

**The Associate Educational Fellowship Programme**  
*'Improving professional practice through collaborative enquiry and dialogue'*

**Feedback from Fellowship discussion at 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 meeting:**

Greany, T. (2015) 'How can evidence inform teaching and decision making across 21,000 autonomous schools? Learning from the journey in England' In: Brown, C. Ed. *Leading the use of Research and Evidence in schools'* London. Institute of Education Press pp. 11 – 12.

**QUESTION: How do we create a 'culture' in our schools where we routinely access, evaluate and use research evidence as part of school improvement?**

The barriers discussed were:

the external pressures including Ofsted and actually being able to find the time

it was agreed that there is a need to develop a culture but that we need to be realistic about attitudes from within the school especially from the leadership teams. If the use of research is not driven by school leadership it tends not to happen

There needs to be school time given to develop the use of research to inform practice

Are we creating a division of culture where some schools are able to focus on the use of research where other schools, usually those with issues, would struggle even though it would benefit their performance and raise morale?

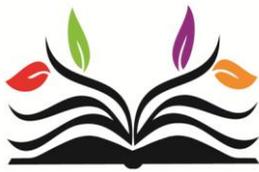
There needs to be collaboration in accessing research – discussing ideas and evaluation giving more confidence to find out more

We need to have:

- Value in evaluation
- Value in collaborating with each other
- Value of professional judgement to go and find the evidence
- Value in improvement

There is still a gap between where research is found, how it is written and teachers ability to access research (This is where the Fellowship Space comes in!)

Research tends to focus on the headlines and doesn't necessarily dig down to classroom based projects. It is used differently in each school. Small changes that occur in own school are powerful within their own context. However, there doesn't seem to be any vehicle to share the outcomes and this is our (the Fellowship) opportunity to create that environment through time, capacity, risk taking.



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How do we know what works? What might work for one might not work for another. There is a desire to get things right and we don't know what the impact will be until it is too late. Research takes time to impact. Where do we get the research from?

Research needs to have purpose, value and impact. It is OK to try, take a risk, to be experimental. It is OK to fail. Research and enquiry within each school is unique with unknown variables. We need to have time to develop and to start evaluating from the planning stages, to embed the culture and for it to be sustainable. There needs to be a whole school approach and ethos with the leadership supporting any change. Collectively the school will own it and be able to share their real life examples.

Research and enquiry means a change of culture. If staff are negative another theory or ideas needs to be discussed – one that could impact on them. Does this start in the NQT year? Research needs to be top down with professional judgement through reading and citing research.

Could there be a research question built into everyone's performance management – one that is discussed and negotiated with the member of staff and line manager?