COMMISSIONING FUTURES:
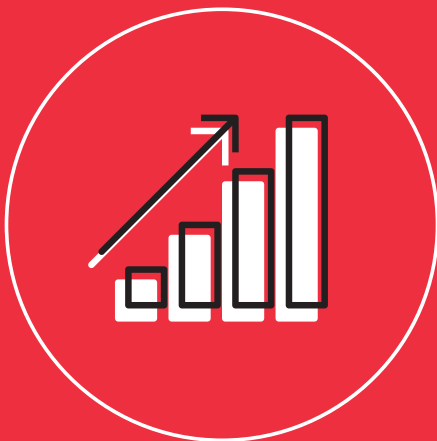# A GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS
FULL REPORT

THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

About The Young Foundation

The Young Foundation finds new ways of tackling major social challenges by working alongside communities, using the tools of research and social innovation. We run a range of national and international programmes, and work in partnership with leading organisations, thinkers and policymakers to achieve this.

We have created and supported over 80 organisations including: *Which? The Open University, Language Line, Social Innovation Exchange, School for Social Entrepreneurs, Uprising* and *Action for Happiness.*

Find out more at www.youngfoundation.org

About The Young Academy

The Young Academy supports early-stage charities, social enterprises and mission-driven businesses working to improve educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people in England.

Organisations participate in a programme of workshops, mentoring and opportunities to test their ideas, supported by experts in education, impact measurement and business. As a result of the support, participants develop more effective solutions to educational disadvantage delivered by more sustainable organisations, which are better equipped to scale up by accessing further funding and investment.

Visit the Young Academy website at www.theyoungacademy.org to find out more.

Authors

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4. Dr Helen Saddler, Inclusive Classrooms
5. Greg Sanderson, Smart School Councils
6. Cherie White and Hannah Rees, Think for the Future

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Educational inequality is a persistent and entrenched problem in the UK.[1] There remains a significant attainment gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. For example, a child from the richest 20% of communities is ten times more likely to attend a Russell Group university than a child from the poorest 20% of neighbourhoods.[2]

Schools and teachers play a primary role in improving existing teaching and learning practice to address this. An end to educational inequality is only likely to happen if we also develop **new ideas to make change**. Many schools and teachers are spearheading and developing innovative approaches to the challenge of educational inequality.[3] However, for a range of reasons, including competing demands, the need for specialist skills and an outside perspective, there is much that schools can gain from commissioning external innovative services to work with them to improve student outcomes.

In our work with The Young Academy[4] since 2014, a support programme for education ventures, we have worked with 52 innovative organisations with the overall aim of tackling educational inequality. Through this experience and from our research, we have seen that more can be done to support schools in this process. **As a result, we have created this guide to support schools to more effectively engage with and commission innovative services[5] which improve outcomes for children and young people by tackling educational inequality.**

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for anybody who is thinking about how best to tackle educational inequality and improve the attainment and achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the English education system. In particular, it is likely to be useful to:

- Education professionals with budgetary decision-making power, such as headteachers, senior leaders, middle leaders, and governors.

- Academy chains, local authorities, education and learning trusts.

- Anyone with an interest in improving outcomes for children and young people and tackling educational inequality through effective commissioning of external services.

How will this guide help?

We know there are multiple and intense challenges facing schools at the current time, including budget cuts, staff recruitment and retention pressures, high workloads and accountability pressures. This guide has been designed to alleviate those pressures, not to add to them. In a nutshell, this guide will help you to understand:

- How working with external providers, particularly those offering innovative services, can help you address these challenges and tackle educational inequality in your setting;

- Identify sources of funding to enable you to commission services to tackle inequalities in your school;

- That the process of developing and/or bringing services into your school and working with them is essential to their success;

- The key principles and steps of effectively commissioning innovative services and how to implement them.

Overall, by the end of this guide, you will have a better idea about **how to strategically commission the right services for your students**, in a way which deploys limited resources effectively, and can even help you access additional and new sources of funding.

What is this guide based on?

We have developed this guide based on the views and experiences of headteachers, teachers, innovative education services (or 'ventures'), social financiers, think tanks, charities and a range of other experts. It is also based on The Young Foundation's practical experience of supporting 52 education ventures to grow new ideas for and tackling educational inequality work with schools through The Young Academy, including case studies on six of these organisations (detailed below). Once the guidance was drafted we tested it with headteachers and senior leaders. A detailed breakdown of our methodology can be seen at the end of this guide in Appendix 2.

CASE STUDY ORGANISATIONS

Below you can see examples of innovative and creative services which we feature in this guide as case studies and which have been supported through The Young Academy, some of which may be familiar to you.

Think for the Future (TFTF) is a social enterprise which delivers a range of innovative programmes aimed at young people at the risk of exclusion and delivered by trainers with lived experience. Through mentoring, training and workshops, TFTF enables young people to pursue more positive outcomes, reducing permanent exclusion, improving behaviour and equipping schools to work with challenging pupils.

Inclusive Classrooms is a continuing professional development programme which works with primary schools across England to transform the efficacy of their teaching assistants (TAs). The programme provides on-the-job training to TAs, in particular equipping them to better support children with special educational needs (SEN).
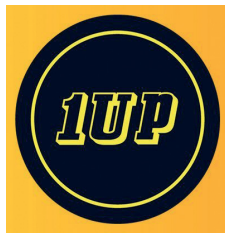
1Up is a social enterprise which creates and implements bespoke programmes to bridge the gaps between young people, businesses and local communities. Rather than a 'one size fits all' approach, they design interventions based on the specific needs of the school or organisation in order to close the attainment gap for disadvantaged young people.

Fearless Futures is a not-for-profit organisation which delivers innovative peer-led leadership development programmes for girls in schools, aiming to end gender inequality. It is unique in the way the programme equips girls to deliver workshops to their peers, putting into the practice the leadership skills they are developing.

Smart School Councils is a charity which offers an innovative model of delivering school councils which involves the whole school in the democratic process, with the aim of helping all young people become active democratic citizens. The programme offers year-long online subscriptions to 360 member schools across the globe, with the option of an additional training programme for teachers.

Edukit is a social enterprise which offers online and analytical tools to help schools raise student attainment by making it easy to find appropriate support for students and to track the results whether academic or behavioural.

2 SUMMARY OF GUIDANCE

In this guide we propose a six step approach to commissioning services to improve student outcomes, which is underpinned by six key principles, as shown in the diagram below.

Figure 1: The Young Academy commissioning model, including key steps and key principles
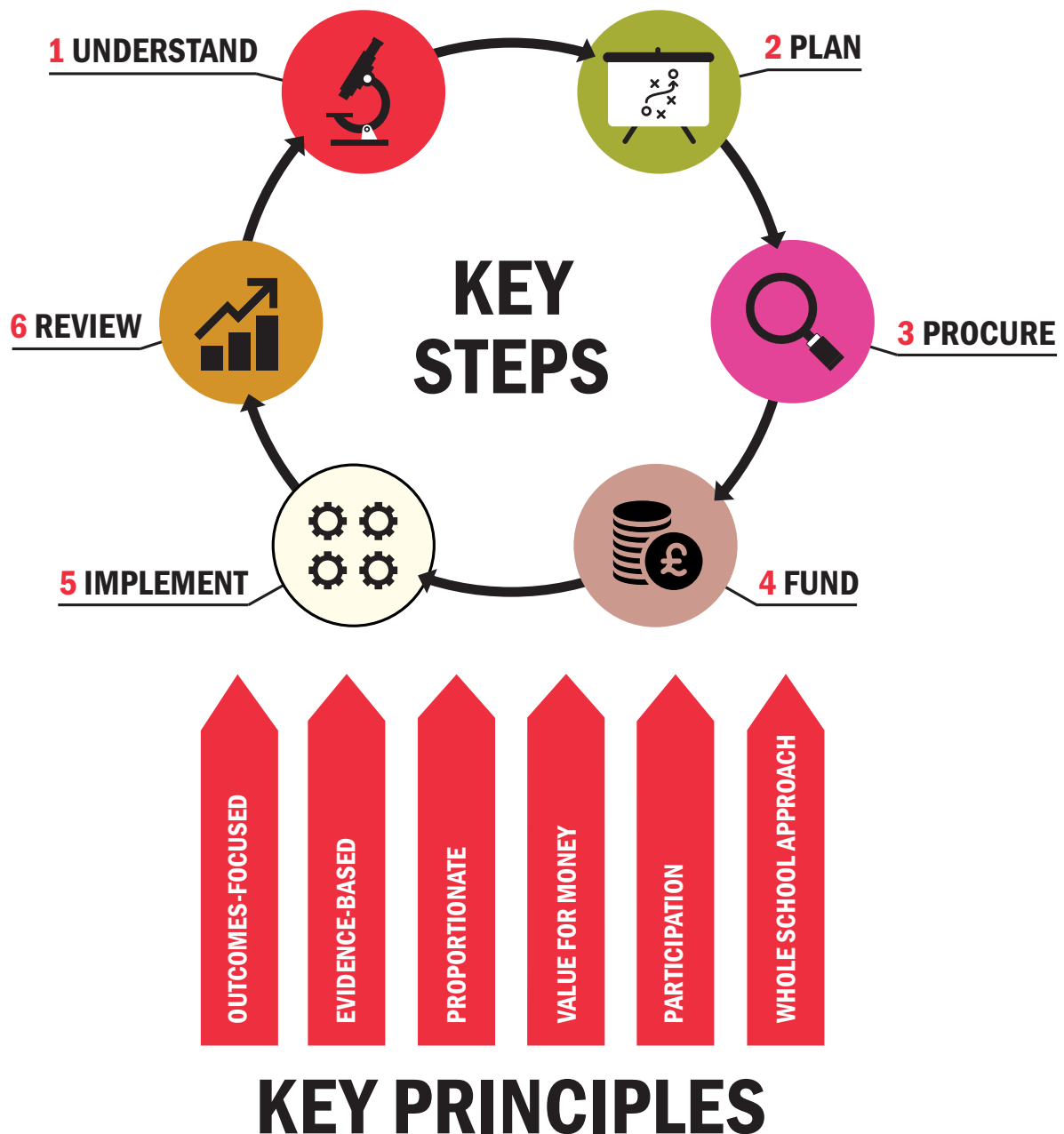
KEY PRINCIPLES

The following key principles for effective commissioning have been formulated on the basis of evidence of what works within education, as well as other sectors, such as health and social care. These are:

1 OUTCOMES-FOCUSED

A focus on outcomes throughout the commissioning process will facilitate an aligned and strategic process. The intended outcomes should be formulated in line with the ultimate goal – for example tackling educational inequality, which this guide is concerned with.

