

# National Improving Writing Programme

## Wave 1 Evaluation

January 2024

Updated following ACEL publication



Children and  
Young People  
Improvement  
Collaborative



Education  
Scotland  
Foghlam Alba

## Executive Summary

*“What a difference a programme like this can make in [our] local authority. The difference it is having on one bairn, one whole class and then a whole school ... it’s fantastic.”*

Local authority Director of Children’s Services

The Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) **National Improving Writing programme** is being delivered in partnership with Education Scotland.

The purpose of the programme is to **improve children’s attainment in writing** during first level Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) by spreading an evidence-based writing change theory, originally developed and tested in a local area, to achieve results at scale.

As well as aiming to improve attainment, the programme is providing valuable learning around how we **spread evidence-based practice** and local innovation to achieve national impact and helping **equip class teachers with Quality Improvement (QI) knowledge** so that they can apply the method more widely to improve outcomes for children. This programme supports the consistent **implementation of good learning and teaching**.



This report outlines the impact and learning from Wave 1, which consisted of two Cohorts. As part of CYPIC’s approach to spread, Cohort 1 was made up of **26 Schools from 5 local authorities** who were supported by the Programme team to build the conditions for change locally and implement the theory of change using tried and tested QI methods. Alongside this, local leads were supported to develop the capability required to deliver the learning to a second cohort – **a further 25 schools** – to help build local capability and reach more classes and children.

The programme is demonstrating **significant impact on attainment**, with **all participating Local Authorities reporting an improvement**. The impact is being measured using both qualitative and quantitative data and a range of wider benefits, including significant improvements in teacher’s confidence in teaching writing and pupil engagement and enjoyment have also been identified.

A risk identified during programme development was that it could broaden the existing “gap”. For instance, children with Additional Support Needs, less able children or reluctant writers would be left behind their peers. However, the opposite has occurred as **able children were pushed to achieve while reluctant writers started writing** and often began to catch-up to expected levels. Teacher feedback also highlighted the positive impact the structured approach is having on children with dyslexia and where English is an additional language as well as some **observing a positive impact on the poverty related attainment gap**, with one Local Authority reporting they had almost halved the gap.

Where children are still to achieve first level, class teachers are noting substantial **evidence of the gap between individuals and their peers narrowing**. The number of children achieving CfE First Level in Wave 1, Cohort 1 was 845. Of this group **171 children attained that were not expected** to (this represents **20% of the cohort**). Cohort 2 figures are held locally.

While data over time has been gathered for each local authority, given the sensitive nature of reporting ACEL figures, changes have been illustrated as two anonymised data points at this time.

Achievement of First Level CfE outcomes for 2022/23 (compared to the previous year):

- Local authority 1: increased 9 percentage points (**15% improvement**)
- Local authority 2: increased 5 percentage points (**8% improvement**)
- Local authority 3: increased 4 percentage points (**5% improvement**)
- Local authority 4: increased 5 percentage points (**7% improvement**)
- Local authority 5: increased 7 percentage points (**11% improvement**)

The spread aim:

By June 2024 the five local authorities participating in Wave 1 will achieve  $\geq 70\%$  in first level CfE (Baseline 0 of 5)

This was achieved in **June 2023, with all 5 reporting 70% or more**

Results at school level:

- 20 of 24 schools that completed Cohort 1 reported an improvement on their 2021/22 ACEL figures for First Level writing.
- 18 of 23 schools that completed Cohort 2 reported an improvement on their 2021/22 ACEL figures for First Level writing.
- 25 schools reported an **ACEL figure above 70%** this year (baseline 8 of 49).
- 16 schools reported an increase of more than **20% points** above the previous year.

Once available, virtual comparator data will be used to review participating school improvement compared to typical school improvement. In the meantime, data gathered from process measures and the rich qualitative feedback provided further points to the programme having had a significant impact.

Across Wave 1, Cohort 1  
**25% more children**  
attained CfE First Level  
than was predicted.

100% of 43 teachers (Cohort 1) agreed or  
strongly agreed with the statement:  
“Participating in the writing programme  
increased attainment for learners.”

Teachers feeling “*extremely*” or “*very*”  
confident to teach writing more than  
doubled from 32% to 79%

Pupil enjoyment of writing  
increased from 25% to 90%

The evaluation identified the following key themes as essential elements in the success of the programme:

- The attention given to making implementation practical and consistent has helped teachers reliably implement the writing change theory (including a bundle of changes focused on high quality learning and teaching).
- Teachers have clarity of what to focus on, are taught ways to gather effective data to see improvement quickly and engage children in the process. The emphasis on implementing the whole Writing Change Bundle and not “cherry picking” increased as the programme progressed.
- Opportunities for peer support and camaraderie helped break down barriers and address reluctance around sharing information with children, specifically run charts.
- Teachers are aware of the impact they are having on a daily basis. Children and teachers are motivated by the success they are experiencing.
- Quality Improvement capability is developed in real time so participants build their capacity to continue improving. Participants see this as a stepping-stone for wider curricular change.
- The programme is structured to engage at the macro, meso and micro levels of the system. With strategic leaders engaged and informed, therefore able to create the conditions for change, while class teachers are empowered to improve and supplied with the tools to help positive change happen.
- National messaging is clear, Education Scotland and CYPIC partnership is visible, and pedagogy is combined with a method to implement improvements.
- The Programme faculty are knowledgeable and approachable, they actively develop a safe space to support learning, and continuous improvement is built into the programme.

*“The ease of implementing the bundle to have such a profound impact on writing attainment”.*  
Class Teacher

*“Using the bundle makes sure the evidenced work happens consistently”.*  
Local Lead

These findings are being used to continuously develop the programme for Wave 2 and upcoming Wave 3. The next phase of the work will further hone how to involve more schools where there is the greatest need for improvement alongside a local leads programme to support sustainable spread.

The programme is providing valuable learning on how to scale up improvement and spread what works, which feels applicable not just in education but in CYPIC’s wider improvement work. Future opportunities to adapt the approach where most needed will be explored with the CYPIC Board.

*“The impact of CYPIC upon writing attainment has been remarkable. It has enabled the teachers to transform and enhance their teaching practice within writing and track progress in full partnership with children. It has positively impacted upon the attainment gap in writing within P4 and P5”*  
Head teacher

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## Purpose of the Programme

The purpose of the Programme is to improve children's attainment in writing during first level Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) by spreading an evidence-based change theory, originally developed and tested in a local area, to achieve results at scale.

As well as aiming to improve attainment, the programme is designed to provide valuable learning around how we systematically spread evidence-based practice and local innovation to achieve national impact and helping equip class teachers with Quality Improvement (QI) knowledge so that they can apply the method more widely to improve outcomes for children.

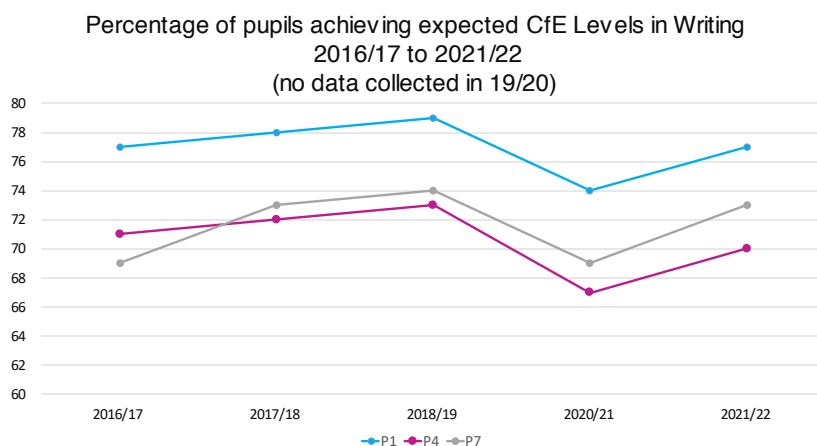
Two questions have been driving the learning of the programme:

1. What conditions need to be in place for systematic implementation of the writing bundle?
2. What level of support is required to enable this change to be sustained?

## Background

CYPIC's purpose is to provide **focus**, **connection** and **method** where most needed to improve outcomes for babies, children and young people.

The writing programme became a priority area of **focus** as, since 2017/18, national writing data has demonstrated a pronounced gap in attainment at First Level. Last year (2021/22) 30% of P4 aged children in Scotland did not reach their expected CfE writing outcomes. Though an improvement from the previous year when 33% did not achieve, most likely related to COVID-19, outcomes remained low. The equity gap between the most and least deprived also increased over the same period. Capacity for change and context were factors in pursuing this as a priority. Early literacy is a common feature in School Improvement Plans and the National CYPIC team of improvement advisors were frequently asked to provide support in this important area of attainment.



Over the past few years, Fife Education Service has been testing and spreading learning across a large number of primary schools; forming an evidence base of 'what works' to improve children's writing outcomes. They learned that applying Quality Improvement **methodology**, a rigorous and systematic approach, led to sustainable change and improvement. One stream of their work focused on improving writing.

CYPIC provided support in **connecting** in other areas with a shared interest in improving this area of the curriculum and worked with Fife to facilitate additional testing in Dundee, Shetland and Midlothian which further demonstrated that it was the approach (and not a particular team) that was leading to improvement. This built a good degree of belief that the writing interventions and approach could be spread more widely.

This initial learning formed the basis of the National Improving Writing Programme. The content has been reviewed by subject-matter experts in Education Scotland and as a result has been further enriched with latest pedagogy and best practice.

## Approach

The approach underpinning the writing Programme – from “small to all” – is the Quality Improvement Journey.



Quality Improvement Zone, TURAS (nhs.scot)

Following localised testing, the CYPIC team developed a spread theory based on an adaptation of the Institute of Healthcare improvement’s (IHI) “multiplicative scale up”, with the ambition to spread that local innovation through a programme which leads to measurable results at scale with more children in Scotland achieving First Level Curriculum for Excellence.

Recognising large scale change is rarely made successfully all at once, systematic spread is at the centre of this programme’s delivery. To build confidence in the spread theory, CYPIC needed to test local infrastructure for the programme across a variety of contexts (local authorities). It was also anticipated that this would build belief in the Improving Writing theory more quickly if local examples of success for each participating local authority were provided.

Given the limited Improvement Advisor capacity available in the National CYPIC team, a multiplier of five was identified as a manageable undertaking. Simultaneously testing with five local authorities and their local leads, with each invited to bring five of their schools through the programme.

CYPIC worked with Education Scotland to agree a shortlist of local authorities to approach with an offer of participating in the national programme. This offer was



based on a combination of lower average First Level writing outcomes, context and local capacity for improvement.

For greatest impact it was suggested the Local Authorities brought schools that had:

- Writing attainment of 70% or below.
- A school leader and primary 4/5 class teachers willing to participate, with agreed capacity to partake in all mandatory training and implement their improvement work.

Wave 1 Cohort 1 went ahead with 5 local authorities and 26 schools (one more than initially planned): Aberdeen City, Argyll and Bute, East Lothian, Perth and Kinross, Shetland. Cohort 2 was led locally in each of the five authorities.

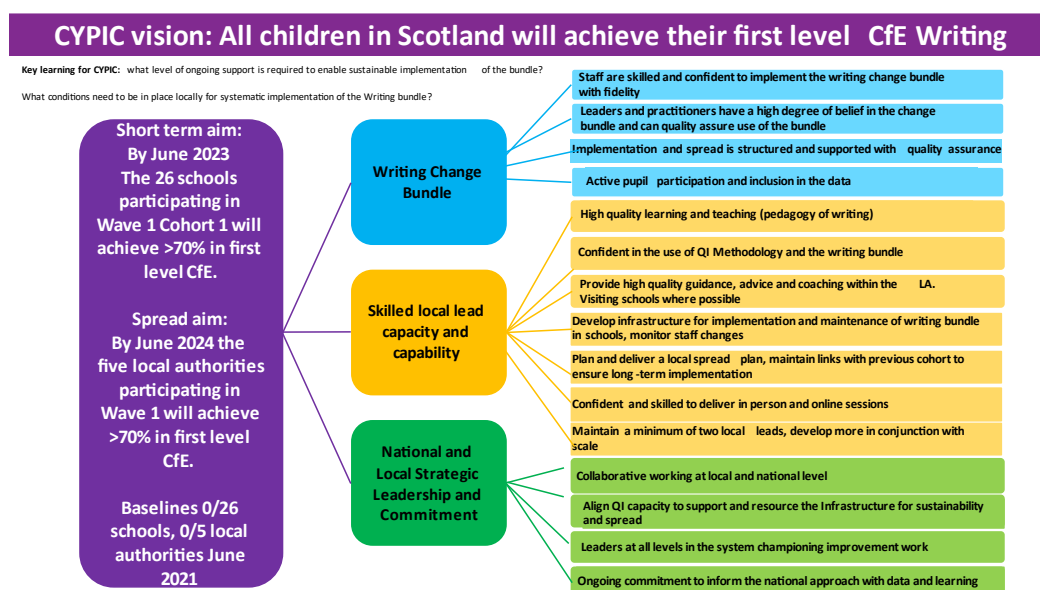
The timeline for this spread is included as Appendix 1 and reflects the rhythm of the academic year, where realistically two 12 week programmes can fit between terms.

