

# Challenge the Gap : Summary



## 1. What is Challenge the Gap?

Challenge the Gap is a **whole-school improvement programme**, run by Challenge Partners, that is breaking the link between poverty and poor outcomes. **Designed and delivered nationally by expert practitioners**, with a track record of improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, Challenge the Gap builds in-school expertise in collaboration for staff at all levels. A key element of the programme is working with other schools to share current research, best practice and joint practice development to have a lasting, transformational impact for all pupils.

A Team of **professionals across all levels** of your school (leaders, teachers and para-professionals) are trained to tackle educational disadvantage by developing a programme of **evidence-based strategies tailored to your school context**.

Initially targeting a small group of your most vulnerable pupils, your school's Team **develops an in-school programme of activities to trial**. As the year goes on, the Team **identifies what works** through a rigorous focus on data and then **scales up their effective strategies** to impact pupils across their entire school.

## 2. What will the programme look like?

- a. Training workshops:** There will be a series of six training workshops (**these will likely be held in September, November, January, March, June and July**).
- b. School activities:** In between workshops, your Challenge the Gap Team will develop their in-school programme together and in collaboration with colleagues from Teams in other local schools.
- c. School visit:** Your local Programme Lead will visit your Challenge the Gap Team in your school to offer challenge and support to help ensure the programme has maximum impact in your school.
- d. Cascade model:** Your Challenge the Gap Team will be trained to identify whether their strategies are working and should be scaled up and shared in your school.
- e. Support from the National Challenge the Gap Team:** The Challenge the Gap central team work with Clusters across the country to share what works in narrowing the gap for disadvantaged pupils. Your school will receive newsletters each term updating you on the latest research, best practice and emerging effective innovation from schools across the country.

## 3. The programme timeline



## 4. Your 'Challenge the Gap Team'

Your school will select a Team of exceptional staff to take part in the programme. They become experts in strategies for narrowing gaps with the skills necessary to implement these strategies across their school.

- **Primary schools choose: 1 leader, 1 teacher and 1 para-professional.**
- **Secondary schools choose: 1 leader, 3 teachers (inc. maths & English) and 2 para-professionals.**

## 5. The programme themes

The programme has three central themes that focus on developing pupils to acquire specific skills and competencies to accelerate their progress in the classroom:

- **The Academically Competent Learner**
- **The Self-Aware Learner**
- **The Resilient Learner**

## 6. Workshop content

1. The starting line; the bigger picture	<i>Programme Launch; building relationships (the school Team and the Trio); identifying common issues to tackle; establishing a baseline of pupil data.</i>
2. A deep dive into pupil data	<i>What does the research say? What are the programme themes and why are they important? What does your data tell us about your target pupils? Identifying what needs to be done at your school and planning for the year.</i>
3. Programme Theme 1: The Academically Competent Learner	<i>Building academic literacy, academic numeracy or critical thinking in the classroom (focus area chosen based on local needs).</i>
4. Programme Theme 2: The Self-Aware Learner	<i>Developing metacognition in the classroom; leading change for your target pupils.</i>
5. Programme Theme 3: The Resilient Learner	<i>Building resilience in and out of the classroom; leading change across your school.</i>
6. So What... And What Next?	<i>Evaluating progress and extending the reach of your impact in school.</i>

## 7. Practical tools and resources

Your Team will be provided with all the practical tools and resources they will need to run an effective Challenge the Gap programme in your school including planning tools, data tracking tools, case studies of effective practice and reading lists of relevant research.

## 8. Choose your pupils – the Target Cohort

Each school chooses a small group of 'invisible', underachieving, vulnerable pupils (around 15), who are not (ideally) in an exam year, and not receiving other interventions or support to target. Target Pupils are the starting point to develop a whole school approach to narrowing gaps and improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Tracking data indicates which strategies are working and which are not and then schools can look at whether these strategies could be scaled across the school.