2 EVIDENCE-BASED

The collection, consideration and use of the best available evidence, from inside and outside of the school, in decision-making and planning. With highly innovative and early stage services, this is likely to require drawing on evidence and best practice principles from elsewhere to ascertain the likelihood of impact.

3 PROPORTIONATE

The level of time and resource that is invested in the commissioning process should be proportionate to the size and value (in terms of cost and likely impact) of the service being commissioned.

4 VALUE FOR MONEY

With limited – and in some cases decreasing – budgets, schools must seek to achieve value for money with their commissioning decisions.[6] However, this does not mean commissioning the cheapest possible provider. Instead, consideration of value for money should take into account 'wider social and environmental costs' and benefits of service provision.[7]

5 PARTICIPATION

Involving key stakeholders, such as students and teachers, in the commissioning process is not only a more democratic approach to service delivery, but it can also help to make more effective commissioning decisions. This is because such an approach capitalises upon the expertise and experiences of those who are most closely involved in the change process we want to bring about. As we outline below, participation must be facilitated in a careful, ethical way and schools will have varying capabilities and capacities in relation to this.

6 WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

Commissioning innovative services should be part of a whole school improvement plan. In order to achieve this strategic alignment, commissioning plans and decisions should be overseen, if not made by, senior leadership. Services should be embedded within and communicated across the whole school. This will help to capitalise upon external innovative services within a school to create a wider culture of innovation.

KEY COMMISSIONING STEPS

1 UNDERSTAND

Overview

Any efforts to change, disrupt or improve practice and student outcomes should be underpinned by a deep exploration and understanding of need.

Implementation

- Schools should explore evidence of the extent and ways in which educational inequality is manifested in their context.

- Schools need to draw on a range of quantitative and qualitative data sources to explore barriers to learning to understand why some groups of students are underachieving relative to others.

2 PLAN

Overview

Schools' understanding of need should underpin plans to commission innovative services, which should be part of (or aligned to) the whole school improvement plans.

Implementation

- Schools should consider whether internal and/or external solutions are suitable to address identified needs. Key questions to consider include: capability, capacity and cost.

- External services may be an appropriate strategy in relation to: intractable problems, new problems, re-engagement and mediation, continuing professional development (CPD), and when specialist knowledge and expertise are needed.

- The commissioning plan should include a limited selection of outcomes that the school wants to bring about, which should determine the target audience, timescales, responsibility, budget, evaluation strategy and success criteria for the commission.

- To achieve strategic alignment with overall school improvement plans, senior leaders should oversee all commissioning plans and decisions.

3 FINANCE

Overview

Commissioning innovative services can open up new avenues of funding, be cheaper than alternatives and enable efficiency savings by 'doing more with less' and enable cost avoidance.

Implementation

- Sources of funding for commissioning innovative services include: Pupil Premium; state innovation funds; crowdfunding; charitable grants; trial grants for testing innovative approaches; and the use of social finance.

- Schools should consider which funding model is best suited to achieving their aims; while most schools commission outputs, increasingly schools are commissioning providers to deliver specified outcomes (a 'payment by results' model).

- Schools should seek value for money by negotiating with providers, seeking matched funding, and exploring the possibility of commissioning together with other schools to achieve an economy of scale.

4 PROCURE

Overview

Schools need to go beyond 'word of mouth' to scope options for commissioning external support.

Implementation

- We outline a framework to help schools decide which innovative service to commission: a 'Confidence Framework'. It includes questions on service design, delivery, monitoring, impact and cost effectiveness.

- To help assess confidence in particular innovative services, schools can 'try before they buy', compare a range of options, seek 'user reviews', and involve the target audience in decision-making.

- All contracting should be aligned to UK and EU public procurement policy, including the principles of: value for money, non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, mutual recognition and proportionality.

5 IMPLEMENT

Overview

The role of the commissioner in implementation should be considered from the outset.

Implementation

- Schools should seek to collaborate and engage with providers to work together to define and reach an appropriate target audience, ensuring that services are integrated into timetables appropriately.

- Schools should balance the need to implement a service in a way which is faithful to its core design whilst tailoring and adapting its 'surface features' to a particular school context.

- Schools should implement fewer longer-term services which have sufficient time to build relationships and improve outcomes.

6 REVIEW

Overview

Innovative services must be robustly evaluated to assess impact, to identify areas for improvement, to understand student needs, to hold providers to account and ultimately to shape further decision-making. This is especially important with early stage innovative services for which there may be limited evidence of impact.

Implementation

- Schools and providers should work closely together to evaluate innovative services, especially through data sharing. Evaluation planning should begin early in the commissioning process, and be agreed as part of the contract.

- Schools should consider the options of external, school-led or venture-led evaluation and aim for the most robust approach to evaluation which is proportionate to the size and importance of the commission.

- In situations of limited resources, schools can encourage providers to lead much of the evaluation work, limiting the burden on the school itself, with oversight provided by senior leadership.

- Insights provided by evaluation should help schools to consider future commissioning decisions.

3 THE CASE FOR COMMISSIONING INNOVATIVE SERVICES

Educational inequality is a significant and intractable problem in the UK education system.[8] In particular, income, geography and ethnicity are all key factors which are related to a child's educational performance and these trends can be observed over time. For example, we know that the link between low socioeconomic background and poor educational attainment in the UK is among the strongest observed in any developed country, across all levels of education from primary school to higher education.[9] Educational performance also varies significantly across different ethnic groups and this is a significant factor in performance by the age of eleven, independent of socioeconomic background[10] and the geographic area a child lives in has also become more strongly correlated with their performance at the age of 11.[11]

Against the backdrop of **persistent educational inequalities**, and a policy context of **increasing school autonomy**[12] (which allows schools to make more independent decisions about how they spend their resources) and **real-term funding cuts**[13], it is more important than ever that we are, amongst other approaches, developing innovative thinking and practice, to address these challenges.

The value of innovative services

Research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) suggests that countries with greater levels of innovation in the education system demonstrate improvements in certain educational outcomes, including more equitable learning outcomes across ability, higher mathematics performance at age 14, and more satisfied teaching staff.[14] Innovation is also highlighted by the UN's Education Commission as a key mechanism for challenging educational inequality.[15]

Our research also finds that engaging with innovative external services can help schools in their mission to tackle educational inequality. We have detailed below some of the ways in which this can happen:

- **Improved and more equitable outcomes**. Innovation in education is associated with improvements in certain educational outcomes, including more equitable learning outcomes and more satisfied teachers.[16]

- **An outside perspective and fresh thinking**. As in any organisation, embedded practices, norms and culture can be a barrier to change. Bringing innovators into a school can help to provide an alternative perspective and new ideas. This can help to create a more outward looking, engaged and innovative school culture.

- **Specialist expertise**. Schools cannot be specialists in everything. Bringing in external support and services provides the opportunity to engage with professionals and organisations which specialise in a range of areas, such as: continuing professional development; subject specialists (especially for primary schools); and social, emotional, psychological and behavioural specialists.

- **The opportunity to do more, with less**. As resources per pupil dwindle, if schools want to achieve the same or better outcomes, they cannot afford to do what they have always done. To an extent, engaging external services can enable schools to effectively share resources with other schools, especially if schools commission jointly.

- **To solve new problems**. As well as facing long-lasting entrenched problems such as educational inequality, the challenges faced by schools are ever changing and evolving. For instance, the issues of cyber-bullying and 'sexting' require new and innovative solutions to ensure that young people use technology in healthy and safe ways.

- **To take advantage of new opportunities**. The opportunities available to schools and students are also emerging and changing, such as increased understanding of 'what works' to improve student progress or the increasing availability and variety of technological tools and applications for learning. Innovative services can help schools to take advantage of these opportunities.

- **To unlock new and alternative sources of funding**. It is increasingly likely that schools will want to look for alternative sources of funding to complement or replace dwindling state resources; commissioning innovative services can be an avenue for gaining access to such funding.

- **To offer children, young people, parents/carers, governors and teachers a dynamic and exciting education offer**. Offering a dynamic and innovative range of opportunities for students and parents/carers, as well as to governors and teachers, is likely to help you to appeal to prospective students and teachers. It can also help to develop their capability for developing new ideas to social problems.

As a result of our experience and findings, we identified the need for guidance that focuses on how schools can engage and commission innovative external services. This can have a significant impact on the extent to which those services can bring about positive change. Our guidance for this process is outlined in section 4.

The value of commissioning

Commissioning is about 'the most effective and efficient way of using all the available resources to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families'.[17] Purchasing and procurement is a key part of commissioning but it is only one element. It is also about understanding need, opportunities and assets; improvement planning; identifying the best solution to address the need; and implementing and reviewing the extent to which that solution has addressed the need and indeed if the need remains the same or has changed.[18] As such, commissioning can best be understood as a process or cycle, as we will go on to explore in this guide.

Drawing on practices and processes developed in other public sector settings, such as health and social care,[19] we suggest that schools can more effectively tackle educational inequality by adopting more systematic and strategic commissioning practices. Effective commissioning effectively provides an opportunity for schools to work with innovative organisations to improve outcomes and tackle educational inequality.[20]

Many schools across the country are already working with innovative services to improve outcomes for their students. However, our research suggests that this is happening with varying degrees of success. As one interviewee told us: *'it is a little bit of a 'wild west' when it comes to commissioning because of the lack of an institutional process'.* This is unsurprising given the lack of guidance and support that exists to help schools to do this effectively. Figure 2 summarises some of the key observations of current commissioning practice in comparison with our recommendations for effective commissioning. Current practice of school commissioning in Figure 2 is based on some cases and is of course not representative of all schools.
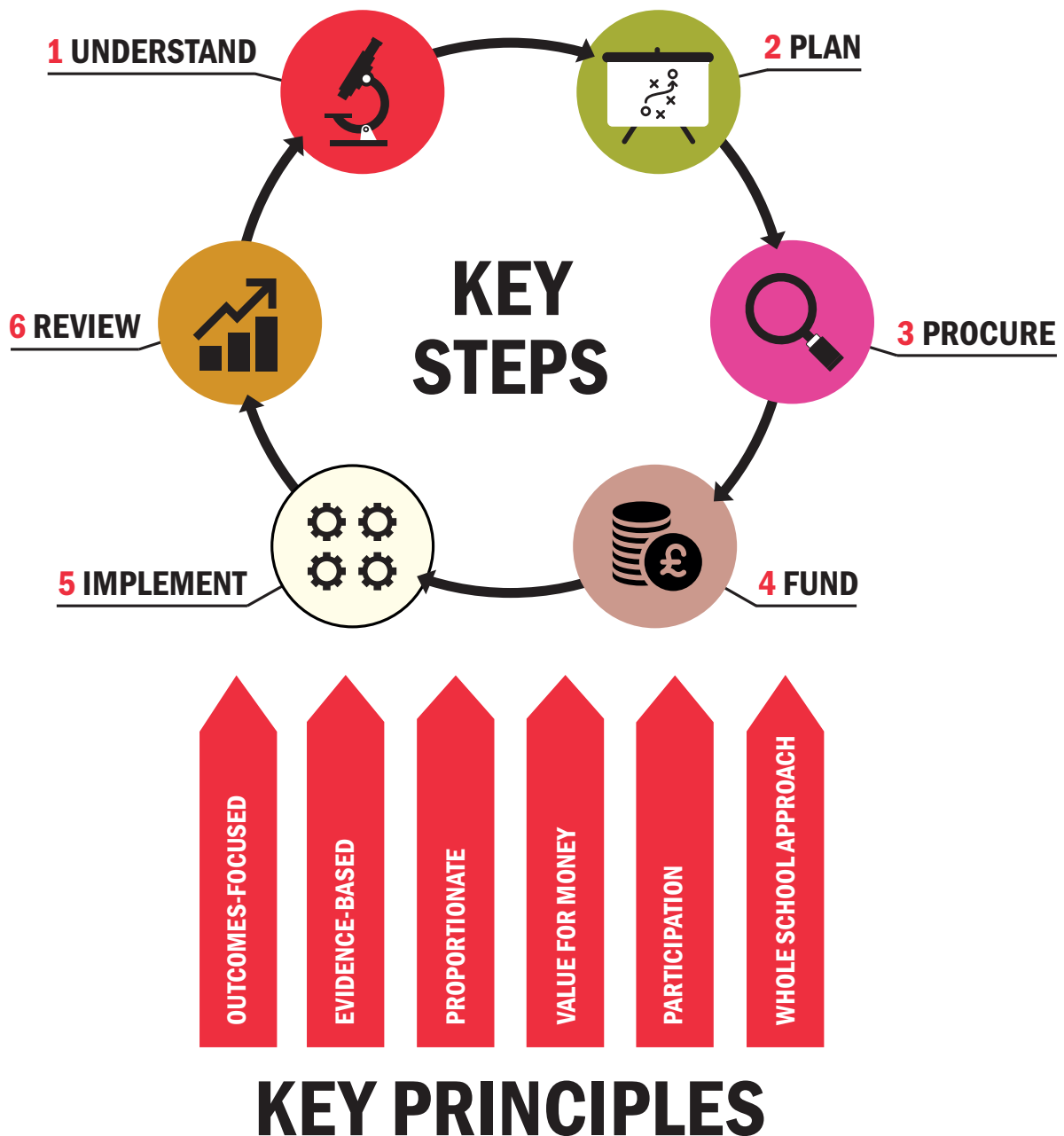
Figure 2: Comparison of current commissioning practice with the approach put forward in this guide

Step in the commissioning process	Current practice	Aspiration
Overall	• Lack of clear process or system • Ad hoc and responsive • Fragmented – schools don't know where to look and ventures don't know where to sell • Geographically diverse practice • Ofsted-focused	• Clear process and system of commissioning • Consistent, proactive and timely • Commitment to effective commissioning of services across the country
Understand	• Often not central to commissioning decisions • Often not based on evidence • Not regularly reviewed	• Understanding of need as foundation of commissioning strategy • Based on rounded evidence base • Regularly reviewed
Plan	• Lack of strategy • Responsive and incident led • Activity or output, rather than outcome, driven • Not aligned to school improvement plan	• Outcome focused • Proactive • Timely • Part of or aligned to whole school improvement plan
Procure	• Services identified through word of mouth or marketing • Decision to commission based on instinct rather than research or structured analysis • Commissioning decisions made at various levels of seniority	• Potential services are scoped and compared • Key criteria for selecting a suitable service are used to come to a judgement • Final commissioning decisions are made by senior leadership
Fund	• Only core and Pupil Premium funding used (if at all) • Schools commissioning services individually • Lack of cost-benefit analysis	• A range of funding sources are used, including innovation funds, trial grants, crowdsourcing, social finance etc. • Schools commission in groups to achieve cost efficiencies • Alternative funding models used where appropriate, such as payment by results • Cost benefit analysis conducted
Implement	• Schools do not collaborate with external providers to implement services • Existing programmes are not replicated faithfully to their design • Insufficient attention to target audience • 'Hot potato' services which are short-term, one-off and ad hoc • Services which are brought in on a whim and then continue to be delivered in a school	• Schools and providers collaborate to implement services • Existing services are faithfully implemented with surface level adaption for context • Appropriate target audience is defined and reached • Long-term commitment to embed services
Review	• Lack of monitoring and evaluation so services are not sufficiently held to account • Automatic renewal of service contract without reviewing success or impact • Evaluation based on anecdotes rather than evidence	• Rigorous, routine monitoring and evaluation to assess impact, hold services to account and help them to improve • Evidence is shared widely and used to underpin decision making and future planning

4 HOW TO COMMISSION TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

This section of the guide outlines the key steps and principles for effectively commissioning innovative projects, services and programmes, as summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3: The Young Academy commissioning process and key principles

KEY STEPS

1 UNDERSTAND
2 PLAN
3 PROCURE
4 FUND
5 IMPLEMENT
6 REVIEW

KEY PRINCIPLES

OUTCOMES-FOCUSED

EVIDENCE-BASED

PROPORTIONATE

VALUE FOR MONEY

PARTICIPATION

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

"It starts with a really deep understanding of need".
(Education innovation expert)

Commissioning innovative services needs to **begin with a clear and evidence-based understanding of the specific need or issue you are seeking to address**. Evidence shows that schools which most effectively tackle educational inequality, do so through an evidence-based understanding of which pupils are underachieving and why, and they use this knowledge to plan support and intervention strategies accordingly. [21] [22]

An understanding of 'the gap' as it exists in your school context, can be used as the basis of any commissioning decisions. We found this approach generates more positive outcomes than just basing decisions on the novelty or appeal of particular services. Trying to second-guess the solution before having clearly defined risks missing underlying issues or contributing factors.

Identifying the 'gap'

There are a range of sources that can be used to develop this evidence-based understanding of need or 'the gap' as it manifests in your school, some of which schools will already be using.[23]

These may include:

- Internal school attainment, achievement, behaviour and attendance data, and any SIMS (School Information Management System) software used.

- Analysing School Performance (formerly RAISEonline) – A DfE-provided platform which allows access to detailed performance data and analysis.

- The Families of Schools Tool - This database of over 17,000 schools provided by Education Endowment Foundation, allows you to see:

  ○ Recent school performance data;

  ○ School attainment relative to other similar schools;

  ○ The value added by each school (for PP and non-PP pupils) relative to other similar schools;

  ○ Predicted attainment of PP and non-PP pupils.

These tools can help identify specific forms of educational inequality within each school context.

Exploring barriers to learning

As well as identifying where educational inequality exists in schools, it is also important to begin analysing why this might be happening by identifying barriers to learning, as this helps you to identify underlying causes of educational inequality.

The table below presents a non-exhaustive range of possible barriers to learning, including internal/school barriers, internal-external barriers and external barriers.

Figure 4: Possible barriers to learning

Possible internal barriers	Internal/external barriers	Possible external barriers
• Inadequate teaching. • Inadequate subject leadership. • Inadequate pastoral support. • Culture of peer-to-peer bullying. • Low expectations. • Lack of behaviour management.	• Poor attendance. • Poor behaviour. • Lack of relationship between school and home.	• Home environment is not suitable for learning. • Parents are not supporting learning. • Episodes of going missing. • Substance misuse. • Mental health problems.

Using the data sources highlighted above to identify where underachievement is pronounced can help with understanding where the barriers to learning may exist in. Other, more qualitative, data sources can help to strengthen these insights and to explore why some students are systematically underperforming relative to other students.

The sources of information you might draw on will depend on the nature of the problem and whether it relates to an individual pupil, a year group or a particular demographic. However, examples of the range of evidence that you might draw on to identify the need and the trigger factors or barriers to learning are:

- **Teacher observations** as evidence of the performance of particular teachers and teams of teachers;

- **Student voice** such as student surveys, student interviews, student focus groups, and student council. See case study 3 on Smart Schools Council for an example of an innovative model which facilitates this.

- **Parent voice** such as parent surveys, parent interviews, parent focus groups and parent governors.

- **Ofsted reports** as these draw on a range of data sources, including performance data, teacher observations and student/parent voice.

- **Local and national research** related to key factors enabling/inhibiting progress among particular groups of students or in particular subjects.[24]

- **Teacher knowledge of pupils** as an invaluable source of information about why individuals and groups of pupils may be underperforming.

Interviewees suggested that talking with members of the wider school community can help to gain a deeper understanding of the need and test whether there is agreement with the assessment of the problem and its possible causes. We found that it is also important to assess and reassess this on a continual basis as part of the commissioning cycle, to link it to the 'Review' stage, and to be prepared to change your approach if you identify that your needs have changed. External consultants can be commissioned to carry out an audit or review which will help identify and develop needs and priorities.

Testing these insights again with colleagues, teachers, students and parents will help ensure that any approach is rooted in the experiences of those most closely involved in the teaching and learning process.

Commissioning principle 1: Evidence-based decision making

The collection, consideration and use of evidence in decision-making and planning should play a key role throughout the commissioning process. As we explain in this guide, evidence should play a role in:

- Understanding need and identifying intended outcomes

- Deciding which service is most likely to affect those outcomes and should therefore be commissioned

- Assessing how much a service should be paid and whether it offers value for money

- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of a service, how it can be improved, and whether it should be re-commissioned

The use of evidence by schools to aid decision-making is not always easy or straightforward.[25] Key organisations exist to support schools to do this, most notably the Education Endowment Foundation.

An evidence-based understanding of need and barriers to learning should serve as a foundation for any plans to change, disrupt or improve practice and outcomes.

Plans to address identified needs and remove barriers to learning should be part of, or consistent with, **School Improvement Plans**. Schools are encouraged to document all improvement plans within one overarching improvement plan to ensure strategic alignment across improvement activity.[26]

Experts such as the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) have highlighted that a whole school approach is key to raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.[27] As such it is important that efforts to address need or to commission innovative services do not sit outside of this overarching strategy, but are instead embedded within it. This means that commissioning processes would benefit from being part of an overarching self-evaluation and improvement planning cycle within the annual school calendar. In addition, in order to achieve this strategic alignment, commissioning plans and decisions should be overseen if not made by senior leadership.

Internal and/or external solutions

The best strategy for addressing a particular need may not necessarily be innovative or externally provided; many needs will be best met through internal initiatives. Refining what is already being done is often a more appropriate approach than changing practice altogether. However, in order to ascertain whether to address an issue internally or to commission an external service, we found that the following considerations are important:

- **Capacity**: Do we have the capacity, in terms of staff time, to address this issue internally?

- **Capability**: Do we have the skills and ideas needed to address this issue internally?

- **Cost**: Is it cheaper and more efficient to develop an initiative internally or to bring in an external service?

Innovative external services may be a particularly appropriate strategy to addressing student needs in relation to:

- **Intractable problems.** Where a school has already attempted to address student needs or barriers to learning and these attempts have been unsuccessful, new and fresh thinking and solutions may be necessary.

- **New problems.** Where entirely new needs or issues emerge, such as cyber-bullying and 'sexting', new solutions provided by professionals who have experience and understanding of the problem, are likely to be necessary.

- **Re-engagement and mediation.** Where the relationship between a student or a family and the school has deteriorated, an external professional or organisation can help to intervene, mediate and reengage. As a former teacher, now an education researcher, told us:

  "If you have a young person who is disengaged from school, an external project may be easier to engage with. They are seen as separate from teachers."

- **Continuing professional development (CPD).** In order to up-skill and develop the whole staff body, external and 'new perspectives' are necessary to 'challenge existing practice'.[28]

- **Specialist knowledge or expertise.** Where issues have been identified which are affecting student outcomes but which are outside of the school's expertise external initiatives may be necessary. For example, social, emotional and pastoral issues, such as child sexual exploitation, substance misuse, or gender inequality, are likely to require specialist intervention.

In most cases, as we outline in the section on implementation, it is likely that a combination of internal and external efforts will be needed to address the identified need and achieve the intended outcomes. Ultimately, as the evidence suggests, the commissioning of external services should only ever be to complement, rather than compensate for, internal school efforts to improve teaching and learning and address educational inequality.[29] [30]

Commissioning plan

In order to set out a commissioning plan, our research found that it is important to agree the following (in line with your school improvement plan):

Aspect of plan	Related questions
Intended outcomes	What is it that you want an innovative service to achieve or result in? This should be based on the need or learning barrier you have identified and should underpin all strategy and decision-making. Intended outcomes should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and it is important to prioritise fewer outcomes that you can realistically achieve, rather than seeking to achieve a multitude of outcomes. The difference between outcomes and outputs is outlined in the glossary in Appendix 3.
Target audience	Who should the innovative project work with and focus on to ensure that these intended outcomes are achieved? How would this intervention sit alongside other activities and interventions that these students are involved in? (see more guidance on this in the Implement section).
Timescale	When should the innovative project begin work in your school and how long would they need to achieve the intended outcomes? Will the service fit in with student and/or teacher timetables?
Budget, cost, resource	What is your budget for achieving these outcomes (in terms of monetary resources as well as staff time)? (see more guidance on this in the Fund section).

This will help determine which kind of innovative service should be commissioned. The following factors are also important to consider in the commissioning plan once a suitable service has been identified and procured:

Responsibility	Who should have responsibility for overseeing the project internally? Who is best placed to enable the project to achieve its intended outcomes?
Evaluation strategy and success criteria	How will we know if the intended outcomes have been achieved by the project and how are we going to find this out? (See more guidance on this in the Review section).

A template commissioning plan can be seen in Appendix 1. The importance of a plan for change is also highlighted in the Education Endowment Foundation's Implementation Guide for schools.[31]

Commissioning principle 2: Focus on outcomes

A focus on outcomes should underpin every step in the commissioning process, from exploring need to defining intended outcomes, to monitoring impact, as will be outlined in the remainder of this guide. Outcomes should be formulated in line with the overall goal or aim of a school, such as tackling educational inequality or raising standards for all.

An outcomes-focused approach to commissioning has gained traction in recent years and is consistent with current commissioning guidance from other sectors including the NHS[32] and social care sector[33]. Various clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) have adopted this approach successfully and offer good examples to the education world.[34] For example, the South Nottinghamshire CCG produced a comprehensive strategy for an outcomes based approach to care commissioning.[35] There have also been benefits observed in both cost and quality of care in Oldham, where the CCG has implemented an outcomes based approach.[36] Similarly, customer satisfaction with care was seen to improve under an outcomes based commissioning scheme in Wiltshire.[37]

"We also know that schools that are most effective in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils always use evidence about what makes a real difference."[38]
(Headteacher)

Once a school has decided to commission an external provider to address needs and achieve particular outcomes, there are several ways in which a school might go about procuring a suitable service. This section outlines some best practice principles which we have identified from our research, for effectively procuring innovative products, services or interventions in a way which is likely to realise the intended outcomes. As in the rest of this guide, we focus on how schools can best procure existing innovative services, rather than inviting new models and services to be designed.

Scoping the options

By investigating what provision exists and weighing up the options, schools can ensure that they identify the optimum solution.

Our research suggests that schools often do this by asking teaching colleagues and senior leaders in local and other schools for their recommendations. This **'word of mouth' approach** can be helpful in gaining a sense of available options and providing testimonials of successful interventions. The Families of Schools Tool offered by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) can help you connect with **schools facing similar challenges**. As one expert pointed out, *"it can be helpful to realise that schools in [other areas] might face some of the same challenges"* as your school.

However, as highlighted in the Inclusive Classrooms case study below, it is important to go **beyond 'word of mouth'** to scope options for external support to identify the best possible solution. There are organisations which provide a directory of services and can support you in assessing which are most relevant for you, as outlined in Figure 5. Headteachers are not necessarily experts in the service area being sought; seeking expertise from elsewhere is therefore important.

Figure 5: Search platforms for services and solutions

Platform	Description
Edukit	An online platform which offers online and analytical tools to help schools raise student attainment by making it easy to find appropriate support for students and to track the results, whether academic or behavioural.
Innovate my School	A website and online community which showcases, through a range of platforms, the 'best in education innovation' by teachers and industry experts from around the world.
Good CPD Guide	An online database and marketplace of school and college professional development services. Services can be filtered across a range of criteria, including target audience, evidence base and subject.
HundrEd	A website which documents and shares 100 of the more inspiring innovations in education from across the world.

CASE STUDY 1 - INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Inclusive Classrooms works with primary schools across England to transform the efficacy of their teaching assistants (TAs). It was founded by Dr Helen Saddler, a qualified primary school teacher who recognised the need for greater continued professional development (CPD) for teaching assistants and developed a practical programme based on her own academic research into the role of TAs. The programme provides on-the-job training to TAs, in particular equipping them to support children with special education needs (SEN).

From her experience of the commissioning process, Helen suggests that schools could benefit from broadening their approach to finding external services and relying less heavily on word-of-mouth recommendations from other head teachers. She thinks that procuring an external service or intervention should involve research into the best options for a particular school and its context. For example, good organisations should be able to provide testimonials which demonstrate their value in a range of school contexts and different geographical areas. Helen suggests that:

"Don't just settle for the stuff that's in your face a lot or the "big money programmes". Do your research. Make sure it meets the needs of your students."

Weighing up the options

When choosing an external intervention to commission, the selection may seem overwhelming. Schools often receive marketing or promotional material speculatively from a range of ventures and it can be hard to choose between them.

Here we outline key criteria and questions which could inform discussions with organisations and aid decision-making at this crucial point in the commissioning process.

These criteria are adapted from the Confidence Framework, which was co-developed by The Young Foundation as part of the Realising Ambition programme[39], to provide clarity about what enables successful replication[40] of children and youth services.[41] A checklist of questions based on these considerations can be found in Appendix 1.

Figure 6: Key considerations for assessing the suitability of external services

Key element	Questions to help you weigh up your options
Design A tightly designed service	• Does the service have a strong and logical theory of change in place? • Are the key components and activities of the service well defined? • Is the design of the intervention suitable to our school context?
Delivery Effective delivery to those that need it	• Does the service have a clear target audience which is aligned with mine? • Does the service have realistic delivery targets? • Do I have confidence that it can be delivered effectively? • Do I have confidence in the delivery staff, e.g. are they motivated and well qualified?
Monitoring Delivery and impact are monitored	• Does the service routinely and robustly monitor its delivery? • Does the service routinely monitor its outcomes? • Does the service use evidence to improve delivery and outcomes?
Impact The intervention is likely to achieve my intended outcomes	• Does the service routinely and robustly monitor its delivery? • Are the intended outcomes of the service aligned with the outcomes that I want to affect? • Can the service provide evidence of their impact? • If not, which may be the case with highly innovative and early stage services, is there evidence from elsewhere that this type of intervention is likely to be effective (e.g. from EEF) and/or is it aligned with best practice and guidance? [42] • What, if any, is the risk that impact won't be achieved and is this tolerable?
Cost effective The intervention is likely to be cost effective	• Are the costs of the service fully understood and clear, including 'on costs'? • Do we have sufficient resources to support this service effectively? • Are the benefits of the service likely to outweigh the costs and does it offer value for money? • Can the service provide evidence of its cost benefit?

Commissioning principle 3: Value for money

All public procurement should seek to achieve value for money or cost effectiveness.[43] The HM Treasury defines value for money not in terms of 'the choice of goods or services based on the lowest cost bid' but rather takes into account the 'wider social and environmental costs' and benefits of service provision.[44] This is an important principle for effective commissioning, considering the broader social dimensions as well as the monetary cost of commissioning services.

One extension of this definition of value is the Public Services (Social Value Act) introduced by the coalition government in 2012. This requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.[45] The act has been used to great effect by local authorities and councils as a framework for their commissioning decisions. For example, Liverpool CCG has prioritised and embedded social value throughout its commissioning cycle, which defines social value as 'increasing the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people we serve'.[46] Within this, Liverpool CCG has identified ways to reduce health inequalities through concentrating on the social rather than just monetary value of services it commissions.

