

# School Partnerships Programme: a school-level matched difference in differences evaluation of impact on pupil attainment

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<b>Registration date</b> 21/05/2018	<b>Overall study status</b> Stopped	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 08/09/2021	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

The Education Development Trust (EDT)'s School Partnership Programme (SPP) is a structured approach to cluster-based school collaboration, through the provision of a coherent and consistent approach to peer review that aims to drive improvement across all schools involved in the cluster. The programme aims to develop a culture of partnership working through school self-evaluation, peer review and school-to-school support. The aim of this study is to estimate the effect of participating in the EDT School Partnerships Programme (SPP) for two years on pupils' attainment.

### Who can participate?

About 300 state-funded schools in England as part of pre-identified clusters of schools who are happy to commit to participating in the School Partnership Programme. The study focuses on the test scores of those in school Year 6 (age 10-11) when the two year programme ends.

### What does the study involve?

300 schools are recruited to implement the SPP programme described above. The change in these schools' performance is compared to the change in specifically chosen comparison schools over the same period.

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

SPP is a peer review model that is intended to build capacity and capability across clusters so they can gradually take more responsibility for their own development and maturity, and lead their own improvement. Over time, local areas will own the SPP model, and continue to develop it so it has impact locally. SPP provides frameworks and tools, training and professional support, and is designed to incorporate and build on, not side line, schools' existing best practice.

### Where is the study run from?

The study is run by the Education Development Trust and the evaluation is being run by UCL Institute of Education. The study includes schools from across England.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?  
May 2017 to December 2020

Who is funding the study?  
Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

Who is the main contact?  
Dr Jake Anders

## Contact information

**Type(s)**  
Scientific

**Contact name**  
Dr Jake Anders

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**Contact details**  
UCL Institute of Education  
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## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**  
N/A

## Study information

**Scientific Title**  
School Partnerships Programme: a school-level matched difference in differences evaluation of impact on pupil attainment

**Study objectives**  
Participation in the School Partnerships Programme for two years improves pupils' attainment

**Ethics approval required**  
Old ethics approval format

**Ethics approval(s)**  
UCL Institute of Education Research Ethics Committee, 20/03/2018, ref: REC1040

**Study design**  
School-level matched difference in differences

**Primary study design**

Interventional

**Study type(s)**

Quality of life

**Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Academic attainment at age 11

**Interventions**

This is a quasi-experimental intervention study. 300 schools will be recruited to implement the SPP programme.

Treatment: The Education Development Trust (EDT)'s School Partnership Programme (SPP) is a structured approach to cluster-based school collaboration, through the provision of a coherent and consistent approach to peer review that aims to drive improvement across all schools involved in the cluster. The programme aims to develop a culture of partnership working through school self-evaluation, peer review and school-to-school support

Comparison: Business as usual (300 matched comparison schools will be identified from administrative data)

The trialists will then compare the change in these schools' performance to the change in specifically chosen comparator schools over the same period. The intervention continues across a two academic year period and follow up will be based on administrative data collected at the end of this second academic year.

**Intervention Type**

Behavioural

**Primary outcome(s)**

School average performance in KS2 maths tests (currently mat\_average in administrative datasets) in pre- and post-treatment years, collected from publicly available school-level reports collected by schools from testing conducted during the summer term of each academic year and reported to the UK Department for Education (DfE) in line with national requirements

**Key secondary outcome(s)**

School average performance in KS2 reading tests (read\_average in administrative datasets) in pre- and post-treatment years, collected from publicly available school-level reports collected by schools from testing conducted during the summer term of each academic year and reported to the UK Department for Education (DfE) in line with national requirements

**Completion date**

31/12/2020

**Reason abandoned (if study stopped)**

Pandemic

**Eligibility**

**Key inclusion criteria**

Target recruitment was 50 clusters of English state-funded primary schools to be recruited with an approximate cluster size of 6, making 300 schools in total, with the proviso that if cluster size is smaller than expected additional recruitment would be undertaken to bring the number of schools recruited up to 300. In the event, the project team (EDT) successfully recruited far more schools than anticipated, providing a sample of 437 English state-funded primary schools in 85 clusters (average cluster size of just over 5). All recruited schools will receive the intervention, while statistical matching methods will be used to identify the counterfactual group. In order to be considered, schools will have to agree to cooperate with the project and evaluation teams during the trial. The project team will advertise the trial and also approach schools through their existing networks. Where possible it will aim to recruit schools that have larger populations of individuals receiving FSM.

For the evaluation, the study focuses on the test scores of those in school Year 6 (age 10-11) when the two year programme ends.

**Participant type(s)**

Other

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Other

**Sex**

All

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Independent schools
2. Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish schools

**Date of first enrolment**

01/10/2017

**Date of final enrolment**

28/02/2018

**Locations****Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

**Study participating centre**

UCL Institute of Education

20 Bedford Way

London

United Kingdom  
WC1H 0AL

**Study participating centre**  
**Education Development Trust**  
Highbridge House  
16-18 Duke Street  
Reading  
United Kingdom  
RG1 4RU

## Sponsor information

**Organisation**  
Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

**ROR**  
<https://ror.org/03bhd6288>

## Funder(s)

**Funder type**  
Charity

**Funder Name**  
Education Endowment Foundation

**Alternative Name(s)**  
EducEndowFoundn, Education Endowment Foundation | London, EEF

**Funding Body Type**  
Private sector organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**  
Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

**Location**  
United Kingdom

## Results and Publications

## Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be stored in a publically available repository. School-level outcomes data from before, during and after the treatment period for participating and matched comparator schools will be uploaded to the EEF Data Archive (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/evaluating-projects/eef-research-papers/>). Access to these data are available to researchers on application to the EEF for analysis to understand educational attainment and inequality. The data we are submitting to this archive are extracted from publicly-available school performance data reported by the UK Data Service.

## IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in repository

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Participant information sheet</a>	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
<a href="#">Study website</a>	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes