



Curtin University

CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE  
LITERACY  
IN THE EXPLICIT TEACHING OF  
*Round Three*



**THE CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE  
IN THE EXPLICIT TEACHING OF  
LITERACY: ROUND THREE**

2021-2022

The Centre for Excellence is a collaboration between the Department of Education and Curtin University. The aim of the Centre is to strengthen and extend explicit literacy teaching in public school classrooms across Western Australia.

The Centre was established at the official launch by the state minister for Education, the Hon Sue Ellery, on 20th August 2019.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





“The Centre for Excellence in the Explicit Teaching of Literacy (CfEETL) is a unique research and professional learning project, premised on ‘customised’, authentic evidence-based research, conducted in four Western Australian public primary schools.”

# THE CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE PUTTING WESTERN AUSTRALIA AT THE EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

This Executive Report provides an overview of the Centre for Excellence in the Explicit Teaching of Literacy (CfEETL) project, from its implementation in January 2019 to its conclusion in April 2022. The McGowan State Labor Government of Western Australia is to be congratulated for providing funding which made possible the development of this groundbreaking professional learning project in literacy education. The CFEETL project provides a robust and

## Multi-levelled Learning

The professional learning program was multi-levelled. In addition to face-to-face learning at the university, each 'intern' school was allocated to a 'mentor' school, which provided support through advice, lesson observations, peer-reviews and professional collaboration. Each intern teacher and their principal also received two school-based visits from the professional learning team which included the three Curtin teacher academics and the WA Department of Education teaching and learning consultant, to discuss progress and future plans.

## Innovative Design

The project was innovative because it brought together teacher academics and teacher practitioners in extended professional dialogue around literacy, learning and the management of change for success. This fusion of expert knowledge and practical school-based application enabled change to be: research informed, immediate, easily monitored and evaluated. The action-research model allowed teachers to be 'in-control' as agents of their own learning and directors of ameliorative change.

## Extended Professional Learning

Whereas most professional learning is short term (e.g. one day), this program involved 8 inter-connected days of professional development across four school terms. It enabled teachers to develop strong learning networks and engage in sustained professional dialogue. Some of these networks still remained in place after the formal professional learning had finished.

# EXPLICIT TEACHING OF LITERACY: FOREFRONT OF POSITIVE

exemplary model of integrated professional learning, combined with teacher and school development. It is a unique model that is worthy of emulating in future practice.

The purpose of this Executive Summary is to pin-point the salient features of the project that made it so remarkable. The project was innovative for a number of reasons.

## Ecological validity

The professional learning program had strong ecological validity. Research undertaken in five exemplar schools at the start of the project provided valid case-study evidence of successful literacy teaching in the context of Western Australia. This made the professional learning program both relevant to teachers and plausible. Case study research enabled the team of three teacher academics at Curtin University to identify salient elements of success in literacy teaching and use them as beacons for change in the participating schools. Ecological validity was extended to participating schools by 'intern' teachers, working in their own schools, who identified short, medium and long-term targets for themselves and their colleagues, based on a needs analysis. Using research tools and strategies disseminated by Curtin teacher academics, intern teachers implemented action-research in their own classes and across the whole school by working with a team of dedicated peers. Hence, change was customised to the specific school context making it relevant and purposeful.

## Collaborative Leadership

The inclusion of school leaders as integral agents for change, supporting and working alongside their intern teachers, maximized opportunities for success.