Additional benefits resulting from successful delivery were anticipated and an outcomes map was prepared ahead of Wave 1, to help determine the range of “upstream” outcomes we expected as a result of the National Improving Writing Programme. The Outcomes map is included as Appendix 2.

Given the generally low level of QI capacity in the target group, a key part of the programme has been building sufficient QI capacity and capability as part of the spread process.

The change theory for successful spread recognised that the Writing Change Bundle itself was only one element of the wider change required to ensure sustainable implementation. Substantial work to prepare for the programme, create a local infrastructure and spread plan and build capability at local authority level is wrapped around the formal delivery.

The theory is described in the driver diagram below:



Time was spent engaging local leaders and schools with senior leaders engaged throughout. They had clear accountability and greater vision for next steps beyond individual classroom delivery.

### **Local leads programme**

The CYPIC spread theory is built on the creation of local capacity, ultimately removing the need for central CYPIC/Education Scotland support for ongoing delivery. The intention was to develop an operational infrastructure for successful spread of this work, i.e. that each local authority has at least two people with the responsibility and capacity to deliver this programme on an ongoing basis therefore identifying at least two local leads was a requirement of participation. These leads had regular coaching and mentoring sessions with CYPIC faculty and a series of group sessions to share and learn from one another.

The programme was designed to equip local leads to address each of the secondary drivers listed in the change theory, and teach QI knowledge and skills to the extent that they can support and deliver their own cohorts with credibility. This ensures leads have the capability to deliver the course with fidelity and are equipped to plan for the spread of the programme in additional schools across their local authority.

Additional information on the Local Lead Programme and a brief evaluation is included as Appendix 3.

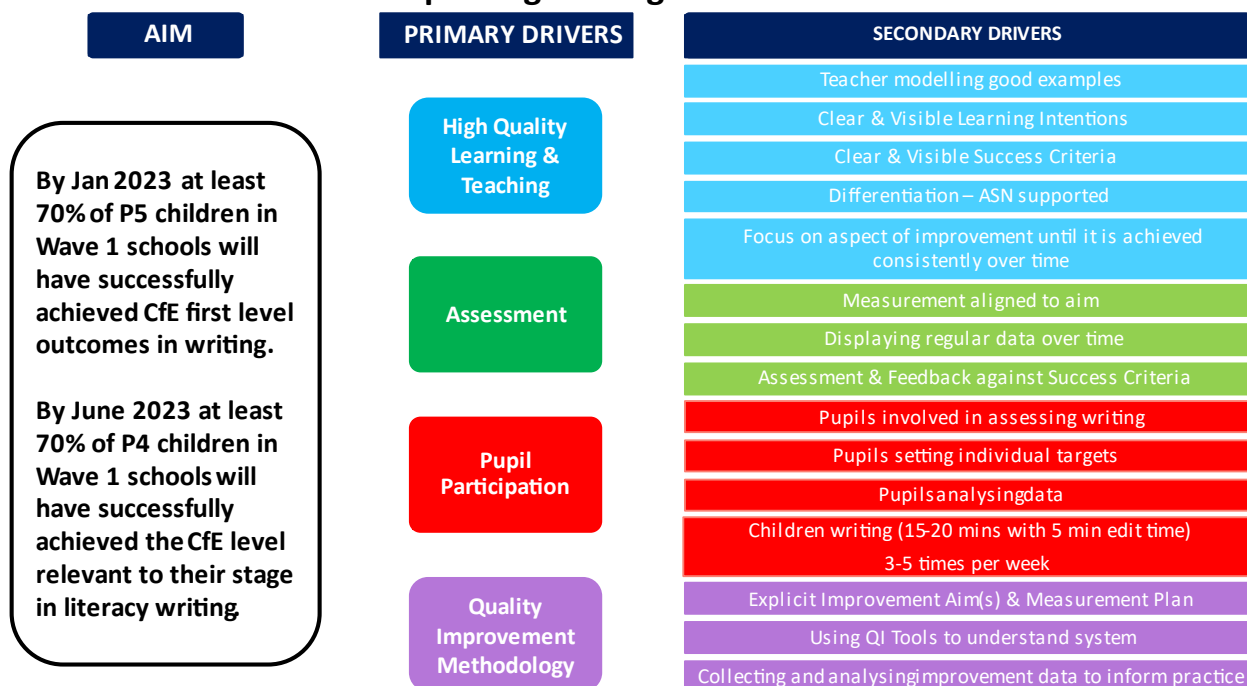
### **Summary of the 12 week programme**

Running alongside this capability development work, the 12 week writing programme is designed to equip teachers with the skills to monitor progress in their classroom and collate data for improvement to guide their decision making. The programme combines improvement science skills with a standardised approach for teaching writing, captured in the core elements of the Writing Change Bundle:

- Children writing 3-5 times per week.
- Children writing for 15 minutes with 5 minutes to check.
- Teacher input aligned to aim.
- Share learning intention and make success criteria explicit.
- Assess and feedback against success criteria.
- Involve children in the process.

The Writing Change Bundle is the shorthand summary of the consistent practices that should happen in every writing lesson, it is only one element of the overall change theory and should not be taught in isolation. Detail of the full approach required is outlined in the driver diagram below.

## Improving Writing Outcomes



Delivered with the Fife Improvement Coordinator, and alongside Education Scotland colleagues, the writing programme is outcome focused, blending subject matter expertise with an improvement method. Wave 1 of the writing programme trialled enhanced content with increased emphasis on writing pedagogy informed by **research** and developed and co-delivered by an Education Scotland Education Officer for literacy. This was very valuable for content and for demonstrating cohesive partnership working.

The programme is **evaluative**: teachers and schools are using **data** for learning as well as data for judgement. Children are carrying-out daily self-evaluation of their own work. Qualitative feedback demonstrates the depth of understanding, participating children now have of their own work and areas for development. In addition, the programme has been rigorously evaluated throughout with continuous points for adaptation and improvement built-in to delivery.

Intended learning outcomes for participants:

- Be supported to implement the components of a successful Writing Change Bundle (outlined in the driver diagram).
- Have the opportunity to learn skills and techniques to improve writing attainment in their classroom.
- Gain Quality Improvement knowledge.
- Have the opportunity to share insights and collaborate with practitioners across a national platform.

A summary of programme content is included as Appendix 4.

### Approach to evaluation

The Kirkpatrick Model is being used to understand the impact of this work and to continuously develop the approach. Through a staged approach it examines:

- Level 1: Engagement and learning experience.
- Level 2: Knowledge being built.
- Level 3: Changed behaviours.
- Level 4: Improved outcomes for children and their teachers.

A Measurement Plan (Appendix 5) accompanies the programme's outcome map. Given that ACEL figures are annually recorded, it offers a range of supporting process measures which, where improving, are indicative of successful outcomes to come. Qualitative data is also being gathered through regular surveys, feedback conversations, pupil voice, participant posters and presentations.

Evaluation of Wave 1 consistently evidences level 3 (changed behaviours) and level 4 (improved outcomes). The plan is to follow up with Wave 1 schools to track sustained behaviour change.

*"Best course I have ever been on."*

*"This will make an everlasting impact on my teaching of writing."*

## Results and learning

While outcome data over time has been gathered for each local authority, given the sensitive nature of reporting ACEL figures, changes have been illustrated as two anonymised data points at this time:

Achievement of First Level CfE outcomes 2022/23 (compared to previous year):

- Local authority 1: increased 9 percentage points (**15% improvement**)
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- Local authority 3: increased 4 percentage points (**5% improvement**)
- Local authority 4: increased 5 percentage points (**7% improvement**)
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Results at school level (appendix 7 provides detail):

- 20 of 24 schools that completed Cohort 1 reported an improvement on their 2021/22 ACEL figures for First Level writing.
- 18 of 23 schools that completed Cohort 2 reported an improvement on their 2021/22 ACEL figures for First Level writing.
- 25 schools reported an **ACEL figure above 70%** this year (baseline 8 of 49)
- 16 schools reported an increase of more than **20% points** above the previous year.

One local authority summarised the extent of the impact in their Cohort 1 and 2 schools:

*“...when comparing June 2022 and June 2023 ACEL Literacy data for First Level, the rate of improvement in Cohort 1 (+13% points) and Cohort 2 (+20% points) is better than the average improvement across all authority schools for First Level Writing (+7%).”*

This local authority noted a knock-on impact on overall P4 Literacy figures at First Level in all but one participating school.

Both cohorts in Wave 1 had consistently positive progress against process measures. Process data and emerging outcome data is positive. The impact the programme is having has resulted in all five local authorities committing to this programme beyond the first cohorts, with Cohort 3 underway and in some areas additional local leads identified to expand their capacity.

A range of wider benefits, including teacher’s confidence in teaching writing and pupil engagement and enjoyment have been identified. Teacher feedback also highlighted the positive impact the structured approach is having on children with dyslexia and where English is an additional language as well as some observing a positive impact on the poverty related attainment gap. Where children are still to achieve First Level class teachers are noting substantial evidence of the gap between individuals and their peers narrowing.



*The number of teachers confident in assessing writing has more than tripled.*

The improvement in teacher confidence to **teach** and **assess** writing was substantial (32% to 79%) and (24% to 81%). At the reconnect day, 94% of teachers reported as enjoying teaching writing a great deal or a lot. This increase of 40 percentage points from pre-programme indicates changed attitudes and logically this will impact how writing is perceived by the children in the classroom. It may be worthwhile to explore how this impacts on teacher wellbeing. Children's enjoyment (reported based on teacher observations and qualitative feedback) was most pronounced, steadily rising from 25% to 90%. Following their change in practice, one teacher described pupil engagement as "*incredible*".

*"It has changed the way I teach for the better. No going back for me. This is the way forward in writing."*  
Class teacher

*"My overall quality of practice in writing has improved. I feel more confident teaching writing and also enjoy teaching it more. I feel more confident in assessment and how to use it to better inform practice."*  
Class teacher

While the programme did not set out to measure the poverty related attainment gap, one local authority reported a **48% reduction in their poverty related attainment gap** from 27 percentage points in 2021/22 to 14 percentage points in 2022/23 (literacy figure for P1, P4 and P7, not writing alone). This represents a lift in SIMD Quintile 1 outcomes, Quintile 5 figures have not dropped in this time. Some participating schools observed similar patterns and attributed the impact to the programme.

Teachers feeling "extremely" or "very" confident to teach writing more than doubled from 32% to 79% (147% increase). Crucially those reporting as "**not so confident**" to **teach writing reduced to zero** from a starting point of 14% of the cohort.

Similarly, confidence to assess writing more than tripled from 24% to 81% (an increase of 238% reporting "extremely" or "very" confident). With **no one reporting as "not so confident to assess writing"** by the end of the programme, previously 18% of the cohort.

24 of the 26 Schools in Wave 1 Cohort 1 completed the programme. The number of CfE First Level children reached was 845. Of this group **171 children attained that were not expected to** (this represents 20% of the cohort).

An additional 25 schools participated in local authority led Cohort 2s. Figures on Cohort 2 reach are held locally.

