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Welcome!

Welcome to the ninth newsletter of the SEAL Community. We've a case study from a brilliant primary school that has been using SEAL for seven years and thoroughly embedded it into policies and practice – including their creative work on the new curriculum. Plus lots of news, research and new resources.

If you missed our earlier newsletters, you'll find them in the Newsletter archive on the SEAL Community members' pages. The theme of the first (Keeping SEAL alive and growing) may be of interest if you have been using SEAL resources for some years and are looking to refresh your approach. The second focuses on diversity – how schools and settings have adapted SEAL so as to meet the needs of different groups of learners (children with SEN, looked after children, boys who don't respond well to too much talking.) The third is all about Ofsted/Estyn, the fourth is about SEAL and academic learning, the fifth focuses on SEAL and early years, the sixth on SEAL in secondary schools, the seventh on SEAL developments and the eighth on SEAL in practice.

News Update

Happiness is as important as academic success says Nicky Morgan



Children's emotional wellbeing, resilience and mental health will be a priority for the DfE, said Education Secretary Nicky Morgan in her first interview since the election. 'I want children to do well academically, and attainment is supported if they have good mental health, character and resilience', she said. 'They are two sides of the same coin. There is no point in having a generation of academically able pupils who are very unhappy.'

At the same time, however, The Secretary of State has not backed MPs' calls to make PSHE statutory. In July the DfE published its response to the parliamentary Select Committee's report 'Life Lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools'. The report had strongly recommended that PSHE should become statutory, but for the moment this has not been agreed.

The DfE response says: 'The Government wants all young people to leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. We agree with the committee that high-quality PSHE and SRE have a vital role to play in this by providing a curriculum for modern life.'

The Government also agrees that there is more that we can do to emphasise its importance and improve the quality and provision of PSHE education which is not yet good enough in too many schools. That is why we announced a package of support for PSHE in March 2015, including the development of a rigorous new PSHE quality mark for schools to demonstrate excellence in their teaching and further work with the PSHE Association to help them quality assure resources produced by other organisations to ensure that teachers have access to the best materials.

We now want to go further, and will take forward work with the sector to develop further measures to improve the quality of PSHE. We want to make significant progress on this issue this parliament, and will consider in full the arguments put forward by the Select Committee as part of this work before reporting back later this year.'

Read the full government response at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pshe-and-sre-in-schools-government-response>

Six year olds with good social and emotional skills are four times as likely to graduate from college than those with poor skills

In the early 1990s, about 50 kindergarten teachers were asked to rate the social and communication skills of 753 six year old children in their classrooms. It was part of the Fast Track Project, an intervention and study administered in Durham, N.C., Nashville, Seattle and central Pennsylvania. The goals were to understand how children develop healthy social skills, and help them do so.



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Using an assessment tool called the “Social Competence Scale,” the teachers were asked to assign each child a score based on qualities that included “cooperates with peers without prompting”; “is helpful to others”; “is very good at understanding feelings”; and “resolves problems on own.”

This month, researchers from Pennsylvania State University and Duke published a study that looked at what had happened to those students in the 13 to 19 years since they left kindergarten. Their findings warrant major attention because the teachers’ rankings were extremely prescient.

They predicted the likelihood of many outcomes: whether the children would graduate from high school on time, get college degrees, have stable or full-time employment as young adults; whether they would live in public housing or receive public assistance; whether they would be held in juvenile detention or be arrested as adults. The kindergarten teachers’ scores also correlated with the number of arrests a young adult would have for severe offences by age 25.

The researchers had statistically controlled for the effects of poverty, race, having teenage parents, family stress and neighbourhood crime, and for the children’s aggression and reading levels in kindergarten.

Children who scored high on social and emotional skills were four times more likely to graduate from college than those who scored low. Findings showed that for every one-point increase in a child’s social and emotional competence score in kindergarten, he/she was:

- Twice as likely to attain a college degree in early adulthood;
- 54% more likely to earn a high school diploma; and
- 46% more likely to have a full-time job at the age of 25.

