
DURHAM RESILIENCE PROJECT

Research and Evaluation



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About the Authors

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The Centre of Resilience for Social Justice

The Centre of Resilience for Social Justice at the University of Brighton is a vibrant and diverse team in which co-production and 'real world' impact underpins all our research.

Our team is comprised of academics, social workers, teachers, other professionals and service users. Our researchers are from the fields of healthcare, sociology, media studies and arts practices. Together, members of the centre collaborate across disciplinary boundaries to address health, social and ecological inequalities in the UK, Europe and Africa, aiming to tackle disadvantage and brings genuine change to people's lives around the world.

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Introduction

This report summarises key findings from the data collected alongside the Durham Resilience Project (DRP).

The report considers the potential of the DRP to contribute to capacity building and sustainability of good practice in relation to resilience across multiple levels of the school system. Findings are presented to illustrate the impact of the DRP for multiple stakeholders, including pupils, and staff at school and county levels.

Contextual Need

In the UK, the most recent evidence suggests that 1 in 8 children and young people aged between 5 and 19 have a diagnosed mental health difficulty¹. Statistics also show that as demand is increasing for specialist support services, these services are being stretched beyond capacity². In addition, an inequalities gap exists between ‘disadvantaged pupils’ and their peers in

¹ <https://files.digital.nhs.uk/F6/A5706C/MHCYP%202017%20Summary.pdf>

² Page, Z. (2016). CAMHS benchmarking 2016. Retrieved from

<https://www.nhsbenchmarking.nhs.uk/news/camhs-benchmarking-2016-findings-published>

Accessed:24.5.18

Pitchforth, J., Fahy, K., Ford, T., Wolpert, M., Viner, R. M., & Hargreaves, D. S. (2018). Mental health and well-being trends among children and young people in the UK, 1995–2014: analysis of repeated cross-sectional national health surveys. *Psychological medicine*, 1-11.

NSPCC, (2016). Rise in children hospitalised for self-harm as thousands contact Childline. Retrieved

from London: [https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/rise-children-hospitalised-](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/rise-children-hospitalised-self-harm-thousands-contact-childline/)

[self-harm-thousands-contact-childline/](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/rise-children-hospitalised-self-harm-thousands-contact-childline/) Accessed:1.10.17

terms of academic attainment³. In terms of examination grades at Key Stage 4 (GCSE or equivalent), there has been little change in the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers since 2011. By the end of Key Stage 4 in the North East of England, there was as much as a two-year gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers⁴. The socio-economic environment appears to significantly contribute to gaps in attainment, having a negative impact for all children (but especially for disadvantaged pupils) who are falling the furthest behind national averages⁵.

A Whole School Resilience Approach

Considering the high levels of demand for external services, increased attention has been shifting to schools as an essential setting for promoting emotional health and wellbeing and building long term resilience. Whole school approaches have been promoted as an effective model because they build on existing strengths, and build capacity to meet the needs of all members of the school community. Resilience-promoting approaches are thought to be less stigmatising ways to address young people's mental health difficulties, since they are strengths based. Resilience approaches to promoting mental health and wellbeing can also be more sustainable since they focus on what building internal capacity rather than relying on

³ DfE (2015). Pupil attainment at state-funded schools in the 2013 to 2014 academic year. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399005/SFR06_2015_Text.pdf Accessed:1.5.17

⁴ JRF. (2016b). *Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2016 (MPSE)*. Retrieved from <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/monitoring-poverty-and-social-exclusion-2016> Accessed:1.4.17

Hutchinson, J., Robinson, D., Carr, D., Crenna-Jennings, W., Hunt, E., Akhal, A. (2018). *Education in England: Annual Report*. Retrieved from <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/annual-report-2018/> Accessed:19.10.18

⁵ Partnership, N. P. (2017). *Educating the North: Driving Ambition Across the Powerhouse*. Retrieved from <http://www.northernpowerhousepartnership.co.uk/media/1208/npp-educating-the-north.pdf> Accessed:20.10.2018

expensive and transient ‘experts’, who deliver short term or individualised intervention⁶

One such model is called the Academic Resilience Approach (ARA), developed by Professor Angie Hart and Lisa Williams in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Brighton, and other practitioners and young people. The ARA has been used widely in the UK and globally to respond to a need for increased mental health intervention and to tackle the persistent inequalities gap in pupil outcomes. The ARA is based on the principle that by embedding a resilient school culture, schools can support young people to achieve positive outcomes in spite of the complex disadvantage they may face. The ARA therefore aims to enable schools to help young people not only ‘beat the odds’, but in doing so, tackle the inherent inequality in the school system, thus also ‘changing the odds’.

The Durham Resilience Project

Durham County Council has developed their own locally facilitated approach to building resilience and promoting mental health and wellbeing. The process has been guided by a ‘steering group’, which included senior managers and the senior public health commissioner at Durham County Council.

The Durham Resilience Project (DRP), is a whole school and whole county approach that draws on the systems based nature of the Academic Resilience Approach (ARA), adapting the model for local contextual needs.

The DRP is both tailored to meet specific local contextual needs, and account for existing strengths, both at school and county level. School and specialist staff at the County Council were closely involved at all stages of development in order to increase local ownership and strengthen cross system links.

A multi-disciplinary team were selected from Durham County Council specialist staff, including advisory teachers, education psychologists and school advisers. In this report, these professionals are referred to as

⁶ Hart, A., & Heaver, B. (2013). Evaluating resilience-based programs for schools using a systematic consultative review.

‘facilitators’ of the DRP. The facilitation team engaged initially with 20 pilot schools. They supported school staff to audit current practice, implement a whole school action plan to promote resilience, mental health and wellbeing, and reviewed the impact. In most cases, these formal audit sessions were delivered across two staff twilight sessions involving all school staff.

The DRP’s strong focus on capacity building within and beyond school (through the train the trainer model and through re-shaping everyday practices) aimed to increase sustainability and reduce sole reliance on external support, especially considering the current strain on external services.

Executive Summary

Key findings

The Durham Resilience Project (DRP) was a complex process that was shaped by the varied contexts in which it was implemented. This evaluation has sought to explore data across multiple system levels, and from multiple stakeholders, in order to identify the contextual mechanisms that were perceived to have increased the impact of the DRP, and to summarise the changes that have been observed in these cases.

Across all schools who have provided data, the DRP been perceived by staff at multiple system levels to have had a positive impact on school climate, and to have increased the competence and confidence of individual staff in relation to the concept of resilience and its relevance in schools. Notably, statistically significant improvements have been reported in relation to staff workload, participative decision making and perceptions of leadership. Effective information sharing and increased communication and collaboration was a key theme of interviews with school and county level staff, demonstrating the parallel influence the DRP had for policy and practice at multiple system levels. Both facilitators and school staff report an increased understanding of a systems based conceptualisation of resilience, and increased confidence and competence in applying this concept to school policy and practice.

Current data suggests that there have already been gains for pupils as a result of the DRP. For example, school staff cite many improvements to the school environment which they report has had a direct impact on pupils. Specific examples include more safe spaces at break time, increased access to specialist equipment, opportunities for creative and risk-taking play, greater integration between pupils accessing enhanced mainstream provision (EMP) and their peers, and visual displays that are being used to develop understanding of resilience and to guide the use of effective coping strategies. A combination of improved pupil awareness of resilience (and

associated protective factors), and modelling of strategies by staff, appears to have resulted in increased pupil perseverance, independence, positive peer interaction and improved behaviour, as reported by staff. Whilst there is not currently sufficient data to quantify the impact of the DRP on pupils' academic progress, attendance and behaviour, it is possible that the significant impact on school climate will influence such outcome markers long term. Especially in the light of rich practice based examples of the impact for pupils provided by school staff, it is anticipated that longitudinal data collection may further support this anticipated link.

The unique opportunity provided by the DRP to gather multiple stakeholder perspectives about current school strengths and challenges, and the adaptability of the approach to specific contextual needs were highly valued by participating school staff. In many schools, the DRP was initiated during a time of considerable change and uncertainty for staff. This included a large scale redundancy process, school re-structuring and amalgamation and the introduction of new assessment and attainment measures. In addition, multiple schools experienced Ofsted inspection during the DRP, resulting in required changes to policy and practice.

Facilitators were able to support staff to use the DRP as an opportunity to maintain open communication between staff of different role types, including increased participative decision making. Facilitators also focused on preserving peer support as an important buffer of workplace stress, and helped to prioritise staff wellbeing in action planning. This was an important parallel to evaluating and developing pupil resilience, considering the well established support mechanisms already in place in many schools for pupils and their families, and the adversity reported by staff in interviews for this evaluation. School staff are a valuable resource in building pupil resilience, provided they themselves are sufficiently supported and have the capacity to do so. Therefore this ongoing work will be critical to the sustainability of the project.

Both staff at the school level, and in the DRP steering group identified the sustainability of the DRP considering its continued relevance both to local needs and national policy, its impact thus far, the increasing connections between schools and local services as a result of the project and the increasing demand for the service expressed by schools. Notably, the

‘celebration events’ designed for schools to share DRP experiences, have provided new schools with concrete examples of how the DRP is applied in practice and the impact on pupil and staff outcomes, prompting increased uptake or re-engagement.

Key enabling factors in terms of the potential impact the DRP had at school level for pupils and staff across all participating schools were:

- Congruence of the DRP’s central aims with school ethos
- ‘Optimal turbulence’ (staff, especially school leaders, do not consider other priorities to be competing with the DRP and can align existing priorities with the DRP)
- Supportive leadership (including the presence of school leaders at audit sessions)
- Involvement of the whole staff (including administrative staff, catering staff, pastoral staff and site staff)
- Consistency of staffing (especially the school lead and nominated facilitator)
- Adapting the focus of the DRP to address relevant adversity for both pupils and staff - making sure the approach has reciprocal benefit
- Insider/Outsider position of the facilitator as an experienced professional with local links who also valued staff as experts of their own school’s strengths and challenges
- Careful guidance and facilitation that fosters open communication between multiple stakeholders
- Introducing new information to school planning about multiple stakeholder perspectives that help direct action planning (e.g. staff surveys, pupil audits)
- Incorporating the DRP into formal whole school planning - all staff have shared ownership and responsibility

- Embracing complexity - a focus on long term outcomes and an understanding of how small changes in one area can lead to significant impact in others

Potential constraints of the DRP reported by staff in some schools were:

- Many staff were initially concerned about the potential increased workload and time commitment required in order to participate in the DRP. This was true of staff both at school and county level. However in the vast majority of cases, the DRP was adopted as an ‘umbrella’ approach, unifying, co-ordinating and tweaking existing practice. A commonly discussed outcome was that the DRP had redefined practice and professional roles rather than adding to workload
- Inconsistent staffing (led to a loss of momentum)
- In some cases existing priorities, usually urgent, short term pressures (e.g. Ofsted inspection, assessment, workforce restructuring) dominated school leader time and attention, detracting from the DRP. However, in some cases, increased support was provided to support leaders to align the DRP with existing targets, thereby increasing engagement
- Some leaders, especially in secondary schools, reflected that due to the highly adaptive nature of the DRP, there was a perceived lack of structure and specialist support. However, the majority of school leaders valued the ‘coaching’ approach of facilitators and the freedom to direct the DRP to existing needs

Development of the DRP

- The DRP has grown and been shaped organically by the many local professionals who have collaborated in its design, implementation and evaluation. This development is ongoing.

- A challenge identified by the steering team is to define the offer to local schools, ensuring this offer is practically attainable and targets schools in which the DRP is likely to have significant impact
- One suggested development is to consider school 'readiness' for the DRP - based on the aspirational conditions identified in this report - prior to providing audit sessions. Readiness could be determined along with specific areas of necessary focus prior to DRP engagement in order to avoid potential constraints, to target the implementation, and to maximise impact.
- Considering the additional workload involved for school staff and facilitators to gather data required for audit and action plan review, data collection procedures should be evaluated. It may reduce administrative work to require schools to submit baseline data prior to DRP engagement as a condition of engaging in the audit process, possibly linking access to school level evaluation reports which could aid school planning and increase motivation to provide necessary data.
- The steering group have identified a need to differentiate the approach for secondary schools, based on feedback from participants about the perceived barriers of increased competing priorities, larger staff and pupil populations and structural restrictions.
- Longitudinal data collection will continue to explore the long term impact of the DRP for pupils and staff, and could include a range of quantitative outcome data such as pupil attendance, staff absence and turnover, pupil academic progress, fixed term and permanent exclusion rates and parent engagement (e.g. attendance at parents evenings or stay and play sessions). In addition, revisiting qualitative interviews and focus groups with pupils and staff would provide a rich picture of the impact of changes to school climate over time and in relation to specific contexts.

Research Aims

This report explores the potential for the DRP to contribute to the capacity building and sustainability of good practice across the multiple levels of the system, using a whole school resilience building approach. In addition, this report explores the extent to which resilience was built in the whole school community, and, in turn, considers how this might influence future pupil outcomes (including behaviour, academic attainment and wellbeing).

Objectives of the research:

1. To explain how this implementation has been experienced from the point of view of the various stakeholders of the DRP (including steering group, facilitators, school senior management and school staff) emphasising achievements & strengths of the process and highlighting challenges and lessons learned for future implementations.

2. To investigate the extent to which this project built capacity within Durham County Council (including to what extent this project increased confidence and competence in working with the concept of resilience, with each other and with schools). To consider the extent to which this pilot enhanced good practice and developed networks or connections.

3. To investigate the extent to which this implementation impacted on school climate, staff perception of the school system, and staff and pupil resilience (including a range of projected outcomes).

4. To explore the potential for the sustainability of the DRP in the whole system (i.e., what elements of this project will be incorporated into long term whole school planning and policy? What has been the learning for the wider system including senior management teams at school and county level? To what extent has this project improve information sharing, communication and connections across the different aspects of the system?)

Research Design

Mixed Method Multiple Case Study

This evaluation adopted a multi-school, multi-level and multi-method study design. Quantitative data was collected in the form of pupil and staff surveys (whole population sampling), which were issued at the start of the DRP and repeated at the end of one year involvement in the process. In addition, all schools were asked to provide numerical data regarding pupil attendance, exclusions and referrals. Qualitative data was collected in the form of an open ended facilitator survey (conducted post DRP implementation, a focus group (with five members of the DRP steering group), and semi structured interviews. Interviews were carried out with a sub-sample of three school staff of varying role type in each of the five case study schools and with every facilitator (interviewed twice during DRP implementation).

By synthesising qualitative and quantitative data, both breadth and depth of information was collated in order to articulate the process and impact of the DRP. Data was collected at both at school and county level, in order to establish the impact of the DRP across multiple system levels. This evaluation has employed the Value Creation Framework (REF) to consider immediate and ongoing value generated by the DRP, the sustainability of the project and how it might contribute to long term whole system resilience. A full explanation of the framework is provided in section X of this report.

Data Collection

A range of qualitative and quantitative data was collected from both pupils and staff. Data was collected before, during and after the DRP had been initiated in each school. Data was also collected from Local Authority and Steering Group staff in order to consider the broader impact of the DRP and the sustainability of its delivery.

Timescales

Task	Collection period	2016	2017	June to Aug	Sep to Oct	Nov to Dec	2018	March to May	June to July
		Dec	March to May				Jan to March		
Whole school and Pupil data	1.12.16 1.7.18								
Facilitator Interview 1 (and half term report) (N=9)	3.3.17 19.6.17		x	x					
Time 1 SPSC Survey collection Invited (N=710) Responded (N=228)	1.12.16 5.4.18	x	x						
Time 1 Pupil survey (N=612)	1.12.16 1.7.17	x	x	x					
Interviewees contacted (N=15)	12.7.17 21.7.17			x					

Impact for Pupils

Pupil Survey Findings

Scale

The Pupil Resilience Survey (PRS) is a survey tool created to measure pupil resilience by identifying a range of factors, which may contribute to resilience, notwithstanding adversity and risk. It provides an holistic picture by examining internal factors such as an individual's potential for coping and also measures resilience through their social context as demonstrated through their perception of relationships with peers, family and institutional systems. Additionally it contains a measure of health-related quality of life traits (**HRQoL**). It was created using two instruments; firstly Sun and Stewart's Student Resilience Survey (2007) and secondly the **KIDSCREEN-10** Index (2004) for HRQoL. The Student Resilience Survey was developed in Australia with 2,794 primary school and provides a validated tool for collecting data regarding the perception of students about resilience factors. KIDSCREEN-10 Index derives from a project which included 13 European countries over 3 years to assess health-related quality of life in children and adolescents. Responses are measured by pupil self report. Pupils respond to each item on a five point likert-type scale.

The scale measured nine sub-scales as follows:

- Home
- School
- Away from school
- Home and school
- Experiences at school
- Friends
- Yourself
- Other students in your school

- Your health
- General health

Sample

The first survey was completed by 612 pupils, which included 334 primary school pupils and 278 secondary school pupils. The second survey, after one year of DRP engagement, was completed by 333 pupils, which included 128 primary school pupils and 205 secondary school pupils. Of these responses, 204 pupils provided data for both the first and second survey.

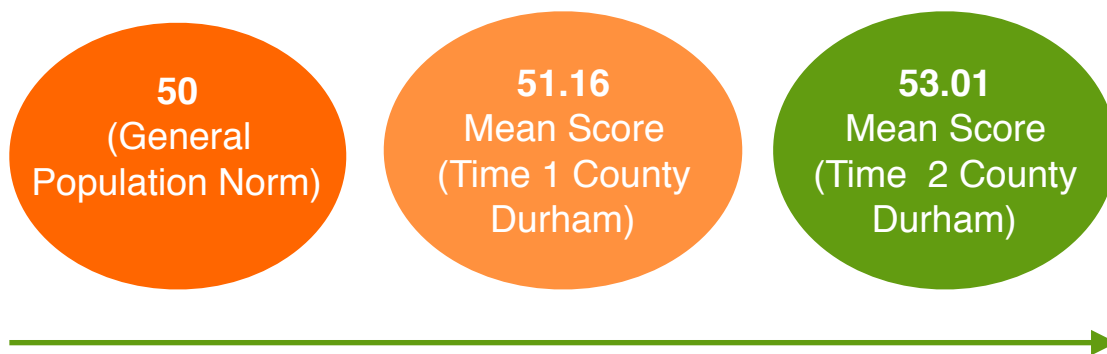
The table below shows descriptives for the final sample who provided data for the first (T1) and second (T2) survey. The sample is representative of those who completed one survey but not the other, and is also representative of County Durham schools when using national pupil demographic data.