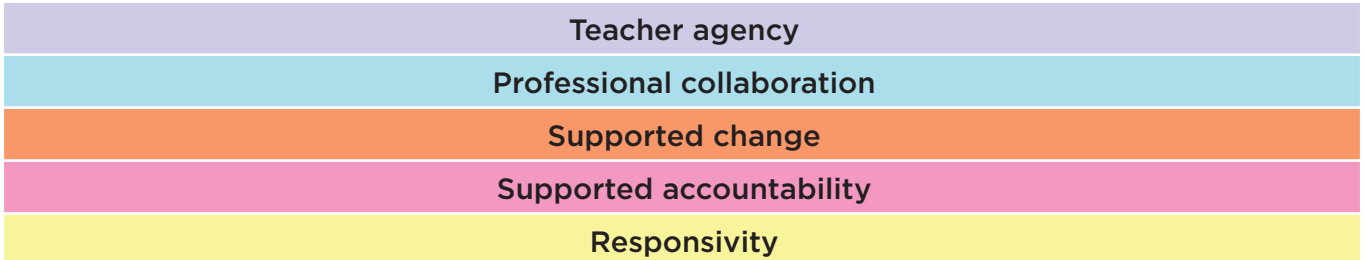
## Three Way Collaboration

It brought together three important, but often loosely connected, elements in teacher education (a university, a department of education and schools). A Governance Group monitored the delivery of the project's contractual requirements, whilst a Reference Group monitored its delivery and gave purposeful advice. This tightly managed collaboration created a comprehensive and strategically coordinated program of professional learning for 60 schools across the State of Western Australia.

## UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF THE CfEETL PROJECT

The CfEETL was a professional learning (PL) program that went beyond the norm: each cohort of intern teachers, academics, principals and teacher mentors, formed a mutually supportive and organic professional learning community (Harris & Jones, 2019).

Hence, the CfEETL project incorporated Five Key Underlying Principles:



In addition, based on our initial research and the action research undertaken by interns in their individual schools, we conclude that explicit literacy teaching requires effective systematic whole school change, which occurs when:

- it is supported by the school's administrative team and it is driven by a staff team dedicated to making positive change;
- it is based on proven need, supported by context relevant data (at school level);
- new methods, approaches and strategies are trialled, evaluated and refined before being disseminated across the school;
- it involves open professional dialogue within, and beyond, the school;
- there is a measure of challenge which is supported by expert mentors;
- reporting and accountability are integral to the process of change;
- professional collaboration occurs within an ethos of mutual trust.



In short, the CfEETL project consisted of bitesize steps that scaffolded innovative practice in teacher professional development for improved literacy teaching and outcomes.



## EXPLANATION OF UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

### Teacher agency

- Curtin teacher academics devised an action research model for 'intern' teachers, which included self-generated targets relevant to their stage of development and school context, and report stages, thereby providing accountability with support;
- Multi - levelled action research, involving the teacher 'intern's' own class, as well as those of a group of peers, and ultimately the whole school;
- 'intern' teachers exercising professional agency by, identifying their foci and targets for change.

### Professional collaboration

- teachers in State schools undertaking a year-long professional learning, which made progress iterative and cumulative;
- a program of professional learning informed by in-depth case-study research in WA state schools (Centre Schools), making it context appropriate;
- professional learning involving systematic collaboration between teacher academics at Curtin;
- rounds two and three involving 'intern' school principals, alongside 'intern' teachers in joint professional development;
- rounds two and three 'intern' principals being integral to supporting their respective 'intern' teachers, making change management in their school more effective.

### Supported change

- principals and teachers in 'centre' schools provided intern teachers with practical support, through advice, lesson observations and peer reviews;
- Curtin teacher academics provided one-to-one support and advice to each 'intern' teacher in their own context;
- Curtin teacher academics provided intern teachers with research tools to identify the specific strengths, needs and challenges of their school, in order to pin-point where to target change;
- the Curtin team of teacher academics ensured professional learning was iterative and 'tailored' to the needs of each of the three cohorts of teachers.

### Supported accountability

- checkpoints for accountability, used in the action research and mentoring process, ensured progress was made by both leaders and teachers at the level of the individual intern, small teaching group, and whole school;
- collegial management, involving: Curtin staff, WA Department of Education and Principals enabled close monitoring and responsive change to occur, as required;
- scheduled PL opportunities for interns to report on the program and success, making them accountable at each stage of development.

### Responsivity

- The Curtin team devised a PL program that was agile and able to accommodate the changing needs of each cohort;
- The project was iterative and evolved to overcome challenges, giving it resilience and validity;
- The model of supported accountability enabled schools at different stages of development to set their own targets and match the pace of progress to the school's capacity for change.