For every one-point decrease in a child’s social and emotional competence score in kindergarten, he/she had:

- 64% higher chance of having spent time in juvenile detention;
- 67% higher chance of having been arrested by early adulthood; and
- 52% higher rate of recent binge drinking and 82% higher rate of recent marijuana use.

Read more at http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/07/24/building-social-skills-to-do-well-in-math/?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share&_r=0

Rise in primary exclusions



There was a rise in the number of primary children receiving fixed term exclusions in England in the last academic year.

Fixed-term exclusions rose to 45,010 in 2013-14 from 37,870 the previous year.

Government statisticians described this rise as "considerable". They said it was driven by more assaults against pupils and adults, and

more persistent disruptive behaviour.

The number of primary pupils given fixed-term exclusions for assaulting an adult in school has risen by around a quarter.

Pupils aged five to 11 were suspended 11,420 times for physical assault against an adult in state-funded primary schools in 2013-14 - up from 9,080 the previous year.

The total number of permanent exclusions across primary, secondary and special schools also increased slightly compared with 2012-13, despite a general decline since 2004-05.

The figures from the Department for Education also revealed a 10% rise in suspension for assault against adults for pupils aged five to 16. Suspension for racist abuse in primary schools increased by 15.6%.

Head teachers are more concerned with pupils' mental health than any other issue related to well-being

Two-thirds of the 1,180 head teachers polled for management support service, The Key, named mental health as their top concern.

Domestic violence and cyberbullying were the next biggest concerns, named by 58% and 55% of heads respectively.

Research for The Key also found that an increasing number of schools were employing their own counsellors, or drawing on voluntary services, to improve their pupils' well-being.

A spokeswoman for The Key highlighted British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy estimates that between 64% and 80% of secondary schools in England offer some kind of counselling.

An investigation by the charity, Young Minds, last year found more than half of councils in England had cut or frozen budgets for child and adolescent mental health between 2010-11 and 2014-15.

Resource round-up

New resources for New Beginnings SEAL theme

Check out the new resources on the SEAL Community website for work linked to the SEAL New Beginnings theme, and for secondary schools settling children into new classes. You will find them at <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/primary-new-beginnings-new-resources-compendium>, <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/new-beginnings-planning>, <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/new-resources-settling-secondary-school>

There are primary medium term planning and assessment tools, nice new ideas for creating a classroom charter, and lots of getting to know you activities. For secondary schools there are a great icebreakers and group bonding activities, a truly fabulous and funny slide show for tutor time or assemblies on how to be successful in the new school year, and lesson plans about friendship, to be used with Y7 in their first weeks in their new school.

Over this half term we'll be uploading new resources for Getting on and falling out/Learning to be together, so do watch out for these.

A great resource for promoting community cohesion and tackling radicalisation



Miriam Hyman was killed in the London bombings on 07 July 2005. "Miriam's Vision: A Response to the 2005 London Bombings" is a collection of high-quality curriculum-based lesson plans, accompanying resources and guidance notes for teachers of 11 to 14-year-olds, based on her story.

The resources are about living in an inclusive, non-violent society, respecting

fundamental rights.

They provide opportunities to develop empathy, and think about diversity, resilience in adversity, considered and constructive response to negative situations, and rational action in the light of rights and responsibilities.

Find the free resources at <http://miriamsvision.org/>

New lesson plans from PSHE Association

The PSHE Association has published a new set of primary and secondary lesson plans on mental health and wellbeing. Funded by the DfE, they are free to download.

Find them at https://pshe-association.org.uk/resources_search_details.aspx?ResourceId=570&Keyword=&SubjectID=0&LevelID=0&ResourceTypeID=3&SuggestedUseID=0&dm_i=HSS,3JOOW,BJ06JO,CPWHY,1