Of the children yet to achieve their level class teachers can evidence substantial progression with the gap between their individuals and their peers narrowing. Many teachers reported the benefits they witnessed aside from ACEL figures. Pupil engagement and enjoyment was evident across classrooms. Children who were

**previously disengaged were writing and catching up.** Teacher feedback identified the positive impact this structured approach was having on those with dyslexia and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Referring to participating schools CfE First Level Writing outcomes:” *Our prediction was 53% achievement, our [June actual] mean average is 80%”*  
Local Lead

*“The difference it made to children was incredible... To see that impact!”*  
Local Lead

Pupils who undertook the programme can articulate what they have learnt and where they need to improve. Feedback demonstrates that **they understand writing more** and can reflect and self-assess their written work. An HMI report carried out on a participating school reported:

*“The school is developing an approach to teaching writing that is helping children to be more confident. They are motivated and engaged in writing for a range of purposes and audiences.”*

## Pupil voice

*“I love writing now. It’s not my favourite subject but I still love it. Before I hated it, but the 20 minutes helps me.”*

*“I feel so proud of me!”*

*“I feel amazing because I thought that my writing was bad!!! I feel good because I know where to put my full stops and use more openers and now conjunctions”*

*“I know what my targets are and I am working hard to achieve them”*

*“I now understand more”*

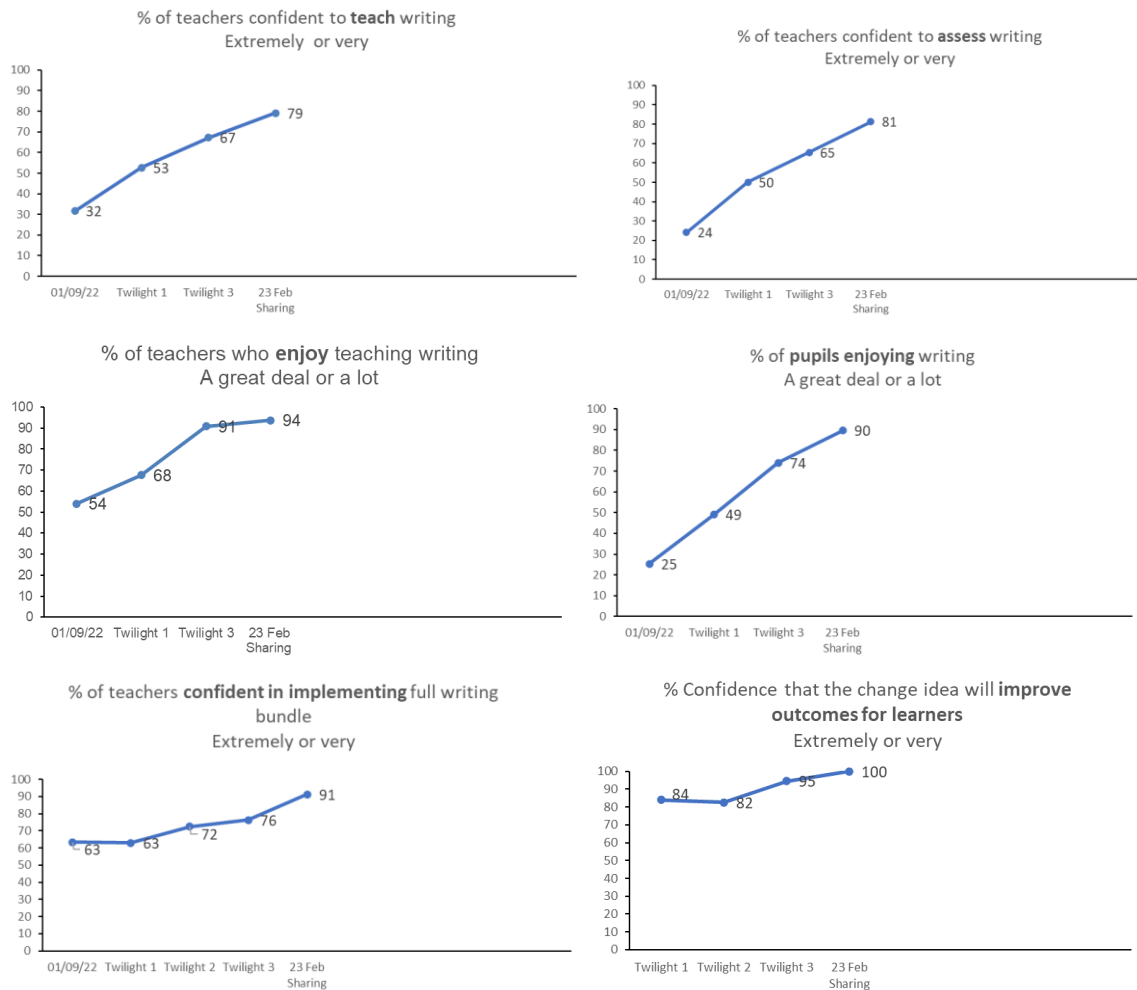
*“Sometimes writing gets hard for me but I never give up”*

*“I am getting better at using punctuation!”*

*“I loved the graph so we could see if we had met our target”*

*“I like having more practice”*

## Process measures from Wave 1, Cohort 1



Behaviour change was measured by teachers self-reporting their consistent delivery of the Writing Change Bundle’s components. Although very low numbers reported no behaviour change, it did take time to see all of the changes introduced. To address this, school visits to reinforce the need for this were undertaken much earlier in the programme for Cohort 2. Process measures for Cohort 2 are included as Appendix 6.

Greatest reluctance came around sharing the information with children, specifically charting success as a run chart in the classroom. The programme builds in regular updates for participants to share their stories during twilights and the impact of sharing the data persuaded those reluctant participants to adopt the change.

“The children were motivated by the run chart and enjoyed learning about how they were improving as each teaching aim was introduced”

Teacher

Their data consistently demonstrated the increased uptick that came with engaging children in the data. A level of comradery and shared responsibility to strive to achieve their differentiated success criteria was regularly described, and teachers were often

taken by surprise at just how engaged the children were with their own data and story of progress. Findings which reiterate the adage of “nothing about us without us”. It is observed that because the importance of implementing the whole bundle not “cherry picking” elements was addressed throughout Cohort 2, the behaviour change came earlier and more consistently.

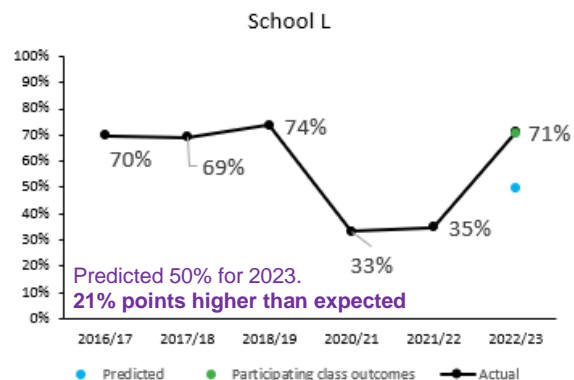
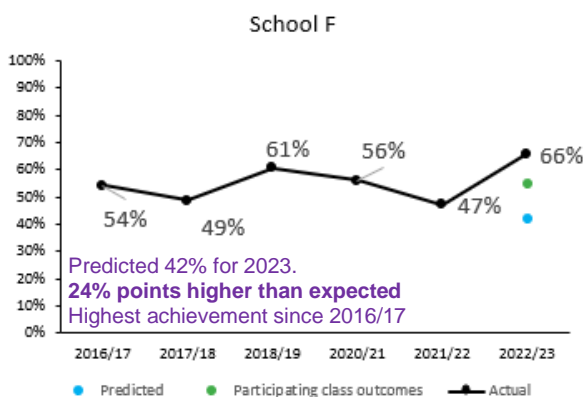
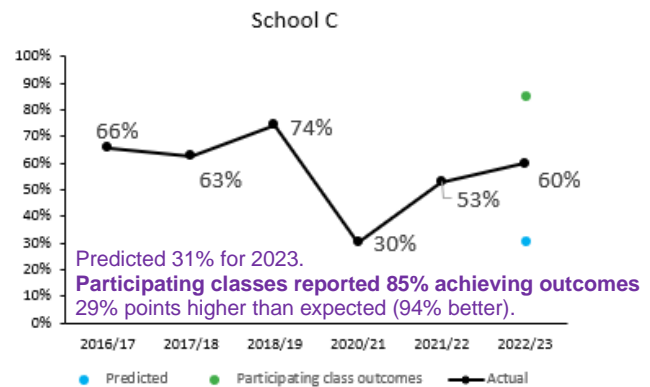
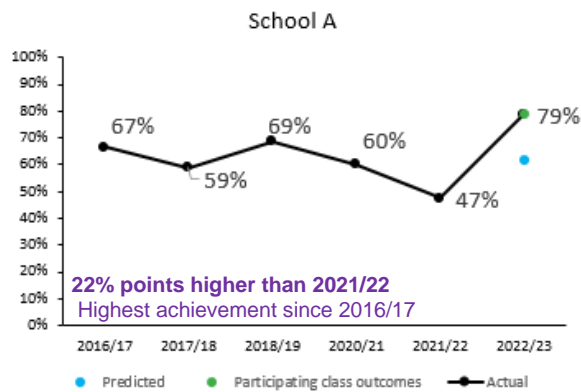
*“Displaying progress of achievement after each lesson worked very well... They began to have more of a responsibility for their own progress and achievement and were very respectful celebrating each other’s success.”*

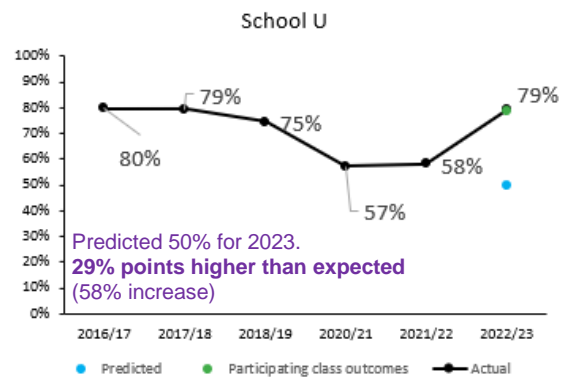
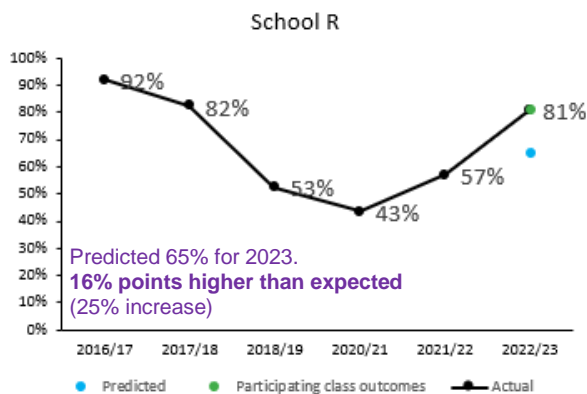
Class Teacher

*“Your children are excited to write and feel proud of themselves, they can all tell me the writing aim. The explicit, simple structure helps your class understand the expectation and use their next steps productively.”*

Teacher observing a lesson

A selection of schools reporting the greatest improvement in CfE First Level figures are illustrated in the charts below. Figures from all 24 participating schools are included as Appendix 7. The black line represents ACEL data over time. The turquoise dot represents the school’s predicted writing outcome for this year (not all schools submitted this figure). The green dot represents the level reported by participating P4 classes. Some schools did not send all P4 teachers therefore their school outcome differs from the participating class average.

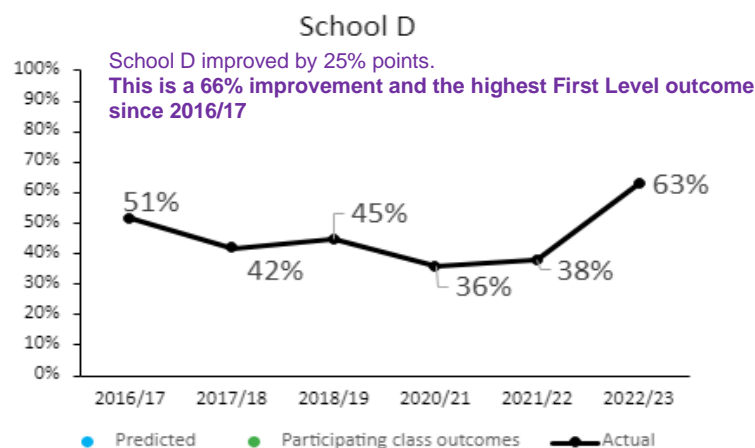




When reviewing schools with lower outcomes, three main themes were identified:

### Baseline and cohort

The starting point of the school and the cohort of P4 children had an impact on results. Some schools started with a very low baseline, in these cases a number of schools saw substantial improvement despite an outcome below 70% (for example School D).



Data over time is richer than snapshot information. For instance, one school which reported a drop in their 2023 figures were keen to demonstrate that this was a success as the cohort of children were markedly different in ability to the previous group. Examples such as these highlight the importance of reviewing data over time supported by contextual information, rather than pre/post figures.

### Varied ages and stages

Composite classes impact reporting numbers. Children from other year groups benefited from inclusion in the programme and demonstrated improvement at class level, however at class level P4 outcomes only were tracked. P5s who had not achieved their CfE First Level participated to catch-up with peers, as did some children from P3 and P6.

Differentiation is an important aspect of setting success criteria with stretching success criteria required for every child irrespective of ability. Class level data again demonstrated improvement here. Additional measures predicting if children are on track for their stage have been added to Wave 2 to mitigate this data gap.