Sample Descriptives for the Comparison group (N=204) who provided both Time 1 and Time 2 data

	Primary Schools (N=106)	Secondary Schools (N=96)
	N (%)	N (%)
School Year		
Year 3	46 (43.4%)	
Year 4	60 (56.6%)	
Year 5	0 (0.0%)	
Year 8		96 (100.0%)
Female	53 (50.0%)	55 (57.3%)
FSM status	37 (34.9%)	25 (26.1%)
SEN status	18 (17.0%)	11 (11.5%)
Looked after status	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Ethnicity- White	100 (94.4%)	93 (96.9%)
English 1st language	102 (96.2%)	95 (99.0%)

Baseline and Follow up Comparison

Results show that even at baseline, the mean score across all pupils for **Health Related Quality of Life (HRQoL)** was 51.16. This is higher than the general population norm for the same age group which is 50, which indicates that **children in County Durham self report a higher than average HRQoL**. The mean score across all pupils for the same measure at the second survey was 53.01, which suggests that *there was a trend towards increasing scores when based on total mean scores for the whole sample. For primary school pupils, there was a **statistically significant** impact of the DRP on Health Related quality of life, as assessed by the KIDSCREEN-10 scale.*



When individual items from the Student Resilience Survey were compared between the baseline and follow up survey, all results showed a trend to increase over time, and for the following items, this increase was statistically significant:

AT HOME there is an adult who is interested in my school work.

AT HOME there is an adult who believes that I will be a success.

AT HOME there is an adult who wants me to do my best.

Pupil Audit

A summary of Pupil Audit sessions was collected from each school. Common themes were that children feel safe and secure in the school environment, and that friendship and supportive adults were seen as an important aspect of resilience. In particular, children valued emotional support, extra-curricular opportunities and their school achievements being recognised, both at school and at home. Many children echoed the sentiments of one quote 'To me school is a second home - they are your parents and they really care for you'.

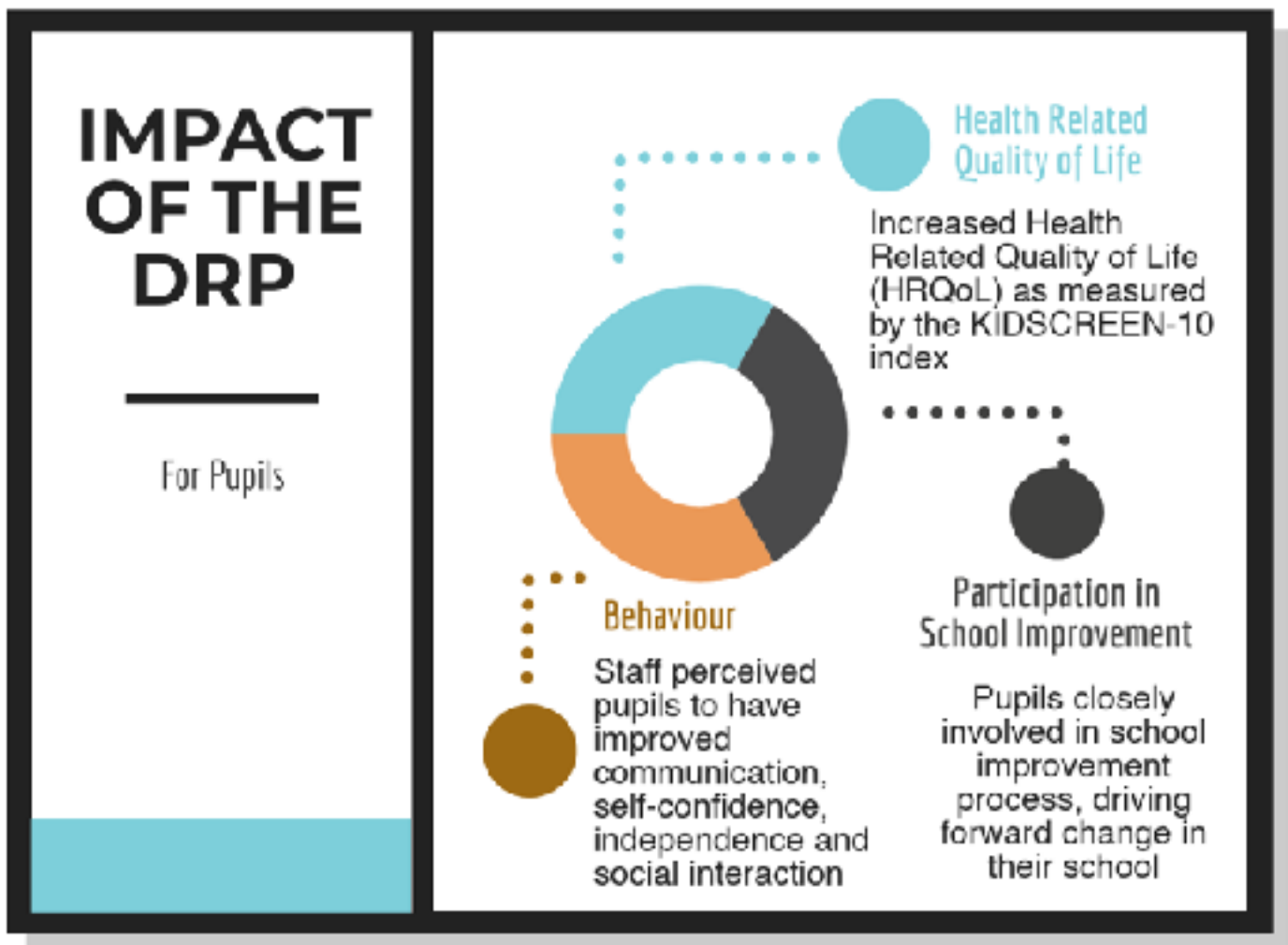
Although children feel a sense of shared responsibility for their own and others resilience, there was some variation about what this meant, especially regarding the definition of resilience, strategies for resilience and how to cope during times of adversity. In particular, facilitators felt there was a need to explore bullying and 'friendship issues' in PSHE style sessions.

Staff reports of impact for pupils

Staff interview data included reports of perceived impact of the DRP for pupils, both directly as a result of the action plan, and as an indirect result of improvements for staff. Improvements were perceived in communication, interaction with peers, self-confidence, increased independence and better coping. Examples are provided in the section of this report detailing staff interview data. Further data collection could further explore this perceived impact, comparing current findings with pupil experiences and outcomes.

Summary of impact for pupils

When the results of the pupil survey are considered in the light of pupil audit data and staff interview data, the DRP can be seen to have impact in three key ways for pupils. There was an increase for total scores when considered across the whole sample for Health Related Quality of Life as measured by the Kidscreen-10 index. This was a statistically significant increase for primary school pupils. Participation in school improvement and school planning also increased for pupils during the DRP and staff perceived changes to pupil behaviour including improved communication, self-confidence and social interaction.



Staff perceptions of the interaction between the DRP and school climate

Staff Survey Tool

Quantitative data about staff perceptions of school climate was being collected using the self-reported Staff Perceptions of School Climate scale (**SPSC**). This scale was developed by combining sub-scales from three existing survey tools that have been previously tested and found to be highly reliable. The three scales are the School Organisational Health Questionnaire, (Hart et al., 2000), the Social Capital Scale (Onyx & Bullen, 2000) and the Health Promoting School Scale (Lemerle, 2005). The majority of sub-scales in the SPSC can be found in the School Organisational Health Questionnaire (7 sub-scales), whilst the remaining two sub-scales were each taken from a different scale. The sub-scale of 'Work Connection' is derived from the Social Capital scale (SCS) and 'School Community Relationships' is derived from the Health Promoting Schools scale (HPS).

- The SCS was initially developed by Onyx and Bullen (2000) in order to measure feelings of trust, safety, proactivity and work connection amongst school staff.
- The SOHQ assesses school organisational climate from the perspective of school staff.
- Lastly, because of the whole school nature of the ARA, it was important that the SPSC survey contained multiple items that gathered information about staff perspectives of school and community relationships. The HPS scale was initially tested by Lemerle (2005) in

39 schools in Queensland, Australia. The scale measures staff perceptions of school health policy, social and physical environment and community school relationship.

What does the SPSC measure?

We have used nine sub-scales (each containing a number of individual items), drawn from the three existing measures outlined above, to create the SPSC. The sub-scales of the SPSC and their relevant items are:

- Morale (enthusiasm, team spirit and pride in school)
- School Community Relationship (involvement & awareness of community organisations, parents and carers)
- Workload (expectation, pressure and time for work)
- Appraisal and Recognition (structures and quality of feedback)
- Participative Decision Making (expressing own views & participating in policy and strategy)
- Goal Congruence (clarity and commitment to school goals)
- Professional Interaction (Support&interaction between colleagues)
- Work Connection (feeling of being accepted and valued)
- Supportive Leadership (empathy and support of Senior Leadership Team)

Staff Survey Findings

Baseline survey results - (pre DRP).

Results provided in this section are based on staff who responded to the Time One survey (pre DRP). The total number of staff responding to the survey was 266, with the lowest response to an individual item being 211. A summary of notable results both in terms of sub scales and individual items

is provided for the total cohort, before consideration is given to variation by school and role type.

Summary of Strengths and Challenges

Strengths

When SPSCCT1 sub-scale scores were placed in order from highest to lowest, **'Professional Interaction' was the highest score, 'Goal Congruence' the second highest, and 'Work Connection' the third highest.** Each of these sub scales are related to staff sense of connection to their professional role, to other staff, and to shared values. These results suggest that there was a high level of belonging and commitment in staff teams in spite of adversity highlighted in the 'challenges' below. As reflected in staff interviews, these aspects of school climate were perceived by some staff as protective factors against role adversity. Since an aim of the DRP was to preserve and build on existing strengths, these aspects of school climate became a focus for facilitators, in terms of maximising opportunities for peer support, and linking the DRP to existing values.

Challenges

When SPSCCT1 sub-scale scores were placed in order from lowest to highest, **'Workload' was the lowest score, 'Participative Decision Making' the second lowest and 'Appraisal and recognition' the third lowest.** This reflects qualitative data findings in which workload and employment uncertainty in relation to redundancy processes (which impacted perceptions of leadership and participative decision making) posed the most significant adversity for staff at the beginning of the DRP process.

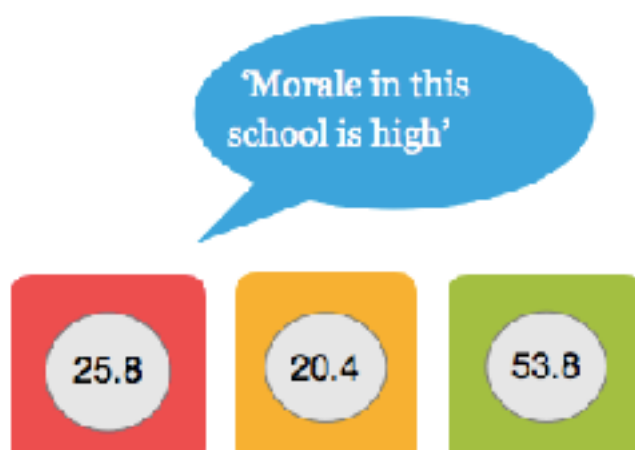
It is interesting to note, that in spite of being amongst the lowest scores at T1, these aspects of school climate that were perceived by school staff to have increased by T2, and 'Leadership', which was the fourth lowest score, also significantly increased. This suggests that the **DRP was able to address adversity** in these areas.

T1 Sub-scale for whole cohort one	
Sub-scale	Mean sub-scale score
Total	3.66
Morale	3.75
Workload	2.71
Participative Decision Making	3.45
Professional Interaction	3.93
Leadership	3.69
Community engagement	3.81
Appraisal and Recognition	3.65
Goal Congruence	3.85
Work Connection	3.91

Specific results of note in the Time 1 Survey

Results of these individual items are provided as percentages of staff responses, grouped into three categories. 'Strongly disagree' and 'disagree' responses were grouped (red boxes) and 'Agree' and 'Strongly agree' responses were grouped (green boxes). Neither agree / disagree responses are shown in orange. Items were selected for inclusion in this report based on a trend towards more staff agreeing in their response, indicating either an agreed strength or challenge of school climate.

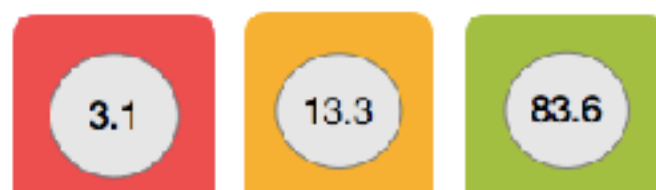
Morale and Team Spirit:



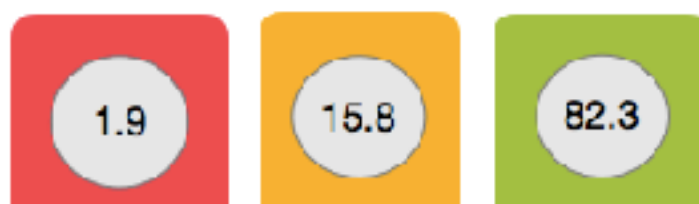
'Staff
feel valued by their
school'



'Staff take pride in
their school'



'Staff are
committed to school
goals'





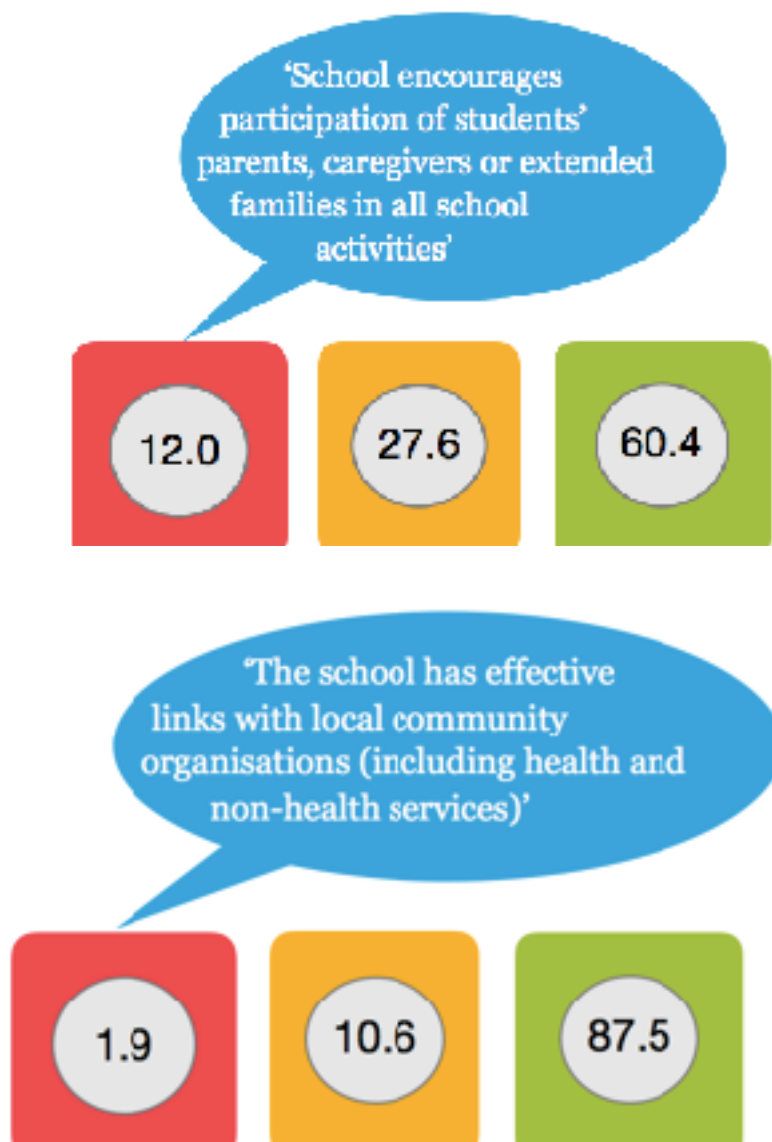
As can be seen in the figures above, staff sense of team spirit was found to be high and the vast majority of staff said that they felt valued by their school and committed to school goals. Although more than half of staff said that morale was high, this figure was lower than staff perception of 'team spirit', perhaps indicating that there are challenges to morale in spite of a strong sense of belonging amongst staff. These challenges could be beyond school level (for example funding or employment issues).

Participative Decision Making, Collaboration and Feedback:



As can be seen in the figures above, staff frequently share methods and strategies, but there may be opportunities for more regular feedback and involving more staff in policy and decision making.

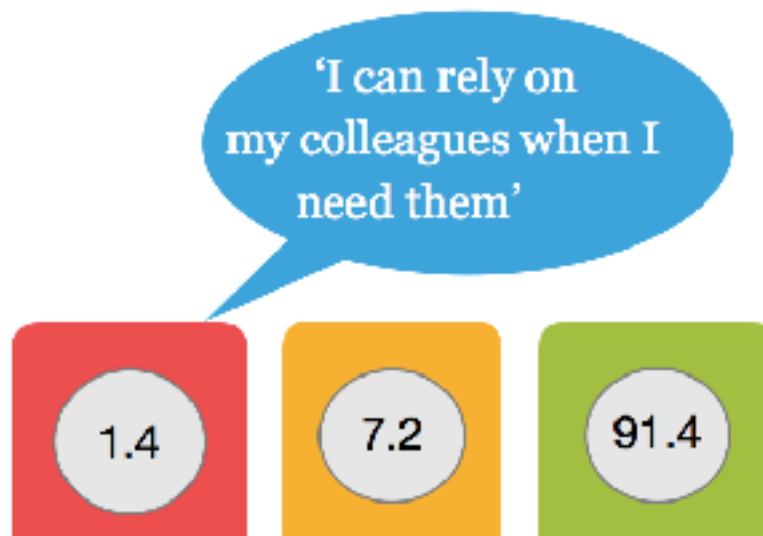
Communication and Community links:



As can be seen in the figures above, links to external and community services was perceived strongly, but there appears to be a suggestion that engaging caregivers, parents and extended families could be an area for improvement.

Workload and Staff support:





As can be seen in the figures above, staff felt well supported by their peers and reported good communication between colleagues. Workload seemed to present a significant challenge to staff wellbeing,

since staff did not perceive realistic expectations or adequate time to relax.

Leadership:



As can be seen in the figures above, there was some inconsistency amongst responses relating to leadership. whilst most staff felt that leaders communicated well with other staff and could be relied upon, an opportunity to build on this communication to develop increased understanding of issues faced by staff could be beneficial for school climate.

Summary of individual items:

As these results indicate, existing strengths of school climate, from staff perspective, was the high level of peer staff support, feeling part of a team at work, taking pride in work, and having shared values and goals as a staff team. Considering the high levels of communication and collaboration in terms of peer support, results regarding leadership communication with staff and communication between groups of staff suggest that communication could be improved across role types. In addition opportunities for staff to be given meaningful feedback about their work, and to meaningfully contribute to policy and decision making was an area for possible growth. Workload, pressure to work and unrealistic work expectations were identified by the majority of staff as the least positive aspect of school climate, thus warranting urgent attention.

Collaboration with community and health organisations was perceived to be very effective. The majority of staff also identified links with parents and carers, although less staff were aware of these links, or felt that they were effective, in comparison to other community groups.