Primary character-building programme

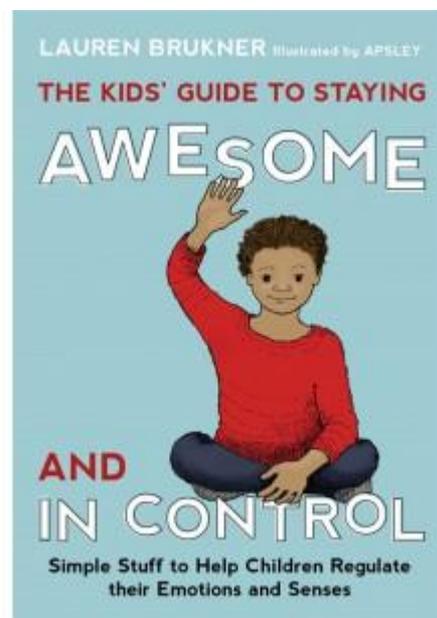
The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues has launched a new Programme of Study – a taught course for teaching character in primary schools. The course provides a wide range of resources and approaches for teachers to deliver in their classrooms, focusing on virtues such as caring, helpfulness, cooperation, courage, kindness and reflection.

The free resources are available to download at <http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1598/programme-of-study#sthash.PWEkQCph.dpuf>

The Kids' Guide to Staying Awesome and In Control

Simple Stuff to Help Children Regulate their Emotions and Senses, by Lauren Brukner

From breathing exercises, pressure holds and finger pulls, to fidgets, noise-reducing headphones and gum, this book is full of simple strategies and tools to help kids aged approximately 7 to 14 years to stay cool, calm and in control. They will learn how to label difficult feelings, choose the perfect strategies and tools to tackle them, and use these correctly whether at home or at school. The strategies and tools are accompanied by cartoon-style illustrations, and the author includes useful tips for parents and teachers as well as handy visual charts and checklists to track learning and progress.



Cute mice explain mindfulness



This is a brilliant two minute video (involving cute mice) that explains the basics of meditation used in mindfulness programmes. Do try it with your class.

<http://www.mindful.org/adorable-animed-mice-explain-meditation-in-2-minutes/>

Interesting new research

Toddlers who watch a lot of TV may be victimised more by their peers as adolescents.

Watt, E. et al (2015) Too Much Television? Prospective Associations Between Early Childhood Televiewing and Later Self-reports of Victimization by Sixth Grade Classmates. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*: July/August 2015 - Volume 36 - Issue 6 - p 426–433

A new study which followed children from birth to age 12 showed that those who watched more television at age 2 reported more instances of being bullied years later. They may be more vulnerable, the researchers argue, because of less developed communication skills and passive behaviours, rooted in those early years of intensive TV, a pattern that tended to continue as they got older.

TV viewing time reported by parents when a child was 29 months old was compared to the children's self-reported responses in the sixth grade. The survey asked sixth graders how often they were victims of certain bullying behaviours: never, once or twice, or often. The examples of bullying included whether other kids had called them names or said mean things; did not let them play with the group; pushed, hit or kicked them; said bad things about them to other children; made fun of them/laughed at them; or forced them to give up something that belonged to them.

Their responses correlated to what their teachers had reported separately in previous studies.

"What was special about our study is it was based on personal experience," said one of the authors. "They have no idea what their teachers said about them in kindergarten or in fourth grade in second grade. But what they're telling us is they had more experiences -- the ones who watched a lot of television at age 2 were the ones who were more at risk of being victimised."

Social and emotional intelligence develops over time through interactions with other people -- the more, the better. Levels of this kind of perception and the ability to "read" other people is referred to as EQ, the emotional equivalent of IQ. The children who watched more TV at earlier ages demonstrated characteristics of lower EQ, suggesting they may not navigate social interactions as well.

Deeper analysis of the sixth graders' responses showed that every hour over the average of 1.25 hours of TV they watched as toddlers corresponded to an 11 percent increase in the number of times they reported being victims of bullying by their peers in the sixth grade.

The results were adjusted for factors that could have influenced the responses. Those included the child's behaviour and cognitive abilities and family characteristics: income, functioning, single or two-parent households, and the mother's education.

Remember the TaMHS mental health in schools programme?

Wolpert, A. et al (2015) An Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of England's Mandated School-Based Mental Health Initiative in Elementary Schools. *School Psychology Review*: March 2015, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 117-138.