## Benefits for children

We are seeing an increase in the number of children achieving their expected CfE level. In addition, where pupils have not yet achieved First Level, there are numerous submissions evidencing a reduction in “the gap” between where individual children are in their learning and the expected level, indicating that the programme has helped them catch-up with peers. A number of head teachers reported improved National Standardised Assessments for Scotland results.

“Just opening the books and seeing where the children are now compared to before.  
Wow!”  
Local lead

“Tracking data of P2-3 children in the same class has increased from 50% on track to achieve CfE First Level writing to 89% (an additional 7 pupils out of 18)”  
Class teacher

Schools are already applying the same learning beyond P4 and P5, some as a result of composite classes, others through planned (or unplanned) spread. It has the same positive impact.

## Reluctant Writers Started Writing

A risk identified during programme development was that it could broaden the existing “gap”. For instance, children with Additional Support Needs, less able children or reluctant writers would be left behind their peers. The opposite occurred, able children were pushed to achieve while reluctant writers started writing and often began to catch-up to expected levels. These children flourished with the shorter writing time, and experiencing success bred further improvements in their writing.

We do not have clear cut or universal measures for this as local authorities track within CfE levels differently. Summary of feedback:

“ASN child struggles with processing and therefore cannot always meet the criteria in the timeframe, however if current progression continues should meet by December 2024  
Class teacher

“Has significant learning difficulties. Has now achieved Early level and is now able to write simple sentences independently. This approach has made a huge difference to their learning.”  
Class teacher

“Pupil ‘A’ ...arguably made the most progress of any writer, writing far more independently, in greater volumes and greater quality of content”  
Class teacher

“Pupil with ADHD, reluctant writer. Has benefitted hugely with the inclusion to main class and has had confidence boosted.”  
Class teacher

*“Has significant literacy difficulties but is now only 1 year behind.”*  
Class teacher

*“Some reluctant writers are now fully engaged with the whole writing process and can feel success.”*  
Head teacher

*“There was no punctuation when writing independently and no motivation for writing. Now, this child writes independently at Primary 3 level with clear understanding of sentence structure. The child enjoys writing and feels success in themselves”*  
Class teacher

### Children with dyslexia

Dyslexia was a recurring theme in the feedback, often where children were not achieving their level but making tangible progress beyond what had been predicted. Breaking down writing into component parts appeared to be helping. Again, the progress is having a positive impact on pupil confidence in how they approach writing.

*“Two pupils with dyslexia made more progress than predicted.”*  
Class teacher

*“Two children with dyslexia started the year 12 months behind and reduced the gap to six.”*  
Class teacher

### English as an additional language

Two areas of the programme seemed to particularly benefit this sub-group of learners, breaking the expanse of writing down into smaller parts with one area to focus on at a time and the expert input from EAL specialists in Twilight 5. Given the positive feedback to this specialist input, Twilight 5 is no longer optional, instead allowing practitioners to choose to discuss changes with specialists relevant to their context.

*“EAL child has progressed from drawing pictures at the beginning of the year to writing and achieving the success criteria most days.”*  
Class teacher

*“EAL [child] with executive function difficulties. He has moved from just starting First Level in August to 1 year 1 term behind other than spelling.”*  
Class teacher

Reflecting on a Ukrainian child who joined mid-way through the school year:  
*“They spoke no English at all. They have just brought their writing jotter down to show me. They have written half an A4 page of a story and used openers, connectives, question marks, etc! They got a tiny bit of help with some spelling. But what made it even better – they read their *story out to me. This wouldn't* have happened without their teacher using the bundle!”*  
Depute Head Teacher

*“More children are achieving success within writing lessons.  
There is less anxiety.”*  
Head teacher

### **Pupil’s understanding of writing**

Faculty were told on numerous occasions that children understood writing, tools for writing and what each of them needed to do to next to improve their outcomes. Pupils have become adept at evaluating and correcting their own work and in supporting their peers. Parents have reported seeing and hearing the difference in how their children engage with writing.

*“Children are asking more questions related to the tools for writing to challenge themselves to improve their writing... Children can transfer their knowledge and are now starting to apply the tools for writing into different genres...”*  
Class teacher

*“Pupils are able to analyse a piece of writing and detail what elements have made the writer successful. We have been working with the writing attainment teacher in our ASG and she has suggested that the class are able to do this analysis better than other pupils at the same age and stage in school and wider cluster as a result of this approach.”*  
Class teacher

*“Almost all children [across three classes] can talk about their Learning Intentions and Success Criteria and self-assess against these”*  
Class teacher

*“Ability to self and peer assess and identify next steps in learning has improved”*  
Class teacher

### **Absence**

Regular analysis of data in the classroom, combined with visible results from those consistently having writing lessons 3-5 times per week, has highlighted the need for high school attendance for achievement in writing. Often absence is listed alongside another factor, however teachers now have increased confidence reporting that absence in itself is holding children back. This will be explored as a possible balancing measure for future waves so that we can build learning around impact.

## Impact for teachers

Many teachers reported a transformation in their practice. Teachers have told us how they and their colleagues have changed their attitudes towards writing. They can see and feel a shift in the culture of their classes, and many have told us they are eager to start with their new class (and beyond) from the beginning of the new term.

The impact of having a method has differentiated this programme from others. Participants have left each session not only knowing what to do but having clarity about how to go about it. Coaching staff to pinpoint where they need to focus based on their own context, understanding and data, while providing new skills in improvement science has enabled breakthroughs.

The QI Journey has given structure to conversations about improvement and increased understanding of what is needed beyond 'the new thing' to achieve results. Feedback indicates real confidence in writing a stretch aim, and good understanding of what this is. For instance, it was not a target for class teachers, or even this programme to be measured against. Instead it was an exercise to meaningfully explore current context, evaluate the likelihood of achieving based on their current approach, commit to doing something different knowing that the stretch aim could not be achieved through continued hard work alone.

Teachers and their senior leaders were ambitious for their young people. That one class had reported 93% achieving their CfE First Level and not met their stretch aim illustrates how bold the group were for their pupils.

### Using data

*"As a teacher, my confidence in both teaching writing and making judgements at the end of a level has greatly increased due to the empirical evidence. I believe that the children have benefited majorly from this and sharing the data with anyone visiting the class is straight-forward and makes moderation smoother, and I assume it will do the same with transition.*

Class teacher

*"Life-changing!"*  
Class Teacher

*"This has been the best CPD I have done in 27 years of teaching, and it clearly works"*  
Class Teacher

*"This approach has changed the way I will teach writing forever."*  
Class Teacher

*"I feel much more confident in identifying exactly what my pupils need to learn and how to help them achieve success"*  
Class Teacher

Understanding the difference between data for judgement and accountability versus data for learning has been transformational for numerous teachers. Having the confidence to adapt their approach and planning and ‘managing up’ are enabled by timely and relevant data, analysed in context. Having additional tools that could confirm hunches and disprove assumptions has had a significant impact on how they work.

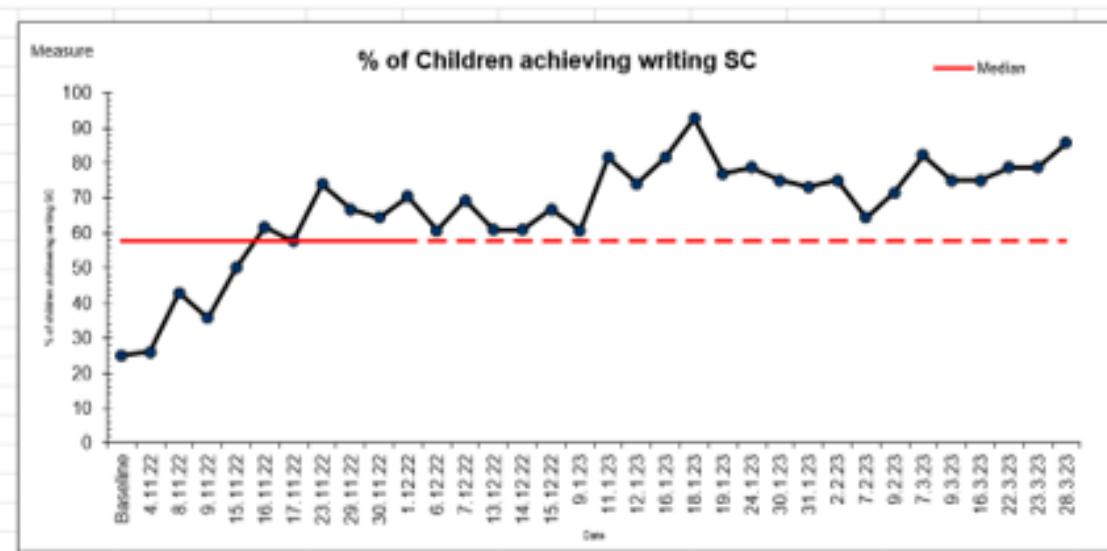


Figure 1: Typical run chart collated and shared in classes. The first data point is the baseline before the programme started

Sharing data about each class within the classroom was a leap for many teachers when undertaking the programme. The outcomes surprised people. Children were engaged, considerate and driven by the data. A side effect of the work has been that pupils can analyse their charts and explain patterns in the results.

*“I had never thought of sharing the data directly with the pupils in this way and it has been revolutionary for me.”*  
Class teacher

A further behaviour change resulting from the programme is that Pareto charts are being applied to other areas of the curriculum and school life so that energy and resource are focused on the right areas. See Appendix 8 for a Pareto chart.

*“Pareto makes so much sense. Why didn’t we think of it before?”*  
Class teacher

### Teacher confidence

Confidence in writing pedagogy and the application of that pedagogy is apparent. At the outset of the programme teachers shared that they did not have confidence in teaching or assessing writing (32% and 24%), this improved steadily throughout the programme’s feedback and was evident in the way teachers engaged with content. Having a systematic approach gave greater clarity to staff and guided their decision making. Conversations with children, parents and management were informed by data and easier as a result.

*“Ability to self and peer assess and identify next steps in learning has improved”*  
Class teacher



## Time

The change in time spent on writing looks different depending on each school's previous approach. Many reflected that making the transition from one long writing lesson a week to numerous shorter ones took time. Some reported that it impacted their typical schedule but there was consensus as to this being worthwhile. Conversations about how time is spent and scheduled in the day might be useful in future waves to support implementation.

## Transferable skills

Improvement science has been embraced by participating schools. Class teachers are beginning to use improvement methodology in other subjects. Teachers have understood the importance of having a change theory and organically made the connection that their new skills could be used elsewhere.

*"It has allowed me to simplify my teaching approach to writing and I have started to use these approaches in other curricular areas."*  
Class teacher

Head teachers who were not originally involved in the programme have come forward for network and sharing events to better understand how and where they can apply this new learning.

Requests for posters from other QI projects (for example numeracy, wellbeing, times tables, distressed behaviours) have been made and are now being applied in schools which had little to no QI experience.

Eight people involved in Wave 1 (Education Scotland staff, local leads and teachers) have now been accepted on to the **Scottish Improvement Leaders (ScIL) programme**. This will further the sustainability of the writing programme and enhance local capacity to apply quality improvement more broadly.

## Additional Learning from the programme

### Faculty and Partnership Working

Alongside three CYPIC Improvement Advisors were the Fife Improvement Coordinator and an Education Scotland Literacy Officer. The combined skills of the team led to very positive feedback. Fife's Improvement Co-ordinator allowed the full progression of the programme to be conveyed and ensured "organisational memory" for testing changes and programme delivery.

*"The team should be commended for their organisation, delivery and support throughout this cohort. The standard has been exceptional. Enthusiasm is infectious."*

*"I strongly feel that this programme has been so successful not only due to the writing bundle but also the motivation, positivity, knowledge and skills of the team. I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute."*

### Literacy expert

One of Education Scotland's Education Officers for Literacy was included in national faculty for Wave 1. This has been significant. Their inclusion enabled a full review of content with revisions and adaptations made to ensure the programme was centred on up-to-date literacy information. Learning from earlier testing highlighted that there were gaps in teachers' knowledge of how to teach writing. Combining this additional pedagogy for writing with improvement science methodology enabled practitioners to incorporate learning into their practice.

It is recommended that a literacy officer remains part of the national delivery faculty given their expert content knowledge. The time spent on preparing content will be smaller in future waves, requiring only a refresh and review in-line with latest policies and emerging evidence. Demonstrating collaboration between CYPIC and Education Scotland has been powerful when working with local authorities and this has further benefited the acceptance of improvement science in education.