Variation of T1 results

School Type

As the table below shows, there was some variation between scores in Primary and Secondary schools. Primary staff tended to score school climate more positively, providing higher mean scores for every sub-scale with the exception of workload (the scores not being significantly different). These results suggest that of participating staff, school climate was

perceived slightly more positively in Primary schools than Secondary schools prior to the DRP project.

T1 Sub-scale scores by School Type			
Sub-scale	Primary	Secondary	
Total	3.74	3.49	
Morale	3.84	3.58	
Workload	2.70	2.73	
Participative Decision Making	3.66	3.05	
Professional Interaction	4.02	3.76	
Leadership	3.85	3.38	
Community engagement	3.90	3.650	
Appraisal and Recognition	3.69	3.56	
Goal Congruence	3.96	3.63	
Work Connection	3.96	3.81	

Role Type

As the table below shows, there was some variation between scores across role type. Leadership staff tended to score school climate more positively, providing higher mean scores for every sub-scale. Prior to the DRP, the dominant pattern was that Leadership staff scored school climate the most positively, followed by teachers, followed by non-teachers, for every sub-scale except '**Workload**', '**Community**' and '**Goal Congruence**'. It is possible that non-teaching staff had more involvement in pastoral activities relating to community and parental engagement and more closely related to shared pastoral values, perhaps explaining non-teaching staff and leadership staff providing higher scores than teachers. It is possible that the workload sub-scale was scored more negatively by teaching staff because, as explained in interviews, planning and marking were generally viewed more negatively than other work (e.g. time spent meeting staff or working directly with pupils and their parents or carers).

T1 Sub-scale scores by RoleType			
Sub-scale	Leader	Teacher	Non-Teacher
Total	3.89	3.66	3.55
Morale	3.89	3.80	3.63
Workload	2.98	2.61	2.70
Participative Decision Making	3.99	3.39	3.23
Professional Interaction	4.09	3.95	3.83
Leadership	4.01	3.66	3.55
Community engagement	3.99	3.73	3.80
Appraisal and Recognition	3.81	3.65	3.55
Goal Congruence	3.99	3.80	3.83
Work Connection	4.01	3.90	3.87

Time 2 survey results (post DRP)

Results provided in this section are based on staff who responded to the Time Two survey (pre DRP). The total number of staff responding to the survey was 146, with the lowest response to an individual item being 137. The total number of staff replying to both Time One and Time Two survey was 109, so comparison of scores was based on this sample. A summary of notable results both in terms of sub scales and individual items is provided for the total cohort, before consideration is given to variation by school and role type.

Summary of Strengths and Challenges, and comparison to T1:

When comparing SPSC2 scores to SPSC1, staff perceptions were more positive for every sub-scale post the DRP. The highest and lowest sub-scale (when SPSC results were placed in order from highest to lowest mean sub-scale score) did not alter. In other words, the same strengths and challenges were identified by

staff post DRP, but improvements were perceived for school climate as a whole. This meant that although all aspects of school climate were perceived to have improved, changes were perceived most significantly for sub scales that were identified as particularly challenging (for example workload). The statistical significance of this improvement in staff perceptions of school climate is addressed in the statistical analysis below. In summary, as a trend, the DRP appears to have improved staff perceptions of all aspects of school climate, but has had a *statistically significant* increase in the sub-scales of ‘workload’, ‘participative decision making’ and ‘leadership’.

T1/2 Sub-scale for whole cohort one		
Sub-scale	Mean sub-scale score T1	Mean sub-scale score T2
Total	3.66	3.82
Morale	3.75	3.89
Workload	2.71	2.96
Participative Decision Making	3.45	3.69
Professional Interaction	3.93	4.06
Leadership	3.69	3.90
Community engagement	3.81	3.84
Appraisal and Recognition	3.65	3.78
Goal Congruence	3.85	3.94
Work Connection	3.91	4.06

Statistically Significant Change between T1 and T2

A paired-samples t-test (using the SPSS statistical analysis software package) was conducted to understand whether there was a change in SPSC scores from the Time One (T1) survey results and the Time Two (T2) results. For the final sample (N=109) there was a significant increase ($t(107)$

=-.283, $p < .01$) in the total SPCS scores ($M_{t1}=3.74$, $SD_{t1}=.53$ / $M_{t2}=3.84$, $SD_{t2}=.51$).

Results of the T1 to T2 comparison for the whole sample suggest that staff perceived the overall school climate significantly more positively following

	Time 1 Survey		Time 2 Survey		Paired t-test	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Total Survey	3.74	.53	3.84	.51	-2.83	<.01
Morale	3.81	.75	3.92	.73	-1.53	ns
Workload	2.78	.79	2.99	.83	-3.05	<.01
Participative Decision Making	3.55	.76	3.73	.76	-2.64	<.01
Professional Interaction	4.00	.57	4.08	.56	-1.61	ns
Supportive Leadership	3.80	.78	3.92	.72	-2.09	<.05
School Community Relationship	3.83	.49	3.83	.63	.045	ns
Appraisal and Recognition	3.73	.83	3.81	.73	-1.25	ns
Goal Congruence	3.94	.65	3.95	.59	-.25	ns
Work Connection	3.98	.59	4.07	.59	-1.83	ns

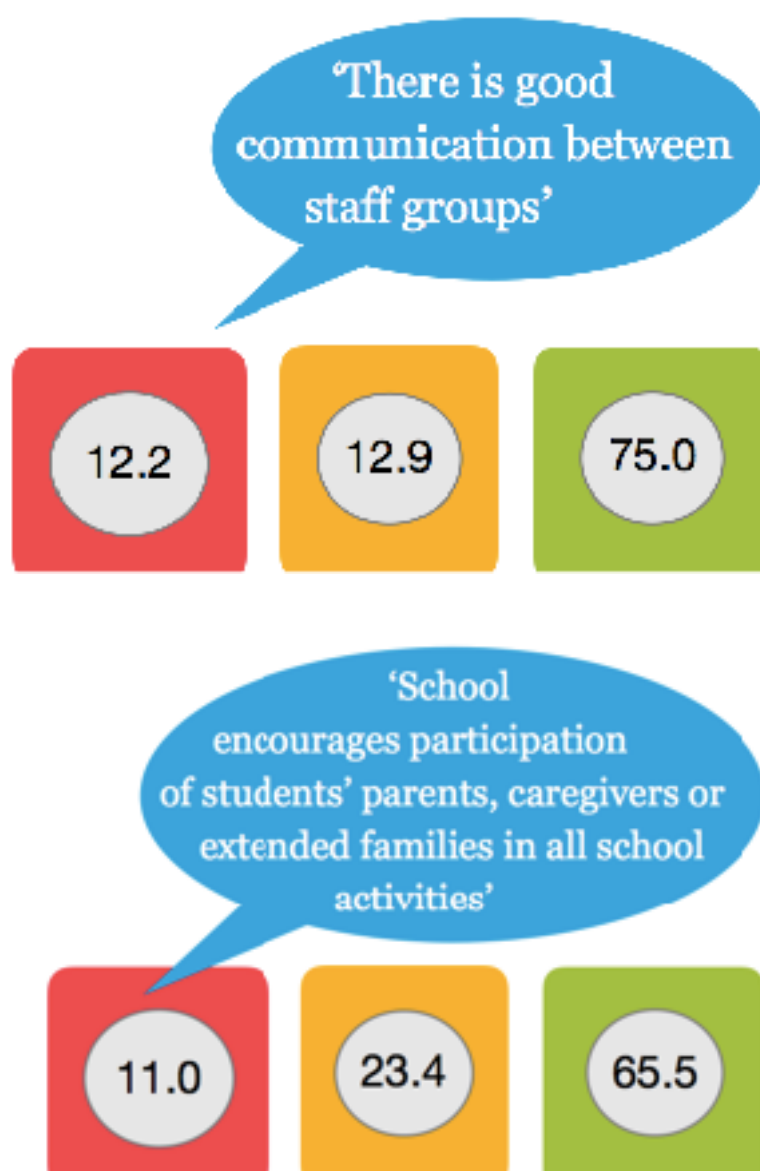
the DRP process. In particular, results show that when the whole sample is considered, staff consider ‘Workload’, ‘Participative Decision Making’ and ‘Supportive Leadership’ more positively in comparison to pre-implementation scores. Thus, it is likely that the drivers of the observed change in staff perceptions of school climate were an increase in realistic workload expectations, improved work balance, increased participative decision making, and more supportive leadership.

Specific results of note in the Time 2 Survey

Results of these individual items are provided as percentages of staff responses, grouped into three categories. ‘Strongly disagree’ and ‘disagree’ responses were grouped and ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly agree’ responses were

grouped. Items were selected for inclusion in this report based on the extent of the increase between time one and time two survey scores.

Communication and Community links:

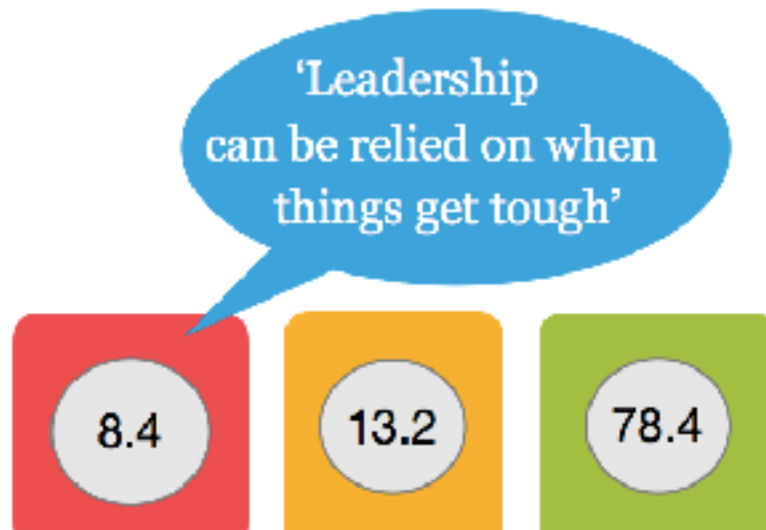


Workload



Leadership





Summary of individual items

As these results indicate, there has been an increase in staff perceptions between the first and second survey following the DRP process. These individual items have been highlighted because there has been a bigger increase than for other aspects of school climate. Based on staff interviews, it is reasonable to assume that the DRP has improved communication between staff groups and especially between leaders and non-leaders. Staff also perceived greater leadership empathy and support, and more favourable workload conditions post the DRP.

Variation across role and school type

Statistical analysis showed that participant role type, extent of experience and other demographic identifiers did not influence the extent of improvement from Time 1 to Time 2 results.

School type did have a significant impact on survey results, with primary school type having a significant positive effect on the increase of staff perceptions in overall survey scores, as well as for 'morale', 'professional interaction', 'school community relationship', 'appraisal and recognition' and 'work connection'. Though both primary and secondary school staff perceived improvements in school climate post the DRP, the increase was more significant in primary schools.

T1 /T2 comparison of Sub-scale scores by School Type					
Sub-scale	PrimaryT1	PrimaryT2	Secondary T1	Secondary T2	
Total	3.74	3.92	3.49	3.65	
Morale	3.84	4.06	3.58	3.58	
Workload	2.70	2.99	2.73	2.91	
Participative Decision Making	3.66	3.87	3.05	3.34	
Professional Interaction	4.02	4.17	3.76	3.87	
Leadership	3.85	4.0	3.38	3.74	
Community engagement	3.90	3.92	3.650	3.72	
Appraisal and Recognition	3.69	3.81	3.56	3.73	
Goal Congruence	3.96	4.04	3.63	3.75	
Work Connection	3.96	4.15	3.81	3.91	

Reviewing the DRP

Some additional questions were included in the SPSC_{T2} as a result of qualitative data analysis that asked staff to indicate if they perceived a change in the certain aspects of school climate as a result of the DRP. The first five questions asked respondents whether the DRP had resulted in specific changes to school environment, pedagogical practice, school ethos, leadership, and feedback and communication. Participants were asked to select 'yes', 'no' or 'I don't know' as their response. Five follow up questions asked respondents to provide examples, if they had perceived change to have occurred. This table shows the results of these questions for the whole sample, divided by school type.

Overall, for every additional question, primary school staff perceived more change to have occurred in school climate as a result of the DRP, supporting both interview findings, and SPSC_{T1} and SPSC_{T2} comparison.

Since most secondary staff responded 'do not know' to each question, it is possible that school size may have restricted the extent to which staff were aware of changes, or that these changes might take longer to embed.

Staff were also asked an open ended follow up question in relation to each of these aspects of school climate in order to provide examples. These responses (drawn from staff who observed changes in each aspect of school climate) have been collated to provide the summaries below:

School environment: Staff who observed changes to school environment as a result of the DRP, reported improved understanding of resilience across the whole school community, mirroring interview findings. Staff suggested that resilience practices have stemmed from a culture shift, and have been embedded in work with parents, pupils and approaches to leadership.

Pedagogical practice: Staff who observed changes in pedagogical practices in relation to the DRP reported that changes in staff perspectives influenced approaches to teaching. Increased staff reflexivity and improved understanding of resilience as a predictor of academic success were seen to influence chosen pedagogy (reflecting outcomes expressed by staff in interviews). Staff provided examples of encouraging problem solving, perseverance and risk taking in pupil learning.

School ethos: Staff who observed the DRP's impact on school ethos, reported further commitment to an holistic approach. For example, staff noted the importance of understanding children's home lives, the importance of fostering a sense of belonging (such as promoting safe learning environment) and reinforcing a sense of school community. These responses reflect interview findings, particularly from primary schools.

Leadership: Staff observed the DRP to impact multiple aspects of leadership. For instance, a relationship policy was developed and head teachers reported increased understanding of staff wellbeing. There was also a higher profile of resilience in leadership meetings and staff suggest that leaders were quicker to support and celebrate achievements. As with staff interviews, increased feedback has led to greater awareness of leaders for the need for staff support in primary schools in particular.

Feedback and communication: As in staff interviews, survey findings showed that staff reported improvement in communication, partly due to increased feedback. Strategies were described to reduce the negative impact of emails and social media, whilst staff perceived better information sharing procedures to be in place and a shared language around resilience to aid communication.

Staff Interviews

Fifteen semi-structured interviews lasting approximately one hour were carried out with staff from five case study schools. The three staff from each school included one member of the senior leadership team (SLT), one teacher and one non-teaching staff (including teaching assistants, pastoral care support and administrators amongst others).

The case study schools included at least one secondary, primary and special education school type. were selected because they had represented the highest, middle and lowest scores from the staff perception of school climate (SPSC) survey. This meant that staff perceptions of school climate (including perceived enabling and constraining factors) could be explored in relation to observed change in the school environment, and for staff and pupils.

Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. This enabled detailed analysis of common key themes, as well as variation between school types and staff role types. A summary of the main themes discussed by the fifteen participants from the five case study schools is presented in this section of the report, along with quotes that help to illustrate these themes in specific examples of how the DRP was experienced and perceived in practice.

Perceptions of the Existing School Climate

At least one member of staff in each school (eight in total) referred to a **strong sense of shared professional values**. A recurrent theme was the

desire of staff to **make a difference in the lives of pupils**, and to **support each other as colleagues**, as part of a caring or nurturing school ethos:

‘To be a loving, caring school that nurtures children to reach their full potential, you have to have a whole staff that believes that...I can’t think of a member of staff in school that isn’t here because of those reasons’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘We are like a little family...the children feel like they’re in part of a family as well, because we nurture and care for them just like we would our own.’

(School D: Non-Teaching Staff)

School staff in every school highlighted local social deprivation as a significant influence on existing school ethos. The majority of staff (11 of 15) suggested that **deprivation in the local community shaped staff values and school purpose**:

‘Levels of deprivation here are through the roof. There are high levels of domestic abuse incidents, like one in three families here. There are lots of issues with adult mental health and child mental health, drug and alcohol addictions, lots of families where there is no extended support and we are the only family that they have’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘I think it’s just an unsaid thing that we all understand is the importance of the children’s mental wellbeing...because they have so many barriers, so, so many issues outside of school that they’re dealing with’

(School D: Teacher)

At least one member of staff in four schools perceived high levels of staff agency and commitment to shared values. Staff considered that their school offered collective protective factors against the challenges that pupils faced. In addition, ‘making a difference’ was considered by staff to be a source of personal professional satisfaction and, therefore, to sustain staff motivation:

‘We do work in quite a deprived area with quite difficult children. Actually, we all share that love of working with the children that we work with and commitment to them’

(School B: Leader)

‘They’re not to be worried about all the things that are happening in their home lives. They can leave them at the door. I couldn’t work in a school that wasn’t in a deprived area...I wouldn’t be making a difference like I do’

(School D: Leader)

‘There’s a lot of examples I could give about staff going the extra mile. To stay back later in the evening and do some work. A lot of members of the staff are long-serving ... they’re very dedicated, loyal and motivated’

(School C: Non-Teaching Staff)

Shared values were perceived as both positively and negatively related to staff wellbeing. On the one hand, **shared values contributed to a sense of team spirit and thus might be considered a protective factor**. On the other, the commitment to **‘making a difference’ was described as a risk factor for staff, due to the intensity of work this involves**. Peer support and collaboration was identified by staff in every school as the most effective buffer of work place stress and most successful way of reinforcing shared values.

‘It’s fantastic...staff are incredibly supportive of each other, socialising with each other outside of school as well as in – a great team atmosphere’

(School D: Leader)

However, especially for non-leadership staff, concerns were raised about the impact of workload on staff capacity to seek and provide peer support.

‘The challenges are that the school has changed since September...the shorter day means the staff have less time to meet with other staff and have less social break-out times and things to support your colleagues - because time is of the essence’

(School C: Teacher)

Workload, lack of time, uncertainty in relation to workforce restructuring and redundancy and the everyday emotional and physical intensity of the professional role were cited as significant adversity for all school staff, irrespective of role type. For leaders, an additional adversity was the culture of accountability in which some leaders identified feeling under intense pressure to evidence progress or results, which they felt required to balance with needing to ensure the wellbeing of staff and pupils. Due to this background adversity described by staff, a theme expressed by staff of all role types was the need for increased attention on staff wellbeing and resilience.

