Changing Mindsets (re-grant)

The Changing Mindsets project taught Year 6 pupils about the malleability of intelligence by training teachers to deliver weekly workshops and through digital classroom resources, such as case studies about overcoming adversity. The project was delivered by Portsmouth University.

subject  Cross curriculum  key stage  Key Stage 2

EEF Summary

The Growth Mindset approach is widely known in UK schools, with the effects on pupils’ attainment and learning motivation investigated in the empirical literature through experimental research designs and school-based interventions.

The EEF funded an initial study of Changing Mindsets which evaluated teacher training in the “growth mindset approach” and workshops delivered directly to pupils that encouraged them to adopt growth mindsets in primary schools. While there was no evidence of impact from the teacher training, there was some evidence of promise for pupil workshops.

The second evaluation of Changing Mindsets combined the approaches of the previous study by providing pupil resources alongside teacher training. The study found no evidence that the intervention had impacts on children’s literacy or numeracy progress at National Key stage 2 tests, compared to pupils in the control group. The programme was delivered as intended and the findings have a high security rating.

One explanation for the absence of a measurable impact on pupil attainment is the widespread knowledge of growth mindset messages: many staff members were aware of similar approaches prior to their involvement in this project, even if they had not used them directly in their teaching. Another explanation is that Growth Mindset approaches take longer to embed.

Given the results of these studies and the limited number of evaluations of growth mindset interventions in English classrooms, teachers should be cautious about using growth mindsets alone as a way of boosting pupil attainment. EEF has no plans for a further trial of Changing Mindsets.
Research Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome/Group</th>
<th>Impact - the size of the difference between Changing Mindsets (re-grant) pupils and other pupils</th>
<th>Security - how confident are we in this result?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KS2 Maths</td>
<td>0 Months' Progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS2 Reading</td>
<td>0 Months' Progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS2 Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling</td>
<td>0 Months' Progress</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Were the schools in the trial similar to my school?

- There were 101 schools involved in the trial across the South East, South West, Midlands, North East, and North West of England.
- 90 of the 101 schools were Good or Outstanding schools
- 35% of pupils included in the trial (intervention and control groups) were eligible for FSM

Could I implement this in my school?

- Teachers need to plan how they will incorporate the two-hour weekly sessions in their lessons, including adapting and modifying the materials to suit the needs of their classes.

Delivered by Early Years Professional

Participant group Whole Class

Intervention length 8 Weeks

How much will it cost?

The Changing Mindsets intervention costs approximately £4 per pupil, if the University of Portsmouth delivers the training to the school during an inset day and provides the intervention materials for all staff. The intervention costs £1,800 per school in the first year. There is no cost in the subsequent years.

Cost per pupil £4

No. of Teachers/TAs Variable

Training time per staff member 1 Day

Schools 101
Pupils 5018
Key Stage Key Stage 2

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Evaluation Conclusions

1. Pupils in schools that received the intervention did not make any additional progress in literacy nor numeracy—as measured by the national Key Stage 2 tests in reading, grammar, punctuation, and spelling (GPS), and maths—compared to pupils in the control group. This finding has high security.

2. This evaluation also examined four measures of non-cognitive skills: intrinsic value, self-efficacy, test anxiety, and self-regulation. The evaluation did not find evidence of an impact on these measures for pupils in schools that received Changing Mindsets. A positive impact was found for the intrinsic value measure, but the impact was small and was not statistically significant.

3. Among pupils eligible for free school meals (‘FSM pupils’), those in schools that received the intervention did not make any additional progress in literacy nor numeracy—as measured by the national Key Stage 2 tests in reading, GPS, and maths—compared to FSM pupils in schools that did not receive the intervention.

4. One explanation for the absence of a measurable impact on pupil attainment is the widespread use of the growth mindset theory. Most teachers in the comparison schools (that did not receive the intervention) were familiar with this, and over a third reported that they had attended training days based on the growth mindset approach.