### Attainment Advisor role

Three attainment advisors with improvement science knowledge provided a critical friend role and supported content delivery.

Attainment Advisors were identified as an excellent conduit between schools and strategic leaders in each local authority. Their position enabled them to raise awareness of the programme with stakeholders, support the selection of schools and ensure the focus of the work locally was relevant to local improvement plans. They have also supported the articulation of stretch aims and contributed to each local authority spread plan.

Though this work was not designed to specifically address the poverty related attainment gap, emerging evidence suggests it is a contributing factor. Attainment Advisors are a valuable asset to support local delivery, they were used to support

breakouts during twilights and gave local authorities more security for local delivery should a local lead become unavailable. Feedback highlighted the wider benefits of building relationships locally.

Two local authorities were approached later than the others to be involved in Wave 1. As a result of reduced planning time, they named their Attainment Advisor as a local lead. Following the evaluation of the programme we see these roles as distinct and Attainment Advisors need to maintain capacity to fulfil their broader SAC remit. It increases risk to the programme as it reduces local sustainability as capacity is not being developed in-house.

### **Head teacher engagement**

Leadership at the school level contributes to improvement. Having a head teacher present and engaged in the programme helped create the conditions for change and added a layer of quality assurance at the school level. Teachers also reported the benefits of having decision makers in the room as they could remove barriers and support their improvement work in the wider school context. Additional sessions targeted to head teachers have been added to Wave 2 to mitigate this issue.

### **Sustainable implementation**

Each individual school must reach scale across First Level at the same time that the spread plan enables scale across additional schools in the local authority. Further spread beyond First Level is already taking place, with a risk to programme fidelity. Maintaining an offer of central **implementation waves** should mitigate this risk, combined with continued local lead faculty development locally and nationally.

See Appendix 9 for additional learning and adaptation made for future delivery.

## Summary of key elements of success

The evaluation identified the following key themes as essential elements in the success of the programme:

- The attention given to making implementation practical and consistent has helped teachers reliably implement the writing change theory (including a bundle of changes focused on high quality learning and teaching).
- Teachers have clarity of what to focus on, are taught ways to gather effective data to see improvement quickly and engage children in the process. The emphasis on implementing the whole Writing Change Bundle and not “cherry picking” increased as the programme progressed.
- Opportunities for peer support and camaraderie helped break down barriers and address reluctance around sharing information with children, specifically run charts.
- Teachers are aware of the impact they are having on a daily basis. Children and teachers are motivated by the success they are experiencing.
- Quality Improvement capability is developed in real time, so participants build their capacity to continue improving. Participants see this as a stepping-stone for wider curricular change.
- The programme is structured to engage at the macro, meso and micro levels of the system. With strategic leaders engaged and informed and therefore able to create the conditions for change, while class teachers are empowered to improve and supplied with the tools to help positive change happen.
- National messaging is clear, Education Scotland and CYPIC partnership is visible, and pedagogy is combined with a method to implement improvements.
- The Programme faculty are knowledgeable and approachable, they actively develop a safe space to support learning, and continuous improvement is built into the programme

## Conclusion

This programme is providing significant impact having already exceeded its stretch aim with more children achieving CfE First Level Writing, teacher confidence increasing, and more children are engaging with and enjoying writing. This programme has supported the consistent implementation of good learning and teaching.

It is providing valuable learning on how we scale-up improvement and spread what works, which feels applicable not just in education but in our wider improvement work to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The evaluation is being used to continuously develop the programme, building on its strengths and adapting where needed.

It has also demonstrated the power of partnership working with Education Scotland and local leads. Combining subject matter and QI expertise is proving a potent mix. This has been essential to success alongside commitment from school leaders, which is vital for sustained impact.

The success of this programme is likely to result in increased demand and decreased fidelity unless fully resourced with focus simultaneously maintained on spread and implementation. To maximise the impact across Scotland, we must maintain links with Wave 1 local authorities to structure implementation waves and continuity of messaging.

The next phase of the work is to continue to hone how we involve schools where there is the biggest need for improvement. This must be done in tandem with the Local Lead programme for sustainable spread.

The spread theory demonstrated in this programme is not unique to writing and can be adapted for improvement across the curriculum (and some schools are already doing this, for example in numeracy, times tables, wellbeing, distressed behaviours).

Opportunity to couple improvement science with other curricular areas where there is a gap between known good practice and consistent delivery should be explored and the Wave 1 local authorities are now well positioned to test potential changes.

The CYPIC team will work with the CYPIC Programme Board more broadly to identify further opportunities, outwith education, to test and refine our spread theory to scale up improvement where it is most needed for children and families in Scotland.

## Acknowledgements

With special thanks to Fife CYPIC for being the innovators of this work and their contribution to the National Improving Writing programme. Their commitment to improve, generously share and learn collaboratively has enabled this work. And to all the people who have taken part in the programme so far, your dedication to improving outcomes is making a difference.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Summary of the spread theory

Local context guided our final decision, 26 schools were in Wave 1, Cohort 1. Similarly, the local authorities were not required to choose five schools for their Cohort 2s. Instead this number should reflect Local Lead capacity and school readiness. Wave 2 began in September 2023, with Wave 3 planned for September 2024.

### Improving Writing Spread Plan, 5x5: Waves of 5 local authorities x Cohorts of 5 schools



## Appendix 2: Outcomes map

# Outcomes map: Objective 1 – National Improving Writing Programme LAST REVIEW 30/03/2023

What we do	What we do	Who with	How they feel	What they learn and gain	What they do differently	What difference does this make?
<p>Lead large-scale improvement and spread initiatives with specific shared outcome-focussed aims linked to identified priorities</p>	<p>Develop national driver diagram and measurement plan</p> <p>Create a Spread driver diagram and design spread plan</p> <p>Collate and analyse data to determine offer of engagement</p>	<p>Co-deliver with attainment advisors and literacy officers</p> <p>Fife QI Co-Ordinator (where the work originated)</p>	<p>Confident that they teach writing well</p> <p>Safe to collaborate, share and learn</p> <p>That their effort is connected to impact</p>	<p>Practical skills to assess writing for their learners</p> <p>A methodical approach to teaching Tools for Writing</p> <p>Up to date pedagogy</p> <p>Practical tools for standardising work</p>	<p>Standardised approach to teaching tools for writing</p> <p>Approach writing with enthusiasm</p> <p>Actively share learning about QI projects and programmes with the wider QI community</p>	<p>QI is more integrated into the way people work and they can show it makes a difference to children &amp; young people</p>
<p>Provide high quality guidance, advice &amp; coaching to support people &amp; organisations throughout the QI Journey</p>	<p>Pre-work and capacity building in each geography</p> <p>Deliver Local Lead delivery programme</p> <p>Gather data and learning, evaluate the impact of this work</p> <p>Learning sessions to support QI and share what works</p>	<p>Education Scotland colleagues</p> <p>Senior leaders from each of the participating local authorities</p>	<p>Thinking differently about how to make systematic change in their role</p> <p>That they have had a positive experience</p> <p>Supported to make changes, explore difficulties and share barriers with local leaders and national team</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills to apply QI at the appropriate level</p> <p>Access to examples of what works and how it can be implemented in practice using QI</p> <p>Classroom data to inform decision making and an understanding for how data can improve their teaching</p>	<p>Apply QI approach to improve outcomes in writing across their LA</p> <p>Monitor their progress and use data to guide decisions</p> <p>Join a network to learn and apply further QI</p>	<p>More children are achieving their CfE level 1 writing in P4.</p> <p>Some children are achieving CfE first level earlier and the teacher is in a position to differentiate for them.</p> <p>The "gap" for those who have not achieved their level is reduced</p>
<p>Share learning about what works &amp; how QI has helped in accessible &amp; engaging ways</p>	<p>Coaching sessions to provide QI support and develop local leadership</p> <p>Share information and learning to build a movement</p> <p>Demonstrate unity and consistent messaging by working as a partnership team</p>	<p>Class teachers (past and present participants)</p> <p>Head and depute head teachers</p> <p>Subject matter experts</p>	<p>Committed to improving writing outcomes</p> <p>Inspired to apply QI</p>	<p>Confidence to implement the writing bundle independently</p> <p>Connections and networks with other improvers and/or other subject matter experts</p> <p>Local leaders equipped to drive this process and further spread the work</p> <p>A methodical approach to spreading improvements</p>	<p>Understand sub-populations of learners and how they may need specific support.</p> <p>Use a method to make changes</p>	<p>Teachers are satisfied that they are having a positive impact in teaching writing</p> <p>The infrastructure to maintain and spread high quality work is in place at school and local authority level</p>

### Assumptions

The increased confidence in teacher assessment carries through to ACEL review at end of year

Local areas remain committed and dedicate resource and planning for additional cohorts

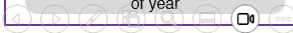
Pedagogy leads can remain engaged to ensure connection to up-to-date best practice

### Risks

Pedagogy leads unable to continue supporting

Short term impact of work is not embedded to maintain quality

Those undergoing training are not kept as P4 teachers for the incoming year, lessening the chance of sustained impact



## Appendix 3: Local Lead Programme Feedback

The Local Lead Programme has led to the successful delivery of Cohort 2, readied local authorities for Cohort 3 and strengthened national delivery by increasing faculty size.

### Local Lead Role

CYPIC's theory was that the local lead role would be an essential component to address important spread theory questions:

- What conditions need to be in place for systematic implementation of the writing bundle?
- What level of ongoing support is required to enable sustainable implementation of the bundle?

The local leads have been the local linchpin for this work. The role itself has been carried out successfully by people from a range of backgrounds: literacy pedagogy leads, Quality Improvement Officers and head teachers. What has been vital is clarity of escalation route (e.g. having a named Executive Sponsor) to allow decision making and capacity to join all sessions and ideally visit participating schools.

Before having the ACEL outcome data:  
“... we've already made the decision to bring in more local leads to support roll-out in [our local authority]  
Local Lead

A minimum of two local leads who have undertaken the Local Leads Programme and have the capacity to deliver local cohorts, is essential. Some local authorities were unable to identify a second local lead and brought their Attainment Advisor in, as the local lead position. This was considered a risk and unsustainable. For Wave 2 we have ensured that no Attainment Advisor is the named local lead.

Local leads are now equipped to independently deliver Cohort 3 in each of their areas, they are not reliant on the national team. Maintaining this group as a network ensures continued links to the national programme and any future revisions to ensure fidelity, broadens the pool of faculty available nationally and/or between local authorities to reduce reliance on individuals. Already a number of local authorities have added to their number of local leads, with additional team members shadowing Cohort 2. The option to shadow and facilitate National Wave 2 is also available to emerging local leads from all Wave 1 local authorities.

A number of local leads have applied to the Scottish Improvement Leader (ScIL) programme. This will increase their QI knowledge and application, strengthening local capacity longer term.

### Local Lead Programme

Local leads reported feeling better equipped and confident delivering not just the National Improving Writing Programme, but using their new skills in other aspects of their work. Many are already exploring how they might be more methodical in their use of QI in other areas of education.

The Local Leads Programme was very well attended and received positive feedback (qualitative and quantitative data gathered).

Universally the group found the days useful.

100% of the group completed the programme feeling equipped to deliver the writing programme.

Sessions increased their knowledge of QI and pedagogy, and developed skills such as coaching, presenting and analysis of data.

The national faculty were consistently lauded for the relevance and high quality of formal sessions and informal support.