‘We have to do a lot emotionally to support our children, because if we didn’t they’d just be rioting...actually, I think our children get a better deal resilience-wise from our school than most schools provide...(but) staff weren’t feeling resilient. The staff were the ones that were feeling, emotionally neglected’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘In terms of responsibilities, we do take quite a lot on... It can be overwhelming at times, it’s what we do’

(School D: Teacher)

‘I came into this field probably 14-15 years ago now. Someone said to me: ‘Don’t do this for more than 4-5 years, because it burns you out.’ It is stressful and it’s very demanding’

(School C: Leader)

‘On an emotional level, some members of staff weren’t resilient and needed support. What they felt was, if they couldn’t be happy and confident and able to engage and deal with their own problems, how could they help children to do that?’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

At least one member of staff in every school referred to the challenging environment in the current school system of budget and service reduction alongside increasing complexity and extent of unmet needs. However, this was seen to **increase the perceived need for the DRP as a locally owned, universal approach to addressing needs without reliance on external support.**

Perceived Constraints

Four staff in three schools said that they initially held concerns that a lack of time could be a constraining factor to engaging in the DRP. Each of these staff expressed feeling that a lack of staff capacity might constrain the implementation, even though they acknowledged it was a priority:

‘I was like: ‘Well, what would we really get out of this? ...Also, um, the extra workload, because all of us are up to our eyes in it all the time. So, I wasn’t like 100% on board’

(School D: Leader)

‘Yeah, the biggest barrier, it seems to be the same with everything – is time. We’re so busy trying to cram so much in...introducing something like emotional wellbeing, which we all recognise is really important...it’s just another thing to try and fit in’

(School D: Teacher)

However, staff in four schools suggested that their initial concerns had been allayed through dialogue with the facilitation team. Two contributing factors to a change in perception of the DRP in terms of workload demand were the strengths based approach (starting with what is already working well) and the capacity of the DRP to address adversity for staff, including tackling workload:

‘Our facilitator came to see me and was like: “Look. It’s no extra work. You’re just looking at what you’re already doing and then seeing if you could tweak anything”... I thought: “Yeah, what’s the harm in us reviewing what we’re doing and seeing if we could be doing anything more?”’

(School D: Leader)

A tension was identified by at least one member of staff in every school between shared staff values (related to holistic development and ‘making a difference’) and the perceived external pressure to focus exclusively on proxy ‘outcomes’. This perceived conflict was most apparent for leaders, who expressed frustration at having to prioritise short term outcomes that they worried might be detrimental to long term outcomes. This was a significant issue for some leaders who required needed clarity and support from the facilitator about how the DRP was linked with and could contribute to other measures of progress.

‘I mean, the biggest thing in our school is that our children’s emotional wellbeing isn’t as good as what it should be...There isn’t as much of a priority on there as there is on maths and English. They take precedence in every school, because that’s the data you submit at the end of the year’

(School D: Teacher)

‘I think that you have to accept that where emotional wellbeing is concerned, school still is a business...ultimately the school has to evidence that what we’re doing provides a good education for the children. If we’re not getting the levels, we don’t have that evidence’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘We are measured by what the progress of the children is their attainment in Year 6. It sort of feels like you’re on a treadmill, you just keep going and going to get them to this point...in our school, in the area that we’re in, we really appreciate the importance of focusing on wellbeing. But we are torn between the two’

(School D:Teacher)

Inconsistent staffing (both at school and county level) was identified as a constraint by staff in both secondary schools. Changes in staff were ultimately seen to disrupt the DRP process due to reducing momentum and consistency:

‘It took a while for somebody to come in and replace them...so we stalled slightly ... not having the staffing available to support moving it forward to the next stage’

(School E: Leader)

‘There was nobody leading it. I think that’s probably the crux of it...I think this thing dropped because the person who was managing it is no longer here’

(School C: Teacher)

A lack of visible support for the DRP from school leaders or a lack of prioritisation of the DRP action plan in school as a whole was perceived as a threat to staff engagement, and therefore as a constraining factor:

‘Your head-teacher has to be on board and be part and parcel of those meetings...ours wasn’t... I kind of think it loses its importance then... the head-teacher is the person who is supposed to drive the vision of your school, ultimately. They have the final say and they’ve got to be on board with it’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘My facilitator is coming to see me to fill out the action plan, because I still haven’t done it. Because on my list of things it does go to the bottom. I wish I had less on my plate when we took it on. Then I could have really focused on it more than I did I think’

(School D: Leader)

A minority of staff identified a lack of structure in the DRP process as a constraining factor. Both staff were in a secondary school and cited the lack of clear targets and structure as restricting the extent to which they were able to prioritise the DRP. In addition, staff from the same school expressed frustration at the lack of specialist support available for pupils, which they did not feel the DRP was able to solve:

‘It was very much: “What do you want?”...one of the things I wanted from them was their expertise, to support me in deciding where we needed to move the school forwards...I don’t think they valued that enough. Every time

I sign up to one of these things I want somebody to do it all for me! Then, get some counselling for our pupils from it. You know, on a one to one basis without having to pay for it'

(SE:P1)

'I would have liked there to be more structure... "This is what we're doing this term. Step two, this is what we're doing next term". I would like to have seen: "Demonstrate how you've done that, evidence it."'

(SE:P1)

Perceived Enabling Factors

The adaptability of the DRP, high quality facilitator support, strengths-based approach and informative audit sessions were the most frequently cited enabling aspects of the DRP. In establishing school aims for the DRP, four staff suggested that collaboration with the facilitator and the contribution of all staff contributed to establishing meaningful aims that promoted the staff engagement.

'The whole staff have been discussing where they think the areas are that we need to develop, because it is important to get the opinions from every single person...So I think that's what's been good about this resilience training'

(School B: Teacher)

The DRP was perceived as congruent with existing school priorities and ethos by staff in every school. The aim to enable all pupils to thrive in spite of the disadvantages they face, as well as the need to improve support for staff, were the most frequently cited aspects of the DRP that resonated with existing staff values.

The strengths based approach, in which the facilitator assumed a 'coaching' role to guide the school to identify existing strengths and consider how to

capitalise on them, was considered a unique and empowering aspect of the DRP:

‘so, yes, we were given a little bit of guidance, but we were also given a bit of free rein if that makes sense? To try and discover for ourselves and try to implement it in our children. Because obviously, we are quite experienced’

(School C: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘It was much more of a coaching approach...the person who was assigned to our school knew our school very well... so she knew what our values were’

(School A: Leader)

At least one member of staff in every school described a unique ‘insider/ outsider’ position occupied by the facilitator in which professional expertise and knowledge of the school system was combined with being able to support staff from a more objective and reflective position. For staff in schools who had prior experience of working with their facilitator, existing trust, understanding school ethos and mutual respect appeared to be an enabling factor. In schools in which the facilitator was less well known, objectivity and neutrality appeared to be an enabling factor:

‘I’ve met her through a couple of things and yeah. I like her. So, that does help when you kind of respect the person who has come through the door to talk to you about things’

(School D:Leader)

‘It made it feel quite non-judgemental from the staff’s point of view... it has really helped to move the project forward, somebody who didn’t know our school at all. We wouldn’t have been able to do it without the facilitators...It wouldn’t have had the same impact at all’

(School B:Leader)

The DRP process was perceived to have increased school staff understanding of the concept of resilience, and confidence in applying it to aspects of their practice. In particular, staff (in three schools) described a shift from thinking about resilience as an individual characteristic or trait, to

thinking about the protective factors around an individual that promote resilience.

‘We had support from (our facilitator) to sort of develop our wider-thinking around resilience. Some people think of resilience in quite a narrow sense in that it’s just children’s ability to have a go, but actually it’s much wider than that’

(School A: Leader)

In addition, in every school, staff described a shift in expectations that the DRP would focus solely on pupil resilience, to understanding the relevance and value of the concept in relation to staff wellbeing.

The anonymity of the audit tools was considered unique (in comparison to previous approaches) and very useful in terms of establishing a better understanding of multiple stakeholder perspectives of school climate. Staff in four schools said that the audit tools were the most useful part of the DRP process and staff in all five schools said they had a better understanding of school climate and pupil and staff views.

‘We did a peer review before - it wasn’t anonymous...with this it was anonymous, they could say what they really felt, which I think probably made them feel heard’

(School D: Leader)

‘You think you know your school, but you don’t always...I knew the workload was high, but I don’t think I realised it was such a big, big thing to them. So, it has made me think about that far more’

(School D: Leader)

The extent to which leadership staff supported the DRP was considered essential to securing staff ‘buy in’, maintaining momentum, and ensuring sustainability. In particular, leadership presence at all DRP audit and action planning sessions, and the inclusion of the DRP in formal whole school planning was perceived to enable the approach:

‘I feel that it’s been very successful. I think that it’s allowed us to explore avenues that we probably wouldn’t even have looked at previously...I think

that some of that has to do with how we've approached it as a school, which was as a leadership priority'

(School A: Leader)

Staff in three schools suggested that including the DRP action plan in their formal school development plan (SDP) helped to create shared ownership, and integrate the DRP with existing priorities. Where this approach was taken, staff reported distributed responsibility for implementing the DRP action plan, which was perceived to increase sustainability:

'We made it a part of our School Improvement Plan...I think if it's something that you do as an add-on it's not going to have any impact...It was a priority for us, because then, everybody in the whole school community was accountable for it, not just the SLT... it permeates through everything'

(School A: Leader)

Reassurance by facilitators (that a whole school approach to building resilience is complementary and not in competition with improving academic outcomes) was perceived to aid school leader prioritisation of the DRP. In addition, *a lack of immediate short-term pressure* to evidence results, as well as the extent to which leaders prioritised wellbeing *in spite of* the pressures of accountability also contributed to prioritisation of the DRP:

'I think when the DRP came along we'd just had quite a very successful Ofsted. So, we didn't have the threat of Ofsted breathing down our necks, which gave us a bit of a chance to take some risks...we were very much in the right place at the right time...if I'd have had Ofsted looming, I don't think I'd have been so prepared to take on those risks'

(School A: Leader)

'We are building a meaningful pathway to adulthood, we are investing in developing and nurturing the whole child as the first step – what we believe is right. It does work and we'll go down with our ship if we have to'

(School B: Leader)

In contrast, in schools where the DRP was not explicitly mentioned in the SDP, competing pressures and priorities were perceived to reduce momentum significantly:

‘I don’t think it’s ever taken off...I don’t think anything was ever put in place to actually introduce the students or introduce the staff. It was competing with just general day to day working within a very busy school I suppose...’

(School C: Teacher)

Multiple staff considered the lack of reliance on expensive external support and the strengths based approach of the DRP, which also targets the whole school population, a significant enabling factor, given the context of budget or service reduction being juxtaposed with increasing needs.

‘Educational Psychology Services have been reduced, CAMHS have been reduced. So, we have more young people in school with more complex needs and less support...being resilient for our staff, is very challenging. In all honesty, I feel sometimes that we’re failing young people...we’re not meeting their needs ...That’s why you come into the job isn’t it? To help young people.’

(School C: Leader)

‘A lot of the things that were happening were beyond our control, but it completely affected the emotional wellbeing of our Teaching Assistants. That was then exacerbated by the fact that, as a school our budget had to lose some of the workforce... We’ve seen a huge increase in mental health issues in our school, for the pupils and the parents. So, we when this DRP came along, we knew that it was something that was important’

(School B: Leader)

The DRP was perceived to be highly compatible with other existing approaches and interventions schools were already engaged with. Some school leaders reflected that the DRP gave a meaningful shared framework to identify how these multiple approaches were complimentary and co-ordinated as part of a whole school approach.

Summary of DRP enabling factors identified by school staff

Individual Staff	School Level	Local Authority
Perceived need for the DRP – resilience of pupils, staff and parents	School prioritisation of the DRP – e.g. through School Development Planning	Identified need at county level for a sustainable approach to integrating services
Leaders feel the climate is right to ‘take risks’	Lack of excessive change already occurring in system	
Need to feel valued, and adapt the DRP to be relevant for school context	Facilitators knew schools well including existing values	Strengths based approach, existing knowledge of schools, adaptable approach
Desire/ need to focus on staff wellbeing	Existing staff support and desire to increase support	
Perception that leadership is supportive	Supportive leadership	
Identifying opportunities for increased distribution of leadership		
	DRP seen as compatible with other approaches	DRP seen as compatible with other approaches
Staff commitment to shared values of ‘making a difference’	School ethos is based on holistic development / congruent with ARA conceptualisation of resilience	DRP developed to make local meaning of the ARA aims

	Desire to take a whole staff approach – increasing connections between role types	Facilitation style to support whole staff reflection and collaboration Increases communication between role types
Aim to increase understanding of school climate	Timely completion of audit resources to benefit from feedback	Increase feedback from multiple stakeholder groups
	Desire to increase communication with parents	Offers strategies to increase parent/carer communication
	Desire to improve links to LA and other service providers as part of an integrated approach	Offering a broad range of specialist services, accessed through the DRP 'gateway'

Clarifying School Ethos and Impact on School Climate

The majority of participants reported that the DRP was highly congruent with existing school ethos due to a focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Staff reported that the DRP process had helped to 'refresh' or 'revitalise' shared values. This included coproducing school aim or ethos statements involving all staff, investigating the consistency of staff agreement about

school purpose and considering how aspects of school practice support or undermine school ethos.

‘Our vision has become clearer...shared by everybody, kind of and not just the teachers – the teaching staff, admin staff and the children really...We spent a lot of time making sure that everyone had the same vision really. The DRP has really helped to move that forward for us’

(School B: Leader)

‘There’s been a total change around of staff and new people coming in have sort of been trained or taught about the ethos, especially if you haven’t taught in a school that’s done this type of thing before. So, it’s a permanent thread that’s embedded within the school. There isn’t anybody in school now that isn’t singing from that same hymn sheet’

(School D: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘I think staff are clearer on what the vision for the school is. I think they were a bit bewildered before. So, that’s better’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

Staff reflected on pressure that leaders experience in relation to evidencing academic outcomes and how this can be aligned with the DRP

Participants suggested that shared professional motivation to make a long term difference in the lives of disadvantaged young people was amplified and legitimised during the DRP, in contrast to the perceived dominance of narrow short term targets.

‘I think that you have to accept that where emotional wellbeing is concerned, school still is a business...ultimately the school has to evidence that what we’re doing provides a good education for the children. If we’re not getting the levels, we don’t have that evidence’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

'We are measured by what the progress of the children is their attainment in Year 6. It sort of feels like you're on a treadmill, you just keep going and going to get them to this point...in our school, in the area that we're in, we really appreciate the importance of focusing on wellbeing. But we are torn between the two'

(School D: Teacher)

The extent to which school leaders could align the aims of the DRP to build resilience with targets relating to evidencing academic progress appeared to determine how highly the DRP was prioritised and incorporated into whole school planning. In two schools, leaders did not require additional support from facilitators, already highly prioritising pupil resilience as a foundation for learning:

'We are building a meaningful pathway to adulthood, we are investing in developing and nurturing the whole child as the first step – what we believe is right. It does work and we'll go down with our ship if we have to'

(School B: Leader)

'I think sometimes as a Headteacher you need to be prepared to think: 'Actually this is what we need to do and is right for us.' You have to be brave enough'

(School A: Leader)

In two schools, the DRP process was reported to have supported leaders to justify and prioritise pastoral aims due to the conceptualisation of resilience, which linked health and wellbeing with academic attainment:

'I think it's been successful in that it's made us kind of stop and think...how we can develop children and kind of make them more resilient for their future as well. So, not just for the here and now, but how can we equip them with the skills so that when they leave us and go to Secondary School, they can continue to be resilient in their learning outside school and in their everyday life'

(School A: Teacher)

In one school, testimonials from other school leaders regarding the impact of the DRP on behaviour and attendance prompted re-engagement in the process, having temporarily suspended involvement. As opposed to seeing the DRP as a competing priority to Ofsted imposed priorities, a perspective shift occurred in which the school leader 'engaged with the project, seeing the potential of the process to address issues raised by the Ofsted report'.

Impact of the DRP on Communication

In every case study school, staff identified improved communication as a result of the DRP process. For three schools, communication was an explicit focus of the action plan, including improving communication between staff of different role types, with parents and carers, and increasing opportunities for pupil feedback. School action plans included increasing communication with parents (through 'stay and play' sessions, newsletters and informal meetings), introducing 'circle time' to all classes (opportunities for pupils to develop communication around emotional development with peers), 'Solution Circle' (to aid collaborative staff problem solving), 'Big Brother Diary Room' (an innovative approach to recording pupil feedback), 'active listening' training and 'a Day in the Life' (a staff role swap day). The introduction of CPOMS (an online communication system), whole staff team meetings and 'student council' further increased information sharing between multiple stakeholders in two schools:

'CPOMS has been put in place since the resilience training, which is a really fantastic tool to record and log any incidences of any behaviour issues, children who might need extra support - it's a much better system'

(School B: Teacher)

For the other two schools, communication was perceived to have improved through the audit sessions at which findings from the staff survey were used to facilitate more open communication and collaboration between leaders and other staff. This was especially pertinent due to the need to address

tensions arising in some schools as a result of the recent redundancy process. One leader commented that the DRP was an ‘excuse to listen’, and multiple staff praised the anonymous format of the surveys, suggesting that this enabled ‘open and honest feedback’:

‘(In) an audit session looking at how people felt...communication was highlighted as a big issue. That isn't communication between the school and parents, that's communication between staff’

(School B: Non-Teaching Staff)

‘Actually, it was only when we went through the meetings, when we spoke to the staff, that we had addressed it...and actually, we hadn't got to that point before then’

(School B: Leader)

Multiple participants linked increased staff communication to perceived improvements in pupil behaviour and peer interaction. A common theme was that as adversity for staff was addressed, and staff had increased opportunities to communicate their concerns or needs, they had greater capacity to support pupils:

‘Probably it does reflect in the children, ‘cos they can see staff are more relaxed and happier, and I think that has a major impact...that added communication really takes a lot of the stress out of the daily job, it definitely had a positive effect on the children as well’

(School B:Teacher)

The pupil focus group provided schools with feedback about pupil perspectives of current school climate and their ideas about potential developments, and leaders were especially keen to use this information to shape school planning. In three schools, participants reported that changes had been made to the ways in which ‘pupil voice’ was gathered, acknowledging that prior to the DRP pupil voice had been ‘tokenistic’ or ‘lip service’ at times. Staff expressed a desire to increase pupil involvement in decision making, resulting in pupil voice being more meaningful.

Communication with parents and carers was a target for improvement in three case study schools, with each school acknowledging the link between parent resilience and building pupil resilience. In one school, ‘stay and play’ sessions were extended to involve all classes in Early Years and Key Stage One, and in the other, the sessions were extended across the whole school. For both schools, sessions planned to increase parent awareness of the curriculum, and increase parent capacity to support learning at home. In one of these schools, ‘reading breakfasts’ were supplied during ‘stay and play’ sessions, demonstrating an awareness of how these opportunities could be used to simultaneously strengthen parent-school relationship, provide support to overcome barriers to learning, and establish foundations for improved pupil outcomes:

‘We also have Stay and Play now, where we invite parents in to come and work with us, in all our key stages... to kind of strengthen the relationships between school and the community. The parents feel like they can help the children out a little bit more and we supply breakfasts when we invite children to come in and work with parents’

(School A:Leader)

Examples were also provided in a third school of increasing the diversity of ways school communicates with parents to include visual and digital formats in acknowledgement that parental literacy is sometimes a barrier to information sharing. In three case study schools, staff reported that efforts had been made to increase opportunities for informal and spontaneous meetings with parents and carers in order to strengthen community relationships:

‘It was very much a ‘them (parents) and us (staff)’ culture, where they sent their children through the door and that was it. There was very little communication... it’s something that we’ve worked incredibly hard to develop, and we have very much an open-door policy now’

(School A: Leader)

Lastly, communication between schools, and between schools and support services, was reported to have increased as a result of involvement in the DRP. Staff cited a panel style community of practice initiated by one school,

as well as the county wide ‘DRP celebration event’ to establish links between schools, opportunities to share good practice and to collaborate on co-ordinated strategies to build resilience.

Addressing Staff Adversity through the DRP

In every case study school, the DRP was perceived as an opportunity to address adversity, not only for pupils and their families, but also (and in some cases, especially) for staff. This represented a shift in perspective from staff views prior to engaging in the DRP, when there was concern that the project might add to already high workload. Staff reflected that early cynicism regarding the need for the DRP and its potential efficacy were shaped by experiences of previous intervention which expected more of staff, at cost to wellbeing and other existing priorities. The whole school nature of the DRP which intended to build resilience for staff as an important part of building resilience across the school community was perceived as a unique feature of the program:

‘I remember that the staff seemed quite enthusiastic in training - I seem to recall that it wasn’t just about resilience for pupils, it was also about resilience for staff and what support we get as a staff team as well’
(School C: Teacher)

Facilitation focused on increasing trust between leaders and other staff, as well as open communication regarding challenges facing staff, and the protective strategies already being used. This was reported by leaders to have resulted in clarity about how better to support staff, and increased value being placed on informal staff communication and collaboration:

‘It’s easy to talk about being resilient ...being upbeat and being positive, maintaining that every day, every lesson is a fresh start with our young people. I think it’s made me reflect on and think about what a challenging thing it is for staff to do. I think that’s probably probably the most positive part of the project. It makes you reflect on your own practice and how we help staff to have the resilience to come in every day and work with our young people. We have changed some of our school practices... we have a

daily debrief now at the end of the day to talk through incidents, talk through individuals, which we didn't used to do.'

(School C: Leader)

In two schools, establishing a wellbeing policy represented a formal commitment to building resilience in staff:

'We were worried about the extra workload of doing the DRP...now we have a staff wellbeing policy & it's made a massive difference to morale'

(School A: Teacher)

In two other schools, although policy had not been created around staff wellbeing, changes in relation to increased training or support (including CPD, work/life balance, staff wellbeing) and increased opportunities to communicate and socialise with other staff were perceived to have had a positive impact on staff wellbeing.

A theme across four case study schools was that events which might had been seen as competing priorities that constrained or even totally de-railed the DRP (staff redundancy, staff turnover, Ofsted inspection and so on) were embraced by the facilitator as a focus for action planning. Therefore, momentum for change was generated from current challenges faced by staff as opposed to attempting to compete with existing priorities.

Distributing Leadership

Staff in four of the five case study schools cited changes to leadership as a result of the DRP. Staff noted changes in terms of increased distribution of leadership responsibility, and changes in the way senior staff approached their role as school leaders. At least one member of staff in each of these schools referred to increased participation in leadership including decision making processes.

'I think leadership is more open since this project. As I said before, everybody has more of a shared responsibility...You don't feel like decisions

are made solely by: The Headteacher...Because everyone has responsibility'
(School A: Teacher)

'The Leadership Team isn't like most workplaces, where there is the one voice that you listen to. It's very much dispersed around everybody in the school and I think that's what that the DRP brought in'
(School A: Non-Teaching Staff)

In three schools, the process of the DRP itself was seen to have resulted in increased participative decision making and staff collaboration. The involvement of all staff in the process of audit and action planning was perceived as empowering and to have helped unite staff in a shared aim. In addition, ensuring that all staff were tasked with delivering the intended action plan helped to distribute responsibility for the ongoing impact of the DRP.

'I think it's helped the staff realise that we do want to listen and respond to them and we do want it to be a whole-school approach, not a top-down approach.'
(School B: Leader)

'We all have a part to play in making the action plan work'
(School B: Teacher)

Importantly, increased participative decision making was perceived by multiple staff to continue to remain a focus after the end of formal DRP meetings. Staff referred to improved trust between leaders and other staff, better listening and increased autonomy.

'From my perspective, the leadership has definitely changed, I'm more involved in that now than I ever have been...my voice is more important than it was. We were looking at assessments recently, and we were discussing together as a group, rather than those decisions being made by senior leadership and then filtered down...I think the project sort of catalysed that'
(School D: Teacher)

School leaders reflected that particularly during times when staff were facing additional adversity, increasing opportunities for informal support was important:

‘What we’ve done with the project and what we’ve done last year as well is allowed people to come and speak to us if they have issues or worries, rather than kind of letting it build up... they can speak to any of us...any concerns have been dealt with quickly and also sometimes just a bit more informally’

(School B:Leader)

Impact on Physical School Environment

In every case study school, at least one example was provided of a change to the school environment prompted by the DRP action plan. One commonly initiated change was the introduction of visual displays (for example using the resilience framework or examples of emotional vocabulary). Staff perceived such displays, especially if they had an interactive element (e.g. ‘resilience buckets’), to facilitate social emotional learning and to aid self expression:

‘In terms of the physical environment...all classrooms have displays linked to the zones of regulation... We had a little boy the other day who was really, really angry. He’s done something to another child and he went over to the zones of regulation and he was able to find the ‘guilty’ one and say: ‘That’s how I feel.’

(School A: Leader)

Responding to pupil audit data, staff in three schools focused on creating ‘safe spaces’ or ‘time out’ zones in school and on the playground, which was perceived to have helped pupils to employ resilient strategies at difficult times and navigate towards support.

‘If he’s feeling like he doesn’t want to make the wrong choice or he’s feeling scared or something’s bothering him he can go to the bench at the front of the school and he knows that’s a safe space to go to. He can go there and sit down and someone will come and talk to him’

(School D: Teacher)

Specialist equipment (including access to a room with sensory resources and lighting) in the school environment was in some cases extended for universal use, as opposed to for a select minority, which staff perceive to have aided integration and benefited the physical and social development of a broader range of pupils.

In two schools, staff reported that outdoor play and learning provision had been established in their playgrounds as part of their action plan. Staff perceived outdoor play and learning provision to provide resilience promoting activities, as well as to involve pupils in school planning, thus increasing their sense of belonging. In both schools, pupils were involved in the design development of the outdoor space, including clearing a field for an orchard, building a fitness 'trim trail' and creating a quiet space for reflection during break times. In one school, parents were also invited to be involved in the development of the play area by volunteering resources or time to help build equipment. Care and attention had been given by staff to making sure all children had equal access to new equipment including providing all-weather gear for every pupil, and removing fences that previously prevented classes merging at break time.

'We have outdoor play and learning provision in the school now, which means instead of having lovely, pristine playgrounds, our playground looks like a junkyard! The children absolutely love it! We have Forest Schools as well, so we have fire pits up in our woods which I think initially absolutely terrified people. But now, it's just a part of what we do'

(School A: Leader)

Impact on School Policy

In three of five case study schools, staff reported that a specific policy was adapted or created as a result of DRP involvement. Behaviour was the most popular existing policy to address as part of the DRP, with three schools adapting whole school approaches to behaviour. Staff in each of these schools reported that a focus had shifted to the causes of behaviour, taking a preventative approach and enabling pupils to solve problems, as opposed to previous reactionary approaches:

‘Behaviour Policy has been one of the biggest changes that we’ve made. We look at the emotions that guide the behaviour rather than looking at the behaviour itself... We try and defuse situations now as much as possible, rather than allowing things to get to crisis point ... that’s not productive for anybody’

(School A: Leader)

Wellbeing policies were created in two schools to address the wellbeing of staff, pupils and parents in the school community. The policies both emphasised collective responsibility of all staff to prioritise personal and community wellbeing as part of improving pupil outcomes. An outdoor play and learning policy was created in two schools as part of the DRP action plan.

Changes to teaching and assessment strategies occurred in three schools, with a focus on improving pupil independence, perseverance and problem solving. These strategies were perceived by staff to have resulted in a more positive pupil attitude and greater tenacity with challenging curricula content. Extra curricular trips and activities introduced in two schools were intended to increase positive risk-taking experiences that supported emotional and social skill development. Examples provided demonstrated links to many ‘basics’ as identified in the resilience framework, including access to fresh air, play and leisure and new experiences.

Notably, when the DRP was adopted as a lens or frame for school policy - staff described the process as helping to bring together and unify seemingly distinct aspects of existing school policy and practice through the shared aim of building resilience.

Impact for pupils and parents

At least one member of staff in every case study school discussed perceived positive impact of the DRP for pupils. Some examples were provided of specific changes made as part of the action plan that were intended to impact pupils (changes to behaviour policy, use of visual displays, introduction of outdoor play equipment and changes to teaching

and assessment). These changes were perceived to have resulted in increased positive peer interaction, more confidence in previously under-confident pupils, fewer negative behaviour incidents and increased pupil independence. These accounts are subjective and further data collection would be required, both to support these claims, and to determine the link between behavioural change and other outcomes (e.g. academic progress, attendance and exclusion):

'These were children who struggled to communicate with each other. Now, they'll become team leaders and make, like rafts, tents and camps'
(School C: Non-Teaching Staff)

'I think they've embraced that they can challenge themselves a lot more within lessons...they've got the resilience to go and ask for help more, and the help is always there'
(School A: Non-Teaching Staff)

Staff in two schools also perceived improved staff morale to have a positive impact for pupils during the DRP. Reduced staff stress was reported to increase staff modelling of resilient strategies and also increase their capacity to provide consistent support for pupils. Further data collection would be necessary in order to explore the potential link between staff and pupil resilience in order to move beyond tacit awareness to understanding the mechanisms at play in this complex relationship:

'Probably it does reflect in the children, 'cos they can see staff are more relaxed and happier, and I think that has a major impact...that added communication really takes a lot of the stress out of the daily job, it definitely had a positive effect on the children as well'
(School B: Teacher)

'Looking at how our staff and our children are interacting with each other, it is so much more positive now. The staff are happier... we're a happy workforce and happy adults always help with happy children'
(School B: Leader)

Fewer examples were provided about the impact of the DRP for parents and carers, with some staff identifying the closer involvement of parents and carers in the DRP as an ongoing aim. However, in the two schools in which 'Stay and Play' sessions were a focus of the action plan, staff perceived parents to be more confident and competent in supporting their children with school work ('The parents feel like they can help the children out a little bit more'), and noted that there was an increased uptake of the sessions in their new format (including providing breakfasts). In addition, in two schools, staff said that parents and carers had increased knowledge of what was happening in school as a result of changes made, which they perceived would support pupil learning and improve relationships with staff.

'Now we have every half term... we have an event that the parents and carers can come to... also we've started doing a newsletter every half term letting the parents know exactly what the children are going to be learning' (School B: Teacher)

Whilst this evaluation did not collect data from parents and carers, developing the DRP will involve introducing baseline and ongoing data collection throughout the DRP in order to ascertain parent perceptions of school climate (through audit) the impact of the DRP on parent and carer resilience, their relationships with school and their engagement in DRP activities.

Staff interview data summary

Staff of all role types expressed shared values that were both congruent with the DRP and also protective factors against current adversity for school staff. Leaders required varying degrees of reassurance to align the long term resilience building aims of the DRP with perceived pressure to evidence short term pupil progress. Effective strategies to engage leaders included linking the DRP to current policy and stated Ofsted criteria, a comprehensive understanding of enabling factors and time to establish these conditions, identifying a specific aim the DRP could help address, and

testimonials from schools who have already embedded a resilience approach.

Staff perceive the DRP as a uniquely reflective and adaptive approach and particularly valued the facilitation offered by County Council staff. The DRP led to reviewing current practice, better understanding of staff and pupil perceptions of school climate, identifying aspects of practice that could be developed to foster resilience and improved relationships and communication between multiple stakeholders. Multiple changes are reported to have emerged in policy and practice as a result of the DRP. Staff already perceive these changes to have had an impact on school culture, and to have influenced behaviour, which they anticipate may lead to subsequent improvements in pupil outcomes. As a result of significant adversity for staff prior to and during the DRP, many schools focused on improving outcomes for staff in this iteration of the DRP. As evidenced by schools who have already re-audited their action plans, there is now a desire to capitalise on gains for staff in order to benefit pupils and to implement action plans that target the curriculum, classroom strategies and pupil aspiration.

Contextual differences between the case study schools were noticeable in relation to the consistency of staffing and extent of 'turbulence' (other changes and competing priorities), which predicted leader prioritisation and whole staff commitment to the DRP. School type appeared to be linked to these challenges, with secondary school staff being more likely to report difficulties prioritising the DRP and sustaining momentum for the project. This suggests that development of the DRP will require adaptation of the process for different school types, that also utilises information about current school context to establish 'readiness' to engage in the DRP.

Impact across the system

School Action Plans

Action plans were reviewed from eighteen schools. The plans were completed in different formats with varying degrees of detail. Some schools identified aims and broad areas of development, whilst others detailed proposed actions, designated responsibility for their implementation and indicated how these changes would be evaluated. The most detailed action plans used categories from the resilience framework to identify aspects of practice requiring development and then explained how these changes were expected to impact multiple stakeholders. This seemed to be a useful approach that prevented the action plan from re-iterating existing practice and re-framing it as ‘DRP related’, instead keeping the focus on resilience building actions resulting from DRP audits. The DRP could be developed to include standardised action planning reviewing the most useful formats provided by schools in this cohort.

Commonly identified aims across all action plans

- Improving staff understanding of resilience, and its relevance for staff, parents and pupils
- Improving understanding of pupil behaviour as communication and importance of positive relationships - restorative approach
- Increasing staff collaboration and peer support for staff
- Improving behaviour management strategies
- Improving whole school emotional literacy (including using shared vocabulary)

- Focus on wellbeing, including reducing stress and anxiety and increasing opportunities to talk about
- Increasing pupil involvement in school planning and evaluation - meaningful pupil voice
- Improving pupil awareness of, and self navigation to support
- Increasing pupil awareness of protective factors / resilience
- Improving pupil coping strategies - especially around friendship issues and difficult class work
- Increasing pupil independence and problem solving
- Improving communication
- Establishing 'safe spaces' for pupils
- Increasing opportunities for pupils to explore hobbies and interests
- More work on pupil aspirations / future selves
- Increasing parent and carer engagement
- A focus on developing social and interpersonal skills, especially for pupils with additional needs
- Increasing parent and carer understanding of resilience concept
- Improving leaders' understanding of difficulties facing staff
- Improving staff wellbeing including reducing workload
- Improving early intervention for at-risk pupils including nurture groups and parent engagement

Action Plan Implementation

Schools identified aspects of school practice to address in their action plans as a result of reviewing audit data from the pupil focus group, and the pupil and staff surveys. This initial feedback generated momentum for change, which was then translated into a structural or policy change. Perceived impact resulting from the initial change (both intended and unintended

consequences) sustained momentum for further work to extend and embed change. An example is provided below of how one aspect of School A's action plan (Outdoor play and learning policy) was linked to multiple outcomes including pupil behaviour, social development and parent engagement. The pattern of feedback sustaining momentum for the DRP was evident in all case study school interviews.

Action Plan Reviews

At the time of data collection, facilitators had visited two schools for an evaluative review of the action plan, a stage other schools had not yet reached. Both of these re-audits suggest that momentum for the DRP had increased, rather than decreased over time. It was found that initial changes were being sustained and increasingly embedded. For example, one facilitator noted that circle time was still being used at the start of the day for year 6, but had also been introduced for other year groups each half term. Other ideas which had not been implemented at the time of interviews were reported in the re-audit as later having been put into place. The facilitator was told about a 'solution circle' that took place in one of three staff meetings the previous term, a termly SLT 'staff morale' meeting, and a staff swap 'day in my shoes' planned for next term. One of School B's initial aims had been to increase staff morale and decrease teacher turnover. The re-audit states that no staff had left the school since the DRP began, and staff perceived an increase in their own resilience.

In the other school, the action plan review indicated that every aspect of the action plan had been at least partially implemented. The facilitator noted that staff wellbeing was an embedded school focus and that staff had already perceived increased morale. Solution circle discussions have been introduced to daily staff de-briefs and there is increased approval and recognition of school staff (for example, pupil nominations and a staff 'thank you' post box). In addition, staff mentioned increased communication with parents and carers, which they feel has improved home/school relationships. 'Restorative Justice' training for young people and staff has also been planned, which is a restorative approach to preventing and managing conflict focusing on preserving positive relationships.

As evidenced by the re-audits of two schools, whilst the DRP was perceived to result in school level change during the first year of implementation, staff also anticipated that the impact of the approach may increase over time.

Facilitator Reflections

In addition to the two full interviews conducted with each facilitator, an invitation to complete an online survey was extended to the facilitation team at the end of data collection for the DRP evaluation. The interviews provided insight into the impact of the DRP at school level from facilitators' perspectives. In particular, these interviews enriched understanding of existing school context and how audit and action planning procedure was adapted to meet existing needs. The online survey instead focused on the impact of the DRP for the facilitation team, and therefore contributed to an understanding of value generated beyond school level including the impact of the DRP on sustainability and the potential for future growth and change at the whole system level. The focus group conducted after survey results were collected enabled facilitators to expand on their survey responses in more depth in order to provide context for their comments. Results of the survey and the focus group are presented here as part of articulating whole system impact of the DRP.

Facilitator Survey

The survey issued to facilitators was comprised of ten questions which aimed to enable facilitation staff to describe their experiences of developing and delivering the DRP, their perception of the impact of the DRP on their own understanding and practice, as well as their perception of the long term impact across multiple system levels. Most questions were open ended in order to allow for in depth qualitative responses and to reflect the potential diversity of experiences. All six current facilitators responded to every question.

**Do you think that the DRP helped you to improve your understanding of resilience?
If yes, how?**

“The DRP had increased my understanding of resilience and it's impact on young people and staff in schools. It's helped to recognise the importance to have this threaded through school life”

In response to this question, 4 respondents (67%) stated that the DRP had improved their own understanding of resilience. In particular these responses highlighted improved knowledge in relation of processes and practices in school settings that can contribute to building resilience, and improved understanding of how to support schools to develop these areas of practice. 2 respondents (33%) said that they already had very good understanding of resilience, but both acknowledged that the DRP had helped 'keep resilience on the agenda' and has specifically helped facilitators to apply their knowledge to school settings.

What did you understand to be the main principles of the DRP?

"To help schools to establish systems to identify who their vulnerable children are and engage and encourage the whole school community to establish positive relationships with vulnerable children and their families. Developing evidence based practice through a whole school approach to mitigating vulnerabilities and ensuring protective factors are maximised"

Facilitators identified the principles of the DRP as:

- Supporting schools to help pupils achieve good outcomes despite adversity
- Maximising protective factors in schools
- Mitigating against adversity in schools
- Developing a whole school approach across all systems and processes
- Developing positive relationships with vulnerable children and their families
- Improving tracking and identification of vulnerable pupils (a fluid concept over time)
- Aiming to promote awareness of resilience in schools
- Aiming to build and support resilience in schools
- Identifying ways in which schools need support and can support themselves

To what extent did the DRP increase your confidence and competence in applying the principles of resilience in your work with schools? Could you please give some specific examples?

All 6 respondents (100%) said that they had increased confidence and competence in applying the principles of resilience in their work with schools. Multiple facilitators reflected that they had felt unsure or under confident about how to help schools develop resilience in their setting prior to the DRP. Whilst initially, facilitators felt there was less clarity about how this concept translated into the practice of whole school processes, the process of developing the DRP as a local adaptation of the concept of whole school resilience (ARA) helped facilitators to consider practical support and strategies for schools which added to their professional repertoire and filtered into aspects of practice beyond the DRP. For example, one facilitator cited a school who had repeatedly referred one pupil for 'behaviour intervention', but with the support of the facilitator, considered how to balance the extended support network around the child with increased (whole school) opportunities to promote independence and learn from mistakes. The pupil's support plan was re-written to reflect this new approach and the facilitator noted the outcomes had been very successful.

“At first I was very unsure how to help schools develop resilience within their setting. The most helpful was working *with* a school where the staff are completely committed, the HT or link person in school is organised and follows through. Learning in this way *together* and being open with the school about this”

“Facilitating the work across a range of schools, allowed for specific positive examples of practices to be shared. The DRP has supported me to feel more confident in supporting schools to look at systems and practices at a wider school level rather than just focusing on an individual child's needs”

Lastly, facilitators noted that there was a ‘snowball effect’ in which the more schools they supported through the DRP process, the more confident they became in their own practice. In part, a sense of competence was bolstered by an increasing bank of ‘best practice’ examples gathered from working across multiple schools which was a useful starting point to looking at whole school practice rather than individual support with new schools.

During your involvement in DRP have you been shown the online resources, such as the Academic Resilience Approach website on the Boingboing website?

This was a closed response question (Yes/No). All 6 (100%) of respondents said that they had been shown the online resources created as part of the Academic Resilience Approach.

Did you use these online resources as part of your work with schools? If no, was there a reason you chose not to use these resources? If yes, could you please tell us which resources you have used and whether you found them helpful?

Of all responses, 6 (100%) facilitators said that they had shared these resources with schools. 4 of 6 respondents (67%) could identify specific resources they had used and each of these respondents said that the resources had been helpful and useful for schools. The resources identified (in order of most frequently cited as useful) were:

- Resilient Classroom pack (referred to by 4 facilitators)
- Resilience Framework (referred to by 2 facilitators)
- Audit proforma (referred to by 2 facilitators)
- Plan, Do, Review guide (referred to by 1 facilitator)
- Pyramid of Need

The other 2 (33%) facilitators had shared links to the resources with schools but were unsure if they had been followed up or used.

What were the top two strengths (i.e., what worked very well) and two challenges (i.e., what did not work that well) of the DRP?

Facilitators highlighted the following as strengths of the DRP:

- A whole school approach in which every voice is heard
- Strengths based approach
- Promoting resilience across the whole school involving all staff
- Working with an organised and committed key person in school who embraced the DRP and helped to embed the approach
- Staff and pupil audits, which carried a lot of weight in school
- Detailed action planning that can be reviewed and therefore progress measured

Facilitators identified the following challenges of the DRP:

- Competing priorities for facilitators or school staff that cause delays or disruption to the DRP process and reduce momentum
- Staffing change that restricts progress with the DRP at school level
- If lead staff are not fully committed to the DRP- overall commitment will be low
- Schools (especially secondary) find it hard to put time aside for DRP meetings
- Schools (especially secondary) find it hard to involve all staff in the DRP audit and action plan delivery
- Admin / prompting required to prompt schools to complete action plans and return surveys

Were there any aspects of your work in DRP that you are planning to carry on in your future practice beyond the DRP? And if yes, could you please explain what they are?

All respondents said that they would carry aspects of the DRP into their future practice and were able to identify a range of specific and practice based examples of how this learning would 'travel'. The most frequently cited aspect of practice that facilitators identified as useful in other work was a 'consultative', 'coaching' or 'mentoring' approach, in which schools are supported to go through their own cycle of reflection on their current practice, taking a strengths based approach, and involving all staff as well

as pupils in an improvement process. These three broad aspects of practice were considered useful strategies to take in any work with schools. In addition, four facilitators said they would be using ideas related to the concept of resilience itself in their other work. Using the protective factors from the resilience framework to audit current school practice was a commonly provided example and was seen as potential *gateway* to ‘signposting schools to other areas of work we offer, including restorative approaches, mental health, outdoor play and learning, and staff resilience being higher on the agenda’.

“to encourage schools to reflect on where they are and where they would like to be, including how they will get there, it's very effective and it's that process that I will be using in other areas”

Could you please tell us about potential sustainability of the DRP in the future? Do you think it should be carried on and if yes do you suggest any changes to it?

All facilitators thought that the DRP was sustainable in the future due to its strong link to existing local authority offers to schools and the potential for the DRP to provide an ‘umbrella’ that tied these approaches together. The DRP was seen as necessary and effective by facilitators, and some responses suggested that the DRP was seen to increase sustainability within school and local authority systems through capacity building. As such the following enabling factors were identified to DRP sustainability:

- Existing need
- Enthusiasm of the facilitation team
- Congruence with the approach to existing ethos
- Potential of the approach to unify other local authority school offers
- Potential capacity building within school and local authority
- Increasing numbers of school are expressing interest in the DRP and wanting to engage in the process as success is shared from other schools

- Changes or considerations for future iterations of the DRP in order to maximise its impact and ensure sustainability were:
- Developing a contract between school and the local authority to increase engagement
- Simplifying evaluation processes since they became a barrier to school engagement
- Clarifying the link between the DRP and other approaches (such as Restorative Approaches training)
- Ensuring future commissioning is successful - supported by the strong link between the aims (and outcomes thus far) of the DRP and the current need to address mental health and educational inequality

To what extent did the DRP increase team members' (i.e., all facilitators and others who supported the delivery of this programme) confidence and competence in working with each other Could you please give some specific examples?

All facilitators said that the DRP process had built on existing links between staff in the Local Authority to increase collaborative practice. 4 facilitators (67%) also said that the DRP had improved relationships and communication, especially forging new connections across 'cross service' teams, or with newer members of a team.

“The DRP has further developed collaborative practices across the team, strengthened positive working relationships with newer members of the team”

“It has been very helpful working with a colleague who has much more experience of staff resilience”

Many facilitators felt that in the immediate team, although working relationships were 'tight knit' prior to the DRP, the half term reflective meetings set aside focused and protected time to collectively 'troubleshoot', which aided practice. Multiple facilitators felt even more time could be set aside for 'CPD' and peer 'sharing of good practice'.

What was your overall experience of the DRP?

‘Very positive - some very effective practices being developed in schools. Even more so now the DRP has been simplified and schools are not under pressure to complete data - which at times became a barrier to continued engagement’

Overall, every facilitator said that they had found the experience of the DRP positive, both for their own professional development, and in support of their work with schools. Specific examples were provided of enjoyable aspects of the process, mainly focusing on the professional satisfaction drawn from seeing the impact of the DRP for pupils, staff and on whole school climate. In addition, two facilitators noted the diverse ways in which the DRP could be adapted and applied meant that the process did not feel repetitive and was rewarding to deliver. Barriers to facilitator engagement with the DRP was their limited capacity to ‘chase schools’ for meetings and data required in order to evaluate the impact of the DRP. This barrier was identified by 3 (50%) facilitators. In addition, two facilitators (33%) found that it was difficult to prioritise the DRP over other work, which, in combination with schools already being slow to respond and needing much prompting, created a further barrier or delay.

Thus, facilitators suggested that evaluation processes were simplified, expectations were made clear to schools at the start of the process in a mutual contract and that facilitators have dedicated and protected time to carry out important DRP work including tasks outside of direct contact with schools (e.g. communication with schools, analysing data, compiling reports). Facilitators acknowledged that this is already being improved and will continue to be a focus for future sustainability.

Facilitator Focus Group

The following themes have been collated from the focus group discussion involving seven facilitators. These themes emerged from prompt questions drawn from the facilitator survey, allowing facilitators to expand on their experiences.

The changing aims of the project

Facilitators highlighted the changing aims of the DRP as it has organically developed. In particular the role of the facilitator was seen as being clarified over time and through practice with schools. In understanding school needs, facilitators said that they had adapted their approach (a coaching model) and also realised the importance of the DRP not only for pupils, but for staff and for schools as organisations facing tough challenges in the current system.

"There were difficulties in the kick off...in terms of it was not clear what this was; now, in time we are understanding our role in this process.. but part it's been a journey to develop that"

"I think just the process of it; very different from other initiatives we facilitated schools to develop their own practice which resulted in real significant changes"

Understanding of resilience as a concept

A shift was identified in terms of both school staff and facilitators broadening their understanding of resilience as a concept. This was not perceived as a result of training facilitators had received in which the idea of whole school resilience felt 'linear and manualised'. There were perceived issues with the term 'Academic Resilience Approach', which some staff felt 'muddied the waters' and did not help the focus on the whole school, whole county approach the Local Authority had hoped to develop. As a result of close work between facilitators and schools to consider the multiple definitions of resilience for the research literature, a shift was described in terms of a move from resilience as an individualised asset to an ecological network of supportive protective factors. Facilitators reflected that most schools have moved from a focus on risk factors to a focus on protective

factors. There was some acknowledgement that school type and extent of competing priorities created a difference between genuine reflection in some schools and a 'tick box' exercise in others - in which case less reflection and less of a shift in understanding occurred.

“we moved from risk factors to protective factors; then they started to realise resilience is not something you have or not have, but something that develops in the system”

The use of resources

Multiple examples were given of the use of resources in practice as useful starting points with schools. The 'Resilient Classroom' pack was cited multiple times as a way to develop classroom resources and adapt existing practice (for example tutor time activities that supported the DRP). The framework was used by multiple facilitators both as part of the audit process with staff, and to develop resources for pupils to talk through aspects of their own resilience and their experiences of school. Both the pupil and staff audit were perceived very positively by facilitators who said that participants had reported 'feeling more heard', thus both increasing understanding of multiple stakeholder perspectives and increasing a sense of belonging in the process.

The pyramid of need was the most controversial of resources and as such, the least used. Facilitators had concerns about the resource being overly simplistic in its identification of 'vulnerability', (depending on which measures schools used) and felt that there was a danger that the fluid nature of vulnerability would not be reflected or be adapted over time, missing some children.

“there were particular times that I found useful to share these tools... we did not over-rely on these resources; we had a range of resources, it was most appropriate at the action planning stage”

Enabling and constraining factors

Facilitators focused on the strengths based approach taken with schools, which they felt encouraged schools to identify themselves how they could

improve, being supported in the process, as opposed to imposing a structure. The involvement of all staff was seen as key to school success, as was the leadership of a committed and organised school lead. The opportunity to spend time ‘unpicking’ issues ‘probably otherwise happening discretely in the staff room’, especially in relation to staff resilience, was also seen as unique and useful for schools. In addition, facilitators recognised that the DRP had increased their own collaboration with a broader range of staff in different settings and teams. The DRP was seen as a useful mechanism to connect with a greater number of schools and link to other services already provided by the Local Authority to ensure they are part of a whole school approach.

“we coordinated well with other things. We went to schools for an individual child but when we came out they signed up for the DRP”

“The DRP was a front door to schools. The first step was to work with schools more holistically; and then open up other avenues to work with them. DRP was a nice starting point”

Constraining factors were identified as competing priorities (examples provided included Ofsted, staffing change and redundancies), the need for effective co-ordinating of the DRP at Local Authority level and what responsibility each facilitator has. It was suggested that someone who ‘sits between the steering group and facilitators’ was key to the clarity and efficiency of the DRP:

“The senior leadership staff absolutely need to be involved. If not, it is a real challenge”

In summary, facilitators discussed an increasing understanding of the concept of resilience, an increasing confidence in applying this concept to their existing practice, and an appreciation of the strengths based nature of the DRP.

Steering Group Interview

Five Public Health and Local Authority staff from Durham County Council who had been involved in the commissioning and development of the DRP participated in a focus group interview which aimed to explore their perceptions of the process as well as its capacity and sustainability.

Key themes were drawn from responses to the focus group questions and exemplar quotes are provided below.

The journey of the development of the DRP

Participants identified a difficult start to the DRP, citing uncertainty over the project aims and a lack of cohesive vision. Early external training sessions were not perceived to provide clarity about how the Local Authority could develop a meaningful offer to schools that met contextual local need. Time scales had to be constantly revised as participants took time to develop relationships with schools and the multiple teams involved in delivery and evaluation. One focus group member described this process as ‘creating the right political architecture to grow a project’. In this way, early turbulence was seen to ‘enhance the conversation’ and provide useful points of clarification or re-clarification as the approach was developed. Teams were integrated and a co-ordinated approach was established that fitted an existing ethos whilst adapting to meet school needs:

“I feel like we maybe had a couple of false starts, didn’t we? We almost got going and then for a variety of reasons didn’t quite get the traction to go forward. But actually, looking back I do feel that those were really important moments in terms of what you just said which is: you make connections and you develop new understandings and you’re clearer then about what you’re trying to do and how you’re going to go about doing it”

“I think the project itself started with a desire for bespoke work with schools, where this project would help decrease the need for external support. I remember from our conversations at the very beginning that it was based around how we can support schools and sustain that support. That’s kind of the vision or the value of this team...so the

implementation was developed to become part of the existing system... to fit with the values of the system”

“There was a lot of restructuring and bringing together of teams around Social-Emotional Mental Health in particular. People’s roles were up in the air...there was actually a lot of team building going on. We were sort of in a new era really, in terms of bringing people together to work in a much more integrated way – a joined up way”

The involvement of an ‘advisory group’ throughout the DRP process was, overall, perceived as a helpful way of holding those involved in its development to account, as well as ensuring the focus of the project did not ‘drift unhelpfully’ . However, participants did acknowledge the additional work involved to ‘justify your existence’. The ‘operational group’ felt that there was an honest and open relationship with the advisory group which enabled feedback from facilitators and schools to help shape the DRP as the approach was being developed:

“There’s been that honest brokerage and responsive nature to go: ‘Let’s listen to that and let’s adapt it.’ The operational group was informing the advisory group. So, it felt like we had real line of sight to what we wanted to do around children, young people and schools all of the time”

A high level of connectivity to a broad range of services was perceived by the steering group to provide breadth and depth to the DRP. Links were identified with the Mental Health Transformation plan, SEN, initiatives within education and the ‘resilience worker’. However, opportunities for greater involvement from School Improvement were identified.

Capacity building and sustainability of the DRP

Participants acknowledged the enormous effort and amount of work that has gone into the development of the DRP. At times, participants acknowledged, this has been laborious in addition to existing work demands. However, the ‘learning process’ is perceived to have slowly built momentum towards the DRP reducing workload rather than being seen as

additional work. Participants described seeing the DRP as defending the overall approach now, as opposed to being an 'add-on'.

*'I think in the very early days, very much at the beginning it felt like: 'This is in addition to my job.' Which now feels like: 'This **is** part of my job.' I think that shift has been a bit of a journey"*

A whole school approach that starts with existing strengths is seen as fundamental to reassuring schools that much of their existing work is effective and a good foundation for building resilience. A parallel was drawn to the Mental Health in Schools work which emphasises a strengths based approach as 'the starting point of inclusivity' and the focus of the recent Green Paper on a whole school approach.

Capacity in schools is seen to have been bolstered through schools communicating and connecting to share examples of best DRP practice and support each other to find solutions. The Local Authority hosted celebration event was provided as a significant example at which many schools either engage or re-engage as a result of connecting with the 'community of practice'. There are also examples of ongoing informal mentoring encouraged by Durham County Council and often initiated at the celebration events.

"I think one of the things which probably emerged for us is a better understanding of the factors which promote resilience...I think there's a broader conceptualisation and confidence around resilience, but I think that's shaped by working together over a period of time. I think all of those elements were there, but I think possibly it's knitted together more coherently"

"facilitators are feeling much more confident, competent and motivated to continue and sustain this work"

"What I think we're starting to see now is that snowball. Right now, we've got a regular number of schools coming forward. It's because they're hearing about how it's benefitted the schools that have already received it"

The diversity of the facilitation group was seen to support staff during a time of restructuring to connect isolated teams and redefine professional roles.

“Professionally it’s a reasonably diverse group, isn’t it? That was a very deliberate thing from the outset. We made sure that there were: Advisor Teachers, Behavioural Support Workers, Psychologists. There have been ripple affects as a result of that. As we said earlier, the context to this project starting was that there were restructures going on across our teams. I think this was one of the things that actually allowed us to bring people together”

“No one or anybody owned it. It was jointly owned by all of us, and out of that I think all sorts of bridges have been built”

Leadership and the DRP

Participants identified an increase of distributed leadership, both at school level and at Local Authority level, with a common theme of focusing on long term rather than short term outcomes. Being given space to identify needs and creatively build solutions that drew on existing strengths was perceived as a capacity building process at multiple system levels which was unique to the DRP compared to other school programmes. This ‘space’ was seen as balanced by accountability to evidence the impact of the approach as it was implemented and regular communication with the advisory group to evidence progress

“I know that one of the things I definitely appreciated was being given the space to operate and figure it out. I think that that could have been very different...I think it would have been very easy,...for the plug to get pulled actually. There’s always an urgency. That’s the culture of most local authorities...Everything needs to be done fast and there’s no messing about. ‘Make it happen, or else!’ really. Fortunately, there was a tolerance to the fact that we needed time to figure it out and get it going...it did feel a bit more like distributed leadership”

“People learning, figuring out, taking initiative, taking responsibility and being held to account in the right way. I think we’ve actually ended up with more capacity within the teams now, than we would have had if we’d just said: ‘This is what it looks like. This is what you need to say and this is what you need to offer”

“It is always a balance...How much structure do you put in? Because you need to have enough to make sure that everybody is kept honest and held to account, but not so much that you constrain”

School culture was seen to value short term outcomes and ‘quick wins’ and therefore expect to be told what to do, which can risk reduced ownership and longevity. Thus in terms of school level, the steering group identified the same need for balance. Close guidance in the early stages that resulted in evidenced impact was seen as centrally important to long term commitment of leadership staff. Long term planning to reduce reliance on facilitators over time was then seen as important to ensure sustainability.

“Often, you’re looking for some quick wins in the early months to give them a sense that they’re doing something concrete and practical. It helps them to trust the process...otherwise they are just box ticking and doing things in fairly superficial ways. I think for busy Headteachers...compared to Ofsted and School Attainment Standards, which are priorities, I think there’s always a danger that if progress is too slow, mercurial or fuzzy that they’re going to lose interest quite quickly. I think there have been lots of hearts and minds to win in some schools”

“In the early conversations, schools may start off by saying: ‘We’re concerned about the resilience of our young people.’ Then it morphs into staff, and then organisational resilience. For some schools, you have to find the point in the lever where you can work with a school. I think it’s not incompatible to think of a model where there is a leadership framework, but there is also efficacy and agency from all members of the community. Some schools absolutely get that. Some schools are not quite there and you start at the point where you can....you can open those layers with them”

Information and communication

There was an acknowledgement by the steering group of the increased time and effort required to retrieve information and data from schools that added to facilitator workload. However, this was not seen as unique to the DRP but

a well known aspect of working with busy schools and overloaded school staff.