In the context of potentially reduced funding for schools, the need for external services to clearly demonstrate their value for money is greater. It is therefore important that they are able to articulate this in a way which includes social factors as well as economic costs, so that schools are supported to make effective commissioning decisions.

Some of the questions in Figure 6 will have straightforward answers, others will require more consideration and analysis. Here are some suggestions we found in our research, for helping schools to answer these questions and weigh up the options:

- **'Try before you buy'.** Many interventions offer 'try before you buy' schemes or free taster sessions which schools can take advantage of to help shape the decision-making process.

- **Compare different interventions.** For all commissions except very small ones, it is worth identifying and comparing several organisations which offer to achieve similar outcomes, for example through a competitive tendering process, even if they have very different approaches to doing so.

- **Seek and consider 'user reviews'.** If using a platform such as Edukit or Teacher Development Trust, one can read reviews of other schools or organisations which have commissioned a particular service, or simply ask for references.

- **Involve the target audience.** The people that a service works with will often have the best sense of whether it is likely to be effective. This can also help to secure their 'buy in'. As outlined in the box below and in case study 2 on Smart Schools Council, it is also important to ensure that those involved are representative of the wider school community.

Commissioning principle 4: Participation

There are a number of reasons why it is important to enable students, teachers, families and other relevant stakeholders to participate in the commissioning process. It offers a more democratic approach to service delivery, but it can also help to make more effective commissioning decisions because it capitalises on the expertise and experiences of those who are most closely involved in the change process we want to bring about, as emphasised by the New Economics Foundation in their commissioning guide for local authorities.[47] As one Headteacher told us:

"It is so important [students] are involved and empowered in decision-making. They need to feel that they are heard and this actively makes a difference."

There are a range of degrees of participation, from informing to sharing decision-making. Not all schools will be in a position to instigate shared decision-making and it will not always be appropriate or possible. However, schools should consider how they can meaningfully enable participation in commissioning beyond senior leaders wherever possible.

Key considerations to ensure that participation in commissioning is ethical and meaningful, include ensuring that:

- the full range of relevant stakeholders are involved, not just the most able or enthusiastic;

- participants have the knowledge and skills they need to participate;

- the nature and outcomes of participation are transparent. For example, avoid promising shared decision-making, if it is actually consultation that you are practicing.

Facilitating the participation of children and young people in commissioning requires specific and distinct strategies compared with participatory commissioning with adults. Such considerations are outlined in further detail in this guide.

CASE STUDY 2: SMART SCHOOLS COUNCILS

Throughout the commissioning process, from defining the need to selecting a solution, it is important to find ways to involve the whole school community. Facilitating a participatory decision-making or consultation process is not always easy, but is invaluable if the intervention is going to achieve 'buy in', be effective and deliver long-term impact.

One example of how this *can* be done is through Smart School Councils, an innovative model of delivering school councils which involves the whole school in a democratic process. The charity was established in 2014 by Greg Sanderson and Asher Jacobsberg, with the aim of **helping young people become active democratic citizens**. The programme offers year-long online subscriptions to 360 member schools across the globe, with the option of an additional training programme for teachers.

The model of Smart School Councils responds to a question that many teachers ask but are often unsure how to answer: how can school councils be more inclusive? 95% of schools have a school council, but many do not operate as inclusively as possible. Ofsted guidelines require every pupil to regularly experience democracy and participate in it, which is not always delivered by the traditional school council model. Smart School Councils offers a **low-cost resource with the potential to change the way things are done** more broadly within a school. The model is an example of a service which **delivers systematic change** for the whole school community. As Greg told us:

"Rather than going in for a term and them leaving again, we help schools think about changes to their whole approach to something and give them the skills to actively improve their school themselves. If you want to change something big, help people to change it themselves."

Smart Schools Council is an innovation in its own right, which can be used to facilitate democratic and participatory school culture and practice, including in relation to commissioning practice and decision making.

Fair and transparent contracting

Many of the contracts of innovative services, programmes and projects that this guide refers to are likely to fall below the thresholds at which EU Public Procurement Directives apply. These directives set out procedures which must be followed by public sector organisations awarding contracts to suppliers when the contract value exceeds set thresholds.[48]

Nevertheless, it is important for schools to align their procurement process with UK and EU policy and principles which have been to developed to ensure effective, fair and just procurement processes. These principles include:[49]

- Value for money
- Non-discrimination
- Equal treatment
- Transparency
- Mutual recognition
- Proportionality

Commissioning principle 5: Proportionality

The level of time and resource that is invested in the commissioning process should be proportionate to the size and value (in terms of cost and likely impact) of the innovation being commissioned.

For example, if a school is commissioning a one-off workshop to train teachers on a how to use interactive white boards, it is unlikely to be necessary to complete a full needs assessment, commissioning plan, options analysis, and monitoring and evaluation process.

However, our research suggests that meaningful change in outcomes will usually require medium-long term interventions, the size and value of which is likely to warrant engagement with each of the key steps outlined in this guide.

"Now more than ever, schools need to get the best outcome for every investment of resource. That's why you should be looking to innovate."
(Service provider)

Given the current education funding climate schools are rightly concerned about expenditure, especially on anything which is seen to be 'non-essential'. However, while innovative services are clearly not always necessary or financially possible, there are instances in which commissioning innovative projects can:

- Open up new avenues of funding;

- Be cheaper than providing a service or initiative internally;

- Enable efficiency savings by 'doing more with less' and enabling cost avoidance.

This section outlines how innovative projects can be effectively and creatively funded to help schools achieve more or better outcomes with less. It draws on findings from our research as well as Young Academy ventures' experiences of being funded.

Sources of funding

Pupil premium

Pupil Premium (PP) funding[50], totalling around £2.5 billion per year, is a key source of funding that schools can and do use to fund innovative projects to tackle educational inequality.[51] PP is currently additional to per pupil core funding, and is focused on addressing educational inequality. As such, it is an ideal source of funding for investing in new and socially innovative approaches.

Schools are now expected to produce a pupil premium strategy, justifying why and how they intend to spend their pupil premium, and the principles for commissioning in this guide are aligned with best practice in spending pupil premium, for example the principle of regular review.[52]

State innovation funds

There are also specific public funds available for the commissioning of innovation. For example, The Teaching, Learning and Innovation Fund (worth £75 million) focuses on stimulating the supply and demand of innovative CPD, while the Strategic School Improvement Fund (worth £150 million) focuses on raising the performance

of underperforming schools or schools at risk of underperforming.[53] Each fund has an application window cycle.

Charitable grants are available from the National Lottery and grant making trusts and foundations. Grants4Schools is a useful website providing up-to-date information on currently available grants, how and when to apply, and how to write a successful grant application.

Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is a way of raising finance by asking a large number of people each for a small amount of money. This is a fundraising strategy which schools are increasingly turning to. Key platforms which schools can use include:

- **Rocket Fund** is a platform which enables schools to crowd fund up to £1500 to purchase technological innovations and to access corporate match funding. Around 30 schools have received funding through this platform already.

- There are a range of **generic crowdfunding platforms** that schools can use such as: crowdfunder, chuffed, Just Giving and leetchi.

Trial grants

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) offers funding to schools to test the impact of high-potential projects aiming to raise the attainment of children and young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Grants are given to collectives of four or more schools, but larger groups of schools trialling an initiative are favoured and grants of between £90,000 and £1.5 million are awarded.

Such funding is highly dependent on schools being willing to participate in a robust and independent evaluation of the intervention. It is particularly suitable for funding innovative projects and initiatives because it is precisely these novel approaches which need to develop an evidence base for impact (as explored further further in the Review section).

Social finance

Social finance or investment is the use of repayable finance to help an organisation achieve a social purpose. In our 2013 report Social Investment in Education we found that there was real scope for increasing the role of social finance in education. Since then there has been a significant increase in social investment in education ventures, with Young Academy ventures alone receiving £4.5 million social finance

investment, of which £500,000 was from the Young Academy investment fund.[55] Schools can help providers to secure social finance to cover some or all of the cost of provision by committing to implementation in their context.[56]

Models of financing external services

Buying activities or outputs

The vast majority of schools finance external innovative services by contracting activities or outputs. For example, they pay organisations or consultants to provide a certain number or quantity of workshops, assemblies, mentoring sessions or resources. The advantage of this approach is that the deliverable is clear, well understood and easily measured or accounted for. The disadvantage of this approach is that the contractual arrangement is not focused on the outcomes that are being sought and the funding is granted regardless of whether the intended outcomes are achieved. For this reason, some schools and innovative projects have begun to use outcomes-based financing and contractual models, such as payment-by-results (PbR).

Payment-by-results

Payment-by-results contracting and financing is where payment to a provider is contingent on the evidenced achievement of intended results or outcomes.

Now, it is widely practiced in the NHS and increasingly being used by schools to contract innovative services and products. For example, Think For The Future, a Young Academy venture, sells its mentoring services through a PbR model to over 60% of the schools it works with (see case study 3 on Think for the Future below).

There are different ways of devising a PbR agreement but the key features are that:

- **The service provider and school agree the results or outcomes that they want to achieve and the price to be paid for certain outcomes.** These usually need to be 'hard' (i.e. easily measurable) outcomes, such as attainment, attendance, suspension or exclusion, although it is possible to include 'soft' outcomes (such as wellbeing, confidence, self-esteem etc.) if robust and validated impact tools are used.

- **The school works with the venture to monitor and evaluate outcomes.** This requires ongoing and consistent data collection, often using the existing school data collection systems.

- **The school pays the service provider for the outcomes which have been achieved and evidenced.**

Key advantages of this approach are that schools can pay for what matters – the results or outcomes – rather than the means of achieving them. In addition, a higher level of the risk (of ineffective provision) is transferred from the school to the provider.[57] However, there are also potential disadvantages of this approach, including:

- The contracting of hard and measurable outcomes, at the possible expense of more subjective 'soft' outcomes.

- Some providers may be encouraged to 'cherry pick' students for whom they feel they can more easily improve outcomes.

- Possible disagreement about the extent to which intended outcomes have been achieved, especially if intended outcomes are not easily measurable.

- The level of risk involved for service providers can be prohibitive for some.

Cost benefits

It is possible for schools to innovate to save, and to justify funding innovative projects on this basis.