Comments included:

*“This has been an excellent experience, both in terms of a concrete approach to improving writing, but also in the introduction to QI which I now want to explore further so that I can use it to support my day-to-day work.”*

*“Very well planned and detailed sessions and fantastic, high quality support provided throughout.”*

*“I’ve really appreciated being able to contact you and seek help.”*

*“I have gained so much from being involved in the programme. The local leads day today has been extremely valuable. I now need space and time to process, and I need to get the authority leads around the table for serious planning discussions!”*

*“The programme has been a joy to be part of”.*

*“Every session has given me new tools or skills. I’ve been empowered by the sessions and feel confident with QI and [National Improving Writing Programme]”*

*“It has been tremendous to be part of a community. It makes a world of difference. I don’t have these heart sink moments; the impact has been universal”*  
Local Lead

*“Visiting the classes taking part in the programme was the single best week of the session. Teacher’s enthusiasm for the programme is making such a visible difference.*

*...Who would have thought a run chart would ignite P4s!”*  
Local Lead

## Appendix 4: Programme content

12-week programme delivery	Evaluation
Day 1 session (in-person)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential as an in-person session to build strong relationships, “read” the room and address issues in real time.</li> <li>• The in-person day creates a joint sense of purpose and community, an approachable faculty, with a hook to get people “fired up”.</li> </ul>
4 x 2 hour twilights (virtual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After-school to fit with arranged CPD in schools. Participatory sessions with periods of action in-between.</li> <li>• Minor adjustments to content/focus.</li> </ul>
2 x optional twilight sessions (virtual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Wave 2 Twilight 5 is no longer optional as the input from subject matter experts was evaluated to be of very high value.</li> </ul>
Reconnect session (in-person)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition from quality improvement project to implementation.</li> <li>• Valuable opportunity for stakeholders to hear successes and address barriers, to gain support and future resources.</li> </ul>
All participants invited to national networks:  Improvement Science Writing Network  Writing School Widespread Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining a connection to schools as they proceed to implement and potentially spread.</li> <li>• Opportunity to create “loops” so that new learning can be incorporated into future waves.</li> <li>• Our theory is that this network will be a quality control support, maintaining quality and furthering behaviour change (Kirkpatrick level 3).</li> </ul>
Local lead programme delivery	Evaluation
Pre-programme session (in-person)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty meet local leads in their local area. Very positive start to the relationship, understand local context, ability to get into specifics and understand motivation.</li> </ul>
3 x post-session reviews (virtual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings to get their perspective feedback from each Twilight.</li> <li>• Useful for reviewing overall content and specifics as to where participants may need more support, and/or where local leads need to spend time to build their own confidence to deliver.</li> <li>• These sessions informed planning for local lead days.</li> <li>• Revised to 45 mins max.</li> </ul>
3 x local lead days (in-person)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and coaching sessions to prepare for local delivery and spread.</li> <li>• High attendance with positive feedback.</li> <li>• Request to maintain this network to share learning for Cohort 3 and beyond.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 5: Measurement plan

Local Authority Measurements			
What	When	Why	How
1 CFE 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Writing	June 2021 June 2022 Dec 2022 Mar 2023 June 2023 Dec 2023 Mar 2024 June 2024	As writing programme spreads across 1 <sup>st</sup> level classrooms we would hope to see an increase in attainment over time within the local authority.	Local Authority Lead to provide this information to CYPIC. (Where this isn't available data to be extracted in December when published).  MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET
2A. Which schools have undertaken writing programme	June 2022 Jan 2023 June 2023 Jan 2024 June 2024 Jan 2025 June 2025	To understand if participating in the programme is a contributing factor to improvement in CFE 1 <sup>st</sup> level writing.	Local Authority Lead to complete table detailing schools who have taken part.  MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET
2B. How many schools have undertaken writing programme	June 2022 Jan 2023 June 2023 Jan 2024 June 2024 Jan 2025 June 2025	To understand progress against CYPIC local authority aim of 70%.  To understand progress against Local Authority aims.	
3 Details of Local Leads and Supporting Faculty	June 2022 Jan 2023 June 2023 Jan 2024 June 2024 Jan 2025 June 2025	To understand the infrastructure needed to implement / spread the writing programme locally	Strategic Local Lead / Local Leads to maintain an overview of who is involved, including roles and responsibilities.  PROJECT PLAN
4 Confidence of Local Leads to deliver the full writing programme	August 2022 November 2022 December 2023 February 2023 Scheduled Touch Points per cohort delivery	To understand the infrastructure needed to implement / spread the writing programme locally	Local Lead survey monkeys Local Lead feedback post sessions  SURVEYS and INTERVIEWS

School Measurements			
What	When	Why	How
5 CFE 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Writing	June 2021 June 2022 June 2023 June 2024 June 2025	As writing programme spreads across 1 <sup>st</sup> level classrooms we would hope to see an increase in attainment over time within the schools participating.	School to provide this information to Local Lead yearly in June / August. Local lead to provide this information to CYPIC yearly in August. (Where this isn't available data to be extracted in December when published)  MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET
6A. Which teachers have undertaken writing programme	June 2022 Jan 2023 June 2023 Jan 2024 June 2024 Jan 2025 June 2025	To understand if participating in the programme is a contributing factor to improvement in CFE 1 <sup>st</sup> level writing.	School Lead to complete table detailing teachers (including class stage) have taken part. School Lead to give this info to Local Lead.
6B. How many teachers have undertaken writing programme	June 2022 Jan 2023 June 2023 Jan 2024 June 2024 Jan 2025 June 2025	To understand the extent of spread.	PROJECT PLAN (6A) MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET (6B)
7 Teacher confidence to teach and assess writing	Pre-programme During programme Post-programme	To understand if the programme supports teacher confidence and if this is a contributing factor to improving attainment.	Teacher completes Survey Monkeys  SURVEYS MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET
8 Teacher enjoyment of teaching writing	Pre-programme During programme Post-programme	To understand if the programme increases teacher enjoyment and if this is a contributing factor to improving attainment.	Teacher completes Survey Monkeys  SURVEYS MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET
9 Teacher confidence to implement writing bundle	Pre-programme during Programme Post-programme	To ensure teachers feel able and supported to implement the bundle fully – using this feedback to adapt training and support to ensure they are able to do so.	Teacher completes Survey Monkeys  SURVEYS MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET
10 Which and number of teachers who continue to implement the writing bundle post training	Post programme	To understand if bundle continues to be implemented and want impact this has on data overtime.	Teacher completes Survey Monkey  SURVEYS MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET

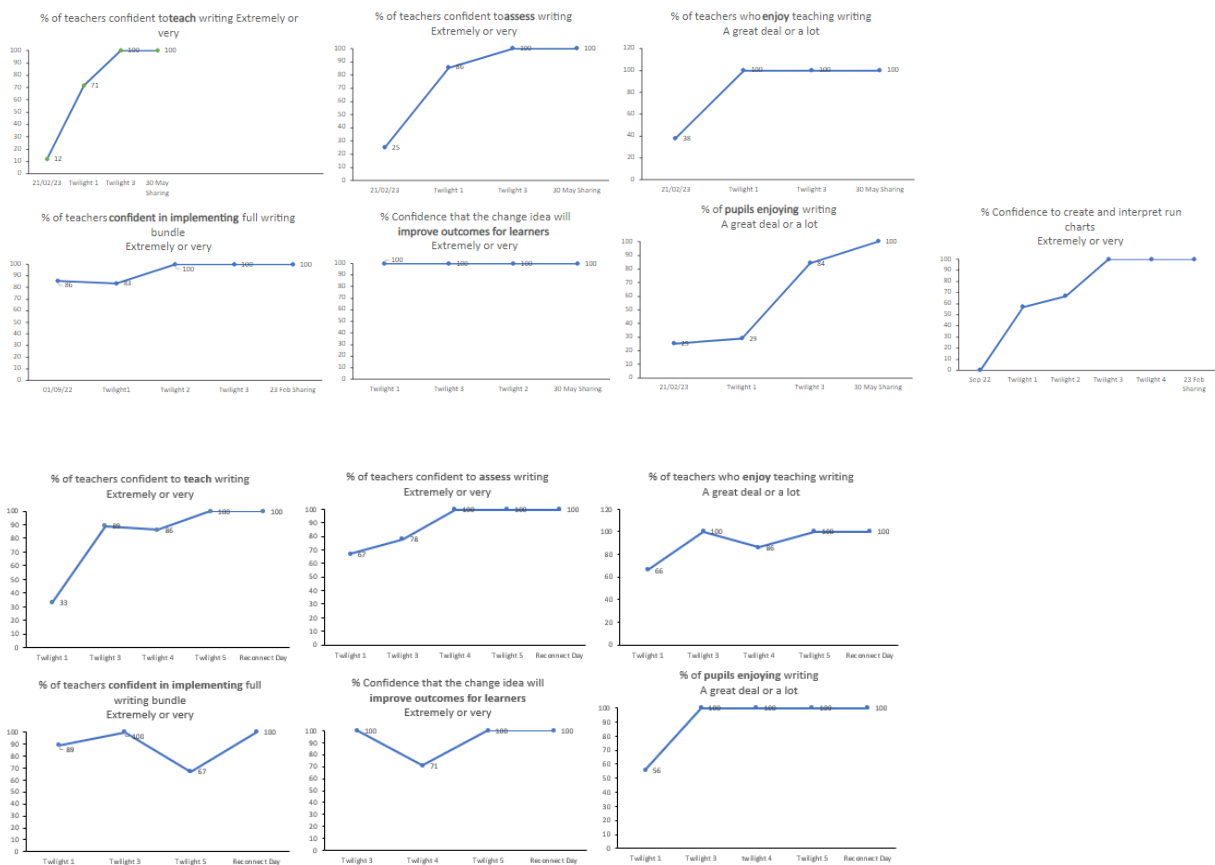


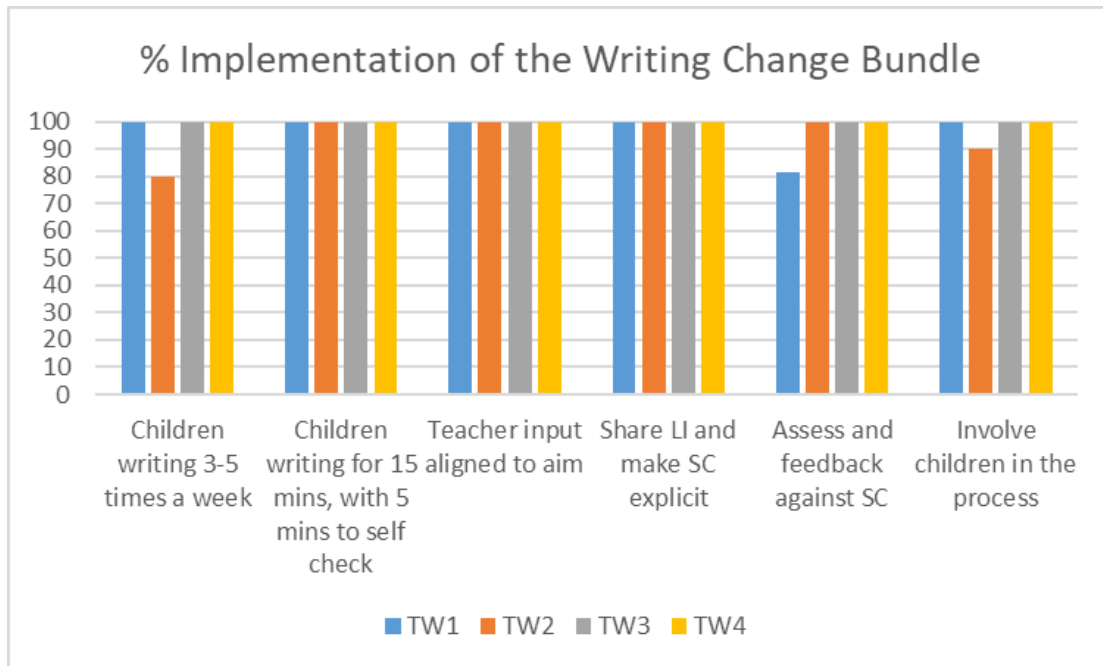
Classroom Measurements				
	What	When	Why	How
11	CfE 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Writing	Month before training Month after training June post training	We would expect to see an increase in attainment within the classrooms involved in the writing programme.	Teachers to complete data collection table  <b>MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET</b>
12	Pupil achievement of Teaching Aim (s)	Every writing lesson	To understand and learn whether the changes being implemented are leading to improvement. To support assessment of pupil's writing.	Complete spreadsheet Display and Share information on Run Chart  <b>RUN CHARTS SHARED: TW 2, TW 3, POSTER</b>
13	Pupil enjoyment of writing	Pre-programme During programme Post Programme	To understand if the programme increases pupil enjoyment and if this is a contributing factor to improving attainment. (We would expect to see this improve)	Teacher to devise a way to gather this information. (Writing Faculty to provide examples of how to do this)  <b>SURVEY / INTERVIEW MEASUREMENT SPREADSHEET POSTER</b>
14	Pre-assessment of First Level Tools for Writing	Before Training	To identify what the majority of pupils are unable to do and apply Pareto principles.	Pre-assessment spreadsheet with Pareto template completed by teacher. Pareto collated per classroom, per local authority and per Wave 1.

## Appendix 6: Cohort 2 process measures

Not all Cohort 2 data has been received. A selection of anonymised data has been included below.