“I do think trying to get the information back from schools or encouraging them to get information to you guys has been quite hard. It always is. Again, that’s not at all unique to this project. That’s always the case”

However, participants also identified the importance of open communication with schools and the use of data to demonstrate impact, in order to maintain momentum established in the early DRP meetings. Processes and structures have been developed internally in the Local Authority to provide succinct and articulate accounts of DRP progress including rich case study reports. These processes have been very useful to those outside of the operational day to day practice to gauge the changing direction of the project and the growing impact. Further opportunities were identified for information sharing including using the celebration event to link up headteachers who can support one another or mentor new schools through the DRP process.

Resources

The added value of everyday work in the system being influenced by the DRP was seen as an important addition to Public Health and the Local Authority’s existing commitment to continue to fund mental health and wellbeing intervention. Pressure for future resourcing was seen to be related to how to ‘scale up’ the DRP. Defining and delivering a ‘universal offer’ within the confines of limited resources was acknowledged to require a creative and innovative approach. An aspirational aim was to be able define the number of schools that the DRP could reach each year, and gradually extend this as more schools require less support and are independently continuing the DRP, freeing up facilitator time to engage with new schools. The important role of school to school partnerships or hubs was emphasised as was the importance of adapting the DRP for multiple school contexts, especially secondary.

The importance of assessing school ‘readiness’ to engage in the DRP will also be an important and ongoing way to direct the service to the most fertile environments for change. Relatively low intensity work can be carried

out to establish current school climate and consider how much support a school will need in order to set up and implement the DRP action plan. This might restrict frustrating ‘stop/starts’ with some schools who actually need ‘readiness’ work prior to engaging fully in the DRP. There was a very clear sense that it was better to work in depth with a smaller number of schools over time (which then increases slowly), than to lose impact by aiming for breadth too early. An example was given of Healthy Schools and the danger of schools ‘jumping through hoops’ for accreditation without meaningful and sustainable change.

Sustainability, growth and change

As identified in both quantitative and qualitative facilitator data, as well as in the steering group interview, the DRP is strongly perceived as sustainable in the long term, provided an emphasis remains on responding to local needs, and to adapting the process in response to learning in partnership with schools. In addition, the DRP is also perceived as an important and valuable means to promote sustainability, growth and change both in schools and at Local Authority level, given its strengths based approach and capacity to co-ordinate and promote existing services. This is especially important during time of restricted funding, increasing privatisation of services and increasing contextual need. Schools urgently need to respond to increasing mental health issues and address inequality of educational outcomes, whilst protecting and promoting the wellbeing of their school staff, in many ways their most precious resources. The DRP is perceived to offer a unique, highly supportive process of self reflection and improvement, enabled by highly skilled facilitators and the extended services they provide.

In summary, the steering group perceived the DRP to have organically developed through a complex change process which had involved high levels of collaboration across existing teams and services. The DRP is perceived as a sustainable model for framing future support services that are offered to schools by Durham County Council.

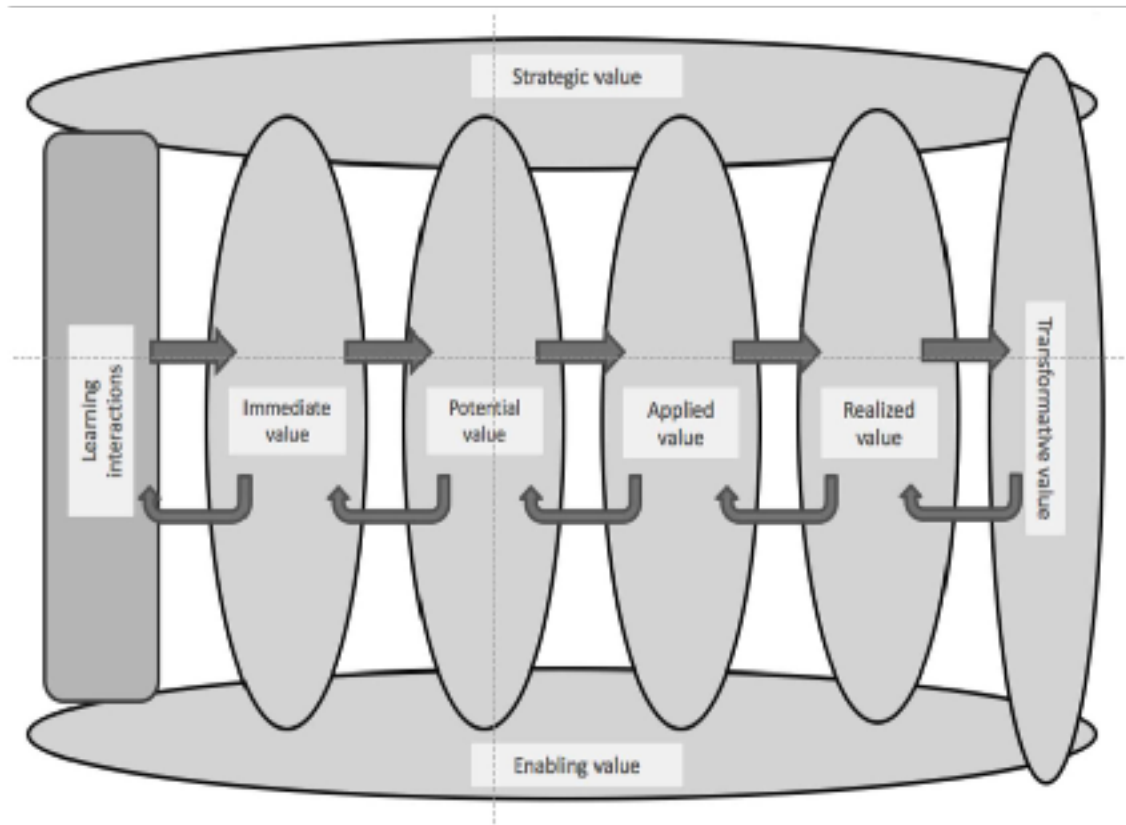
Whole School Impact

In order to make sense of the impact of the DRP at school level, this section of the report uses the headings of the Value Creation Framework (VCF)⁷ to illustrate the value of the DRP for different people or aspects of school practice, at different points in the DRP process. The VCF is well suited to rich descriptions of social learning processes such as this, in which value emerges at multiple stages and can travel to cumulatively have a more significant impact over time. Ideal (or aspirational) conditions, alongside constraints (or risks) can also inform our understanding of the context specificity of the approach, and the importance of establishing ‘readiness conditions for the DRP in future practice.

What is the Value Creation Framework?

The **‘Value Creation Framework’** is an evaluation framework for social learning processes. The underlying perspective of social learning suggests that participation in learning interactions can help to gain new insight, make changes to practice, develop new resources and have the potential to transform individuals, communities, and their environments. There is a strong focus on value being created *throughout* a learning process, as opposed to attaching value only to ‘outcomes’ of the process. In addition, value can be accumulated and reinforced as momentum is built in a social learning project.

⁷ Wenger-Trayner, Wenger-Trayner, Cameron, Eryigit-Madzwamuse & Hart, 2017



In the framework, the social learning process includes seven cycles, each providing opportunities for the creation of value.

These cycles are summarised below using a practice based example to illustrate the concepts:

Immediate Value

By engaging in a social interaction, immediate value is created and can be seen in increased understanding, enjoyment and enthusiasm. *For example, teachers at a CPD event enjoy being with likeminded practitioners and increase understanding of the importance of staff wellbeing.*

Potential Value

Insights created by connecting with others generate ideas that act as seeds for future value or outcomes. *For example, teachers are inspired by an approach that has worked well in other schools and develop the idea of a staff wellbeing policy.*

Applied Value

Putting these ideas into practice creates ‘applied value’. This might mean changing individual practice, an environment or developing resources. *For example, staff are consulted about what would improve their wellbeing at work. The results of this audit show that submitting planning for the week in advance is considered a poor use of planning time since plans inevitably change, rendering plans less useful. Staff no longer have to submit plans for the week and therefore spend less time ‘re-planning’.*

Realised Value

The extent to which changes to practice can be considered to ‘make a difference’ or have impact. *For example, due to the staff wellbeing policy, staff have an increased perception of morale and there are greater opportunities to collaborate with other staff. In time, there may be less staff absence and turnover, which would result in more consistent relationships between staff and pupils, as well as potential economic value due to increased retention.*

Transformative Value

When social learning transforms individuals, communities and their environment, it is said to have ‘transformative value’. *For example, a significant shift in staff understanding of ‘resilience’ as applicable to **everyone** in the school community and a formal inclusion of staff wellbeing in formal school policy.*

The following value creation cycles are associated with all prior cycles, they are broader indicators of what has enabled value and the strategic impact:

Strategic Value

The impact of social learning on the quality of relationships between people, connections with relevant stakeholders and communication. *For example, a community of practice is developed between multiple schools to share best practice from the DRP. There is an improvement in communication and participation with parents and carers.*

Enabling Value

As a result of the social learning, lessons are learnt that help to improve systems, enhancing value in other areas. Resources and services that enable value across the cycles are included in this area. *For example, the composition and approach of the facilitation team could be said to have enabled changes to school systems, to county level practice, and to gradually embed practice across more schools.*

In addition to the cycles above, the Value Creation Framework also includes the idea of ‘**aspirations**’ and ‘**risks**’. Aspirations are set by the community based on what they hope to achieve and what conditions there are to facilitate these aims. Risks that might constitute barriers to these aspirations can be mitigated through careful planning. Aspirations and risks are context specific and can change in relation to a range of circumstances and over time.

Based on this theory, social learning is considered to have the potential to create iterative ‘loops’ that carry value across multiple cycles and back, causing a ripple effect. By combining diverse sources of both quantitative and qualitative data across these cycles, it is possible to present a ‘**Value Creation Story**’, that articulates the creation of value across multiple stages of a change process.

The data collected for the DRP has been used to produce a ‘**Value Creation Story**’ for the DRP, including ‘aspirations’ and ‘risks’ as identified by school

staff, facilitators and the steering group. This story is presented in the diagram below and is articulated through the accompanying text.

Immediate Value

The DRP audit sessions, delivered by facilitators to schools, had immediate value as a result of interaction between school staff and facilitators. School staff who participated in the audit and celebration sessions reported:

- Enthusiasm and excitement about the DRP
- Increased motivation to adopt the DRP as a whole school approach
- Better understanding of resilience (as a holistic concept not as an individual quality)
- Improved understanding of school strengths and needs (from pupil & staff audit)
- Improved interaction and communication between staff of different role types

- For facilitation staff, the DRP also had immediate value in the form of increased understanding of resilience, and increased confidence and competence to apply these ideas to daily practice.

CASE EXAMPLE

Some staff in one case study school were initially sceptical about the DRP, since they had prior experience of approaches that required more work for staff, to detrimental effect. Consequently, these approaches had not been sustainable and therefore were seen as 'fads' or unnecessary novelty ideas. However, after the DRP sessions, staff in the

school were pleasantly surprised by two aspects they considered unique to this approach in comparison. Firstly, staff identified the strengths based approach that allowed school staff to steer the direction of the DRP, based on their expert knowledge of their own school and pupil needs, including what was already working well. Secondly, staff acknowledged that the holistic and ecological concept of resilience underpinning the approach promoted the importance building resilience for *everyone* in the school community and helped to prioritise staff wellbeing. This was especially important at a time when some staff felt undervalued and de-stabilised during redundancies and restructuring. Staff feedback suggests that staff of all role types recalled a ‘buzz’ of enthusiasm resulting from these aspects of the DRP, as well as an increased understanding of resilience in relation to whole school practice. An immediate increase in collaboration, communication was reported to have resulted from this collective enthusiasm.

QUOTES

‘Our facilitator came and spoke to us and talked about it and we kind of got a bit of a buzz from it. I remember that the staff seemed quite enthusiastic. I seem to recall that it wasn’t just about resilience for students, it was also about resilience for staff as well and what support we get as a staff team as well’ (Teacher, School C)

‘I kind of was reluctant because I was like: ‘Well, what would we really get out of this?...the extra workload, because all of us are up to our eyes in it all the time. So, I wasn’t like 100% on board, but I do really like NAME who runs it in the Local Authority. She came to see me and was like: ‘Look. It’s not extra work. You’re just looking at what you’re already doing and then seeing if you could tweak anything... I thought: ‘Yeah,

what's the harm in us reviewing what we're doing and seeing if we could be doing anything more on this?' (Leader, School E)

'Initially, I guess I thought of the children rather than the staff, but I mean, we do have to be quite resilient in our role in terms of responsibilities. Because there's only a few staff, we do take quite a lot on. It can be overwhelming at times, with what we do. But I mean, initially I was thinking of it in reference to the children. Now, I can see the relevance for staff as well'. (Teacher, School B)

'We had a lady come in who delivered the programme to us. That was very enlightening, it gives you a little bit more self-awareness...things that you would have just thought were everyday things, you just seem to take notice of that stuff more. The strength of ..the staff, they do bring a lot of that experience to the table anyway. So, it just sort of enhanced what we already had' (Non-teaching staff, School A)

'It was never for the staff, it was for the students, but last year within the Local Authority the teaching assistants were going through job evaluations. As a school, we had to go through redundancies. Actually, that became quite an important part of staff resilience. Although we'd never thought about it much in the beginning, it did really become an important part of it' (Leader, School B)

'(previous resilience work) was more based around the children. It wasn't until we started the project that we started to think more about the staff, and then that was where we were introduced to things like a Wellbeing Policy for staff' (Teacher, School A)

Potential Value

Both the initial audit and action planning sessions, and the subsequent celebration event, provided potential value. As a result of the audit, all schools developed their:

- understanding of the resilience framework
- increased insight into current school climate

In some schools, the process of the audit itself resulted in:

- Increased collaboration between staff of different role types
- More open and honest feedback about school climate being shared

School action plans used the concept of whole school resilience to plan for a range of changes. Some commonly identified potential developments as part of whole school action plans were:

- Planned improvement in approach to staff wellbeing
 - Planned increase in communication between multiple stakeholders
 - Planned opportunities for links with parents and carers
 - Plans to adapt behaviour management
 - Plans to increase pupil independence and positive risk taking
 - Plans to develop outdoor play & learning opportunities
- The celebration event created a loop of further potential value. Schools who had applied value shared their work, thus creating potential value for new schools.

CASE EXAMPLE

In one school, the competing priority of responding to short term targets established post Ofsted visit (in combination with changes to staffing meaning that the facilitator and school lead both had to be replaced) meant that the DRP temporarily lost momentum. However, when leaders from this school attended the celebration event, they were surprised to find multiple examples of other schools who had made progress with the very outcomes Ofsted had been reviewing (e.g. attendance and behaviour). Working in partnership with leaders from other schools, it was possible to align the aspirations of the DRP with existing priorities so that they were congruent, as opposed to competing. Staff from the case study school visited other DRP schools to see how the ideas worked in practice and met as a whole staff to consider how to adapt the ideas for their own context. The case study school has now developed their DRP action plan, which is a whole school approach to achieve these outcomes. It balances the aim to build pupil resilience with a dual focus on improving staff perceptions of school climate (including increasing participative decision making, and improving appraisal and communication systems).

QUOTES

'I think that the twilight sessions allowed people to be honest. It was the start of people honestly giving their views...We were using this as an excuse to listen, a chance to listen and move our school forwards...I really realised that what people were saying and what people were thinking at the beginning of the year wasn't necessarily the same thing' (Leader, School B)

'We had support from our facilitator to develop our wider-thinking around resilience, because I think some people think of resilience in quite a narrow sense in that it's just children's ability to have a go, but actually it's much much wider than that. That developed then into an action plan that was much much wider than what we'd initially started with' (Leader, School A)

'On the course that we had, we had to rate ourselves on how much resilience we thought we had as people and it was quite enlightening, because it opened up those areas that you didn't think were necessarily associated with resilience... I think what was instilled when we talked about resilience gave a lot of people that area of expertise ...and that confidence (that) I think that did stem from the resilience training' (Non-teaching staff, School A)

'To see everybody's viewpoints. From the cleaners, to the TAs, the teaching staff and our pastoral manager as well, that was really, really interesting, and very beneficial. We sort of all got together and discussed: 'right where do we think we are on certain areas', and through that, sort of assessing ourselves, we've managed to think, right, where do we need to improve' (Teacher, School B)

'We had a member of the EP team come in, and she spoke with three different groups of students and collated ideas, of what their ideal school was, and what was their non-ideal school and how we fitted into that. From those points we created an action plan' (Leader, School D)

Applied Value

Putting the DRP action plans into practice resulted in applied value.

Staff reported multiple changes to:

- School environment
- Curriculum
- Policy and practice for both pupils and staff
- Communication systems
- Redefining or clarifying school values

In addition, a theme across school staff, facilitation staff and the steering group was that the DRP had *re-imagined* or *re-shaped* current practice. Rather than the DRP being an 'add-on', the concept of resilience became a shared value base and aim that united distinct areas of current practice.

CASE EXAMPLE

In one case study school, the anonymous staff survey identified parent and carer partnership as an area which staff perceived could be improved. In addition, the pupil focus group suggested ways of improving the outdoor play area to provide more safe spaces, opportunities to have fun, and to take positive risks. As part of the school action plan, a new policy on outdoor play and learning was developed, supported by a local community interest company specialising in outdoor play. Children were involved in designing the playground. Parents and carers were invited to come and help create and build the playground. This aspect of the action plan helped to shape school values (by prioritising play, and a link with the local community), change the school environment, and change policy and practice around this aspect of the school day.