As well as being undesirable in their own right from an ethical and social perspective, poor student outcomes can cost schools (and society more broadly) a huge amount of money. Preventing or avoiding such poor outcomes can therefore help to protect school budgets. For example, schools can currently be charged around £4,000 for covering the alternative education costs of an excluded pupil and the total cost of an exclusion to the education system is around £20,000.[58] A persistent truant can cost the education system in the region of £1,200.[59] In comparison with the cost of, for example, Think For the Future's mentoring programme of around £90 per pupil per year, schools potentially stand to avoid significant costs by investing in preventative innovative projects. In addition, with funding models such as payment-by-results the school only pays for the service if the outcome (or cost avoidance) has been achieved, so there is minimal financial risk.

Before commissioning services schools should ask providers for evidence of their 'cost-benefit' and schools should seek to explore the cost benefit of projects that they commission, possibly themselves or by asking the project itself to do this analysis (as explored further in the Review section).

Commissioning efficiently

There are various ways in which schools can ensure that their approach to funding innovative services is as efficient as possible.

First, schools should always **negotiate with providers** to secure the best possible price. Early stage services are often keen to trial and evaluate their model in a school, to develop a track record, and significant discounts can be secured by offering such services an opportunity to operate. A disadvantage is that such projects are likely to have less evidence of impact to begin with.

Second, innovative projects may be able to **attract other funding** to support the delivery of their project in particular schools or for particular pupils, for example by securing philanthropic donations to match school contributions. Always ask if this is a possibility. For example, Talent-Ed, a service which provides young people from low income

backgrounds with year-long programme of weekly small group sessions led by qualified teachers, are contracted by schools but they also receive grants from charitable foundations that subsidise the costs of providing their service in certain schools or locations.

Third, schools can often purchase innovative products and services more cheaply if they innovate in **chains or clusters to achieve an economy of scale**. This can happen through Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) commissioning services on behalf of multiple schools at once, or through independent schools (most likely in a particular area) coming together to purchase a product or service. Many of the funding streams available for external services (such as the EEF trial grants and government innovation funds) specifically look for groups of schools to fund. As well as helping to achieve an economy of scale, commissioning in groups can enable more robust evaluation and impact measurement to take place.[60]

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CASE STUDY 3: THINK FOR THE FUTURE

Think For The Future is a social enterprise based in the East Midlands which delivers a range of innovative programmes aimed at young people at the risk of exclusion. It is delivered by trainers with lived experience of being at risk of exclusion from school. TFTF was founded by Cherie White and Hannah Rees in 2012 in response to a specific local need for interventions tackling educational inequality. Through mentoring, training and workshops, TFTF aims to **stop young people being defined by their environment** and enable them to pursue more positive outcomes. Specifically, their work has an impact by reducing permanent exclusion, improving behaviour and equipping schools to work with challenging pupils.

Payment by results

TFTF delivers its in-school mentoring programme on a **payment by results** basis in 60% of the schools it works with. Hard outcomes are agreed in advance with each school – for example, specific objectives for increasing attendance, improving attainment or reducing exclusion. Schools commit to covering a portion of the delivery costs up front and schools top up this amount for positive outcomes achieved, particularly prevented exclusions. TFTF suggest that this provides value for money for schools by focusing the contract and funding on the intended outcomes.

Outcomes-focused, evidence-based commissioning

Payment by results can also offer a solution to the tendency towards what Cherie describes as **'hot potato commissioning'** in schools: reactive, ad hoc procurement of external services without consideration for their long-term impact. Setting objectives for the duration of the programme requires schools to think reflectively and strategically about what they are paying for. When schools opt for payment by results, they commit to providing TFTF with regular and comprehensive data relating to the agreed outcomes. This approach can help to encourage teachers to adopt a mind-set which focuses more on impact and evaluation, leading to more evidence-based commissioning.
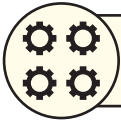
"It is not simply a case of plug and play"
(Service provider)

Schools need to actively and effectively support the implementation of the innovative services they commission, even when they are externally provided, in order to enable them to fulfil their potential impact on student outcomes.

This section outlines key considerations related to implementation and evaluation of projects, including: collaborative implantation; defining and reaching the target audience; balancing the need to implement services 'by the book' (i.e. with fidelity) whilst also adapting them to a particular context; and granting sufficient time for implementation. For a comprehensive guide to implementation, please see the EEF's implementation Guidance Report.[61]

Collaborative implementation

Although the vast majority of the work of implementation of externally provided services should be delivered by the service provider themselves, in order to enable them to achieve their intended outcomes it is often likely that an element of collaborative implementation will be needed. While the school will have the knowledge about the students, staff and school system, the service provider will have the understanding of the project design, delivery methods and staff. Both of these perspectives are vital to the success of most innovative services. A relationship of partnership rather than service delivery is necessary.

Key steps to facilitate this collaboration include:

- Nominate a named member of school staff. Schools need to think carefully about which member of staff should be responsible for supporting implementation within the school. This person needs to have necessary decision-making power, access to information to facilitate the intervention, and they also need to be able to champion the project in the school and engage the target audience in the project. It is therefore likely to a suitable role for an assistant or deputy head, or somebody with time to oversee such projects, such as a Pupil Premium or careers manager. Whoever is responsible for overseeing external service provision, this process will be facilitated if teachers are rewarded for working effectively with projects.

- Communication with service providers. Communication and information sharing channels between the school and the service provider need to be established from the outset and maintained. For example, before an intervention begins, information about the school and project target audience should be shared with the project. During the project if there are any major changes being made to the school strategy or systems, these need to be communicated to the provider.

- Communication with the whole school. Information about the service, especially its aims, activities, operation, and impact should also be communicated with relevant people across the school more broadly. For example, if a new CPD programme is being delivered to teaching assistants, it is likely to be useful to communicate this with teachers so that they can work with teaching assistants to maximise this learning in their lessons.

This collaboration will help to implement and integrate an innovative service in a school context helping to realise the full potential of a project to bring about positive outcomes for students and avoiding pockets of isolated innovation and change. As one expert told us:

"It's not just buy a new solution and you're done – it's about change management as much as coming up with new ideas and buying new interventions."

Time and time again, we have been told that innovative services are most likely to be successful when the school and teachers are engaged with the intervention and help to implement it.

Defining and reaching the target audience

A key aspect of implementation that schools and providers should work collaboratively on together is defining and reaching an appropriate target audience. It is essential that eligible individuals in need are served by an appropriate intervention. This should be based on agreed intended outcomes and in line with the design of the service. In particular, schools will need to decide if the target audience is:

- **Teachers, parents, students, or a combination of all three.** Although student outcomes are the ultimate goal, sometimes interventions (such as the CPD activities or family outreach workers) will need to work with teachers or parents in order to affect student outcomes.

- **The whole school:** Some interventions, such as Smart Schools Council, will need to work with the whole school to bring about change.

- **Targeted groups or individual students.** Many interventions, especially those which are seeking to address educational inequality and therefore the underachievement of certain groups of students, should be targeted at particular groups or individual students. For example, such targeting is often likely to reflect eligibility for Pupil Premium, especially if Pupil Premium is paying for the project. As one educational expert told us:

"Innovation has to be targeted, it shouldn't be for everybody. It needs to be targeted to redress the balance and inequality. Schools and interventions need to know who to target."

Sometimes, however, it is necessary to deliver innovative projects for all students or for whole groups of students, rather than targeting particular students. Ultimately this depends on the intended outcomes and intervention design.

It is therefore important that before an innovative project is implemented the target audience and eligibility criteria are agreed upon. In some cases, a process for assessing eligibility may need to be established. For example, if a project is targeted at boys with low levels of confidence then mechanisms will need to be in place to establish which boys in a school have low levels of confidence (such as using a survey which measures confidence). In addition, these mechanisms can be used to determine when individuals may no longer be eligible to participate in a project (depending on the exit criteria).

Much of this work can be done by the innovative project, especially in terms of assessing eligibility, but schools do need to be involved in agreeing the target audience and cooperating in identification.

One key reason for this is that it is also important that schools look across the range of activities and interventions a student is participating in. As one education innovation expert told us:

"Schools need to think hard themselves about the targeting they're doing so PP pupils don't get bombarded with interventions while other children with less obvious needs don't get anything".

In order to ensure that the right students engage in the right service at the right time, it is important to integrate commissioned services into student and/or teacher timetables. The Fearless Futures case study below also demonstrates the importance of defining the target audience and doing so in a collaborative way.

CASE STUDY 4 – FEARLESS FUTURES

Fearless Futures is a not-for-profit organisation which delivers innovative peer-led leadership development programmes for girls in schools, aiming to **end gender inequality**. It currently works in London and Birmingham, with plans to expand into other parts of the country. It is unique in the way the programme equips girls to deliver workshops to their peers, putting into practice the leadership skills they are developing.

Once they have commissioned an intervention, schools should hold providers accountable for the service they offer. **Engaging with the process and providing the right data quickly** and proactively allows the intervention to be more efficient and **achieve a bigger impact**. Schools and providers should establish accountability to each other so that both get the most out of the programme. Fearless Futures suggested that:

"The programme works best in schools where teachers are more engaged."

Fearless Futures encourage schools to work with them to identify which students would benefit most from the extra support, rather than selecting the same students for every opportunity that arises. Especially with transformative extra-curricular programmes such as Fearless Futures, **greater consideration to the most appropriate individuals can lead to greater impact**. Fearless Futures told us that:

"Schools could think much more carefully about who they select for interventions. Be more thoughtful about which children get what."

Tailoring to context

Most often implementation of innovative projects is actually about replicating projects that have been delivered in other schools or settings in a new school or setting. The replication process itself allows (and often calls for) adaptations, or incremental changes, which are a key source of innovation.

There is much evidence that tightly defined services or projects need to be implemented faithfully – that is 'by the book' and in line with the service design (or theory of change behind the service).[62] Faithful implementation makes it more likely that the intended outcomes of the service will be achieved. To help with this, service providers should have mechanisms in place to support faithful implementation, such as programme manuals and quality assurance procedures.

Schools should ensure that projects have such mechanisms and that they are being utilised.

On the other hand, it is inevitable and also necessary for services to be adapted and tailored to specific contexts, rather than simply being imported wholesale into a new context. The importance of adaptation and tailoring of services can be seen in case study 5 on 1Up below.