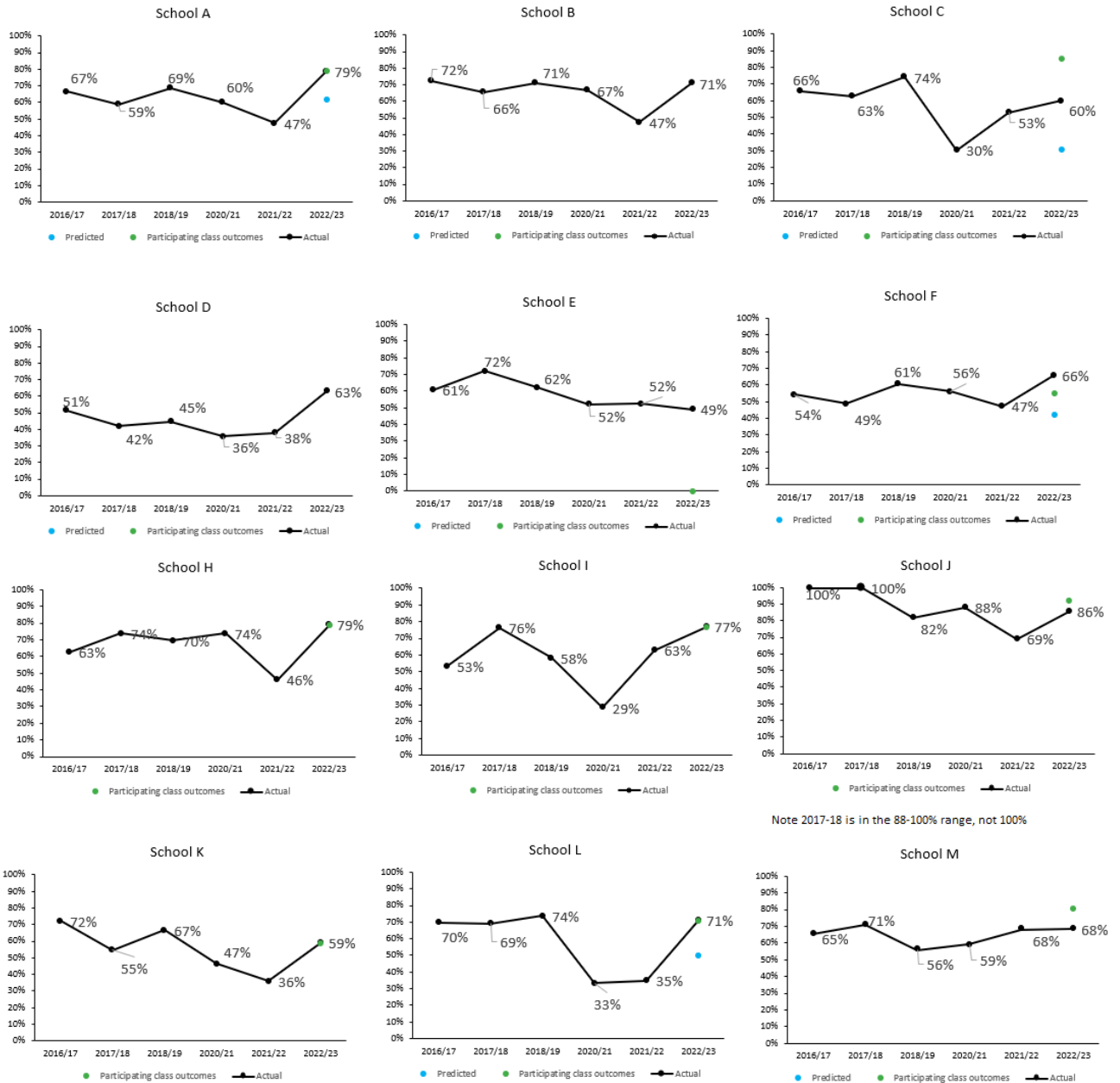
School / Session	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23	
	First Level %	Cohort Size	First Level %	Cohort Size	First Level %	Cohort Size
School 5	55	166	62	129	66	122
School 6	72	115	75	89	81	121
School 7	29	41	50	42	66	76
School 8	0	12	15	13	72	18
Cohort Average / Total	39	334	51	273	71	337
LA Average	61	1248	63	1252	70	1199
% Gap: Cohort vs LA Average	-22		-12		2	

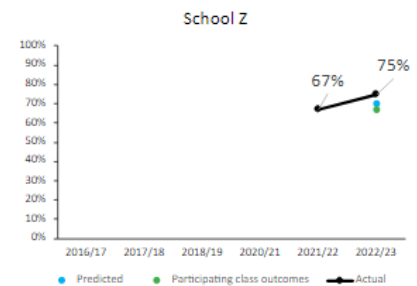
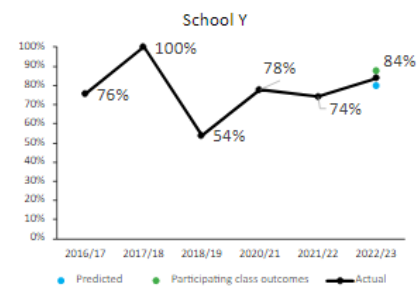
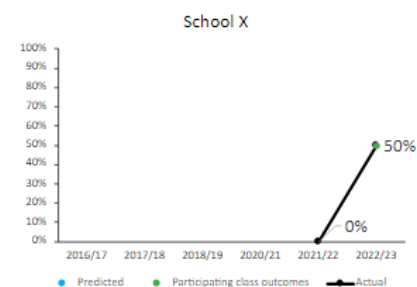
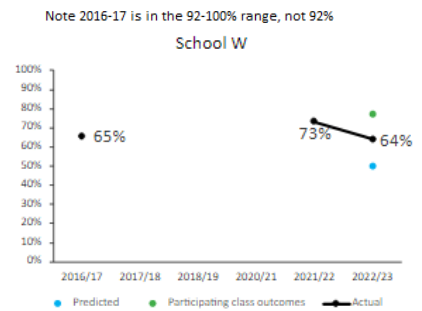
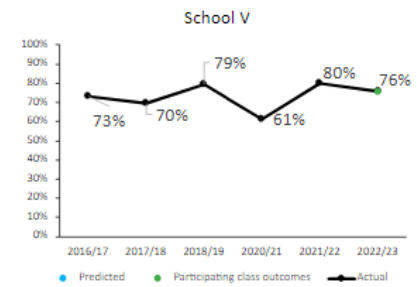
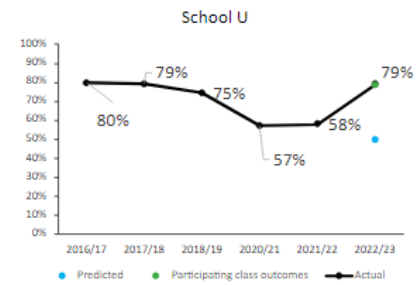
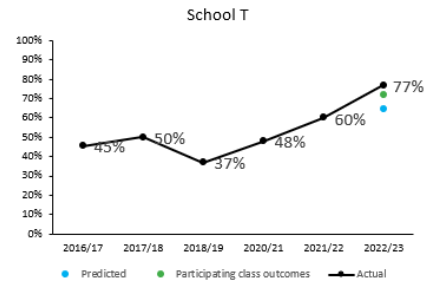
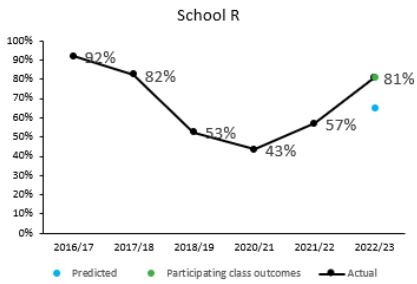
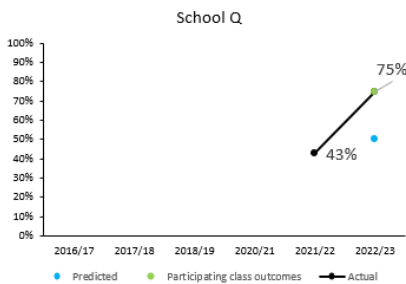
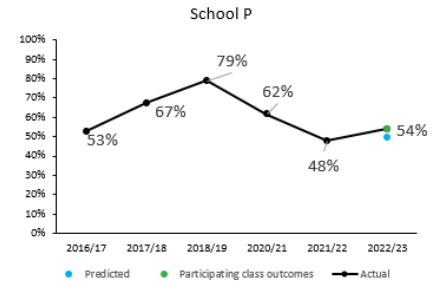
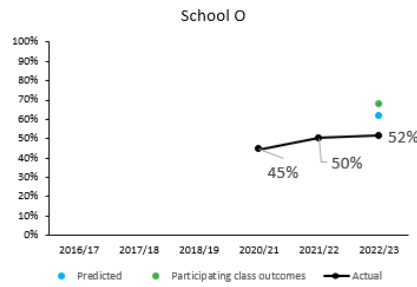
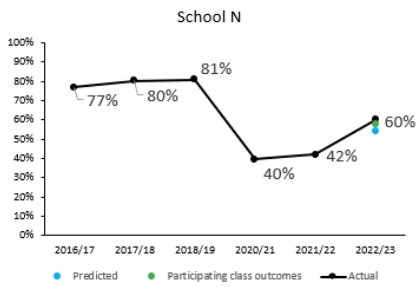




## Appendix 7: Data tracked during the programme

### Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence First Level - Cohort 1





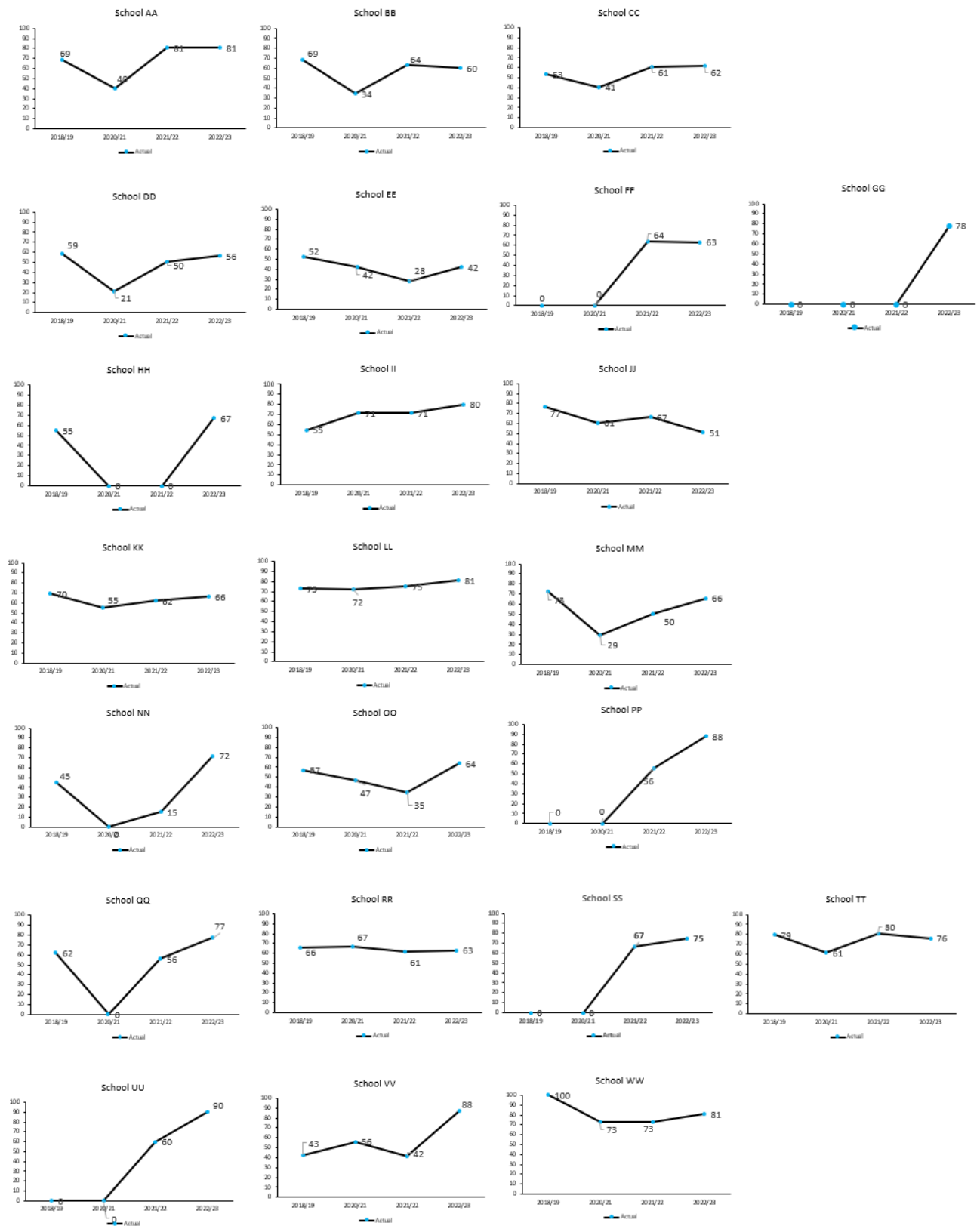
Notes:

School G - No First Level data, sent P5 teachers on the programme.

