schools; a series of research symposia for teachers; termly research and development 'twilight forums' (events held at the end of the school day at one of the participating schools); and bespoke research brokerage.

The principal objective of this pilot study was to explore whether, and to what extent, research communication and engagement strategies had the potential to improve teachers' use of, and attitudes towards, academic research to support pupils' progress. The project was funded through the EEF Research Use in Schools grants round which supported studies to test ways of increasing the impact of educational research in schools. It was jointly funded by the EEF, the Department for Education and the Mayor's London Schools Excellence Fund.

Key Conclusions

1. There was no evidence that teachers' attitudes towards research, or their use of research evidence in teaching practice, changed during the intervention.
2. Teachers found the research symposia and twilight events valuable, particularly as opportunities to learn about developments in educational research and reflect on teaching practice outside the classroom.
3. Attendance and engagement in the programme was occasionally low due to time pressures faced by teachers. This posed a serious threat to the feasibility of the programme.
4. A greater commitment from senior leadership teams to fully support staff with release time and classroom cover is likely to be necessary for successful implementation.
5. The programme requires further development before it is ready for a trial. In particular it requires a clearer specification of the key features of the programme in terms of structure, content, and which components are required, and better information for schools on how much commitment is needed from teachers.

What are the findings

The programme largely ran as intended and was generally positively perceived by participating teachers. Those who attended the 'twilight sessions' and symposia found them valuable. However, while the structure of the programme and its outputs were as planned, levels of teacher engagement varied. Overall, therefore, the evidence on the programme's feasibility was mixed.

The evaluation helped to highlight some of the practical barriers to engagement with, and implementation of, educational research. One of the main barriers was a lack of time to fully engage in the programme, which was related to competing priorities in schools and varying levels of buy-in from senior leadership teams. The findings suggest that systematic implementation of research evidence would require sustained engagement of senior leaders, through an enhanced process of mentoring and support.

We believe that the Ashford Teaching Alliance Research Champion model is not currently ready to be evaluated in a trial. The programme requires a clearer specification of the key features of the programme in terms of structure (activities and outputs), content (topics covered at the training

events), and which components are required, and better information for schools on how much commitment is needed from teachers.

The process evaluation identified some key learning points. Developers should:

1. explore ways to ensure participating staff are given regular, dedicated time for the programme—in particular, release time to attend all events and to engage with the brokerage service, and time to plan, implement, and review changes in classroom practice;
2. foster support from senior leaders at the school—encouraging buy-in from senior leadership teams would lead to more support for staff, including release time and classroom cover, as well as greater likelihood that learning from the project would be shared and taken forward across the whole school;
3. allow flexibility for schools to tailor strategies to their own context—this was viewed as key to promoting engagement and buy-in from teachers and senior leadership teams; and
4. provide practical examples and materials that could be used to facilitate classroom implementation, with a focus on simple strategies expected to bring ‘quick gains’.

How was the evaluation of the pilot conducted?

This was a mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) study with several iterative components. A model describing how the intervention would work in practice was drafted by NatCen researchers in consultation with the Research Champion following a workshop to identify the resources, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the programme.

Teachers at the participating schools were surveyed at the beginning and end of the academic year. Quantitative data on teacher attitudes and behaviours was collected and analysed to identify any changes. The process evaluation was based on depth interviews, observations of training events, and the outcomes survey. Interviews and observations took place throughout the academic year in order to capture experiences and views of participants as the intervention progressed. All schools took part in some process evaluation activities. Findings were shared with the delivery team as they became available to provide formative feedback and facilitate ongoing development of the intervention.

The cost of the intervention was estimated at £56,310, which includes up-front costs (£15,845) and running costs in the first year (£40,465). The cost per pupil was estimated at £27.13, based on 2,075 pupils in total across the five participating schools in its first year. The cost per pupil was relatively low and is estimated to decrease in the programme’s subsequent years, with the estimate for the programme’s third year being £16.80 per pupil per year.

Key findings

The table below summarises the key findings.

Question	Finding	Comment
Is there evidence of promise?	No	There was no evidence that teachers’ attitudes towards research, or their use of research evidence in teaching practice, changed during the intervention.
Was the approach feasible?	Mixed	The programme ran largely as intended in terms of activities and outputs, but teacher engagement and attendance at events was lower than expected. There were mixed views on the usefulness of some elements of the programme.
Is the approach ready to be evaluated in a trial?	No	The programme needs to be developed further before being evaluated in a full trial.

Introduction

This study aimed to evaluate the Ashford Teaching Alliance Research Champion¹ programme, a school-based intervention delivered in the Ashford, Kent area. The project was funded by the Education Endowment Foundation as part of the Research Use in Schools round of projects² and was delivered during the 2014/2015 academic year.

Intervention

The programme was an intervention piloted in five schools—four secondary and one primary. Three schools were in Ashford, a town in the county of Kent in the South East of England, and two in neighbouring towns with rural catchment areas. A sixth school (a primary), originally recruited to be part of the programme, left during the early stages after a change of leadership. Participating schools were either already part of the Ashford Teaching Alliance when the programme began or joined at the point of recruitment.

The delivery of the programme was led by a teacher (the 'Research Champion') based at one of the five participating schools. The Research Champion had run a variant of the programme in the 2013/2014 academic year: this laid the foundation for the project.

Each participating school identified a research lead to take the programme forward for them. During the pilot year (2014/2015) the Research Champion worked with research leads and other teachers in participating schools—including senior leadership team members—to promote engagement with research evidence.

The programme had four key components:

1. School audits, to identify individual school's needs and interests in terms of educational research, conducted by the Research Champion.
2. A series of research symposia (three over the course of the pilot year). The symposia were envisaged as staff development days where seminars from educational researchers were combined with workshops. The aims of each symposium were:
 - to provide access to insights and ideas from recent educational research; and
 - to create a forum in which to discuss the challenges of making improvements based on these insights.
3. Termly Research and Development 'twilight forums' to provide a context to explore how to use research both in the classrooms and at the senior leadership level. The aims of each session were:
 - to provide a forum for discussing the challenges of evidence-based teaching;
 - to provide new ideas using examples drawn from recent educational research; and
 - to reflect on the themes covered in the research symposia.
4. Bespoke research brokerage for each participating school (one session per school each half term). Support aimed to address the particular needs and requirements of each school, but was anticipated to include services such as the design and running of staff workshops, help

¹ The programme was referred to as the ATA Research Based Education Project in some early project materials.

² <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects/projects-a-z/research-use-in-schools/>

with the practical implementation of new practices, and assistance to make better use of internally produced evidence.

In addition to symposia, twilight forums, and bespoke research brokering sessions, the programme as originally set out was anticipated to include regular updates on the progress of the project to schools via a twice-termly printed newsletter.

The intervention aimed to help staff at participating schools to:

- understand the key findings of specific educational research;
- apply educational research findings in the classroom and at a strategic development level; and
- establish a stronger culture of evidence-based enquiry and practice.

These three aspects were expected to help improve the quality of the teaching and learning in each school and, in the longer term, to positively impact pupil outcomes.

Background evidence

The gap between research evidence on one hand and policy-making and professional practice on the other has increasingly become the focus of attention in the UK as well as across the world (Cooper *et al.*, 2009; Nutley *et al.*, 2007). A number of studies have sought to define (research) knowledge mobilisation and propose ways for improving its effectiveness in education and overcoming the existing barriers (Cooper *et al.*, 2009; Levin, 2011).

The barriers to research engagement include skill issues (such as an inability to interpret research findings), resource issues (such as lack of time or access to academic publications), and insufficient rewards in the system (Bransford *et al.*, 2009; Nutley *et al.*, 2007; Sharples, 2013; Hemsley-Brown and Sharp, 2003). It has also been noted that research evidence needs to be *transformed* before it can be used in teaching practice: this involves more than simply summarising it and requires effective collaboration between teachers and researchers and/or 'mediation' (Nelson and O'Beirne, 2014).

This programme aimed to communicate research evidence to teachers in a form that could be more easily used in their practice (through, for example, presentations at the training events), as well as building capacity among the teachers to try new approaches with the support from the Research Champion.

This project is one of the EEF's Research Use in Schools funded projects. These projects were funded to explore knowledge mobilisation in the teaching profession, and consider how research evidence is integrated into teachers' practices and school processes. The projects funded under this round were designed to explore three key questions:

- How can research organisations and others effectively communicate their findings and engage with schools?
- How can schools overcome the barriers to using research well?
- How can brokers and mediators help schools find and use evidence-based approaches?

In addition to this programme, four other projects were funded as part of the Research Use in Schools funding stream:³

³ More detail on these projects can be found at <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects/projects-a-z/research-use-in-schools/>

1. Research into Practice – Evidence-informed Continuing Professional Development in Rochdale: a pilot project in ten primary schools in Rochdale area, testing whether the evidence-informed CPD programme in Rochdale is a feasible model.
2. Research Learning Communities: an efficacy trial of a project developed by the Institute of Education to examine whether ‘evidence champions’ are effective at promoting research use in schools when supported by a research community of peers from local schools and an academic facilitator.
3. The Literacy Octopus – Communicating and Engaging with Research: a large multi-arm randomised controlled trial investigating a range of different methods of communicating research to schools and engaging them in research evidence.
4. The RISE Project – Evidence-informed school improvement: an efficacy trial of a project led by Huntington School that aims to test whether a research-based school improvement model makes a significant difference to classroom practice and student outcomes.

This report presents findings of the first evaluation of the Research Champion programme. This is a pilot study, and in the conclusions of the report we comment on whether this programme is ready to be evaluated in a trial.

Evaluation objectives

The evaluation of the ATA Research Champion programme pilot, like other projects in the EEF’s ‘research use’ round, had the following key objective:

- to explore whether, and to what extent, research communication and engagement strategies had the potential to improve teachers’ use of, and attitudes towards, academic research to support pupils’ progress.

Other evaluations in this funding round looked at the impact of different research communication and engagement strategies on pupil attainment. Although analysis of KS2 and KS3 data was part of the original protocol for this evaluation, both the evaluator and the EEF decided not to carry out this analysis. This was for two main reasons. First, given the slow progress of the intervention in the beginning (the first symposium took place in December 2014) it was felt that there would not be sufficient time for pupils to experience the benefits of the intervention by the time outcome data was collected in the summer term, especially as improvements to pupil attainment were a longer-term impact in the intervention’s logic model (see Figure 2). Second, the intervention activities did not necessarily target the year groups for which KS data would be available.

Project team

The intervention was delivered by the Research Champion, a teacher based at one of the five participating schools in and around Ashford.

The independent evaluation team was led by Dr Svetlana Speight at NatCen Social Research who was supported by Dr Julia Griggs, Dr Javiera Cartagena Farias, Alexandra Fry and Dr Triin Edovald. The evaluation team was responsible for the design and delivery of the evaluation, including a logic model workshop, baseline and outcomes surveys of teachers, interviews with staff, observations of training events, and analysis and reporting. Questionnaires for the baseline and outcomes surveys of teachers were developed by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) (Poet *et al.*, unpublished) and used across all projects in the ‘research use’ round.

Ethics

The project underwent an ethical review by NatCen’s Research Ethics Committee and was approved in September 2014, prior to data collection.

The headteacher at each school signed a Memorandum of Understanding that included consent to provide the Research Champion with the names and email addresses (and phone numbers where

appropriate) of all teachers at their school for passing on to the evaluation team (see Appendix B). In addition, written information about the study was sent to headteachers at the participating schools by post prior to the baseline survey taking place (see Appendix C), and information for teachers about the surveys was sent to them by email (separately for the baseline and outcomes surveys; see Appendix C). Information about process evaluation activities was provided to participants by researchers undertaking interviews and observations in advance via email and again face-to-face or by telephone at the time of data collection, and consent was sought prior to interviews and observations taking place. Information about the study was also available on the study webpage on the NatCen website, a link to which was included in communications with research participants.

Methods

Recruitment

The five schools participating in the programme were recruited by the Research Champion. This included the Research Champion's own school and two other schools that were existing members of the Ashford Teaching Alliance and were previously involved in the programme. Additionally, two further local schools were recruited to the project (and also to the ATA) in order to increase the diversity of those included in the pilot. In particular, the two additional schools were recruited to ensure schools taking part in the programme had different pupil populations, for example, proportions of pupils eligible for free schools meals (FSM). The Research Champion used existing contacts to secure involvement of the final two schools, and ensured that consent was secured from senior leaders at each of them.

The Research Champion worked primarily with research leads within each of the schools. There was no fixed process for recruiting research leads, with some staff self-selecting and others being put forward by senior leaders.

Research leads were identified during the early stages of the programme, and contact information was supplied to NatCen by the Research Champion. The first round of interviews (with research leads and the Research Champion) took place in October and November 2014. The second round of interviews took place with other teachers at participating schools: these were also involved in the programme but were not the research leads. Teachers were selected and recruited to take part in additional staff interviews by the Research Champion. All staff selected for interview had attended at least one of the events. The aim of these additional interviews was to provide a more complete view of the programme from the teachers' perspective. The research leads from each school were invited to take part in a follow-up interview in the summer of 2015. Two follow-up interviews were also conducted with the Research Champion.

While the overall response to interview invitations was good, there were difficulties scheduling interview appointments given restrictions on teachers' time. It was not possible to interview the research lead in one of the schools at either round of interviews.

For the baseline survey of teachers, the evaluation team asked the Research Champion for a list of all teachers (including headteachers and those in management positions) at the five participating schools, together with their contact details. All teachers were then invited to take part in the baseline survey. Those who completed the baseline survey were eligible for, and invited to take part in, the outcomes survey at the end of the academic year. The repeated survey allowed the evaluation team to explore changes in attitudes and behaviours over the course of the programme.

No data was collected from or about pupils at the participating schools.

Data collection

The evaluation of the programme was a mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) study. Findings from the evaluation were shared with the delivery team as they became available in order to provide formative feedback and facilitate ongoing development of the intervention.

As part of the evaluation, several methods were used, including:

- the development of a logic model;
- pre- and post-intervention surveys; and
- in-depth interviews and observations.

The original design for the evaluation also included analysis of pupil attainment data from the National Pupil Database because one of EEF's key objectives is to improve pupil attainment. The intention was to measure pupil progress using Key Stage 2 (for primary schools) and Key Stage 3 (for secondary schools) attainment data, and to compare pupils in participating schools with a matched comparison group of pupils in schools not taking part. However, it was decided in consultation with the EEF that assessing pupil progress would not be an appropriate measure of the programme's success, or potential, at this stage in its development. In particular, it was felt that pupil progress was a longer-term goal for this particular project, rather than a short or medium term one (as set out in the logic model). Also, the process evaluation revealed that the pupils who were directly affected by the intervention belonged to different year groups, including pupil groups not captured by Key Stage attainment data. Moreover, since the programme got off to a slow start it was felt that there would be insufficient time for pupils to experience the benefits by the time Key Stage data was collected in the summer term. These factors meant that any change in pupil attainment identified, positive or negative, could not be linked in any way to the programme. Consequently, analysis of pupil attainment data was not undertaken.

Logic model

A logic model workshop was held with the Research Champion in September 2014 to identify the resources, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the programme. The logic model was then drafted by NatCen researchers and finalised in consultation with the Research Champion (see Figure 2). A copy of the logic model was provided to the Research Champion for sharing with participants at the training events.

Surveys

A key objective of the evaluation was to explore whether the programme demonstrated the potential to improve teachers' use of, and attitudes towards, academic research. This was assessed using baseline and outcomes surveys developed by the NFER for the EEF (see Appendix A) specifically for use in all of the 'research use' round evaluations (Poet *et al.*, unpublished).

The surveys were administered online by NatCen Social Research with teachers in all intervention schools at two time points: during the start-up period (baseline) and in the intervention's final school term (outcomes). All teachers at the participating schools were invited to take part in the baseline survey.

A letter was initially sent to the headteacher of each participating school in September 2014 to inform them of the upcoming survey and to ask for their support in encouraging teachers to complete it. Individual teachers were then sent an email that included a weblink to the survey; this was followed by a maximum of three email reminders. The baseline survey took place in September and October 2014 and the outcomes survey in June and July 2015. All teachers who had participated in the baseline survey were invited to take part in the web-based outcomes survey. This was followed by up to four reminder emails. The outcomes survey closed at the end of the summer term 2014/2015.

Outcome measures

NFER guidance (Poet *et al.*, unpublished) recommends using six outcome criteria when analysing survey data collected in the EEF's Research Use in Schools funded projects:

1. positive disposition to academic research informing teaching practice;
2. use of academic research to inform selection of teaching approaches;
3. perception that academic research is not useful to teaching;
4. perception that own school does not encourage use of academic research;

5. active engagement with online evidence platforms; and
6. research knowledge.

However, it was not possible to use outcome measure 6 as the questions were not asked at baseline. The other five outcome measures were constructed using relevant survey variables and following the NFER guidance (see Appendix A for details of the measures). The Cronbach's alpha score, and therefore the reliability of the measure, varied considerably between the five scales. The results are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha scores for the five composite measures

Outcome measure	Cronbach's alpha in baseline survey	Cronbach's alpha in outcomes survey	Reliability of the measure
Measure 1: Positive disposition to academic research informing teaching practice	0.86	0.86	high
Measure 2: Use of academic research to inform selection of teaching approaches	0.37	0.54	low at baseline, moderate at outcomes
Measure 3: Perception that academic research is not useful to teaching	0.60	0.72	moderate
Measure 4: Perception that own school does not encourage use of academic research	0.71	0.37	moderate at baseline, low at outcomes
Measure 5: Active engagement with online evidence platforms	0.66	0.61	moderate

The Cronbach's alpha scores for measure 4 were considerably lower than for the others—scores so low as to suggest the internal consistency was very poor and the measure was not reliable. For this reason measure 4 has not been used in this report. Instead, we analysed the two separate questions it was intended to be based on.

Approach to survey analysis

Analysis focused on change over time between the two surveys. There was no comparison group so it was not possible to compare the changes to a 'business as usual' scenario. The main outcomes of the programme were estimated using descriptive analysis, frequencies and cross-tabulations, and paired sample t-tests.⁴ Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the outcome measures, and McNemar's test to explore whether differences between responses at baseline and follow-up were statistically significant for individual questions.

Differences between estimates which were significant at $p < 0.05$ are referred to throughout the report as being 'statistically significant', and those which fall below the 5% threshold as non-significant. However, it is important to note that as the total sample size available for analysis of outcomes was fairly small ($n = 106$), it limited our ability to detect significant results. All analysis was conducted in IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 21.0.

⁴ Measures of effect size were not considered appropriate given the absence of treatment and control groups.

Process evaluation

The process evaluation was designed to explore views on delivery, implementation, and perceived impacts of the programme. A mixed-methods approach was used to meet these objectives. This included observations of two research symposia and one twilight forum, interviews with research leads and other teachers at the participating schools, and survey items specific to the Research Champion programme for participating teachers (see Appendix E Block F).

Depth interviews with research leads and teachers in the five schools, as well as with the Research Champion, (most of which were conducted by phone) took place at three time points:

1. November–December 2014: interviews with the Research Champion and four of the five school research leads. These interviews focused on the objectives of the intervention and early implementation processes.
2. March 2015: follow-up interview with the Research Champion.
3. May–July 2015: follow-up interviews with the Research Champion and school research leads (four of five), as well as interviews with other teachers involved in the programme at each of the five schools (11 teachers in total).

The inclusion of interviews with the Research Champion in the design meant that information was gathered from the perspectives of both the programme designer/deliverer and the participating school.

The content of each interview was based on a topic guide to ensure systematic coverage of key issues. It was intended to be flexible and interactive, allowing individual respondents to discuss issues of particular relevance to them. The interviews covered:

1. the profile of the school and background information about the teacher, including their role within the programme;
2. how the programme had been implemented in the school;
3. views on the programme and any recommendations regarding how it could be improved;
4. assessment of whether the programme had had an impact on the interviewee's teaching practice, and on pupils' behaviour, attitudes, and/or attainment; and
5. barriers to the implementation of the programme and to sustaining it within the school beyond the pilot.

Interviews were digitally recorded and full interview notes taken. All participants were told that everything discussed in the interview would remain confidential and would be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act, and that their views and opinions would only be reported anonymously. However, it was made clear that details about how the programme had been implemented in each school might be included in the report.

In addition to the qualitative interviews with teachers, the outcomes survey included a series of process questions that asked those teachers directly engaged with the project to provide feedback on the programme and its different components. Findings from this part of the survey are discussed in the process evaluation section.

Figure 1: Timeline of the evaluation

Date	Activity
Summer 2014	Schools recruited to the intervention
September–October 2014	Programme delivery began Logic model workshop Baseline survey of teachers

November–December 2015	First phase of process evaluation interviews with research leads and the Research Champion Observation of first symposium
March 2015	Observation of twilight event second interview with the Research Champion (of three)
May–July 2015	Final stage of process evaluation interviews with research leads and the Research Champion process evaluation interviews with additional staff at participating schools
June–July 2015	Outcomes survey of teachers observation of third symposium
August 2015–January 2016	Analysis and reporting

Costs

Information on the costs of the intervention was collected from the Research Champion. Our estimate of the total cost includes the up-front costs (such as a programme launch meeting), the costs of providing the training and support, and the costs of teachers attending the intervention events. The costs of developing the intervention are not included.

This intervention was implemented at the whole-school level and intended to benefit pupils across all year groups, however the implementation was gradual with some pupils receiving the direct effect of the intervention only at the end of the academic year. Therefore, to calculate the total cost per pupil in the intervention's first year we considered only those pupils who were involved in the programme from the beginning of the academic year ($n = 2,075$). When estimating costs per pupil in the intervention's second and third years we assumed that all pupils at each school would be affected by the intervention from the beginning of the academic year, and thus used the total number of pupils across the five participating schools ($n = 4,851$).

Findings

Participants

Five schools (four secondary and one primary) were recruited to participate in the project. Three of the schools were based in Ashford, a town in the county of Kent in the South East of England, and two in neighbouring towns with rural catchment areas. A sixth school (a primary), originally recruited to be part of the programme, left during the early stages after a change of leadership. The remaining schools stayed involved during the pilot year.

The four secondary schools had an average of 1,162 pupils,⁵ higher than the national average for secondary schools (957 pupils in 2014): three were larger than the national average, and one smaller. The one primary school was slightly smaller than the national average for primaries (263 in 2014).

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) among the secondary schools was 26.1% on average, slightly lower than the national average of 28.5%.⁶ In contrast, the one participating primary school had a considerably higher proportion of FSM pupils than the national average for primary schools (26.6% in 2014). Overall, there was a high level of variation in FSM eligibility between schools.

The schools were also mixed in terms of their Ofsted ratings: one of the schools was rated as 'outstanding', another as 'requires improvement', and the remaining three as 'good'.

Key characteristics for each of the schools are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: School characteristics

School	Type	Urban/ rural	Size	FSM
School 1	Primary	Urban	Slightly smaller than average	Higher than average
School 2	Secondary	Urban	Slightly larger than average	Lower than average
School 3	Secondary	Rural	Smaller than average	Higher than average
School 4	Secondary	Rural	Slightly larger than average	Slightly lower than average
School 5	Secondary	Urban	Slightly larger than average	Close to average

As the programme aimed to achieve change at the whole-school level rather than only for teachers and pupils directly involved in the programme, all teachers at the participating schools were invited to take part in the teacher surveys at baseline and at the end of the academic year. When reporting on findings of these surveys, we present estimates both for all teachers and for different subgroups depending on their level of involvement.

The overall response rate for the survey was 63% at baseline (190 of an eligible 304 respondents) and 56% for the outcomes survey (106 of 190 eligible respondents). Those responding to the survey were predominantly either classroom teachers (41%) or middle leaders (40%). A further 15% held senior leadership positions or were school heads, while 5% recorded their job as 'other role'. In the outcomes survey, there was a good distribution of respondents with regard to teaching experience, ranging from

⁵ Figures have been drawn from each school's Ofsted reports, which, in turn, used the 2014 January census.