## CHALLENGES OF THE CFEETL DESIGN

During the course of the 3 year project we identified a number of challenges. Their consequences and possible solutions are presented in the table below:

CHALLENGES	CONSEQUENCES	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
After Round 1, the reduction of Centre Schools from 5 to 4.	Increased workloads, especially for the remaining Centre Schools.	Identify extra schools of excellence to support the project if necessary.
Leadership changes at Centre Schools Round 1: Six principal changes. Round 2: Two principal changes Round 3: None	Disruption to the program. Intern had to negotiate new working arrangements with the new Principal. Curtin staff had to brief the new Principal.	Highly recommend that leadership teams commit to being part of the project for its duration. Involvement of the Deputy Principal to support continuity.
Intern changes in schools Round 1: One intern changed Round 2: Three changes Round 3: Four changes	Another teacher had to replace the original intern, causing a disruption to the program. Curtin staff had to brief the new intern.	Two interns appointed within each school would enable continuity in the event of an intern leaving.
Intern changes at the end of the project without fulfilling the role of engaging a partnership school Round 1: Five interns left	Curtailed implementation of the action plan beyond the PL program; Prevented a neighbouring school benefitting from the intern's support.	
Schools in the same cohort, at the commencement of the PL program, were at different stages on the continuum to Explicit Literacy Teaching.	The Curtin team and Centre Schools had to differentiate the PL and support to meet the differing needs of these schools.	Fortunately, the Curtin team devised a program that was responsive and flexible. The corollary is that the design of PL needs to be conducive to the needs of each school.
Time allocation for the project differed between internship schools	Interns given more time were often more successful in implementing their action research.	Guidelines outlining time allocation as part of the application process.
Interns and Principals had differing perceptions of explicit teaching.	This caused some interns and Principals initial confusion about the expected model of good practice.	Explicit teaching can take different forms. So, each school needs to devise or adapt a model of teaching and learning that consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear and achievable learning objectives;</li> <li>• builds on students' prior learning/ knowledge;</li> <li>• a scaffolded approach to learning;</li> <li>• a degree of challenge for learners;</li> <li>• measure of success that is discernible to both the teacher and the learner.</li> </ul>
All Centre Schools were Metropolitan	Regional and remote contexts were not represented; Centre Schools had high student numbers - small intern schools did not have an equivalent exemplary model.	Identify and include regional and remote schools that are exemplary models. Identify and include a small school as an exemplary model.
Schools geographically located far from both Centre Schools and other internship schools.	Travel expenses to visit Centre Schools to view lessons and liaise other internship schools prohibited closer connection and the number of visits.	Western Australia is a vast state and choosing rounds of interns which are geographically closer would enable intern schools to liaise with each other. Choosing Centre Schools outside of the metropolitan area would reduce travel costs and enable closer connection.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

The iterative nature of the CfEETL project meant no two rounds of professional learning were entirely identical; each was tailored to the identified needs of the intern teachers and their schools. In keeping with this trend and in addition to everything stated in the table, we offer the following recommendations for any future projects.



### Research

- further case study research in the existing mentor schools and/or new schools to ensure data are relevant, up-to-date and take account of new and refined practice.



### Student Achievement

- building into the program data collection of students' progress in literacy, as well as teachers' progress;
- including student achievement data at the beginning and end of the program in order to evaluate impact on learning, as well as teaching.



### Timing

- if Terms 3 and 4 were a preparatory stage for full implementation the following academic year, intern teachers could undertake a needs analysis of their own school, devise the action research model, establish a team of peers to drive change, undertake initial visits to their designated mentor school and commence whole school professional learning in their own school;
- implementing action research in Term 1 of the new academic year, intern teachers would have a whole year to implement plans.



### Impact on Mentor Schools

- extending the professional learning program to 6-8 school terms;
- reduce the number of schools in each cohort to 10, but increase the number of interns from each school from one to two teachers;
- identifying Regional and Remote mentor schools and implement geographically situated programs of professional learning (this would ensure the program had greater ecological validity for these schools in the regions).
- undertaking end of project research in mentor schools to identify the benefits and challenges of this model of professional learning for teachers, students and admin teams in these schools;
- interviewing teachers in intern schools to evaluate the impact of the program on those not directly involved in the professional learning; and,
- conducting focus group interviews of students in intern schools to gather data on the impact of the program on their learning.