In line with best practice from Realising Ambition, we suggest that schools enable services to make necessary adaptations to the *surface*[63] features of projects, but that they ensure that services are implemented in a way which is faithful with the *core*[64] components of the service.[65]

Figure 7: Summary of the distinction between core Vs surface features of a service

Core Vs surface features of an innovative service

Realising Ambition use the example of the smartphone to demonstrate the difference between 'core' and 'surface' features:

'The **core** is formed by a lot of complex electronics in the back that we couldn't change even if we wanted to, and if we did would cause the device to malfunction. The core is what makes it work. The surface is made up of the picture we choose to put on the screen, the settings we tweak and the apps we buy, all of which make the phone personal. The **surface** makes it yours. Approximately 975 million smartphones are sold each year, but if you buy one it will be made yours by all the surface adaptations you make to it'.[66]

We can also apply this distinction to innovative education projects. For example, Fearless Futures' schools work (outlined in more detail in Case Study 4) is based on **core** elements of peer-to-peer education, exploring intersectional inequality, and experiential learning. These aspects of the programme should not be changed because they are integral to its theory of change and effectiveness. However, other **surface** aspects of the programme are changed according to school context to ensure that it appeals to and is suitable for particular young people in a particular setting. For example, the language and activities used may be adapted depending on the age of the students participating.

CASE STUDY 5 - 1UP

1Up is a London-based social enterprise which creates and implements bespoke programmes to bridge the gaps between young people, business and local communities. Rather than a 'one size fits all' approach, they base their design on the specific needs of the school or organisation in order to close the attainment gap for disadvantaged young people. It was founded by Louise Brown and Karim Mokrani and was inspired by a business engagement and mentoring programme they were both involved in running, which Louise describes as *"one of the most effective interventions I've ever used working with young people."*

Tailoring services to context

The 1Up approach highlights that **innovative projects should be shaped by the needs and situation of a particular school.** Tailoring programmes specifically to each school allows 1Up to tackle particular problems in a focussed fashion. For example, the first school 1Up worked with highlighted three key issues they were facing that they wanted help with: underachievement of white working class pupils; child sexual exploitation and involvement in gangs. 1Up worked with the school to design a programme of mentoring to target these specific issues. They have designed bespoke programmes for the specific needs faced by other schools and charities they have worked with. Louise told us that:

"All schools have their own working culture and their own context. That's why we do it bespoke, because you need to understand those cultural and contextual factors."

Long term implementation

Almost all initiatives which are seeking to improve outcomes for children and young people will require a medium to long-term implementation commitment. As an expert interviewee suggested:

"If you want to really change things - outcomes, diversity, attitudes or behaviours - it has to be ongoing – it can't be a one off workshop or assembly (especially given high levels of staff turnover)."

Schools, ventures and educational experts we interviewed all tended to agree that meaningful change in students' lives takes time and often depends on building strong and lasting relationships. In contrast several experts told us that what they often currently see in schools could be described as 'hot potato' commissioning, that is reactive, ad hoc procurement of short term external services without due consideration for their long-term impact. One expert interviewee told us that:

"I worked in a school where there was a new initiative every couple of years and the old one would quietly get shelved".

A commitment to longer-term implementation of an innovative service allows time for meaningful work and change-making to take place, as well as encouraging schools to think very carefully about the needs and intended outcomes they are seeking to affect and therefore to prioritise and plan strategically, which are in themselves key components of effective commissioning.

When considering short-term or one-off projects or programmes, schools are therefore encouraged to interrogate its reasons (or the project's logic) for doing so particularly carefully.

REVIEW

Monitoring, learning from and evaluating innovative projects is absolutely crucial to improving student outcomes and tackling educational inequality. It should be treated as an integral element of effective commissioning of innovative projects.

Our research strongly suggests that this is a key area for development in the commissioning process to allow schools to hold the services they commission to account. As one expert interviewee said: *"Teachers don't really care much about the outcome data - lots of the ventures we work with don't do significant impact assessments unless they're asked"*. Another expert interviewee told us: *"Schools find it very difficult to part with money but once they do, they don't really hold us to account that much."*

The responsibility for monitoring, learning and evaluation lies with providers, as well as with schools, but ultimately schools need to demand that the organisations they commission provide this evidence and information. This section outlines:

- Why schools should monitor and evaluate innovative projects as part of the commissioning cycle

- How schools can effectively and efficiently monitor and evaluate such projects

Why monitor and evaluate

The market of innovative education products, services and projects is highly unregulated. There is no systemic requirement to demonstrate quality or impact. In this context it is the commissioners of these services – schools – who need to hold such projects to account. In addition, there will often be a lack of existing evidence in relation to highly innovative projects so it is vital that the impact of such services is assessed.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation serves a variety of key functions in the commissioning process, including:

- To *improve* and refine delivery so that outcomes are maximised.

- To highlight how an intervention might need to be *adapted* for a particular context.

- To assess and *prove* whether a project works, that is whether it achieves its intended outcomes, and to *share this learning* with the wider education community.

- To make *evidence-based decisions* about whether a project should be re-commissioned and if so on what basis; sometimes evaluation will show that projects should be decommissioned.

- To *assess the nature of student need* in a school, whether this has changed or stayed the same, to underpin future commissioning strategies.

A former school senior leader emphasised the importance of evaluation by stating that:

*"Morally, it's about how **to make the right choices for your children** – you have a pot of money, how do you decide what's going to have an effect and what isn't – evaluation is what is going to allow you to make those decisions effectively."*

Evaluation should be part of an 'active commissioning' strategy in which the best way of allocating limited resources is continually being assessed, reassessed and acted upon.

How to evaluate impact

There are many different ways of evaluating education interventions and the best approach will depend on the nature of the intervention, the resources available for evaluation and the evaluation aims. In any case, we encourage schools to firstly ask providers what their approach to evaluation is and how they are going to assess and demonstrate impact. **Schools should put the onus of evaluation on the project provider** but should enable and facilitate the evaluation, especially through data sharing. Data sharing between schools and providers can help to ensure that the most robust existing data – such as that related to attendance or attainment - is available for evaluation purposes. Senior leadership should oversee service evaluation to ensure accountability and quality assurance.

For an evaluation which is seeking to assess the impact of a project on students, most effective evaluations will include the steps outlined in Figure 8. In order to facilitate these key steps it is important to **begin discussing and planning the evaluation from the outset**, at the point at which any project or service is contracted.

Figure 8: Key steps for evaluating impact

Key step	Explanation
Agree the **outcomes** that you are intending to improve	In line with the 'understanding need' section of this guide, the foundation of evaluation should be to agree intended outcomes. Defining intended outcomes should be led by the school. This could be as part of a broader theory of change.
Agree evaluation **methods and measures**	In many instances, existing school data can be used to assess the impact of an intervention, particularly if outcomes related to attainment, attendance, or behaviour are of interest. In such cases an information or data sharing agreement between the school and the provider may need to be agreed at the outset.

For other (softer) outcomes, such as confidence, self-esteem or anger, questionnaires (impact tools) should be completed before (possibly during) and after the intervention. There are many existing impact tools available so schools do not need to spend time creating new ones. |
Decide on the **timeframe** for the evaluation	You will need to decide when the evaluation is going to take place. Usually in order to assess change over time, impact data should be collected before and after the intervention.
Agree who is **responsible** for the evaluation	In order to ensure that the evaluation is conducted, you need to name a responsible person within the school (most likely the project lead) as well a responsible person on the provider side.
Collect the data	Depending on the outcomes of interest and the methods chosen, the school and/or the venture may be responsible for collecting data. In any case, relevant data needs to be captured consistently and in a timely fashion. When and how this needs to be done should be planned from the outset.
Analyse and report	In most cases the provider will be responsible for analysis of data, although some schools may choose to do this themselves too. Evaluation reports should focus on evidence of impact on intended outcomes as well as lessons learned.

In order to assess **causation**, that is to ascertain if the intervention in question resulted in the observed change in outcomes, it is necessary to compare the outcomes of the intervention participants with the outcomes of similar people who did not participate in the intervention. This allows you to see what would have happened without the intervention. This is the most robust approach to impact evaluation but it is also resource-intensive and not always possible.

There are various resources and sources of support available to help schools conduct this kind of evaluation or to conduct this kind of evaluation for schools. These include:

- Education Endowment Foundation DIY Evaluation guide - an accessible resource for teachers which introduces the key principles of educational evaluation and provides guidance on how to conduct small-scale evaluations in schools.

- Project Oracle, children and youth evidence hub- provides support and guidance to children and youth services to support impact measurement.

- Inspiring Impact – an online hub for impact measurement resources and guidance.

- Edukit – see Case Study 6 below.

CASE STUDY 6 - EDUKIT

Edukit is a social enterprise which offers online and analytical tools to help schools raise student attainment by making it easy to find appropriate support for students and to track the results whether academic or behavioural. Edukit told us that:

"We aim to facilitate better understanding of demand so it's not just the kids who shout the loudest who get the most support."

The platform allows schools to visualise data across their whole school, add interventions they've bought and see where money is being spent and who it's having an impact on. All this data can all be listed in the platform and broken down by student and budget.

Alongside this, Edukit offers an online directory of enterprises and services for teachers to search. This recognises that teachers are time poor and don't necessarily have time to interact with a range of interventions. Edukit's platform aims to *"filter out the noise"* and connect teachers with services and programmes which are appropriate for them, in a time efficient way which goes beyond the word-of-mouth approach.

5 CREATING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

"Innovation can become part of school ethos."
(Service provider)

Our research suggests that schools will benefit most from innovative services when they are woven into the fabric of a school, rather than being treated as an adjunct or add-on. It is by embedding innovative services in schools, amongst other mechanisms, that schools can create a culture of innovation, where each student, teacher, staff member or governor is empowered to identify challenges and to identify, develop or propose socially innovative solutions to those challenges. For instance, one expert interviewee suggested that schools can commission in a way which, "*makes the school better at something rather than buying in as a one off.*"

Interviewees suggested that key ways in which schools can implement innovative projects in order to amplify its impact and create a wider culture of innovation include:

- Championing of innovative services by a senior or respected member of staff

- Communication about the innovation, its aims, activities, impact and lessons learned across the school and externally

- Allowing time for the innovation to become embedded, and for the target audience and responsible teacher to be involved

- Rewarding staff and pupils for their engagement with the innovation

Creating a culture of innovation in a school means the whole school feels empowered to propose innovative models and services or to innovate themselves. Innovative ideas should be supported from the top down (i.e. the headteacher) but should also be stimulated from the bottom up (i.e. beginning with subject students and teachers).