⁶ For national statistics, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

NQTs (5%) to those with more than 20 years' experience (19%). More than half of the teachers surveyed had some involvement in the programme, be it first-hand (17%) or via colleagues (31%).

Logic model

A logic model workshop was held with the Research Champion at the beginning of the evaluation to identify the resources, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the programme. The logic model was then drafted by NatCen researchers and finalised in consultation with the Research Champion (see Figure 2). A copy was provided to the Research Champion to be shared with participants.

The logic model informed the development of topic guides for the process evaluation, however it was not used for the construction of data collection instruments for the quantitative element of the evaluation (the survey). This is because the survey questionnaires were developed by the NFER to be the same for all projects in the 'research use' round (see Appendix D). As a result, the teacher- and school-level outcomes measured in the baseline and outcomes surveys do not precisely match the ATA Research Champion logic model.

The delivery of the programme, and any deviation from the logic model, is discussed in full in the process evaluation section of this report. To summarise, findings indicate that the activities set out in the logic model were largely delivered as intended. Attendance at the events, however, was not as high as expected (three teachers from each of the participating schools were expected to attend all three symposia, and two from each school to attend the six twilight forums). While the research symposia were well attended overall, few of the teachers from participating schools were able to attend more than one event.⁷ Attendance at the twilight forums was also slightly lower than anticipated,⁸ with some schools not being represented at all at some of these.

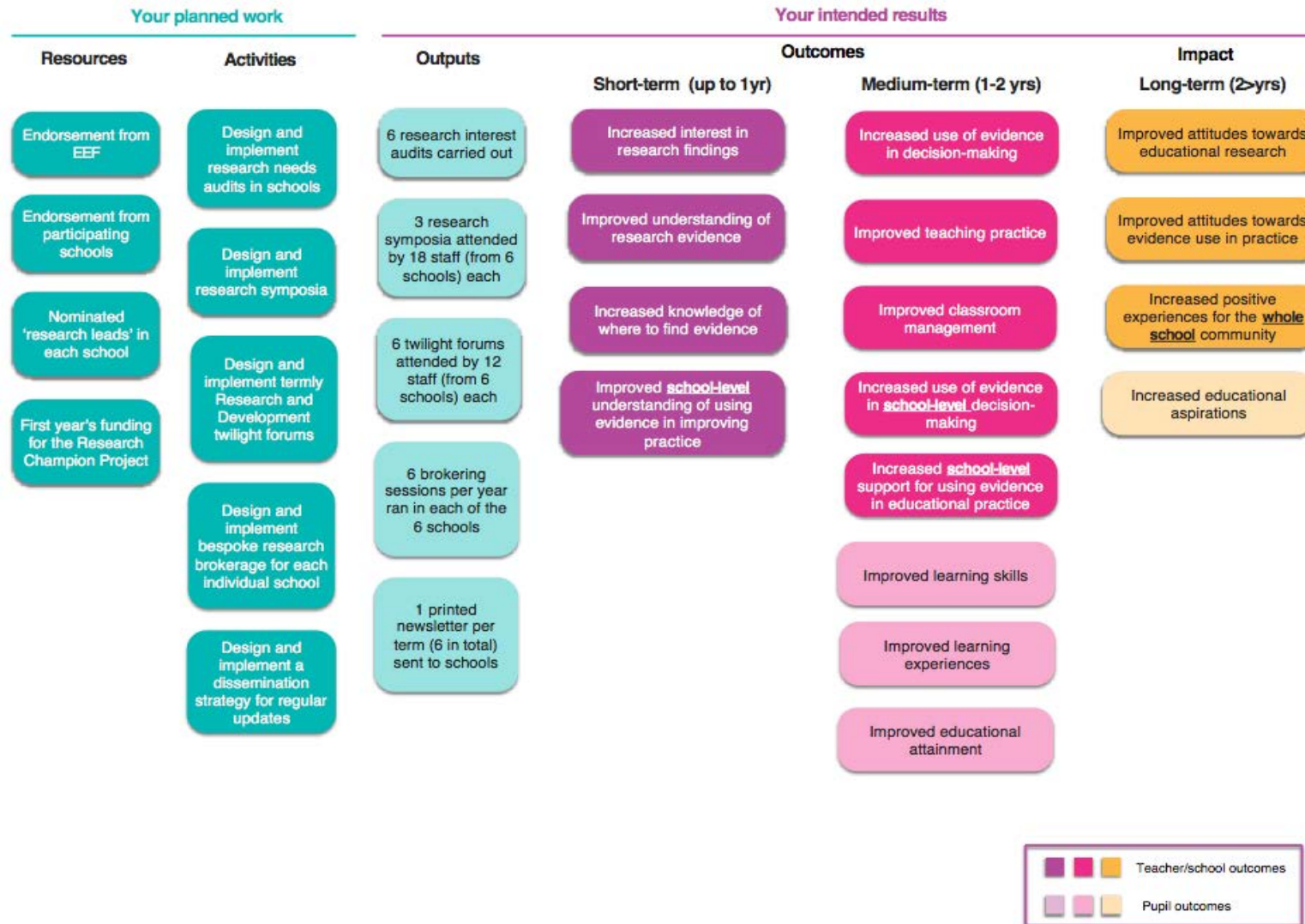
There were also more mixed results in terms of engagement with the research brokerage service: some schools made good use of the provision while others struggled to find sufficient time for the meetings. The structure of this service also changed post-implementation. While it was originally anticipated that schools would schedule a day's consultation with the Research Champion each half term, in practice shorter, more regular meetings were found to be more practical (in terms of staff availability) and to better support a coaching/mentoring approach.

Additionally, the twice-termly newsletter (as set out in the logic model) was only delivered at the end of the first half term. The very disparate activities being carried out at each of the schools made it difficult to create a regular newsletter that would be relevant for all participating schools. It was substituted with updates linked to the symposia and twilight forums, shared articles, and research summaries. The activities and outcomes outlined in the logic model (Figure 2) are discussed in further detail in the process evaluation section below.

⁷ Attendance figures for symposium or twilight events were not collected in a systematic way.

⁸ An observation was carried out at the March 2015 twilight forum. A total of nine delegates attended from four of the participating schools.

Figure 2: The ATA Research Champion project logic model (based on six schools taking part)



Evidence to support theory of change

Each section below looks first at the overall score for each outcome measure, including any change between the baseline and the outcomes surveys. It then considers differences between groups of teachers according to their level of involvement in the programme (based on the teachers' own responses to the outcome survey rather than on any pre-allocation to one of the two groups). Finally, this section explores the individual questions that make up each composite indicator.

All analysis has been conducted on data collected from teachers taking part in both the baseline and outcomes surveys. Where teachers took part in the baseline survey only, their data was not analysed.

Positive disposition to academic research in informing teaching practice

Results of the first composite measure showed very little change in teachers' disposition to academic research in informing teaching practice, with a total mean value of 20.1 (SD = 4.0) at baseline and 19.9 (SD = 4.0) at follow-up.

Looking separately at groups of teachers according to their involvement in the project—(a) those involved directly or indirectly through colleagues,⁹ and (b) those not involved, or who responded 'not sure' when asked about their participation—likewise showed very little difference (see Table 3).¹⁰

Table 3: Positive disposition to academic research in informing teaching practice by level of involvement

	Baseline (mean score)	Outcome (mean score)	Observations (N)
First-hand involvement or colleague/s were involved and shared learning	20.6	20.2	49
Not involved, or not sure	19.7	19.7	53
All teachers	20.1	19.9	106

Note: 'All teachers' (N = 106) includes those who did not answer the survey questions about their level of involvement in the programme.

Looking at each of the individual questions across the baseline and outcomes surveys revealed some interesting trends in terms of teachers' attitudes towards research to inform teaching practice. For example, 72% of teachers reported finding it 'easy' or 'very easy' to understand 'articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research' at baseline; this showed a notable—though not statistically significant—drop to 67% in the outcomes survey.¹¹

⁹ Teachers with first-hand and indirect involvement in the programme have been grouped for this analysis as base sizes are very small (17 for those with direct involvement).

¹⁰ When the same variables were included in an OLS regression model, with the baseline score as a control variable and outcome score as the dependent variable, there was no statistically significant difference by level of involvement in the programme.

¹¹ Frequencies exclude the missing cases and the respondents who said that they 'did not use this source'. All have been included in the composite outcome variable.

Likewise, the proportion of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that that they knew where to find relevant research fell from 54% to 52%, as did the proportion of teachers who reported feeling confident about analysing information from research (63% at baseline falling to 54% at follow-up). The proportion of teachers who reported that they used information from research to implement new approaches in the classroom also fell slightly from 60% to 59%. However, none of the changes were statistically significant.

In contrast, the proportion of teachers who were able to relate research to their own context showed a statistically non-significant increase between the baseline and outcomes surveys (from 61% to 64%).

Proportions were constant across the baseline and outcomes survey for those reporting that research 'plays an important role in my/our teaching practice' (57%) (see Table 4).

Table 4: Response to individual items included in question 8: 'How much research is used at work?'

	Baseline – strongly agree / agree (%)	Outcome – strongly agree / agree %	Observations (N)
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research easy to understand	72	67	104
Know where to find relevant research	54	52	104
Feel confident about analysing information from research	63	54	104
Use information from research to help implement new approaches in the classroom	60	59	103
Able to relate research to own context	61	64	104
Research plays an important role in teaching practice	57	57	104

Use of academic research to inform selection of teaching approaches

Results of the paired sample t-test showed that results remained stable between baseline and follow-up (at 4.1, SD = 1.2). Exploration of differences by level of involvement showed that while teachers who were involved in the project saw a small drop in their mean score, those with no involvement, or who were not sure, saw a slight rise in their outcome score (see Table 5 below). Neither result was statistically significant.¹²

¹² When this association was explored using OLS regression (as with measure 1), no statistically significant difference was found in the outcome score by level of involvement in the programme.

Table 5: Use of academic research to inform selection of teaching approaches

	Baseline – mean score	Outcome – mean score	Observations (N)
First-hand involvement or colleague/s were involved and shared learning	4.3	4.2	48
Not involved, or not sure	3.8	4.0	49
All teachers	4.1	4.1	101

Note: 'All teachers' (N = 101) includes those who did not answer the survey questions about their level of involvement in the programme.

Looking at the individual items that comprised the composite measure across the baseline and outcomes survey showed mixed results. While there was a large significant increase in the proportion of teachers who found 'articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research' important in shaping their approach (a rise from 2% to 18%), differences on the other questions were not statistically significant. One of the items included in the measure, 'online evidence platforms or databases important in informing choice of approach', increased (non-significantly) from 2% to 6%.

In contrast, the proportion of teachers who said that their decision to adopt a specific approach was 'strongly influenced' by its backing by academic research fell from 36% to 26% (this change was not statistically significant). The proportion of teachers saying that they consulted academic articles, reports, books or summaries 'a lot' also showed a considerable drop, in this case from 18% to 9% ($p = 0.078$).

Perception that academic research is not useful to teaching

Once again the mean score on this measure remained stable across the baseline and outcomes survey (mean 4.7, SD at baseline = 1.5, SD at outcomes = 1.3).

Results were fairly consistent regardless of teachers' involvement in the programme, with just a small (non-significant) drop in the overall score for teachers who were involved in the Research Champion project.¹³

Table 6: Perception that academic research is not useful to teaching by level of involvement

	Baseline – mean score	Outcome – mean score	Observations (N)
First-hand involvement or colleague/s were involved and shared learning	4.7	4.6	49
Not involved, or not sure	4.8	4.8	53
All teachers	4.7	4.7	106

Note: 'All teachers' (N = 106) includes those who did not answer the survey questions about their level of involvement in the programme.

¹³ As with measures 1 and 2, the association was tested using OLS regression analysis. Results showed no statistically significant relationship between the outcome measures and level of involvement in the programme.

Each of the two component questions showed a change between the baseline and outcomes survey, but neither of the results reached conventional levels of statistical significance. The proportion of teachers who ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they ‘do not believe using information from research will improve pupil outcomes’ fell from 7% to 2%. The change was smaller in the second item—‘research conducted elsewhere is of limited value to school’—where the proportion of teachers who ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ dropped from 10% to 9%.