### Cohort Composition

# PROJECT OVERVIEW





“Sixty schools have successfully participated in 3 rounds of the Centre for Excellence Explicit Teaching of Literacy program.”

# INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Centre is to strengthen and extend explicit literacy teaching in public primary school classrooms across Western Australia. At the end of the 3rd round the program has reached **27,691** students and 2004 teaching staff.

## Phase One – research

**Five days of research at each Centre school:**

- Ballajura Primary School
- Calista Primary School
- Kingston Primary School
- Wattle Grove Primary School
- West Beechboro Primary School

**Involved:**

- 6 researchers
- 1,200 hours of research
- 113 classroom observations
- 147 interviews
- 355 staff involved
- 3,267 children involved

**Outcomes:**

- Five case study narratives
- Ecological model and synthesis of five case studies
- Six educational films
- Design and development of eight days of professional learning
- Interns' file
- Exemplar Units of work

## Phase Two – professional learning

ROUND ONE 2019-2020	ROUND TWO 2020-2021	ROUND THREE 2021-2022
Implementation of 8 days of professional learning	Implementation of 8 days of professional learning	Implementation of 8 days of professional learning
2 mentor visits to each school – total 40 visits per year	3 days where both intern and principals visited all of the Centre schools	2 days where both Intern and Principal visited Centre Schools
Interns devise school action plans for change	2 mentor visits to each school – total 18 visits per year	2 mentor visits to each school - total 44 visits per year
Authentic classroom based professional learning	Interns devise school action plans for change	Interns devise school action plans for change
18 schools 570 staff 7,500 students	18 schools 733 staff 10,510 students	22 schools 701 staff 9,681 students
REACH	REACH	REACH



# Snapshot of findings across all 3 rounds

**100%**

of Interns across all 3 rounds reported a growth in their schools over the program.

**97%**

of Interns across all 3 rounds stated the professional learning was relevant to them as teachers.

**93%**

of Interns across all 3 rounds stated that the professional learning content strongly met the needs of their school.

**81%**

of Interns across all 3 rounds stated the professional learning program significantly improved their understanding of the explicit teaching of literacy.

**These figures should be qualified by the fact that not all schools began from the same starting point and therefore growth was greater for some than others.**

## Project Timeline



## SCHOOLS IN ROUND ONE, TWO AND THREE

### Round One schools:

- 1 Ashfield Primary School
- 2 Aubin Grove Primary School
- 3 Bannister Creek Primary School
- 4 Bull Creek Primary School
- 5 Connolly Primary School
- 6 Creaney Primary School
- 7 Endeavour Primary School
- 8 Falls Road Primary School
- 9 Goollelal Primary School
- 10 Koondoola Primary School
- 11 Mosman Park Primary School
- 12 Rockingham Beach Primary School
- 13 Amaroo Primary School
- 14 Donnybrook District High School
- 15 Hannans Primary School
- 16 Kukerin Primary School
- 17 Northampton District High School
- 18 O'Connor Primary School
- 19 Parkfield Primary School
- 20 Wongan Hills District High School

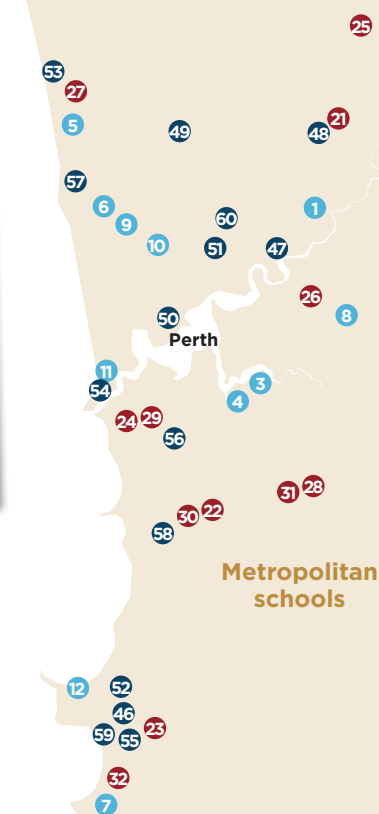


### Round Two schools:

- 21 Anne Hamersley Primary School
- 22 Atwell Primary School
- 23 Baldivis Primary School
- 24 Beaconsfield School
- 25 Bullsbrook College
- 26 Cloverdale Primary School
- 27 Currabine Primary School
- 28 Harrisdale Primary School
- 29 Hilton Primary School
- 30 Jandakot Primary School
- 31 Piara Waters Primary School
- 32 Port Kennedy Primary School
- 33 Falcon Primary School
- 34 Brookton District High School
- 35 Dunsborough Primary School
- 36 Karratha Primary School
- 37 Port Hedland Primary School
- 38 South Hedland Primary School