QUOTES

'We've got a new system, which has been put in place since the resilience training. It's a really fantastic tool to record and log any incidences of any behaviour issues, and incidences of children who might need extra support, and it's a much better system. Before we had to go to the pastoral manager, write our worries or concerns on a post it note and then she would get it, you know later that day, or whenever she came back from her meetings. Now, we can literally type up the incident, our concern or whatever it may be, choose which area it links to, and straight away it gets sent to the headteacher, deputy head, assistant head and the pastoral manager. it gets to the people who it needs to get to straight away' (Teacher, School B)

'In terms of the physical environment, I think what's more evident is all classrooms have displays linked to the zones of regulation. That's something that's very visible there, for all of our children to see, and a lot of our children use it. We had a little boy the other day who was really really angry. He's done something to another child and he went over to the zones of regulation and he was able to find the 'guilty' one and say: 'That's how I feel.'" (Leader, School A)

'We also put in place a School Wellbeing Policy. What happened was that it sits across the top of all of our local authority policies, but sets out quite clearly the: SLT's responsibilities to staff, their responsibility to themselves and the governors' responsibility to staff in terms of their emotional wellbeing' (Leader, School A)

'I think staff are clearer on what the vision for the school is. I think they were a bit bewildered before. So, that's better' (Non-teaching staff, School B)

'Our vision has become clearer. The Headteacher shared her vision very clearly when we started, but this year she kind of made sure it was shared by everybody, kind of and not just the teachers – the teaching staff, admin staff and the children really. We spent a lot of time making sure that everyone had the same vision really. It's really helped to move that forward for us...and we're all going in the same direction an awful lot more than we were previously' (Leader, School B)

Realised Value

DRP action plans are perceived by staff to have led to realised value in the following ways:

- Increased pupil confidence and independence
- Increased pupil tenacity
- Increased staff morale and connection to school values
- Improved work/life balance for staff
- Improved pupil behaviour
- More distributed and participative leadership
- More supportive leadership
- Increased communication between multiple stakeholders

CASE EXAMPLE

In the case study school, there had been a significant break down in communication between non-teaching staff and leaders in the school. According to both school staff and facilitator reports, this was at least partly due to a redundancy process, which had resulted in considerable stress and uncertainty, as well as mistrust between staff of different role types. This was reflected in the staff survey results, which showed that although leadership were seen as supportive, some staff felt that leadership were less approachable, or did not understand their problems. In the DRP process, the facilitator supported staff to open up

communication between groups and increase leadership awareness of problems faced by other staff. Strategies were identified to build on existing strengths and avoid misunderstandings. Staff collaborated to plan how more time could be set aside for informal communication with teaching staff to plan for and reflect on the day. Prior to the DRP, leadership had thought TA's wanted to be invited to the morning meetings when they said they needed more communication, which had led to more frustration, since this had further reduced TA time for planning. Both Leaders and non-leaders identified leadership to have significantly improved as a result of the DRP (in interviews and in survey responses). One participant said a frustrating cycle had been broken for all staff.

QUOTES

'I think the most significant one was the relationship with the Teaching Assistants improved. It does make me stop and think sometimes about how you can get that open and honest communication with people when you're in the workforce. That was something that we were finding quite difficult and manage to achieve' (Leader, School B)

'I cannot state how much of an impact the approach and the resilience, you know like taking them out of their comfort zone – the students-exposing them to things that they wouldn't have done previously...When they've experienced these trips and they've experienced it in the classroom, you should see it. These were children who struggled to communicate with each other. They'll become team leaders and make like rafts, tents and camps. The benefits are huge' (Non-teaching staff, School C)

'I know I keep repeating that it was communication, but I think that that's the really huge improvement in communication between all staff, and also SLT and teaching staff and TAs. I think that's had a huge impact on everybody and also that then filters down to the children and their education as well. I think just generally the staff just have a more positive outlook now, and people seem a lot happier in school' (Teacher, School B)

'From my perspective, the leadership has definitely changed, I'm more involved in that now than I ever have been, I think. I do feel um, my voice is more important than it was. So, I'm listened to a bit more than I was previously. It has definitely shifted and there is more of an inclusive way of doing things at the minute' (Teacher, School E)

'Especially with the more problem solving questions, I think that's become really beneficial for the children because, we started it last year, not right from the beginning, but sort of part way through, and I think the children are really sort of building on that resilience themselves, in, in all their lessons now, so, so it's been really inspiring really' (Teacher, School B)

'Through our project, through our Stay and Play and things like that, we've brought the parents in. It's not only about them doing activities alongside, but also the class teacher modelling how to teach phonics and things like that. So now, the parents feel like they can help the children out a little bit more' (Teacher, School A)

Transformative Value

The DRP can be said to have transformative value because it resulted in significant improvements to staff perceptions of whole school climate

including improved perceptions of workload, leadership, and participative decision making. These changes are reported by staff to have resulted in:

- Increased individual understanding and collective embracing of resilience concept
- Increased competence and confidence of school and facilitation staff around resilience practice
- Policy and practice changes that re-shape the school system to prioritise resilience and increase DRP sustainability
- Improved staff wellbeing
- A more positive and supportive whole school culture
- Improved relationships between staff, and between staff and parents/carers

CASE EXAMPLE

In one case study school, staff survey results prompted an open discussion about aspects of school climate that staff felt could be improved. Workload and supportive leadership were both identified as potential areas for growth. Consequently, the introduction of a staff wellbeing policy was included in the action plan. Staff reported through interviews that this had resulted in reduced workload, improved wellbeing for staff, a perception of increased participative decision making and more supportive leadership. Each of these aspects of school climate were also seen to have significantly improved when staff survey responses were analysed. By prioritising staff resilience as well as pupil resilience, staff anticipate that the DRP will be more sustainable (citing other interventions that required more work of staff and therefore did not last). In addition, staff perceive staff wellbeing as the foundation

for 'organisational resilience' and as an important resource in building pupil resilience.

QUOTES

'I think that also helped the staff think that they had a big say and helped them in their confidence, realising that leaders were willing to listen, kind of thing. We have quite a new senior team. I think it's helped the staff realise that they do want to listen and respond to them and we do want it to be a whole-school approach, not a top-down approach' (Teacher, School B)

'I think it bought in a lot more confidence in the SLT that they would be able to share that knowledge and that responsibility with other members of the staff team and trust them to do it. The resilience gave them that. Um, so obviously that's given everybody that confidence and belief in what they're doing. It's filtered throughout the school' (Leader, School C)

'We now have a Staff Wellbeing policy, which everybody is aware of and everybody's read. It highlights the importance of professional development, but also personal development as well. It's broken it down a little bit more. Obviously, you know, as a teacher you usually spend your Sundays working or the whole weekend working, prepping for the week. Whereas, the Wellbeing Policy states: 'breaking it down into manageable chunks, so that you're not doing everything at once and you're kind of doing a little bit each day to make, make that balance' (Teacher, School A)

'It's easy to talk about being resilient, and being upbeat and being positive, maintaining that every lesson is a fresh start with our young

people. That's an easy thing to say, but it's a harder thing to do. I think it's made me think about what a challenging thing it is, for staff to do. I think that's probably the big, probably the most positive part of the project, is that it makes you reflect on your own practice and how we help staff' (Leader, School C)

Strategic Value

The DRP has been reported by school staff to have had an impact on the quality of relationships and connections between multiple stakeholders. This includes:

- The relationships and communication between school staff of multiple role types
- The relationships and communication between school staff and parents / carers
- The connections between participating schools – including schools sharing best practice and collaborating to develop resources
- Links with external services including specialist training led by county and alternative providers

CASE EXAMPLE

In one case study school, an opportunity to expand extra curricular provision as a way of building resilience was identified in the audit session by non-teaching staff. Leaders in this school supported staff to make contact with another school who were well established with similar trips and experiences for pupils that focused on positive risk taking, working as a team and so on. Resources and expertise were shared between the two schools. During the first of a series of off site trips to adventure activity camps, non-teaching staff said that there was a noticeable improvement in pupil communication with their peers and

staff on the trip. After their return, assemblies and classwork were used to embed learning and relate these experiences to the classroom. Staff who had not gone on the trip utilised the opportunity to build relationships with pupils based on this experience of success.

QUOTES

'Looking at things like our break times and lunchtimes, and looking at how our staff and our children are interacting with each other, which is so much more positive now. The staff are happier. Probably things like the staff room at lunchtime which is a positive experience now and wasn't necessarily at the beginning of the year' (Leader, School B)

'There is a panel style community of practice between schools who come together to share experiences with 'hard to reach', 'vulnerable' or 'disengaged' children, sharing good practice and collaborating in finding solutions' (Facilitator, School A)

'We buy in to an OT and sensory support provision now, called Teacher Step, which is very much about developing our children in terms of their physical development and also their sensory development. We've also put a really big investment into Forest Schools' (Leader, School A)

'We were released from the timetable to go and research these things... and look at other students who had benefits from it from other schools and read their feedback on it. We made contact with a school in North Yorkshire. They've had quite a lot of experience with off-site trips... teambuilding and resilience building. So, we built a bit of a relationship up with them. We were given a little bit of guidance, but we were also

given a bit of free rein ... To try and discover for ourselves and try to implement it in our children' (Non-teaching staff, School C)

'Staff have spoken to the children in their time and said: "I've seen these photos of you, white water rafting'" So, the kids are actually experiencing that with us when we're on the trip, but staff who aren't involved in the trip are asking the kids about it when they come back via photographs and reading written statements from the children... they've then brought different strategies in. You know, to cope with children who hadn't wanted to come in to something. Talking with them, using positivity, putting something in place to make sure that their work can be differentiated' (Non-teaching staff, School C)

Enabling Value

Aspects of the DRP were seen to enable value, making the creation of value across other cycles more likely. These included:

- Knowledgeable & experienced facilitators
- Facilitator knowledge of local need and school profile
- Strengths based approach (which did not rely on expensive training or resources)
- Adaptive and responsive facilitation tailoring the DRP to changing school needs
- Appointing a consistent school lead
- Formalising the DRP in school policy

CASE EXAMPLE

In one case study school, leaders had already established a positive relationship with the facilitator, through previous work with the Local

Authority Services. This increased perceived efficacy of the DRP as well as reduced anxiety about additional work or a lack of support to implement a whole school approach. School staff valued the facilitator's unique 'insider/'outsider' position, both having knowledge of the school and a sense of its values, but bringing expert knowledge and helping adapt its use in practice. The DRP was further legitimised through its inclusion in formal whole school planning (School Development Plan, SDP) which meant that every member of staff in the school had a responsibility and role to play in building resilience in the school community. This prevented the perception that the DRP was *competing* with other priorities. Instead, using a resilience 'lens' to frame existing priorities, a whole school approach co-ordinated short term outcomes with meaningful, long term aims.

QUOTES

'what I really liked was the idea that you got support from um, a named person who would support you to develop sort of, your action plan and things in relation to resilience. Um, so it was something that we could then use to shape our School Improvement Plan because it was the next step' (Leader, School A)

'I do really like the lady who runs it in the Local Authority...I've met her through a couple of things and yeah. I like her. So, that does help when you kind of respect the person who has come through the door to talk to you about things' (Leader, School E)

'I've worked with the EWEL team in Durham in lots of different capacities...we've seen the impact that some of the strategies and

schemes that we put in place, so when the DRP was mentioned to myself it seemed like a really natural next step and fit in very well with the focus of the school through our development plan...I think that definitely having somebody else to come in and work with and support the school also made it feel quite non-judgemental from the staff's point of view' (Leader, School B)

'The Eps have a much better idea of what's been working across a variety of schools, and I've found those conversations with them in terms of developing our school action plan really really valuable' (Leader, School D)

'I think as a school we already had a lot there. When we talked things through and at initial meetings you could see that we have a lot in place. Obviously, being in the area that we have, we already have a lot of tools and a lot of expertise in looking at resilience...Sometimes that can often be forgotten. It gave us a chance to kind of audit what we had and things that we'd forgotten about and make sure that we reuse them as well. That was really beneficial'. (Leader, School B)

'The staff questionnaire was really helpful - we scored really highly in 'Connectedness' for each other... It feels like that in our school, that we all look out for each other. So, in the data we scored really highly on that. I was really proud of that because sometimes you can be a bit blind to how your own school is. I was really chuffed about that' (Leader, School E)

Aspirational conditions

Aspirations for the DRP that staff discussed in interviews and focus groups were:

- To have a better understanding of multiple stakeholder views
- To improve communication, increase feedback and make new connections
- To increase knowledge, confidence and competence in relation to resilience theory and its application in practice
- To reflect on school practice and identify strengths and challenges
- To develop a whole school approach based on the concept of resilience
- To build sustainability in schools and in the local authority

Throughout the DRP, the following conditions facilitated those aspirations:

- Knowledgeable facilitators who were able to adapt their approach to the needs of the school
- Values of the DRP (resilience for all, nurturing ethos, importance of wellbeing and mental health & long term outcomes) are congruent with existing school ethos
- Insider/outsider facilitator position – knowledge of the school and specialist knowledge
- Strengths based approach focusing on what is already working well and acknowledging staff as experts of their own contexts
- Reciprocity of the approach – especially in the prioritisation of staff wellbeing
- Anonymity of staff surveys facilitated accurate insight into perceptions of school climate
- School leader prioritisation of the DRP – including perceived need and the fit with existing priorities

- Distributed leadership – including involving a range of staff and pupils in auditing school practice and creating the action plan
- DRP formalised in School Development Planning meaning all staff share responsibility for its implementation and it is not an ‘add on’ but defines the school approach
- Action plan prioritises building resilience for multiple stakeholders in the school community including staff and parents
- ‘Optimal turbulence’ in the system – i.e. fewer competing priorities, high perceived need, no immediate short-term pressure (e.g. exams / Ofsted inspection)
- Staffing consistency – especially the facilitator and the school lead

‘I think we were just in the right place at the right time and also... we made it a school priority, we made it a part of our School Improvement Plan. I think it has to be given a priority within your School Improvement Plan if it’s going to make a difference. I think if it’s something that you do as an add-on it’s not going to have any impact...but sometimes as a Headteacher You have to be brave enough to say: “This is what’s right for us and this is what we need to do.”’ It’s led us off into all different kinds of avenues’ (Leader, School A)

‘fortunately, everybody was very honest and especially when they were filling out the questionnaire initially. I think that’s really important just to be honest and work together, and just say ‘right we might not be amazing at this but how can we work together to improve it further’ (Teacher, School B)

‘You have to embrace it really. To make it a priority. I know sometimes it can be sort of [pause] demanding on time. But, the value and the impact

is worth it. So, what you get out of it is worth investing the time in it. So yeah. Embrace it and engage with it as fully as you can' (Teacher, School E)

Risks

Throughout the DRP, the following risks could be considered to constrain the DRP or require input from the facilitator in order to avoid the DRP being constrained:

- Competing events or pressures (e.g. workforce restructure, Ofsted, budget cuts)
- 'System turbulence' too high – too many perceived competing priorities
- Lack of whole school integration of the approach (e.g. overly focused on parents rather than staff)
- Disruptions to staffing (especially school lead and facilitators)
- Lack of perceived need (both schools who consider they already have good provision, and schools who perceive other priorities to be require more immediate attention)
- Lack of leadership prioritisation
- DRP does not involve *all* staff – or does not maximise opportunities to involve multiple stakeholders
- Taking a time limited approach to the DRP in which short term outcomes are anticipated rather than a long-term approach to changing culture

'In the midst of all this programme being delivered we've had redundancies here and a lot of our staff have felt very negative. That

Strategic

- Impact on relationships & communication between staff of multiple role types
- Impact on relationships and communication between staff & parents / carers
- Increased connections between schools
- Sharing best practice and co-developing resources
- Links with specialist external services & training providers

Immediate

- Enthusiasm & motivation for the adopting DRP as a whole school approach
- Increased understanding of resilience as a holistic concept
- Improved understanding of school strengths and needs
- Increased interaction & communication between school staff of different roles
- Increased confidence & competence of DRP facilitators

Potential

- Awareness of how the resilience framework can be applied in practice
- Ideas generated from audits
- Sharing examples of best practice with other schools
- Planned changes in the whole school action plan which have the potential to add value

Applied

- Multiple changes made in practice including:
 - Clarifying and re-defining school ethos
 - Applying a 'resilience lens' to county and school level practice
 - Making changes to the school environment
 - Adapting the curriculum
 - Implementing new policy and practice for pupils and staff
 - Implementing new communication systems

Realised

- Increased pupil confidence & independence
- Increased pupil tenacity
- Increased staff morale and connection to school values
- Improved perceptions of workload for staff
- Improved pupil behaviour
- More distributed & participative leadership
- Increased communication between stakeholders

Transformative

- Increased individual understanding and collective embracing of resilience concept
- Increased competence & confidence of school and facilitation staff around resilience practice
- Policy & practice change re-shapes school system based on resilience values
- Improved staff wellbeing
- More positive & supportive school culture
- Improved relationships

- Knowledgeable & experienced facilitators
- Existing link between county team & schools

Enabling

- Strengths based approach
- Lack of reliance on expensive training & resources

- Adaptive & responsive approach to changing school needs

- Appointing consistent school lead
- Formalising the DRP in school policy

impacts very negatively on the emotional wellbeing of all staff. So, we've had [pause] ups and downs where things have improved and then when we've had a bit of bad news around job re-evaluations and things, things have dipped again. So, that's beyond the control of the school. That's to do with each individual and how they feel about what's happening to them as TAs. That does impact on the school' (Non-teaching staff, School B)

'Unfortunately, although it's really important and I think that everybody within the school that we speak to would agree that developing resilience within young people and the staff team is incredibly important, I think it's probably just got pushed to one side...because for the teaching staff and SLT the main priority has become: trying to keep the students in the school, trying to engage them and trying to make the lessons interesting...there's been an initial kind of firework, but then for whatever reason, it's just been allowed to fizzle out' (Teacher, School C)

Provided school leaders prioritised the approach, other potential risks (such as competing priorities) could be navigated and negated - being outweighed by the benefits of participation.

Furthermore, adversity in the system was, to some extent, harnessed by facilitators as a focus for the DRP as opposed to an inconvenient distraction. For example, some schools chose to focus on improving communication that had seemingly broken down between staff of different role types, whilst others developed staff wellbeing policies in acknowledgement of the importance of building staff resilience as part of their whole school approach. Identifying challenges immediately facing school staff and using the DRP sessions to address these challenges increased the perceived need and efficacy of the approach from school staff perspectives.

What have we learnt from the VCF analysis?

As represented in the model shown above, the analysis conducted using the VCF suggests that value was created throughout the DRP process as a result of a combination of aspirational conditions (especially in the existing school climate) and sources of enabling value (especially in the knowledge, expertise and skill of the facilitation team). Immediate value (enthusiasm, engagement and commitment of school staff as well as an increased understanding of resilience) was translated to potential value through the audit and action planning process, which applied the underlying theory to specific school level contextual needs.

Applied value and realised value took many different forms in schools depending on the areas they focussed the DRP on. Changes were evident in the school environment, policy, planning, curriculum and communication for example.

Momentum was built for change, (and thus transformative value) through increasing staff perception of DRP efficacy. Even relatively small changes in practice were perceived to have an impact on broader aspects of the system such as culture, shared values and leadership. In this way the DRP could be conceptualised as a loop, in which value is immediately generated but also accumulates throughout the process, and even in iterative cycles of the DRP.

Summary

In summary, the Durham Resilience Project (DRP) has already had a significantly positive impact on school climate. Staff report that there are also improvements in the physical environment and for communication, information sharing and participative decision making as a result of the process. Staff in some schools report that pupil behaviour and communication has improved as a result of changes made in the process of the DRP. Across all schools there has been an impact on pupil's resilience

and health related quality of life, as measured by the self reported Student Resilience Scale and Health Related Quality of Life scale. Both for staff and pupil measures, impact of the DRP appears to be greater for primary schools compared to secondary schools.