Perception that own school does not encourage use of academic research

Composite measure 4 ‘perception that own school does not encourage use of academic research’ has been excluded from this report on the basis of its poor internal consistency (as discussed above). Instead, the evaluation included analysis of the individual questions brought together under this measure in the NFER guidance.

Comparing baseline and outcome responses to each of the component questions showed a change towards a more positive perception of the use of evidence in the teachers’ own school on both measures. For example, the proportion of teachers who ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that ‘school leaders do not encourage use of research to improve practice’ showed a decline between the baseline and outcomes survey, from 16% to 9%. The proportion of teachers who ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that ‘other staff in my school rarely use information from research to inform their teaching practice’ also showed a drop (from 16% to 15%, see Table 7). However, neither change was statistically significant.

Table 7: Perception that own school does not encourage use of academic research

My school leaders/governors do not encourage me to use information from research to improve my practice	Baseline %	Outcome %
Strongly agree	3	0
Agree	13	9
Neither agree nor disagree	26	29
Disagree	42	43
Strongly disagree	16	20
Observations (N)	105	105
Other staff in my school rarely use information from research to inform their teaching practice	Baseline %	Outcome %
Strongly agree	3	1
Agree	13	14
Neither agree nor disagree	46	45
Disagree	32	37
Strongly disagree	6	3
Observations (N)	105	105

Note: percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Active engagement with online evidence platforms

The average mean score for all teachers showed very little change over the course of the programme, from 4.3 (SD = 1.1) at baseline to 4.4 (SD = 1.1) at follow-up. This difference was not statistically significant.

Exploration of the results by level of involvement in the programme also shows relatively little difference between the two groups of teachers. Once again the differences by level of involvement were not statistically significant.¹⁴

Table 8: Active engagement with online evidence platforms by level of involvement

	Baseline – mean score	Outcome – mean score	Observations (N)
First-hand involvement or colleague/s were involved and shared learning	4.4	4.5	49
Not involved, or not sure	4.4	4.3	53
All teachers	4.3	4.4	106

Note: 'All teachers' (N = 106) includes those who did not answer the survey questions about their level of involvement in the programme.

When considered separately, the two component questions showed mixed results (none of the differences reached conventional levels of statistical significance). While the number of teachers who consulted online evidence platforms and databases 'a lot' remained relatively stable between the two surveys, fewer teachers said that they did not consult them at all (a drop from 46% to 40%). As well as increased use, there was also a small rise in the proportion of teachers who reported finding it 'quite easy' or 'very easy' to understand online evidence platforms (an increase from 68% to 69%).¹⁵ However, the proportion of teachers who found online platforms 'very easy' showed a notable drop between the two surveys, from 16% to 10%. Likewise the proportion of teachers who did not find using online databases 'easy at all' rose from 4% to 8%. None of these changes over time were statistically significant.

¹⁴ As with the other measures, the association between the outcome measure and level of involvement in the programme was explored using OLS regression analysis. Results showed no statistically significant association.

¹⁵ Frequencies exclude missing cases and respondents who said that they 'did not use this source' (37 at baseline and 29 at follow-up). All have been included in the composite outcome variable.

Feasibility

This section reports findings from the process evaluation of the implementation of the Ashford Teaching Alliance Research Champion programme, drawing on qualitative interviews with teachers and the Research Champion, observations of training sessions, and teachers' answers to the outcomes survey.¹⁶

The discussion of the feasibility of the programme is structured around its main components:

1. audits of schools' research interests;
2. research symposia;
3. twilight forums; and
4. research brokerage.

Audits of schools' research interests

The intervention began with school audits intended to assess each school's needs and interests in terms of research use, and to feed this information into a school-specific action plan. This component was included as one of the outputs in the logic model. In the interviews, teachers said that they found the early meetings and discussions with the Research Champion productive, and valued the opportunity to shape the implementation of the project in their own school. However, they were predominantly unaware of these discussions being a distinct phase of the project, or—as was more often the case—were aware of the assessment activity, but not under the audit label.

The lack of a distinct 'audit' activity meant it was difficult for teachers to reflect on this component of the programme and therefore to assess the feasibility of this particular element. However, in general, teachers felt that the early meetings with the Research Champion met their needs, allowing them to reflect on the specific interests of their school and to consider the steps needed for them to implement learning in the classroom.

In summary, this element of the programme was feasible, and appeared to broadly meet its objectives as set out in the logic model. However, further consideration is required as to whether the audit needs to be a distinct phase of the project, separate from subsequent research brokerage activity, and what specific activities distinguish the audit phase from research brokerage. Additionally, it would be worth considering how implementation of the audit could be made more consistent across schools, perhaps by developing a manual.

Research symposia

Three full-day research symposia were held over the course of the pilot, one per term. Teachers involved in the programme, and those belonging to non-intervention schools in the Ashford Teaching Alliance, were invited to attend (the latter subject to a £40 fee). The symposium events were directed by the Research Champion and included presentations and workshops led by expert speakers. Subjects were selected by the Research Champion, but were influenced by the interests of teachers directly involved in project.

¹⁶ The number of teachers answering process evaluation questions in the outcomes survey was very low, as these were only asked of those with direct involvement in the programme. The number of responses ranged from 8–14 depending on the question.

Each event was structured in the same way: introductory and closing sessions from the Research Champion, presentations in the morning session, and workshops in the afternoon. In this way events combined ‘taught’ sessions—which introduced research evidence on topics such as lesson study, feedback, and mindfulness—with more practical, applied workshops, where teachers were able to think about applying their learning in the classroom. Figure 3 provides an overview of the content of each symposium event.

Figure 3: Research Champion project—symposium events

Symposium	Content
Symposium 1 December 2014, 9:30–3:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keynote seminar: ‘Learning from failure: how to improve over time’ 2. Keynote seminar: ‘Formative assessment: can teachers really put it into practice?’ 3. Afternoon workshops on strategies/models for professional development and putting formative assessment and feedback into practice
Symposium 2 March 2015, 9:30–2:45	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keynote seminar: ‘Using Japanese lesson study to improve lesson design and student learning’ 2. Keynote seminar: ‘What do we know about effective CPD and Professional Learning?’ 3. Choice of afternoon workshops: (1) ‘How to evaluate and improve CPD provision across a school’, (2) ‘How to apply the principles of lesson study to day to day teaching’, and (3) ‘How to use lesson study in Maths teaching’
Symposium 3 July 2015, 9:30–2:45	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keynote seminar: ‘Using evidence to narrow the gap: How can large-scale research help you to improve things for your students? How can the principles of research help you to evaluate new policies, programmes and initiatives planned for 2015/16?’ 2. Keynote seminar: ‘Why is “mindfulness” trending? What does it offer? What does research say? How might it help your students and staff?’ 3. Keynote seminar: ‘Mindfulness in practice’ 4. Choice of afternoon workshops: (1) ‘Not everything works and why and that’s a good thing’ and (2) ‘Mindfulness: a practical insight’

Analysis of the process questions included in the teacher survey found that the research symposia were viewed positively by participating teachers, with the majority of participants describing the sessions as ‘quite good’ or ‘very good’. Qualitative interviews with teachers indicated that most had been able to attend at least one of the three symposia.

Positive aspects identified in feedback

Teachers involved in the programme highlighted a number of positive aspects of these events:

1. Expert speakers and opportunities to reflect on practice

Teachers felt that a key barrier to the use of research evidence in the classroom was the time required to read and process the latest evidence. Providing targeted information about educational research at the symposia via ‘high quality’ speakers was felt to be an effective, efficient way for teachers learn

about evidence. Teachers found the topics covered thought-provoking, and reflected that the symposia prompted them to consider their own practice in the classroom, and how it could be developed.

'To have such high quality input; it's better than any day up in London on CPD. Eons above that' (research lead).

2. Practical application of in-depth learning

The combination of theory and practical application, through a 'taught' morning session and applied afternoon workshop, was seen as a particular strength of the symposia. Teachers appreciated the way symposia were tailored to provide practical 'take away' lessons, but which drew on detailed and robust research. Teachers highlighted the CPD workshop as a particularly good example of this:

'It was the combination of the high quality input, then the chance to go and reflect and think about how it relates to my own context and school. I'd really recommend them' (classroom teacher).

3. Opportunities to network and share ideas

The symposia provided useful opportunities for participating teachers to network, build contacts, share experiences, and learn from one another. They valued the opportunity to meet and share practical experiences. Teachers appreciated that the ideas tabled came from other teachers rather than from those in authority. In one case, two participants who taught the same subject at different schools were able to build a rapport and arranged a school visit as a direct result of meeting at one of the symposia workshop sessions:

'We arranged that I would visit the other modern languages teacher in her school... It's something to go and do as a consequence of the workshop' (classroom teacher).

4. Useful reference materials

Teachers were given a pack of materials at each symposium to take away with them, which they found useful as a reference document to follow-up after the event. A small number of teachers made good use of this material, using it to search out references to evidence as directed by speakers. This meant that teachers were able to continue to engage with the symposia materials when they were back in the classroom.

Negative aspects identified in feedback

Alongside the positive feedback about the symposia, a minority of teachers also highlighted a number of areas where this component of the programme could be further developed:

1. More applied sessions and clearer linking with applications in the classroom

Although many teachers were happy with the balance between theory and practical application there were comments that workshops in particular could have been more applied and interactive, and also that at times they felt overly academic. Teachers talked about wanting an outcome, 'product', or concrete plan at the end of the day that they could take back to school and apply. One teacher suggested that participants could have brought along their school's CPD plan to the workshop. They could then have discussed the plans and developed them while there. Although this would not result in a polished product, it would be more productive and efficient. It was thought that while teachers would come away from the events meaning to work through their notes and implement the things they had learned, that day-to-day school life would make this difficult.

2. Making the Research Champion's role at the events more clearly defined

It was felt that although the Research Champion coordinated the events very effectively, there was some confusion as to whether he should be viewed as a fellow teacher or a leader. One teacher suggested that this was something that could be made clear at the start of each symposium.

3. Clearly define the goals of the symposia in advance

Although the content of the symposia was clearly presented in the materials supplied to teachers, it was felt that it would be helpful to have a clear sense of the overarching goal of each symposium, and

the events as a whole. In other words, to have a stronger focus on what teachers would take away from the symposia at the outset of the programme.

To sum up, the research symposia element of the intervention was delivered largely as intended, was feasible, and was positively received by the participants.

Twilight forums

In addition to the research symposia, research leads and colleagues involved in the programme from each of the participating schools were invited to attend twice-termly 'twilight forums'. These were held at the end of the school day at one of the participating schools, and led by the hosting school. They were intended to offer teachers an opportunity to share experiences and reflect on a specific topic, these included feedback and assessment, questioning, and lesson planning.

Teachers found these events productive, offering opportunities to discuss learning in practice in a supportive environment, to reflect on research areas covered at the symposia, and share ideas and good practice. The smaller groups of those more directly involved in the project brought a sense of unity to the events, and gave teachers the opportunity to talk in more detail about their own work. Participants particularly valued hearing first-hand about the experiences of schools and teachers in implementing lessons from research, although they recognised that this was not always directly transferable to their own educational context. This particularly applied to the one primary school taking part in the pilot that felt that lessons were more relevant for secondary schools. Teachers accepted, however, that some topics would be more relevant to their own schools (and subjects) than others, and sought more generic learning points to take back with them:

'What's interesting is when you get a group of teachers from a range of different subjects, we all have very different needs and focuses, so it is interesting hearing what everyone's got to say, and obviously some bits you can discard because they don't apply and there are other things that do' (classroom teacher).

The positive comments about the twilight forums were reflected in the outcomes survey. Results reveal a high level of satisfaction, with the majority describing them as 'very good' or 'quite good'.

Despite generally positive comments, some teachers also offered constructive feedback, including suggestions of areas for development.

It was noted that attendance at the twilight forums was not as good as hoped, and some teachers suggested that the format was problematic. (Although one teacher felt that low numbers were an advantage.) This was felt to be connected to the timing of sessions, specifically, that teachers were required to travel to another school after a day's teaching. Participating schools sometimes held staff meetings at the same time as the twilight forums and failed to release staff.

'Due to perhaps the logistics of having been a day in school and then driving to a different location and then having one hour... With the symposium, you went there in the morning, you were fresh, you could really engage and think about the ideas and what you were being presented with and then get your teeth into it, whereas the twilights just felt like a bolt-on' (research lead).

Additionally, as with the symposia, it was felt the twilight forums could sometimes be overly academic in focus, and that the focus or goal of the forums was not always clear at the outset.

Feedback from the Research Champion suggested that the twilight forums had been less effective than envisaged, primarily due to issues with attendance and with their ability to cover new ground in terms of topic. The scheduling of twilight forums had proved problematic for teachers despite early discussions about timetabling and advanced notice regarding dates. The format had been tweaked going forward to include just the research leads at each of the schools. It was felt that the smaller, more focused events would improve effectiveness.

In sum, the evidence as to whether twilight forums were implemented as originally conceived, and whether they were feasible, was mixed. More thinking is required about the purpose of this element of the intervention and about how it could be implemented in the most effective way, in particular, around the format and scheduling of the twilight events and expectations in terms of attendance.

Research brokerage

In addition to the events, the Research Champion programme included a bespoke research brokerage service available to all participating schools. The brokerage sessions were intended to be an opportunity for the Research Champion to share evidence on topics of interest to individual schools and to support the practical implementation of research evidence in the classroom. The particular research topics covered in the research brokerage sessions were identified by the schools themselves. Originally envisaged as a one-day visit per half term, the model was quickly adapted to a larger number of shorter visits. The model also included informal ad hoc advice by email or telephone.

Research leads generally made good use of the research brokerage service, meeting with the Research Champion several times over the course of the pilot year. Brokerage also included sessions with small groups of staff in all participating schools, and with all teaching staff in two schools. However, the number and frequency of meetings varied from school to school, as did teacher engagement. Teachers also utilised the ad hoc support (although again to varying degrees) and appreciated having a source of advice and expertise on hand.

Interviews with teachers showed that they valued:

1. having an informed outsider, questioning the approach and theory of change in a supportive and constructive way;
2. the emphasis on reflective practice;
3. the momentum the visits added to the programme, keeping it prominent in teachers' minds when the day-to-day practice of teaching threatened to take over; and
4. having a source of support and advice available and helpfully responsive when called upon.

As with the research symposia and twilight forums, the teacher survey found a reasonably high level of satisfaction with the research brokerage service, with the majority of teachers describing it as 'very good' or 'quite good'. However, a substantial minority found the brokerage service 'average', or 'poor'. The survey also showed a more mixed response from participating teachers to ad-hoc support.

The original plan for this component was to conduct one full-day visit per half term, however this was revised as the programme was implemented in that research leads and other staff were now visited on a more 'as needed' basis. These visits were shorter and more frequent. This approach was felt to be more appropriate as it allowed flexibility for staff and could more easily be accommodated with other teaching responsibilities.

Regular meetings with the Research Champion were seen as important as a catalyst to moving the project forward. In this respect, more frequent visits increased the momentum of the programme. However, some teachers struggled with scheduling and stressed the importance of flexibility, for example, to be able to step back from the project during pressure points, such as Ofsted visits.

To sum up, evidence relating to the research brokerage and ad hoc support components was mixed. While the service was generally well used and well received, there was variation in how, and how often, it was used across participating schools. Changes were made to the way this component was implemented, deviating from the original plan as set out in the logic model. However, these changes were made in response to the needs of participants and benefitted the programme. In the future, further thought could usefully be given to the best structure and format for the brokerage service, as well as to the optimum number and regularity of meetings.

Implementation in schools

Each participating school identified a research lead to take the programme forward for them, and the Research Champion encouraged them to identify an area of research in practice that had meaning for their schools. As the schools varied considerably in terms of their pupil intake, and in more significant ways (one of the schools was a primary school), the approaches they took also varied. This was true both in terms of the topic/s explored and the extent to which new approaches were implemented.

Indeed there was considerable variation among participating schools, ranging from one school which had regular meetings with the Research Champion but had yet to make changes to teaching practice, to another which had made multiple inroads into establishing and responding to research evidence. For example, one school had explored the literature looking at questioning, had conducted its own lesson observations and student voice sessions, and, in response to its findings, had introduced a new exercise book that allowed pupils to show rough workings alongside neatly presented final work (overcoming children's anxiety about spoiling their exercise books with mistakes). This particular school differed from the wider group in that it had a teacher in the research lead role who had dedicated time to devote to the programme. The research lead was also working closely with a small team of staff and regularly shared planning time.

Teachers were generally positive about implementing learning from the programme in the classroom, although the extent to which this happened varied considerably from school to school. Teachers flagged a number of facilitators to successful implementation during the interviews, these included:

1. Context-specific implementation

Research leads appreciated being able to select an area of research most appropriate for their own schools' needs, and having the support of the Research Champion in this process. Such flexibility was viewed as integral to the success of the programme as it allowed schools to adapt it to their own specific context and pupil population. This was felt to be particularly important given the diversity of the schools. Additionally, the ability to focus on a topic pertinent to a particular school was felt to increase commitment to the programme and engagement with research evidence.

'Both the challenge and also the area where we can maybe have the most impact, is trying to link together the ideas that are available with specific local issues' (Research Champion).

'This is the best form of professional development I've been on... the power of this is that you can make the process relevant for yourself' (research lead).

2. Implementation support from the Research Champion and others

Research leads and other teachers felt that the combination of events and visits from the Research Champion worked well to facilitate classroom implementation. They were positive about the opportunities the different events gave them to share practice with other teachers and schools, particularly to discuss the successes and learning points from their own practical experience. This was true both of the wider events, such as the twilight forums, and the in-school research groups. The enthusiasm and accessibility of the Research Champion was seen as an important contributory factor.

3. Dedicated time for research use

One of the participating schools (in addition to the Research Champion's own school) had ensured that its research lead had dedicated time to devote to research work. This school had made considerably more progress in terms of thinking and implementation than other schools. Notably it had been able to conduct its own investigations into questioning, an issue of particular relevance in this instance, and to introduce a new exercise book for children, in response to its findings. It was felt that this progress had been facilitated by the lead teacher's ability to dedicate time to develop the project, and to engage with evidence in-depth.

4. Simplicity of the approach

It was felt that approaches that were the ‘easiest to implement’ were often the most effective. One teacher (who was not one of the research leads) appreciated this practical approach—the application of research in the form of easily-applied real-world solutions that brought fast results:

‘The research groups that we’ve had [have] really focused on doing things that are possible, the quick wins... so rather than spending a month planning one lesson, little quick fixes that we can get quick gains on. And if something doesn’t look like it’s working, then we’ll put it on the backburner. So it’s really been a focus on practical, tangible things we can do’ (classroom teacher).

Barriers and challenges affecting programme feasibility

Research leads and other teachers were asked to reflect on the barriers they encountered—both in terms of making full use of the programme, and in using research evidence in teaching practice. The greatest challenge raised was one of competing time pressures: research leads—particularly those involved in preparing students for GCSE and A-level exams—felt that they would have liked, but were unable, to spend more time exploring research literature. Time pressures also made attending symposia or twilight events and scheduling research brokerage meetings challenging.

‘Often there were just issues around cover... It was nothing to do with the programme itself; it’s just demands on time in my school’ (research lead).

One research lead in particular felt that a lack of practical support from the school in the form of lesson cover and release time meant they were unable to engage with evidence—and the project more generally. While the school was not disinterested in the programme, it was felt that the senior leadership team faced other competing and more pressing issues meaning that the project lacked institutional support. Commitment from the school’s senior leadership team was seen as an important factor in the successful implementation, particularly to obtain school-level impacts.

Another challenge identified by teachers was the ability to find a way to adapt and apply theoretical research evidence in the classroom. As the Research Champion noted: ‘we want to know what to do when we get into the classroom on Monday morning’. This was underpinned by a deeper confusion over ‘what research use constitutes’.

Feasibility: Summary

The programme largely ran as intended and as documented in the logic model in terms of the structure of outputs, but not in terms of participants’ engagement, so overall, the evidence on the programme’s feasibility is mixed. The symposia were well attended and well received, with teachers valuing the opportunity to reflect on their own practice and to build networks. Attendance at the twilight forums, however, was not as good as intended, nevertheless most participating teachers felt that these were a useful and positive addition to the programme.

At the heart of the project was the research brokerage service. While qualitative interviews with teachers revealed many positive elements to this service—most notably the accessibility and helpfulness of the Research Champion —survey feedback suggested that the wider teacher response to this element of the project was more mixed. This may have been connected to issues relating to time pressure (indeed, time pressures posed the most serious threat to the feasibility of the programme), but also concerned competing priorities in schools and varying levels of buy-in from senior leadership teams. Key issues, therefore, that must be considered in future implementations are the provision of adequate time to attend programme sessions, teaching cover for events, and buy-in from senior leaders.

Perceived impacts

Teachers taking part in qualitative interviews reflected on the perceived impacts of the pilot on their use of research evidence in teaching practice and pupil outcomes. These are discussed in turn.

The aim of the ATA Research Champion programme, as set out in the logic model, was to develop teaching expertise and practice by promoting educational research and the use of research in decision-making and educational practice—that improving teachers' ability to access, question, and understand evidence would result in the implementation of lessons from research in their classrooms.

As discussed in the implementation section, the extent to which this aim was achieved varied considerably from school to school. However, among teachers' accounts were clear examples of research evidence being accessed and successfully applied. For example, one research staff group member (not a research lead) reported that he had changed the way he presented information to students:

'Asking students to constantly be doing high-level thinking all the time is a no go, in that they'll get exhausted very quickly, so I've started planning my lessons now with some easier ideas to start with and then every now and again give them a challenging idea, but for a short time period' (classroom teacher).

This teacher reflected that his ability to apply evidence in practice had been facilitated by the research group. It was felt that having the dedicated time for discussion and reflection in a supportive environment contributed to the success of this approach.

In another school, the research lead had been given dedicated time out of the classroom to spend on the project. This time had been used to read and absorb evidence, and to understand how and why different approaches worked. The teacher had used this knowledge to conduct research with her pupils and as a result of her findings had overseen a number of changes in practice, including a new approach to questioning, and a new exercise book which allowed teachers to see the children's workings.

Even in those schools where there was little evidence of changed practice based on qualitative interviews, teachers felt they had been encouraged to reflect on their own approach to teaching, and had gained a better understanding of the research process. Much of this ability to engage with research was the result of having dedicated time (if only at symposium events) and the support of the Research Champion.

'I'm not an academic person... so to be inspired to read and to listen to research that has been done and wanting to do more... they've done really well to capture my imagination' (classroom teacher).

There was also evidence from the qualitative interviews that research leads had been empowered and enthused by the programme to independently seek out research evidence beyond that disseminated as part of the programme. For example, one research lead felt that increased awareness of evidence, coupled with dedicated time, had provided both the impetus and opportunity to read in-depth and fully understand how and why certain teaching approaches worked. Additionally, they felt that being able to learn something new, with a purpose and end point in mind, made the experience particularly valuable. Survey results, however, suggested that this may not have occurred more generally.

In addition to this raised awareness in terms of research, one senior leader felt that the programme had had a wider impact on his staff, encouraging a new level of engagement with the profession. It was thought that this might lead to greater retention of NQTs. In addition, teachers felt that impacts on professional development, prompted by the programme, would have a lasting effect.

'Even if there's nothing tangible... What it has done is engage [the teacher], professionalised [them], made [them] think about [their] own practice and, I'd even say that if [they'd] done nothing different, what that's done on some level is make [them] a more engaged professional, and that will be positive in itself' (research lead).

Perceived impact on pupils

The programme did not set out with explicit short-term aims for impacts on pupils, however in the medium term (one to two years from the start of the intervention) the expectation was that the intervention would improve learning (studying) skills, improve learning experiences, and improve educational attainment among pupils. It was anticipated that improvements in educational attainment would be sustained in the longer term.