This study reports on a randomised controlled trial of Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS), which was a nationally mandated school-based mental health program in England under the last Labour government. TaMHS aimed to improve mental health for students with, or at risk of, behavioural and emotional difficulties by providing evidence-informed interventions relating to closer working relationships between health and education services. The study involved 8,480 children (aged 8–9 years) from 266 primary schools. Students in intervention schools with, or at risk of, behavioural difficulties reported significant reductions in behavioural difficulties compared with control school students, but no such difference was found for students with, or at risk of, emotional difficulties. Implementation of TaMHS was associated with increased school provision of a range of interventions and enhanced collaboration between schools and local specialist mental health providers.

Helping others boosts empathy and sense of community

Kirkman, E. et al (2015) Evaluating Youth Social Action, an Interim Report: Does participating in social action boost the skills young people need to succeed in adult life? The Behavioural Insights Team, 9 Mar 2015

www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/sites/default/files/Evaluating%20Youth%20Social%20Action_An%20Interim%20Report_0.pdf

This research looked at the impact of three social action programmes using randomised control trials. They found that 'The Citizenship Foundation programme was very effective in increasing empathy levels, problem-solving, grit and community skills relative to control students'.



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Similarly, young people who took part in the Envision programme experienced positive results when compared against a control group across every measure, including empathy, problem-solving ability, cooperation, grit, community skills and attitudes to education: 'Students who had participated in Envision's programme displayed a sense of community that was 16 per cent higher than that of their counterparts in the control group, whilst empathy and cooperation were boosted by 11 per cent each.'

Teaching children to give

Miller, J. et al (2015) Roots and Benefits of Costly Giving: Children Who Are More Altruistic Have Greater Autonomic Flexibility and Less Family Wealth *Psychological Science* May 26, 2015

Researchers from the University of California carried out an altruism experiment on 74 children aged four. During the experiment, the children played games that would earn them tokens which they could swap for prizes at the end. Electrodes were fitted to the youngsters allowing scientists to monitor heart rate, and the vagus nerve.

At the end of the session, the children were told that they could donate some or all of their tokens to ill children who had been unable to take part in the experiment. The donations were made to look as if they were secret, meaning the children were being genuinely altruistic by giving away tokens to benefit others but without being able to show off about their generosity.

Children from less wealthy parents donated the most, suggesting they were more altruistic than their better off peers.

Those who were the most generous at their own expense were more able to control their stress levels via the vagus nerve. Controlling this nerve, which regulates stress from the brain to the body, leads to better physical and mental health as they grow up, the researchers said.

Jonas Miller, the lead researcher, said: "It means we might be wired from a young age to derive a sense of safety from providing care for others. Our findings suggest that fostering altruistic tendencies might be one path to promoting better health and well-being for all children."

Sharing practice: case studies

SEAL in the new curriculum at Harehills Primary



Harehills is a three-form entry primary school serving a disadvantaged area of Leeds. The school has been using SEAL for seven years now, and the principles are thoroughly embedded into school policies and practice.

SEAL is led by a strong staff team: headteacher Jo Summerfield, assistant headteacher and SMSC lead Catherine McMullen (formerly a PSHE advisory teacher for the local authority), and reception teacher Hollie Melling, who is the school lead for Pupil Voice. As well as

45-60 minutes a week of 'taught' SEAL/PSHE (which usually follows or precedes an assembly) there are ad-hoc circle times used to resolve issues that come up in class or in the playground.

All this is supported by a whole-school approach to staff and pupil well-being. In a big staff group there is a need to create a sense of belonging and community, so staff circles are used in addition to formal staff meetings. Circles start with everyone sharing a magic moment, or with a round. Buddies are used for both adults and children. In Y6 every child has an adult buddy, carefully chosen from the entire school staff (including office staff, site manager, support staff and teachers) to inspire and motivate them. Teachers each have a teaching and learning buddy.

SEAL has been enhanced by restorative practice (<http://www.transformingconflict.org>), used whenever relationships break down – between staff, between children, between children and staff, with families. Illustrating their restorative philosophy, the school has a 'Relationships' policy rather than a behaviour policy.