Innovation is most effective in a school when it forms part of a whole school strategy, aligned with the school's value and ethos as well as the priorities outlined in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). To facilitate this, every member of staff should be aware of the school's current needs, gaps and strategic priorities; clear communication of the SIP to the whole school is vital. Being fully informed of these priority areas means that all staff, whether classroom teachers, business managers or senior leaders, can focus their thinking and gain relevant ideas and suggestions from any external meetings, conferences or events they may attend. However, to ensure that innovative services are embedded in the whole school and aligned with the school's improvement strategy, commissioning decisions should ultimately be made by senior leadership.

Institutionalisation

A culture of innovation can also be embedded through the 'institutionalisation' of innovation. This is when initiatives are effectively brought 'in-house'.

There will be some innovative projects that can only be delivered by external organisations. For example, it is unlikely that schools could ever do what EduKit do in-house, that is providing an online platform which identifies the full range of organisations providing support to students and classifying them by intended outcome and impact. However, other innovative services, such as a student programming course or an enterprise programme could, if teachers develop the appropriate skills and experience, be delivered in-house. As a headteacher told us:

"Over years you start looking at the value - if you've been running it for 4 or 5 years it may not have the same value. You almost outgrow a project after a while."

By commissioning and running an innovative service in a school, over time the expertise and skills of the service can be diffused or transferred to the school itself, its pupils and/or teachers. Indeed, some services explicitly set out to do this. For example, Fearless Futures', a gender equality programme, involves training young women (in years 9 – 13) to become 'Game-Changers' in their schools and to deliver sessions on intersectional inequality to other students in the school, thereby increasing the capacity of the students themselves to embed the innovative curriculum and learning more widely in the school.

Schools should consider how they can best draw on the expertise and creativity of innovative services to increase the capacity and capability of their students and staff so that the impact of the external services is sustained even beyond the contracting period.

Innovative schools

A culture of innovation can also be enabled through mechanisms which encourage students, teachers and the wider school community to be socially innovative. As one innovation expert told us: *"I've been struck by how teachers in particular have been inspired or energised by meeting the entrepreneurial community"*. Much has been written about the importance of creating cultures of innovation within schools, with FutureLab arguing that, 'there needs to be a shift of focus to a model of bottom-up innovation emanating from practitioners themselves to ensure a sustainable culture of change and development'.[67]

Schools can encourage internal innovation through a wide range of mechanisms, as highlighted in our research and in the literature, including:[68]

- Featuring innovation as a key part of a schools values

- Explicitly and visibly recognising and rewarding innovation

- Leadership which prioritises innovation

- Allowing time and resource for innovation

- Equipping teachers with the necessary skills for innovation, such as creativity

- Recognising the innovation potential of everybody in a school community. As Ken Robinson, a leading education thinker, reminds us:

"The role of a creative leader is not to have all the ideas; it's to create a culture where everyone can have ideas and feel that they're valued." [69]

APPENDIX 1:
TOOLS FOR COMMISSIONING

COMMISSIONING PLAN TEMPLATE

Before you have decided on a service…

Intended outcomes – what change are you hoping to bring about?	
Alignment with school improvement plan – how does this align with the school improvement plan?	
Target audience – amongst whom are you hoping to bring about a change?	
Timeframe – over what period of time do you want to bring about a change?	
Budget – what is your budget for achieving this change?	
Key contact – which member of staff will be the key contact for the service?	

Once you have chosen a service…

Responsible senior leader – which member of the senior leadership team will have responsibility?	
Evaluation strategy – who will be evaluating this and how?	

CHECKLIST: QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL PROVIDERS

Key element	Questions to ask a provider	Questions to consider
Service design	• Please could we see your theory of change? Please could you talk us through it? • What is your intended impact and outcomes and how do you achieve these?	• Are the intended outcomes of the service aligned with the outcomes that I want to affect? • Is the theory of change plausible? • Are the elements well defined? • Is the design of the intervention suitable to our school context?
Service delivery	• What is the target audience of your service? • What are your service's delivery targets – what do you hope to deliver and when? • Who delivers the service? How well qualified are they? Are they volunteers or paid staff?	• Is this aligned with my target audience? • Do I have confidence in the delivery staff e.g. are they motivated and well qualified?
Service monitoring	• How do you monitor the quality of your delivery? • How do you monitor your outcomes? • How frequently and in what format do you report to the school?	• Are their monitoring processes robust? • Are their reporting processes robust?
Service impact	• Can you provide evidence of your impact? • If not, is the design of your service based on evidence or is there evidence from elsewhere that your service is likely to be effective? • What, if any, is the risk that impact won't be achieved?	• How robust is their evidence of impact? • If not, which may be the case with highly innovative and early stage services, is there evidence from elsewhere that this type of intervention is likely to be effective (e.g. from EEF) and/or is it aligned with best practice and guidance?[70]
Cost effective	• What are the costs of your service? • How much teacher time do you usually need to support your service? • Are there any other resources that you need from the school to support your service? • Do you have evidence of cost benefits?	• Are the costs of the service fully understood and clear, including hidden costs? • Do we have sufficient resources to support this service effectively? • Are the benefits of the service likely to outweigh the costs and does it offer value for money?

APPENDIX 2: METHODOLOGY

This guidance was developed with experts in education and innovation. A full list of partners and participants can be seen at the beginning of the guide. In line with participant preferences, we have ensured that quotations are not attributable to individuals. We have instead noted whether the quote is attributable to a Young Academy venture, a headteacher/teacher or an 'expert'.

Figure 9 below presents a summary of our research methodology, our sources, methods and the number of participants involved.

Figure 9 Summary of primary research

Source	Method(s)	Number of participants
Headteachers and teachers	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups Review of guidance and feedback	21
Young Academy ventures	Extended case study interviews	6
Education, innovation and commissioning experts	Semi-structured telephone and face-to-face interviews	22 (9 of whom had previously been teachers/headteachers)
Existing evidence and guidance	A literature and best practice review related to best practice in commissioning	N/A

APPENDIX 3: GLOSSARY

Throughout this guide, we use the following definitions of key terms:

Accelerator: a programme which provides support and training for the scaling up of businesses or ventures. These differ from incubators because they typically take equity in the business in return for their investment, and do not always involve a physical space. The Young Academy is an example of an accelerator programme.

Attainment gap: the systematic difference between the educational attainment of a particular group of students and their peers. For example, the difference in attainment between pupils receiving Free School Meals and their non-FSM peers.

Commissioning: the process of planning, procuring, delivering and evaluating services, particularly in the public sector. It is about 'the most effective and efficient way of using all the available resources to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families'.[41]

Educational inequality: the unequal distribution of educational resources and outcomes across different social groups, whether by geography, ethnicity or class background etc. (see also attainment gap.)

Incubator: a service which provides support and/or training to entrepreneurs, often in the form of a physical working space.

Outcomes: the changes, benefits, learning, or other effects that result from what the organisation makes, offers, or provides.

Outputs: the amount and quality of activities that are delivered.

Payment-by-results: contracting and financing where payment to a provider is contingent on the evidenced achievement of intended results or outcomes.

Procurement: purchasing goods or services from an external provider, often through a tendering process.

Provider: the organisation or individual who provides an external service or innovation to a school.

Service: a project, programme, intervention or product which is provided externally to schools. Throughout this guide, we refer to 'services' as a term which includes the various types of external provision which may be commissioned by schools.

Social innovation: Social innovations are new solutions (products, services, models, markets, processes etc.) that simultaneously meet a social need (more effectively than existing solutions) and lead to new or improved capabilities and relationships and better use of assets and resources. In other words, social innovations are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act.[42] Examples of Young Academy social innovations can be seen in the long guide.

Theory of change: a model or flow chart which specifies how a particular activity is believed to bring about a certain change. Key elements in this model often include: aims, outcomes, impact, outputs, activities, assumptions and target audience.

Venture: a new activity or undertaking, most often a business, which involves risk or uncertainty. A Young Academy venture is one that works in the education sector, usually as an innovative early-stage business, charity or social enterprise, which has also participated in the Young Academy accelerator programme.

ENDNOTES

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[3]For example, the Shine Trust highlight and award teachers for innovative practice and teaching strategies. More information available here: https://www.shinetrust.org.uk/

[4]The Young Academy (2016). About. [Online.] www.theyoungacademy.org/about

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[6]UK Government (2017). *Public Sector Procurement Policy* [Online.] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-sector-procurement-policy

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[17]*Department of Education (2009). Good commissioning: principles and practice.* [Online.] www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182307/good_commissioning_principles_and_practice.pdf

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[21]Department for Education (2015). *Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice.* [Online.] https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/PUPP01

[22]Ofsted (2013). The pupil premium: how schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement. [Online]. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-pupil-premium-how-schools-are-spending-the-funding-successfully

[23]Throughout this report we sign-post to useful resources and tools that schools can use funding the commissioning process. These are all relevant and functioning at the time of writing.

[24]For example, the Education Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkit, available at: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit

[25]Education Endowment Foundation (2017). *Evidence for the Frontline: Evaluation report and executive summary.* [Online.] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/our-work/projects/evidence-for-the-frontline

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[39]Realising Ambition was a five year programme funded by the Big Lottery, providing grant funding and specialist support to organisations to refine and build the evidence base of their services aimed at preventing children and young people from entering the criminal justice system.

[40]Replication is the delivery of a service into new geographical areas or to new or different audiences. Replication is distinct from scaling-up in that replication is just one way of scaling 'wide' – i.e. reaching a greater number of beneficiaries in new places.

[41]Realising Ambition (2015). *Programme Insight 1: Replication.* [Online.] www.catch-22.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Realising-Ambition-Programme-Insight-The-Secret-Life-of-Innovation.pdf

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[61]EEF (2017). Putting Evidence to Work: A School's Guide to Implementation. Guidance Report. [Online.] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Campaigns/Implementation/EEF-Implementation-Guidance-Report.pdf

[62]Realising Ambition (2015). Op cit.

[63]Aspects of the service that can be adapted to fit local contexts. These are peripheral components that do not directly alter the core aspects of the service that make it work. Surface adaptations may allow providers in other areas to make the service 'their own' and better serve the needs of local populations.

[64]The key activities that make the service work. Put another way, the specific aspects or mechanisms of a service that lead to the desired change in outcomes. For a service to be replicated successfully, providers need to be clear about what can and cannot be changed.

[65]Realising Ambition (2015). Op cit.

[66]Ibid.

[67]FutureLab (2009). *Promoting transformative innovation in schools: a Futurelab handbook*. [Online.] https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/FUTL20/FUTL20.pdf

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[70]For example, CPD innovations should be compared with the DfE Standard for Teachers' Professional Development, as previously cited.