School S – Unable to complete programme.

Schools O, Q, W, X, Z have instances where data has been suppressed or is not applicable.

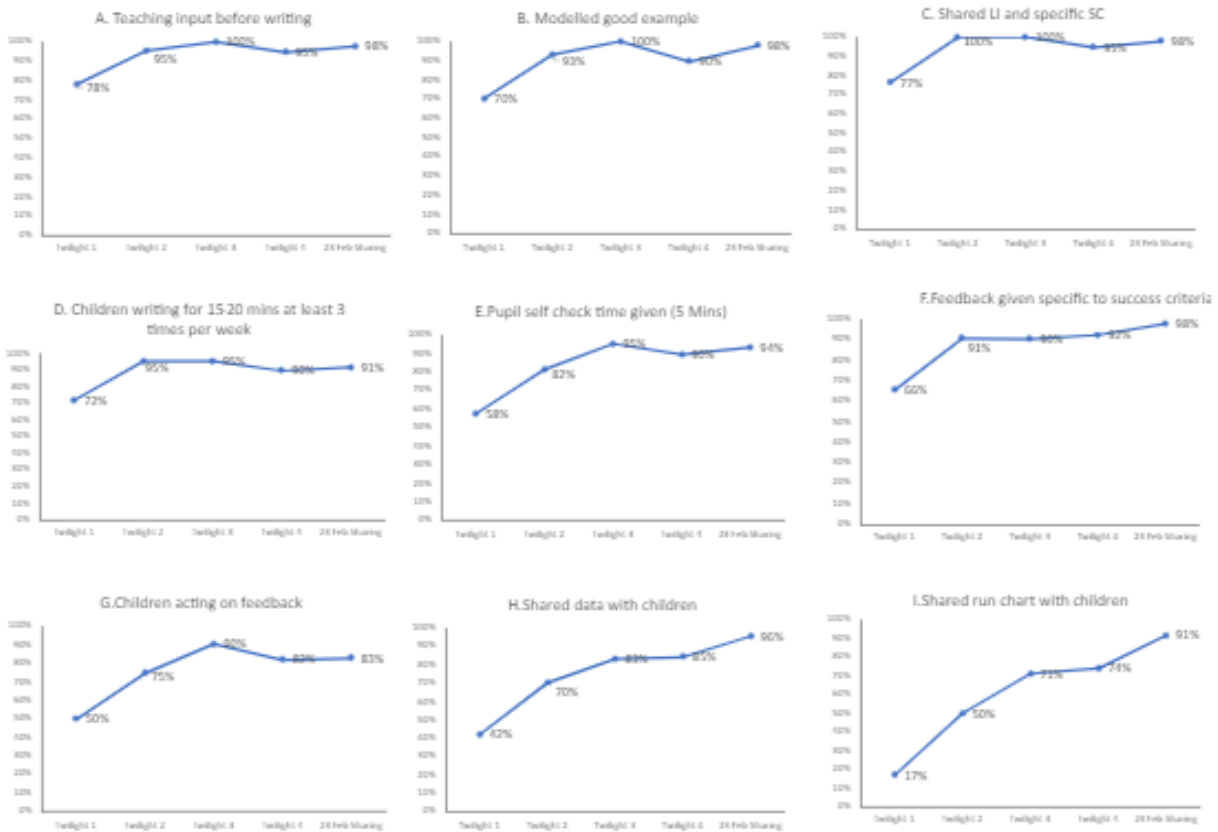
## Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence First Level - Cohort 2





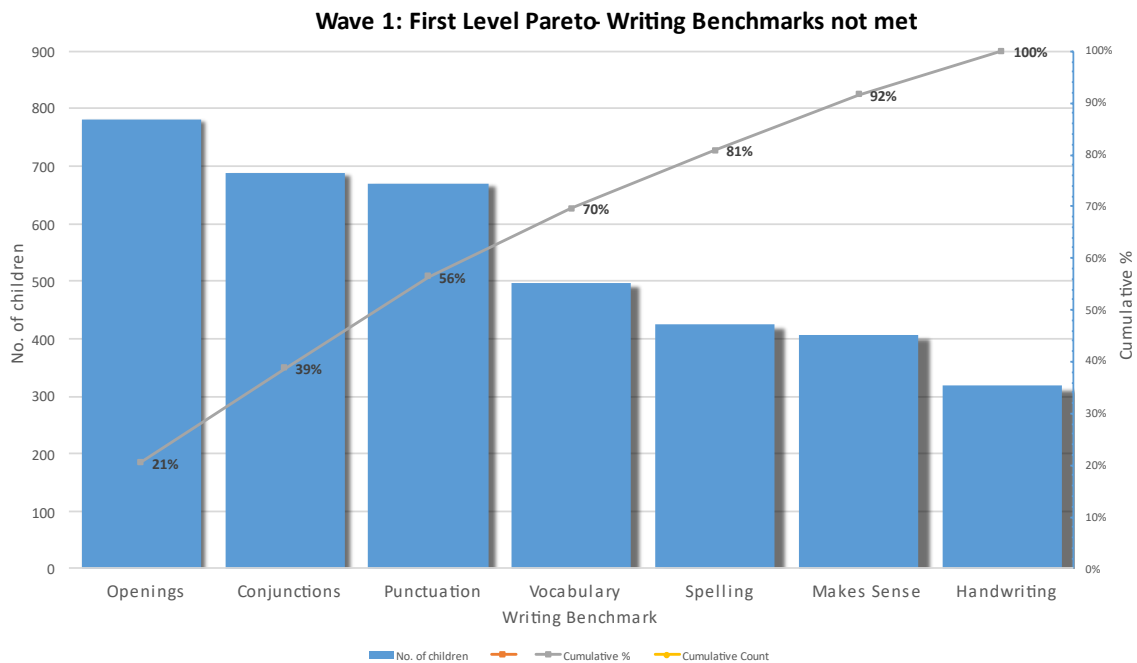
## Recorded process measures

### Small multiples: reliability of the components of the bundle



## Appendix 8: Pareto Chart

Each participating teacher created their own Pareto Chart based on an assessment of writing. Below is an amalgamation of all Wave 1 Cohort 1 charts. This chart identified the majority of children involved in the programme (irrespective of school or local authority) has greatest difficulty with openings, followed by conjunctions.



## Appendix 9: Revisions for Wave 2 (offered to Wave 1 in retrospect)

- The programme works with schools to spread the change theory. The smallest scalable unit is one class. Not all participating schools could send all of their P4 teachers therefore there is a gap and risk that full scale is not achieved in schools at the current level. Teachers also move between year groups so although consistently high First Level is the programme aim, achieving this requires wider implementation. There are equity issues where some children in a school gain benefits from the programme while others do not, or at one point in their primary education but not consistently. **An additional support offer to support these schools up to full scale is recommended.**

From Cohort 1: 17 schools reported that they plan to spread this work further.  
11 intend to spread across their whole school

- To ensure schools are able to cement the progress they have made and build on it further, we suggest bringing in other First Level teachers (and most likely others given the movement between age groups) into subsequent cohorts.
- If P2 and P3 teachers begin using this method, we would anticipate children will be in a stronger position going into P4 and ultimately have an earlier grasp of First Level writing.
- Some local authorities are designing spread into Second Level so that the 2022/23 P4 cohort can maintain this consistent approach to writing until the end of Second Level at P7.
- Spread to other classes and stages in a school has always been likely, but there is a risk to the efficacy of the programme if this is not done well and incorporates all of the change theory. Asking too much of the P4 teachers by relying on them to implement in their own class while spreading across the school could put First Level outcomes at risk.

### Reviewing the “Spread” Theory of Change

This evaluation has indicated that the following factors would enhance the existing theory of change:

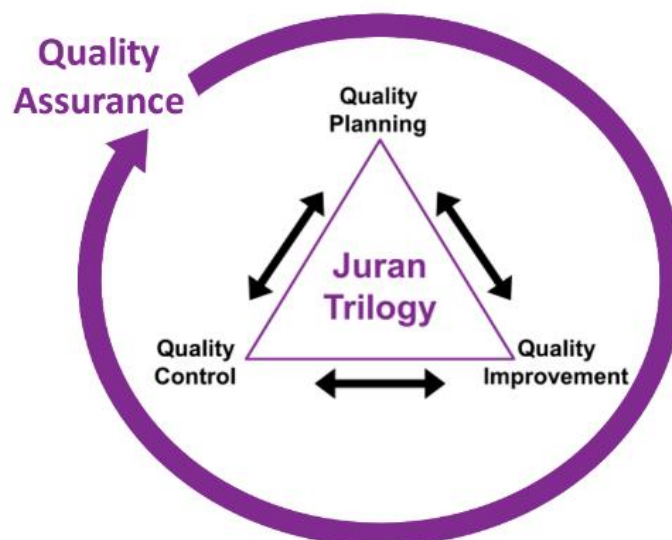
1. More specific, potentially 1:1, support to develop, plan and deliver a local spread plan with each local authority. There is real potential to help people do this with a QI Journey lens rather than a project management approach alone.
2. Scale to reach all P4 / First Level staff within existing Wave 1 schools and to consider the ongoing support to maintain skills with staff churn.
3. Succession planning, equipping additional local leads to ensure there are always two local leads in any area.
4. Succession planning, in-school where staff change roles or move school.

5. Targeted messaging to head teachers at all participating schools to outline commitment, expectations, and ways they can implement and quality assure the programme in their school.
6. Maintaining fidelity of message when schools intend to spread the programme school-wide (with or without central support).
7. Local implementation and spread, the importance of upskilling school champions to equip them with tools to support and drive change with their peers.

*Points 6 and 7 are not directly required to deliver on the programme's stretch aim (CfE First Level) but do impact it indirectly.*

### Strategic positioning

Programme delivery is only 12 weeks, nevertheless throughout the programme we position this work within an overall quality management approach. Using the Juran Trilogy as a basis for these discussions we are creating the conditions for the wider use of quality management and improvement science in education.



Individual teachers are provoked to maintain quality in their classrooms and use data for improvement in their teaching. Further messaging on the trilogy (reinforced with quality assurance) with head teachers and strategic leaders will reiterate that this is a fully resourced and sustained approach within literacy. This paves the way for systematic approaches using the QI Journey to be introduced across the curriculum and school-life.

### Additional roles

We have identified a potential gap in local infrastructure which the CYPIC team should work with them to address. There is a risk that those who have gone through the programme are leaned upon to spread the change in their school beyond their own classroom. This is a very different role to having success within one's own classroom therefore we are offering two additional supports:

**Implementation Champions:** those who have completed the programme and are now expected to be a leader in their school for wider application of QI and the Writing Change Bundle. CYPIC will work with these groups to build their capacity and ready them for the differing requirements of implementation, e.g. additional QI knowledge, particularly spread theory and change management. CYPIC will create an ongoing network for this group to share learning and inform the national theory of sustainable implementation.

**Head teacher information session:** some schools did not have a head or depute attending with them and as a result found it hard to make decisions “in the room” and see their role in the wider school strategy. The in-school management of Improving Writing is being addressed with a session to highlight what teachers will be experiencing during the programme and how head teachers can support this work, ways to provide quality assurance and drive expectations in P4. Connecting this work to wider school strategy will ready them for spread (planned or unplanned which may take place in their school) and give them tips to support and promote the work in their schools.

**Implementation Wave:** bringing additional staff members from these schools on to the full training so that each school can get to a “tipping point” where enough people know about the method to maintain it at First Level.

Retention, turnover, sickness and maternity leave have already been evident in Wave 1. Continued “loop backs” will be essential to achieve full scale implementation across P4. First Level spans P2, P3 and P4, and into P5 for some children, so to reduce variation of how children are taught writing there are many more teachers even within the initial schools who should be brought into the training.

### **External communication**

As the waves of the programme grow, the reach and diversity of stakeholders increases. Faculty will review our stakeholder management plan to examine how best to manage messaging around this work and maintain resourcing and momentum.

### **Spreading a consistent message**

Programme fidelity is fundamental to the implementation and spread of improvement work. CYPIC has been keen to work with local leads and emerging innovators to capture new learning and enable contextual adaptation, without diluting or changing the main messages. As a result, on 31 May 2023 the now extended faculty (National and Wave 1 Local Leads) discussed and agreed the essential elements of the programme.