Curriculum plans

Staff have developed half termly cross curricular themes for the revised National Curriculum. Each half term there is a focus on one of six whole-school attributes of learning: collaborate, enquire, be independent, persevere, be resilient, and reflect. These are linked to curricular learning objectives; for example, in a geography lesson children will say that 'as a geographer I will be using maps, books and atlases and globes to find out about the Polar



on

Region, and in order to do that I will need to enquire.' On top of this there is a weekly whole-school SEAL ethos statement, such as 'I can tell what is a safe or unsafe secret', which is posted on the

home page of the school's brilliant website. At the end of lessons when children self-assess, they will evaluate their progress against the ethos statement (where relevant) as well as the curricular learning objective and attribute of learning.

Another example of the school's cross-curricular approach to SEAL is PE. Harehills uses a PE scheme called realPE (<http://www.createdevelopment.co.uk/solutions/real-pe/>). Lesson plans have a dual focus, a PE physical skill objective and one focusing on social and emotional skills such as collaboration. Progress against both types of objective are again assessed at the end of the lesson.

SEAL and the additional aspects of PSHE (such as drug and alcohol education and safety) are integrated into one programme of study. The programme has New Beginnings as the theme in autumn 1, Getting on and Falling Out in autumn 2, Good to be Me in spring term 1, Going for Goals in spring term 2, Changes and Relationships plus drugs, alcohol and traffic education in summer term 1 and SRE in summer term 2.

One-off events such as Anti-bullying Week, Road Safety events, and Pupil Takeover Day are added in to the appropriate half term plans.

The programme of study includes controversial and challenging issues. Staff are not afraid to use the SEAL resource on bereavement and loss, following a spiral approach in which the youngest children look at the loss of toys or pets while older groups tackle bereavement.

A blog from the school's website

We had a fabulous opportunity to work with Danny from Class Dynamics as part of the 'Safe as Houses' project. As a group, we had to think of our own idea to write and perform a song. At first, we were scared and nervous but as a team we encouraged each other and then performed our song to the whole school. The song carried a very important message about being safe at home. It was brilliant!

Malika, Aman and Erik.

A collaboration with a local Safe as Houses project tackles domestic violence. Project workers come into school to work with the children on how to keep safe, who to tell and who not to tell.

The work involves developing class dynamics; in one lesson children worked together to create a song 'The Power of One' about courage, resilience and standing up for what is right.

Assemblies

Assemblies are an important part of the whole-school approach to SEAL/PSHE and SMSC. They are usually led by the children. Each week there is an assembly theme based on the SEAL/PSHE ethos statement of the week. In a recent assembly, for example, a group of Y1 children shared their ideas on how to deal with the fear, worry and upset that can happen at a time of change.



There is also a regular Celebration Assemblies for two year groups, to celebrate birthdays and achievements in relation to the SEAL ethos statement of the week, attendance, and attributes of learning.

There are Family Assemblies too, involving a range of year groups brought together to create a sense of belonging. This is reinforced by Family Service lunches, in

which children of different ages sit together, older children serving the younger ones and encouraging them to try new things.

Pupil Voice

Pupil voice is very important at Harehills, and the school recently received the coveted Investors in Pupils award (<http://www.investorsinpupils.org.uk/>). There are Class Councils and a School Council which meets weekly after school. Each School Council meeting starts with a SEAL mini check-in on how everyone is feeling. Council members then bring issues that children in their class are bothered about. The whole process has an emotional element as well as business elements.

All children are made aware of the role of the School Council: 'The School Council is made up of pupils from across the school who meet regularly to talk about any problems you might have in school.'

Hollie and Jo also run SEAL tea parties with a representative group of children from different year groups, at which children talk about things that went well/not so well in their class, and things they'd like to go better.



Children can post individual worries via the 'Worry Wall' on the school's website. (<http://harehills.leeds.sch.uk/worry-wall/>) They can choose to post anonymously, or optionally enter their name without it being shown on the website. They will always get a response. A Learning Mentor, for example, responded to one child by posting 'I'm sorry to hear you are sad at school. If there is anything I can do to help please come and see me'. Another child posted 'My worry is that when I leave Harehills I won't have any friends at high school.'



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He received a helpful response from the Deputy Head and also from a child at a partner school in the local CHES cluster of six schools, to which Harehills belongs.