As with effects in other areas, the extent to which teachers felt the programme had impacted pupils varied considerably by school. Teachers noted that the programme was not at a point at which they would expect to see changes in pupil behaviour, that it was just ‘too early to talk about impacts on students’. In schools where there had been very slow progress and little change in teaching practice, teachers did not expect, or highlight, any changes in their pupils. However, in schools where the programme was more developed, teachers felt they had seen small changes in pupils which could be attributable to the programme. The effects on pupils were specific to the type of changes in practice schools had implemented. Examples include:

1. Alternative provision¹⁷

One of the participating schools had put alternative educational provision in place for any student not in mainstream lessons. (The school also operates a ‘no permanent exclusion’ policy.) As well as teaching, staff had a policy of offering tea and toast to alternative provision pupils whenever they felt it was necessary, and offering them pastoral support. While it was felt to be too early to talk about impacts on students, there was some anecdotal evidence that pupils’ attendance had improved, and that they found the alternative provision centre a safe and secure place to be (for some it was felt to offer a safe haven away from the difficulties of home life), and that this fostered engagement. The creation of a positive learning environment was seen as an essential first steps towards impacting attainment.

2. Questioning and fostering a supportive learning culture

A school which began with a focus on questioning—and went on to introduce changes to support children to share their workings with teachers, and combat the fear pupils had of making mistakes—felt that the programme had started to have a positive impact on the pupils’ attitude to learning. In particular, the way in which the changes encouraged a ‘have a go’ attitude and took the emphasis away from getting the correct answers to making effort. Establishing this culture was seen as an important step in creating an environment in which pupils could value the advantages of trial and error and not be afraid of getting things wrong.

Despite general positive effects, one teacher felt that some pupils had been more resistant to change, and were reluctant to present unpolished work to their teachers. It was thought that high-achieving pupils, and those from certain cultural backgrounds, were less likely to have shown a response to this particular change in teaching practice.

3. Feedback and assessment

In the school which had implemented strategies to improve feedback, teachers also spoke positively of improvements, with pupils more able to identify where they needed to improve and what their next steps were. Reflecting on the impacts of this changed approach to feedback on students, one teacher said:

¹⁷ Alternative provision is defined by the Department for Education as ‘education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour’.

'I would say it's effective... The students don't always like to be forced to do questions, obviously, but I think if you asked them at the end of the topic if they understand it better, I think they do. I certainly think it's effective in terms of improvement, obviously that's the whole point of assessment, isn't it, that they improve off the back of it. So I would say they're doing better because of that' (classroom teacher).

One teacher felt that changes to feedback implemented as part of the programme had had a positive effect on pupil confidence, independence, and self-efficacy. Changes meant that pupils took greater responsibility for their own learning, but were also proactive about seeking advice and comments from their teacher. It was thought that the new practices were becoming embedded at the school, changing pupils' expectations.

While it was generally accepted that the programme was at too early a stage to have impacted pupil attainment (a medium term impact for the programme), one teacher felt that students had started to develop a better understanding of the topics under discussion in his lessons, and that this would lead to an effect on their attainment.

Readiness for trial

Findings suggest that the Ashford Teaching Alliance Research Champion model is not ready to be evaluated in a trial in its current state of development. The main reasons for this conclusion include the mixed evidence in terms of programme feasibility, a lack of evidence of effectiveness, and an insufficient specification of the intervention in its current state of development.

One key factor that hindered the feasibility of the programme was variation in the use of the support on offer (the research brokerage); in addition, there was variation in the engagement of teachers in terms of attendance at the programme events, and in the practical implementation of new knowledge in classroom practice. For example, although schools were asked to commit to releasing teachers for a certain amount of time to the project—for example to attend twilight forums—this was not something that happened in practice for all schools.

Ensuring buy-in and engagement from senior leaders is of critical importance where an intervention aims to achieve a whole-school effect, so practical challenges identified in the process evaluation need to be addressed. These include difficulties presented by the changing structure and leadership of schools (which led one of the pilot schools to leave the programme); it would also be beneficial to think through the mechanisms for teachers directly involved in the programme to effectively cascade their newly obtained knowledge to colleagues.

Most importantly, the core characteristics of the programme need to be specified more precisely. This could be challenging for a programme designed to respond to the needs and interests of teachers and schools where a considerable level of flexibility in terms of content is an essential requirement. If the effectiveness of the programme relates to the structure of activities rather than content, then it would be useful to specify the minimum dosage for the programme to have an impact (for example, how many training sessions each participant should attend), and to specify how any new knowledge gained should be implemented in classroom practice.

For a trial, pupil-level outcome data would need to be collected: this was not part of the pilot project. This would require careful consideration of (a) the year groups that should take part (a particular difficulty for a project which includes both secondary and primary schools), (b) which types of data would be appropriate as outcome measures (for example, attainment data only or attitudinal data as well), and (c) the timing of outcome data collection (so that data collection is in line with the logic model)—longer-term outcomes being measured a number of years after the start of the programme.

Finally, given that a significant focus of the programme is on changing teachers' perceptions and use of research evidence as a first step towards improving pupil attainment, it would be helpful if the trial collected outcome data at teacher level as well as at pupil level (with data collection being timed in line

with the logic model). Outcomes at teacher level should fully reflect the logic model, which was not the case in the pilot project where outcomes were developed by an external organisation and were not specifically tailored to the Ashford Teaching Allowance Research Champion project.¹⁸

Cost

Our estimate of the total cost of the intervention includes up-front costs, costs of providing the training and support, and costs of teachers attending the intervention events.

Up-front costs

There were costs associated with the preparation of the intervention before the implementation started. These included a launch meeting, staff cover costs for teachers attending the launch meeting (three teachers on average for each of the five schools), delivery of material, the Research Champion's salary (including costs associated with National Insurance, pension contributions, and overheads) and cover costs for the Research Champion—the latter are included in addition to salary costs in the intervention year as preparations for the intervention started in the final term of the previous academic year.

The Research Champion used 60% of their time (as a full time teacher) in the four months before the programme started on preparing the intervention. This cost £9,875 plus a cover cost of £4,800. See Table 9 for more details.

Table 9: Up-front costs

Item	Time (days, 1 day = 5 hrs)	Cost (£)	Cost (£) per pupil
Launch meeting		450	0.09
Staff cover (launch meeting)	15	600	0.12
Delivery material		120	0.02
Research Champion (salary for 4 months)		9,875	2.04
Research Champion (cover for 4 months)		4,800	0.99
Sub-total up-front costs	15	15,845	3.27

Base: 4,851 pupils receive the effect of the intervention per year.

Cost of implementing the intervention

During the implementation of the intervention, the majority of the costs were associated with hiring the venue (including refreshments) and speaker fees. There were a total of six speakers, each charging a standard fee of £600. Most of the speakers were based relatively locally and did not need accommodation. Accommodation costs were estimated on the basis of two nights of hotel accommodation, at £80 per night. There were no speaker fees associated with the twilight forums as these were run by the Research Champion and the cost was covered under their salary. Research Champion's travel costs associated with twilight forums and other school visits were around £200 in total.

¹⁸ The outcomes survey was not tailored to the Ashford model in order to make the results comparable across all EEF projects in the 'research use' round.

The salary cost for the Research Champion was estimated as 60% of a full time teacher's salary for 12 months. This corresponds to £29,625. In addition, the Ashford Teacher Alliance employs an administrative assistant, and it has been estimated that work relating to this project accounted for a quarter of their time, costing around £4,000.

The cost of purchasing (or printing and photocopying) resources and materials associated with the symposia and twilight forums was estimated as £1,520 for the year.

In addition to the costs detailed above, schools incurred time costs associated with the research lead disseminating information related to the programme in their school. This cost was not translated into financial expenditure as it was planned ahead, which allowed the accommodation of lead teacher time. Therefore, we have indicated the time requirements in the table below but have not included any associated costs. Time spent by each research lead varied considerably from school to school but on average it was around half a day (2.5 hours) per half-term. See Table 10 for more details on the cost of providing the intervention.

Table 10: Cost of providing the intervention (financial marginal cost)

Item	Time (days, 1 day = 5 hrs)	Cost (£)	Cost (£) per pupil
Speaker fees (£600 x 6 speakers)		3,600	0.74
Research Champion salary (12 months)		29,625	6.11
Travel costs Research Champion		200	0.04
Speakers' accommodation (£80 x 2 nights)		160	0.03
Symposia venue & refreshments (£450 x 3 symposia)		1,350	0.28
Twilights forum refreshments (£30 x 6 sessions)		180	0.04
Administration Assistant salary		4,000	0.82
Delivery material		1,200	0.25
Dissemination (5 research leads x half day per half term x 6 half terms)	15		0.00
Sub-total cost of providing the intervention	15	40,315	8.31

Base: 4,851 pupils receive the effect of the intervention per year.

Cost and time of attending the intervention events

The intervention events included three full-day symposia, six 90-minute twilight forums, and research brokerage visits of the Research Champion to the participating schools every half term.

The symposia and the twilight forums required travelling to the venue, but because all schools were within 25 miles of each other, travel costs were fairly low. Teachers tended to share cars to go between the schools, so it was difficult to calculate precise travel costs. We estimate that travel expenses were around £10 per teacher per year.

Each teacher was expected to use three days to attend the symposia. With forward planning, staff in every school were released for these events without cover being bought in.

Total staff time associated with attending the intervention sessions breaks down as follows:

1. 3 staff members in each of the five schools attending all three full-day symposia (45 days in total);
2. 3 staff members in each of the five schools attending all six 90-minute twilight forums (27 days in total); and
3. 3 staff members in each of the five schools spending two days per half term at research brokerage meetings (180 days in total).

Table 11 shows a breakdown of costs and time associated with attending the intervention training sessions.

Table 11: Costs of attending the training sessions

Item	Time (days, 1 day = 5 hrs)	Cost (£)	Cost (£) per pupil
Teachers' travel costs (£10 x 3 teachers x 5 schools)		150	0.03
Staff time	252		
Sub-total costs of attending the sessions	252	150	0.03

Base: 4,851 pupils receive the effect of the intervention per year.

Total cost and cost per pupil

This intervention was implemented at the whole-school level and intended to benefit pupils across all year groups. However, the implementation was gradual, with some pupils receiving the direct effect of the intervention only at the end of the academic year. Therefore, to calculate the total cost per pupil in the intervention's first year, we considered only those pupils who were involved in the programme from the beginning of the academic year ($n = 2,075$). When estimating costs per pupil in the intervention's second and third years, we assumed that all pupils at each school would be affected by the intervention from the beginning of the academic year, and thus used the total number of pupils across the five participating schools ($n = 4,851$). Table 12 shows the total cost of the intervention and its cost per pupil. Overall, the cost of the programme to schools was low. Over the first year of the intervention taking place, schools spent £27.13 per pupil.

Total cost was divided between start-up costs and running costs. The launch event, for example, may be regarded by schools as a one-off expenditure which will not apply in subsequent years if the intervention is extended for a longer period of time. This separation is particularly important as it also allows us to estimate the potential cost of the intervention if it is implemented for three years, where we distribute the start-up costs over the whole length of the programme.

Table 13 shows how the average cost per pupil per year decreases as the length of the interventions is increased. Additionally, since the number of pupils receiving the intervention is estimated to increase after the first year; there is an important reduction of costs per pupil over time.

Table 12: Total cost and cost per pupil in the first year

Item	Cost (£)	Cost (£) per pupil
Start-up cost	15,845	8
Running costs per year	40,465	20
Total cost – first year	56,310	27

Table 13: Total cost per pupil over three years of the programme

Item	Cumulative cost per pupil (£)	Average Cost (£) per pupil per year
Year 1	27	27
Year 2	39	19
Year 3	50	17

Conclusions

Formative findings

Findings from depth interviews suggest that the key learning points to take forward for the ATA Research Champion project include:

1. exploring ways to ensure participating staff are given regular, dedicated time for the programme, in particular release time to attend all events and to engage with the brokerage service, and time to plan, implement, and review changes in classroom practice;
2. fostering support from senior leaders at the school: encouraging buy-in from senior leadership teams will lead to more support for staff, including release time and classroom cover, as well as a greater likelihood that learning from the project will be shared and taken forward across the whole school;
3. allowing flexibility for schools to tailor the strategies they use to their school context—viewed as key to promoting engagement and buy-in from teachers and senior leadership teams; and
4. providing practical examples and materials that can be used in the classroom to facilitate classroom implementation, with a focus on simple strategies expected to bring ‘quick gains’.

Limitations of the evaluation

There were a number of limitations to our evaluation of the ATA Research Champion programme:

1. The outcomes collected in the teachers’ survey were not wholly consistent with those outlined in the intervention’s logic model.
2. There was no comparison group.
3. Response rates to the teachers’ surveys (63% at baseline and 56% at follow-up) mean we were not able to capture data on all teachers at the participating schools. It is possible that there was a systematic bias associated with non-response (for example, responses may have come from teachers who had more positive attitudes towards research, or who were less busy, than those who did not respond).
4. The sample size available for analysis of outcomes ($n = 106$) was very low, and the differences would need to be very large in order to be statistically significant.
5. It was not possible to undertake a separate analysis of outcomes for teachers with direct involvement in the programme due to low sample size in that group.
6. No pupil-level data was collected as part of the evaluation.

Interpretation

The ATA Research Champion evaluation aimed to explore whether, and to what extent, research communication and engagement strategies employed by the intervention had the potential to improve teachers’ use of, and attitudes towards, academic research and thus support pupils’ progress. Analysis of data from the survey of teachers showed that there had been no significant changes in the teachers’ attitudes towards research, or their actual use of research evidence in practice between baseline and follow-up; there was, in other words, no evidence to show that the intervention had achieved its aims in its pilot year.

The programme was largely delivered as intended and as documented in the logic model, however while the structure of the programme and its outputs were as planned, levels of participant engagement varied. Therefore, overall, the evidence on the programme’s feasibility was mixed.

In terms of the individual components of the programme, the research symposia were well received by participants who valued the opportunity to learn about developments in educational research and reflect on teaching practice outside the classroom. Likewise, the twilight forums, although not as well attended as anticipated, were generally felt to be a useful and positive addition to the programme. Evidence on the research brokerage service and ad hoc support was more mixed: while many participants valued this element of the intervention, in particular the accessibility and helpfulness of the

Research Champion, others did not find it as useful. This may have been related to the barriers that some teachers faced finding time to fully engage in the programme, which was related, in turn, to competing priorities in schools and varying levels of buy-in from senior leadership teams. Indeed, time pressures posed the most serious threat to the feasibility of the programme. Overall, findings suggest that systematic implementation of research evidence would require an enhanced process of mentoring and support to promote sustained engagement at the senior leadership level.

Given the mixed evidence in terms of the programme feasibility and a lack of evidence that the programme changed teachers' attitudes towards research evidence and their actual use of research in their practice, our conclusion is that the ATA Research Champion programme is not ready to be evaluated in a trial in its current state of development. A number of development points need to be considered before the intervention could be taken to a full trial stage:

1. Given the 'bespoke' nature of the programme—aiming as it does to respond to needs of individual participating schools—what are its defining features? For example, how important is it to follow a specified structure (such that, for example, teachers attend all symposia and twilight forums), and how important are the topics covered at the events? Before going to trial, it would be necessary to specify exactly which components are required, and how much commitment would be needed from teachers (that is, the minimum dosage for the programme to be effective).
2. The issues with implementation (time pressures on teachers, staff turnover, and buy-in from senior leadership) would need to be fully addressed before going to trial. For example, although schools were asked to commit to releasing teachers for a certain amount of time to the project (so they could, for example, attend the twilight forums) this was not something that happened in practice for all schools. Better strategies are needed for tackling barriers to successful implementation within schools.
3. For a trial, pupil-level outcome data would need to be collected; this was not part of the evaluation of the pilot. It will require careful consideration of the year groups that should take part—a particular challenge for a project which includes both secondary and primary schools.
4. The programme needs to consider fully what types of data would be appropriate as outcome measures at pupil level—for example, attainment data only, or attitudinal data as well, including educational aspirations as a longer-term outcome (see the logic model).
5. The timing of outcome data collection needs to be in line with the logic model. It is likely that a project of this kind will require pupil attainment data to be collected some time after the end of the intervention.
6. Given that a significant focus of the programme is on improving teachers' attitudes and behaviours as a first step towards improving pupil attainment, it would be helpful if the trial collected outcome data at the teacher level as well as at the pupil level (with data collection being timed in line with the logic model). Outcomes at the teacher level should fully reflect the logic model.
7. More conceptual thinking should be given as to how the programme can create a whole-school effect when only a small number of teachers have direct involvement in the programme. In particular, it needs to be made more explicit whether and how teachers directly involved in programme can effectively cascade their newly obtained knowledge to colleagues.

Future research

Our findings suggest that the ATA Research Champion programme is not yet ready to be evaluated in a trial and needs further development before additional research is conducted to explore its effectiveness. As this programme was funded and evaluated as part of the EEF's 'research use' round, it may be useful to review findings from all projects together. This could help to draw out key lessons about which strategies prove particularly successful when encouraging teachers to engage with research evidence. This learning could usefully be fed into the Research Champion programme as it develops.

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Appendix A: Outcome measures

The five outcomes measures used in the analysis were developed by Poet *et al.* (unpublished).

Positive disposition to academic research in informing teaching practice

Composite scale measures constructed using components of different survey questions were used to compare before and after measures. The first of these measures combined responses to six items:

1. Ease of understanding reports, books, or summaries based on academic research (Q6, item 1).¹⁹
2. Information from research plays an important role in informing my/our teaching practice (Q8, item 1).
3. I know where to find relevant research that may help to inform teaching methods/ practice (Q8, item 3).
4. I am able to relate information from research to my context (Q8, item 5).
5. I feel confident about analysing information from research (Q8, item 7).
6. I use information from research to help me decide how to implement new approaches in the classroom (Q8, item 9).

The Cronbach's alpha for measure 1 at both the baseline and outcome survey was 0.86 indicating that the questions were highly correlated.

Use of academic research to inform selection of teaching approaches

The second composite measure was constructed by combining four criteria:

1. Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based) were important when identifying the approach (Q3b, item 4).
2. Online evidence platforms or databases (such as the Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit) were important when identifying the approach (Q3b, item 9).
3. 'Influence the fact' approach was backed by academic research had on decision to adopt it (Q4, item 6).
4. The extent to which articles, reports, books, or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based) are consulted when deciding on approaches to support pupil's progress (Q5, item 3).

This deviates from the NFER guidelines that suggest the outcome measure is constructed with the questions above in addition to the statement: 'CPD based on academic research was important when identifying approach' in Q3a. Since this latter statement is only included in the outcomes survey, using the NFER survey and analysis guidelines it would only have been possible to assess 'use of academic research to inform selection of teaching approaches' in the outcomes survey. However, by excluding this particular question from the analysis it was possible to compare results across the two time points. The Cronbach's alpha for the measure was 0.37 at baseline and 0.54 in the outcomes survey, indicating a weak internal consistency at baseline and a moderate one in the outcomes survey.

¹⁹ Teachers who responded 'I don't use this source' to question 6, item 3, have been assigned a score of 2.5 on this measure, as have those with missing values. This coding follows the evaluation guidelines set out in Poet *et al.* (unpublished).

Perception that academic research is not useful to teaching

Measure three captured teachers' 'perception that academic research is not useful to teaching' combining responses to two survey questions:

1. I do not believe that using information from research will help to improve pupil outcomes (Q8, item 2).
2. Information from research conducted elsewhere is of limited value of our school (Q8, item 8).

The Cronbach's alpha for this measure was 0.60 at baseline and 0.72 in the outcomes survey, suggesting a moderate level of correlation between measures.

Perception that own school does not encourage use of academic research

The fourth outcome measure aimed to capture the 'perception that the teachers' own school does not encourage use of academic research', combining responses to two items on question 8:

1. My school leaders/governors do not encourage me to use information from research to improve my practice (item 4).
2. Other staff in my school rarely use information from research to inform their teaching practice (item 6).

The Cronbach's alpha for this outcome measure was lower than others, 0.71 at baseline and 0.37 in the outcomes survey, suggesting a weaker correlation between measures in the outcome survey, and therefore lower reliability. For this reason, this composite measure was not considered robust enough to be included in the analysis and was excluded from the report. Instead the two questions were analysed separately.

Active engagement with online evidence platforms

The measure constructed to explore 'active engagement with online evidence platforms' combined questions exploring the extent to which teachers used online evidence platforms, such as the Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit (Q5, item 6) and how easily they understood them (Q6, item 6).²⁰ The Cronbach's alpha for the measure was 0.66 at baseline and 0.61 in the outcomes survey, showing a moderate correlation between the two measures.

²⁰ Teachers who responded 'I don't use this source' to question 6, item 6, have been assigned a score of 2.5 on this measure, as have those with missing data. This coding follows the evaluation guidelines set out in Poet et al. (unpublished).

Appendix B: Memorandum of Agreement



Agreement to participate in the Evaluation of Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project

Please sign both copies, retaining one and returning the second copy to Ben White at Highworth Grammar School, Ashford.

School Name: _____

Aims of the Evaluation

The aim of this project is to evaluate the impact of the ATA Research Champion project, a scheme intended to promote effective use of educational research to raise educational outcomes by developing teaching expertise and practice. The results of the research will contribute to our understanding of what works in raising the pupil's attainment and will be widely disseminated to schools in England. Ultimately we hope that the evaluation will equip school staff with the skills and understanding to better support children through making effective use of high quality educational research in key decisions which they make.

What will the Research Champion (RC) Project provide?

The Research Champion project will provide the following free of charge to each school:

- 1. Three Research Symposia:** These are staff development days based on the development aims of the six partner schools. They will include keynote seminars from educational researchers and workshops in which their key ideas will be explored in more depth.
- 2. Termly Research and Development twilight forums:** These will provide a context to explore how the use of research both in classrooms and at school leader level.
- 3. Bespoke research brokerage for each individual school:** Each school involved can make use of the RC in a 'research brokering' role once a term. This could involve providing a summary of relevant research findings, running a workshop with a group of staff, or providing your SLT with findings relevant to your development plans.

Structure of the Evaluation

The evaluation is being conducted by NatCen. NatCen will come to visit schools once or twice during the programme to see how the Research Champion model is working in each school. We will talk to teachers to find out how the trial is working for you, and the mechanisms for this. Telephone conversations will be scheduled between visits. This level of evaluation is expected to be the same in all 6 schools participating in the trial.

In September 2014 and May-June 2015 NatCen will carry out a short online survey with all teaching staff in participating schools. Analysis of anonymised National Pupil Database data, held by the Department for Education, will be used to help understand whether the programme has an impact on Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 attainment.

Use of Data

Data collected regarding teachers and pupils will be treated with the strictest confidence. No individual school, teacher or pupil will be identified in any report arising from the research.



Responsibilities

ATA and the Research Champion will:

- Deliver the three symposia, six twilight sessions, and bespoke 'brokerage' sessions outlined above.
- Be the first point of contact for any questions about the evaluation
- Provide on-going support to the school
- Send out regular updates on the progress of the project through a newsletter

NatCen will:

- Correspond with schools to evaluate the project including visits, observations, face to face and telephone interviews with staff, collecting written feedback and policy/guidance documents and surveying teaching staff in the school
- Collect and analyse data from the project
- Disseminate research findings

The School will:

- Nominate a 'research lead' who will be the primary contact point between the school and both the research champion and evaluation team.
- Liaise with Ben White to complete an initial research interests audit in June/July 2014.
- Release staff so that they can attend training sessions (outlined below) and take part in up to three interviews with NatCen
 - At least three staff to attend each Research Symposium
 - At least two staff to attend each twilight session.
- Commit to utilising the 'research brokerage' support which can be tailored to meet schools' individual needs and interests.
- Provide a list of all teaching staff to the project team, to be shared with the evaluation team
- Allow time for each survey phase and encourage staff to participate in project surveys and interviews
- Ensure the shared understanding and support of all school staff for to the project and personnel involved
- Share school policy and guidance documents with NatCen

We commit to the evaluation of the ATA Research Champion as detailed above

Head teacher: _____

Research Lead: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Letter to headteachers

Name

School name

Address

Date

Dear name,

The Evaluation of Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project

I am writing to you to let you know that over the next few week's teachers in your school will be taking part in an online survey for the Evaluation of Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project.