Pupil Support systems

While the SEAL/PSHE curriculum and ethos provides a backdrop whole-school approach to well-being, children who need additional support with social and emotional learning are catered for by a large Harehills Hub Team of trained, experienced learning mentors and nurture managers. The CHES cluster also share staff with more specialist expertise, building on former pooling of extended schools funding.

Pupil Premium is largely focused on pastoral support. Children are collected in minibuses, for example, for Rise and Shine clubs, which start at eight and offer sports, reading, games and creative activities to around 75 children.

There are also a large number of after school clubs, to develop children's sense of belonging to wider groups, and their confidence. One example a Getaway Girls group; the school has found that many of its Muslim girls become more reserved as they go through KS2, and need to be reminded that they have a voice.

Impact

Jo is convinced that without developing children social and emotionally schools will not get the academic results they want. Having been at the school before SEAL was introduced, she saw the difference it made to children's interactions. Children became much more able to work collaboratively because of the strong and positive relationships they have with one another. This is why, while other schools 'are not willing to take the risk', Jo says, Harehills has remained committed to SEAL/PSHE. Their conviction is reflected in the school's results - this year the highest ever in all of the EYFSP, phonics check, and end of KS1 and 2 assessments.

For more information about the school's curricular maps visit <http://harehills.leeds.sch.uk/harehills-curriculum/#top>.

To find out more or arrange to visit the school, contact Jo Summerfield
J.Summerfield@harehills.leeds.sch.uk

Top tip

How to find lonely children – and save the world



This is a story from a parent in the US, about her son's amazing teacher.

Every Friday afternoon Chase's teacher asks her students to take out a piece of paper and write down the names of four children with whom they'd like to sit the following week. The children know that these requests may or may not be honoured. She also asks the students to

nominate one student whom they believe has been an exceptional classroom citizen that week. All ballots are privately submitted to her.

And every single Friday afternoon, after the students go home, Chase's teacher takes out those slips of paper, places them in front of her and studies them. She looks for patterns.

Who is not getting requested by anyone else?

Who doesn't even know who to request?

Who never gets noticed enough to be nominated?

Who had a million friends last week and none this week?

You see, Chase's teacher is not looking for a new seating chart or "exceptional citizens." Chase's teacher is looking for lonely children. She's looking for children who are struggling to connect with other children. She's identifying the little ones who are falling through the cracks of the class's social life. She is discovering whose gifts are going unnoticed by their peers. And she's pinning down- right away- who's being bullied and who is doing the bullying.

As a teacher, parent, and lover of all children – I think that this is the most brilliant strategy I have ever encountered. It's like taking an X-ray of a classroom to see beneath the surface of things and into the hearts of students. It is like mining for gold – the gold being those little ones who need a little help – who need adults to step in and TEACH them how to make friends, how to ask others to play, how to join a group, or how to share their gifts with others. And it's a bully deterrent because every teacher knows that bullying usually happens outside of her eyeshot – and that often kids being bullied are too intimidated to share. But as she said – the truth comes out on those safe, private, little sheets of paper.

As Chase's teacher explained this simple, ingenious idea – I stared at her with my mouth hanging open. "How long have you been using this system?" I said.

Ever since Columbine, she said. Every single Friday afternoon since Columbine.



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Good Lord. This brilliant woman watched Columbine knowing that ALL VIOLENCE BEGINS WITH DISCONNECTION. All outward violence begins as inner loneliness. She watched that tragedy KNOWING that children who aren't being noticed will eventually resort to being noticed by any means necessary.

And so she decided to start fighting violence early and often, and with the world within her reach. What Chase's teacher is doing when she sits in her empty classroom studying those lists written with shaky 11 year old hands – is SAVING LIVES. I am convinced of it. She is saving lives.

Upcoming newsletters

Upcoming newsletters will focus on assessment of social and emotional skills and evaluating the impact of your SEL work, and round-ups of favourite children's books and films to use as starting points for lessons. Please contact us, using the 'Contact us' option on the website or email jean.gross@btinternet.com directly if you have interesting practice to share on these or any other issues. Let us know the best phone number and times to contact you. Or just email with useful resources you have found, or your top tips. We'd love to write your work up as a case study, too, so do get in touch.