This survey will help us to understand teachers' views and experiences of using research in their teaching. The study is funded by the Education Endowment Foundation. All information collected in this survey will be confidential and individuals will not be identified in the published results.

We would appreciate your support in encouraging all teachers to complete the survey.

Further information about the study can be found at www.natcen.ac.uk/research-use. If you have any queries, please feel free to email researchuse@natcen.ac.uk or call us on 0800 652 0401.



Dr Svetlana Speight

Research Project Director

NatCen Social Research

Appendix D: Survey invitation email to teachers

[Serial]

To [firstname lastname],

I am writing to invite you to take part in a short piece of research for the Evaluation of Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project.

As you may be aware, as part of this programme, teachers in your school will be involved in learning how they may be able to enhance your school's teaching using research-based evidence.

As part of this process we would like you to answer a few questions about your own teaching practice. The online questionnaire should take no longer than 15 minutes. We would be grateful if you could complete it by [date].

Take part now

The information you provide will help us to understand teachers' views and experiences of using research in their teaching. The study is funded by the Education Endowment Foundation. All information collected in this survey will be confidential and individuals will not be identified in the published results.

Further information about the study can be found at <http://www.natcen.ac.uk/research-use>. **If you have any queries, please feel free to email researchuse@natcen.ac.uk or call us on 0800 652 XXXX.**

Kind regards,



Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Project Director
NatCen Social Research

Appendix E: The Outcomes Survey

Supporting Pupil Progress

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Your responses will contribute to a study conducted by NatCen Social Research on behalf of the Education Endowment Foundation. It is exploring different approaches to improve pupil progress. The survey includes questions on how you/your school have decided to introduce new approaches and the types of information you use to inform decisions on teaching and learning.

The survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Your answers will be treated confidentially, which means that you and your school will not be identified in any reports produced from this research.

BLOCK A – Introduction

Job

1. **What is your job role?** Please **tick one box** below that best describes your role

Classroom teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Middle leader (e.g. head of department, subject or curriculum area leader, key stage leader, pastoral services leader)	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Senior leader (e.g. deputy or assistant headteacher)	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Headteacher, principal or director	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Other role (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

HowLong2

2. How long have you been in the teaching profession? *(Please tick the box that describes the length of your whole teaching career, including career breaks)*

30 years or more 1

20-29 years 2

10-19 years 3

5-9 years 4

1-4 years 5

First year of teaching (NQT) 6

BLOCK B - About a specific approach to supporting pupils' progress

ApproachO

3a. Please name in the box below a specific approach that you have used within the last two years to support pupils' progress. For example this could be a teaching method, or a resource, product or initiative.

Name/brief description *(Please write in the box below)*

Identify3

3b. Which, if any, of the following were important in identifying the approach you named? Please select the three most important sources. *(Please tick up to three)*

- Ideas generated by me or my school 1
- Ideas from other schools 2
- Advice from my local authority or academy chain 3
- Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based) 4
- Articles, reports, books or summaries based on teacher experience (paper or web based) 5
- The promotional materials of an external supplier 6
- Action research conducted by me or my colleagues 7

Information gathered through training/CPD	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Online evidence platforms or databases (e.g. the Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
Guidance from official bodies such as DfE and Ofsted	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
Guidance from exam boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	11
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	12
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	13

{Select if Identify3 = 8 – Information gathered through training/CPD}

CPD

Please indicate, from the list below, what the training/CPD was based on. (Please tick all that apply)

3c.

Exam board information	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Academic research	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Ideas from my school (e.g. internal INSET)	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Ideas from other schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Expertise of an external consultant	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Expertise of a programme provider	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Local authority/academy chain guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	8

Influence

Please rate the level of influence that each of the following factors had on the decision to adopt your approach. (Please tick one box in each row)

4.

We thought the approach...	Strong influence	Some influence	No influence	Not applicable
	1	2	3	4
...would be straightforward to implement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...was likely to be popular with staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...was likely to be popular with parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...was likely to be popular with pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... was inexpensive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...was backed by academic research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...was a good fit with existing practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...aligned with our professional experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BLOCK C - Your general approach to teaching and learning to support pupils' progress

We would now like you to think more broadly about how you develop your teaching to support pupils' progress.

5. ConsultPP

To what extent do you consult the following sources when deciding on your approaches to support pupils' progress? *(Please tick one box in each row)*

	A lot 1	A little 2	Not at all 3
Pupil performance data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External organisations (e.g. local authority, academy chain, DfE or Ofsted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on teacher experience (paper or web based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information gathered through training/CPD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online evidence platforms or databases (e.g. the Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance from exam boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colleagues within my own school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colleagues in other schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

UnderstandPP

6. How easy do you find it to understand the information that these sources provide about how to support pupils' progress? (Please tick one box in each row)

	Very easy	Quite easy	Not very easy	Not at all easy	I don't use this source
	1	2	3	4	5
Pupil performance data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External organisations (e.g. local authority, academy chain, DfE or Ofsted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on academic research (paper or web based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articles, reports, books or summaries based on teacher experience (paper or web based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information gathered through training/CPD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online evidence platforms or databases (e.g. the Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Toolkit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance from exam boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colleagues within my own school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colleagues in other schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BLOCK D Evidence-based teaching and using evidence from research**Evidence3**

7.

What does the term 'evidence-based teaching' mean to you?**Please select up to three boxes that best describe your understanding of the term.**

Conducting action research and applying the learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Learning from colleagues and applying the learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Applying Ofsted or DfE guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Using an online evidence platform/database (e.g. Sutton Trust Toolkit) and applying the learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Applying exam board guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Combining academic research evidence with my professional expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Using pupil performance data to track pupil progress and plan ahead	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
Applying the recommendations of an external supplier	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Reading and applying information from academic research or from working with researchers	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
Learning from external consultants, trainers or advisors	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
I don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	11

Research

8. This question aims to find out how (if at all) you use research information in your work. By 'research' we mean information from books, reports, articles, summaries, training or events that is **based on academic studies**.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please tick one box in each row).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Information from research plays an important role in informing my/our teaching practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not believe that using information from research will help to improve pupil outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know where to find relevant research that may help to inform teaching methods/practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My school leaders/governors do not encourage me to use information from research to improve my practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am able to relate information from research to my context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other staff in my school rarely use information from research to inform their teaching practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel confident about analysing information from research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information from research conducted elsewhere is of limited value to our school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I use information from research to help me to decide how to implement new approaches in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ResUsed

9. In the last year, how (if at all) have you used information from academic research to inform your practice? (Please tick all that apply)

Respondents can either tick 'I have not used information from research...' OR as many responses as they like from items 2 to 7.

Respondents are routed as follows:

1. 'I have not used information from research' (item 1) – go to Q11.
2. EITHER or BOTH 'change classroom practice' (item 4) /influenced colleagues to change their practice (item 6), regardless of whether they have ticked any other options – go to Q10

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| I have not used information from academic research in the last year | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Or, in the last year I have used information from academic research to: | | |
| discuss best practice with colleagues | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| reflect on my own practice | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| change classroom practice (this could be starting, developing or discontinuing an approach) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| contribute to my own research/enquiry | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| influence colleagues to change their classroom practice (this could be starting, developing or discontinuing an approach) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| improve my knowledge of a topic or subject | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |

{Select if ResUse = 4 and/or 6}

Change

10. What was it about the research information that enabled you to change classroom practice? (Please tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| It was clear (e.g. language, style, presentation) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| It was convincing | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| I was able to discuss the research with a researcher or someone else who understood it | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |

I could see clearly how the research related to our context 4

There was coaching and training available based on the research 5

It contained practical guidance about how to apply the research in the classroom 6

I was able to see the research being applied in another school 7

It encouraged collaborative enquiry 8

It was supported by resources (e.g. funding, materials) 9

Other (please specify) 10

--

BLOCK E - Your knowledge about research

In this section we would like to gather some information about your knowledge of research. Please answer the questions without referring to other sources.

Knowledge

- 11. Current understanding from academic research suggests that each of the following statements is 'true' or 'false'. (Please tick the answer that you know to be correct in each row. If you are not sure, please tick 'don't know').**

The research says that:	True 1	False 2	Don't know 3
Drinking six to eight glasses of water per day improves pupil learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing class size is one of the most cost-effective ways to improve pupil learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extending the school day is more likely to improve learning outcomes for pupils on Free School Meals than pupils not on Free School Meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interventions that focus solely on raising pupil aspirations have little impact on learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Setting pupils by ability improves learning outcomes for all pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual pupils learn best when they receive information in their preferred learning style (e.g. auditory, visual, kinaesthetic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peer tutoring (students supporting other students with their learning) usually benefits the pupil being tutored more than the pupil doing the tutoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homework has a greater impact on pupils' learning outcomes at secondary school than at primary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Methods

12. Below are descriptions of three reasons why someone would want to carry out research. Along the top of the table are five different research methods.

Please match the research purpose with the best research method for achieving it by selecting the relevant option. Please select one box in each row. There are only three matches – two methods are incorrect (please do not use the same answer more than once).

	Randomised Controlled Trial	Longitudinal study	Interviews and/or questionnaires	Literature review	Correlational study
	1	2	3	4	5
To provide an overview of the evidence base	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To determine whether an intervention or approach has a direct impact on pupil learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To understand how an intervention or approach works in practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BLOCK F - About the intervention

The next questions relate to your schools participation in **the ATA Research Champion programme**

You/your school has been invited to take part in **the ATA Research Champion programme**. The following set of questions asks about your views on this initiative.

Participation

13. Did your school take part in the Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project? (Please tick one box only)

Yes, and I had first-hand involvement 1

Yes, my colleague/s were involved, and they shared the learning with me 2

Yes, my colleague/s were involved, but I don't know any more about it 3

No, my school did not take part 4

I'm not sure 5

{Select if Participation = 1&2}

The following questions ask you to comment on your involvement in **the Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project**. In these questions we would like you to think about your experiences of the **whole project** rather than its specific components.

Information1

14. How did you feel about the amount of information that was provided through the project? (Please tick one box only)

There was too much information 1

The amount of information was about right 2

There was too little information 3

{Select if Participation = 1&2}

Information2

15. To what extent did the information from the project enable you to... *(Please tick one box in each row)*

	A lot	A little	Not at all
discuss best practice with colleagues in my school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
share the learning with people or organisations outside my school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reflect on my own practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
change classroom practice (this could be starting, developing or discontinuing an approach)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reinforce existing practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
conduct my own research or enquiry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
influence colleagues in my school to change their classroom practice (this could be starting, developing or discontinuing an approach)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
improve my knowledge of a topic or subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

{Select if Participation = 1&2}

ResultQ

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please tick one box in each row)

As a result of the project I have:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
---	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------

Sought out further evidence, research or information about a topic relevant to my practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Sought out further evidence, research or information on other topics/approaches.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

{Select if Participation = 1&2}

In the following question we would like you to think about the **individual elements** of the **Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project** rather than the project as a whole.

Elements

17. How would you rate the following elements of the Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project? (Please tick one box in each row)

	Very good	Quite good	Average	Quite poor	Very poor	Did not use/did not attend
--	-----------	------------	---------	------------	-----------	----------------------------

Symposia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Twilight sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Brokerage (the Project Lead coming to your school and offering advice)

Individual support/advice from the Research into Practice lead via phone/email

{Select if Participation = 1&2}

Recommend

18a. Overall, would you recommend the Ashford Teaching Alliance: Research Champion Project to another school? (Please tick one box only)

Yes, definitely 1

Yes, probably 2

Probably not 3

Definitely not 4

{Select if Participation = 1&2}

Reason

18b. Please explain your reasons:



Thank you very much for completing the survey.

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