### Round Three schools:

- 39 Baynton West Primary School
- 40 Dowerin District High School
- 41 Esperance Primary School
- 42 Wandina Primary School
- 43 West Busselton Primary School
- 44 Wickiepin Primary
- 45 Spencer Park Primary School
- 46 Baldivis Gardens Primary School
- 47 Bayswater Primary School
- 48 Ellen Stirling Primary School
- 49 Hocking Primary School
- 50 Hollywood Primary School
- 51 Kyilla Primary School
- 52 Leda Primary School
- 53 Mindarie Primary School
- 54 North Fremantle Primary School
- 55 Rivergums Primary School
- 56 South Lake Primary School
- 57 Springfield Primary School
- 58 Success Primary School
- 59 Waikiki Primary School
- 60 Yokine Primary School



PROGRAM  
REACH:

**60**  
SCHOOLS

**2,004**  
STAFF



**27,691**  
STUDENTS

# UNIQUE MODEL





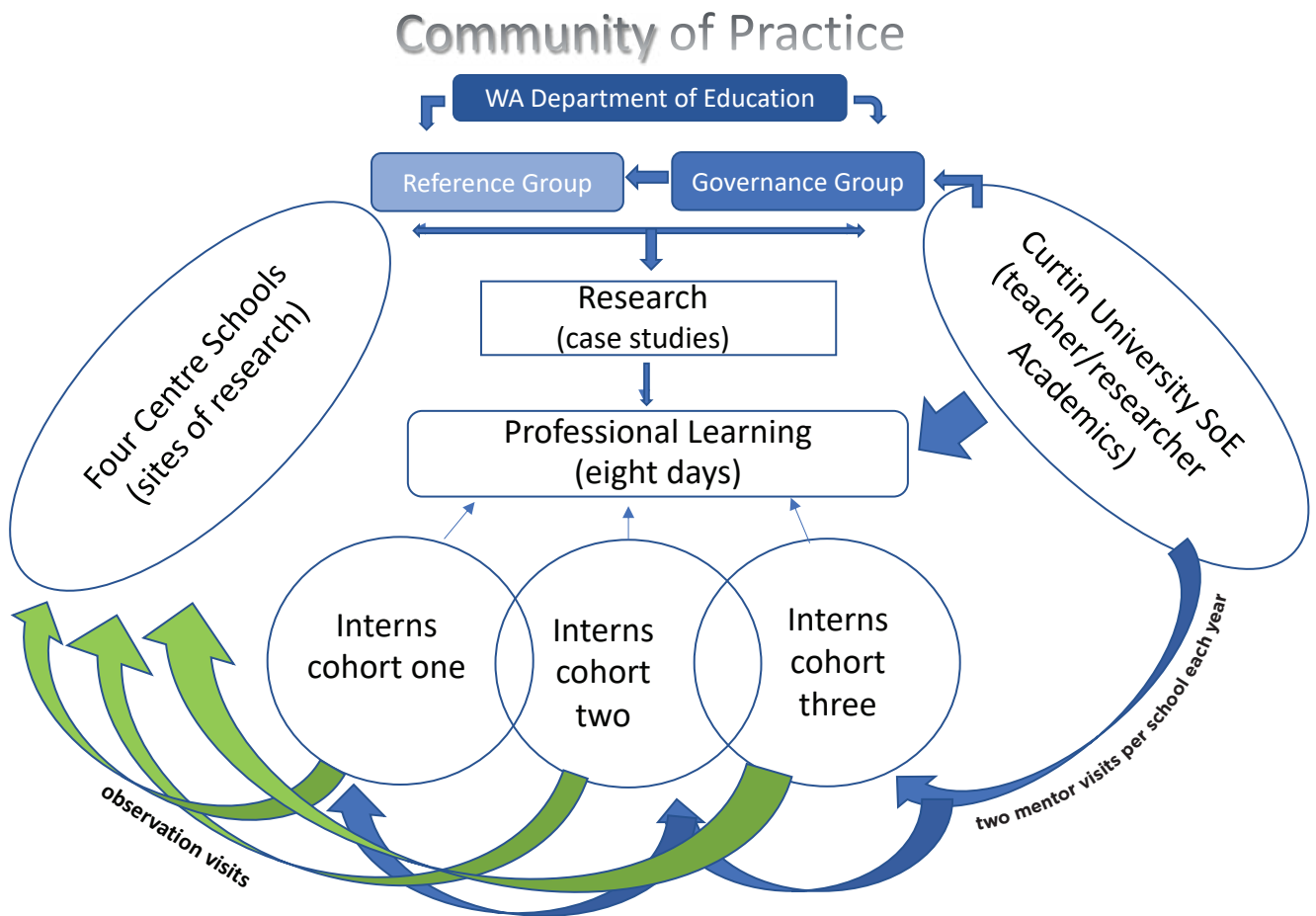


“The CfEETL design is a holistic future focused professional learning model.”

# THE CfeETL: A UNIQUE PROJECT IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The CfeETL quickly evolved to become an integrated, cost-effective network of collegial relationships within a professional community of practice. It brought together teacher academics, Principals and teacher practitioners in an iterative and mutually supportive program of professional learning. Together, colleagues collaborated to advance the teaching of literacy in the State's schools. The uniqueness of the CfeETL project was characterised by:

- Joint management (Principals, WA Dept of Education and Curtin University SoE)
- Original contextually relevant research
- Research informed professional learning
- Extended professional learning
- Extended support to interns and schools





# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Yarning Circle at Curtin University



“Teacher practitioners, teacher academics and school leaders came together to construct a strong community of learning.”

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM

The Professional Learning Program in this project is both distinctive and unique, being premised on current, relevant and authentic research, undertaken in Western Australian schools. The expert team of teacher educators from Curtin University used the case study research from phase one of the project to carefully design and deliver 5 days of intensive, interactive professional learning. The professional learning was re-designed before the start of each round to accommodate the recommendations from previous rounds along with the changing needs of the Intern schools selected. The professional learning program comprised the following components:





### Face-to-Face PL

The professional learning component is a bespoke, individualised and ever-changing part to the program. This is necessary as all the internship schools involved are beginning at a variety of different points.

The five days comprised of transformative and practical strategies such as, collaborative and/ or differentiated approaches. They also included classroom observations, guided practice and opportunities for feedback, between session tasks, presentations from previous Interns as well as opportunities for reflection.



### In School Action Research

A key feature of successful pedagogic and curriculum change in the Centre Schools was their trialling of initiatives by small groups of teachers, in effect, teachers in successful schools are teacher-researchers. In this program Interns become the teacher researcher for their own school by carrying out the action research. Each intern focussed on three levels of action research: individual, small group and whole school.

This results in individualised change for each participating school, another way this program is not just distinctive and unique but context specific.



### Mentor Visits from Curtin University

Each Internship school was visited twice by the Curtin staff. These visits involved the Intern and a member of the leadership team, usually the school principal. The Curtin Team emphasised that these visits were to offer support for the school, rather than checking their progress. Discussions followed a common framework of questions and foci to ensure continuity across all the Internship schools.



### Centre School Support

A mentorship program was developed to assist interns and principals to get the most from the project. It is important that the whole school becomes involved in the process, in particular the leadership team, so change is brought about at a whole school level.



### Collaborative Governance

Oversight of The Centre for Excellence in the Explicit Teaching of Literacy was undertaken by both a Governance and a Reference group. Guidance, accolades and recommendations were made through these groups.

The following people have been involved during the 3-year project:

Curtin Staff for both the Governance and the Reference groups: Professor Rhonda Oliver, Dr Paul Gardner, Dr Sonja Kuzich, Yvonne Sawers, Jane Sutherland and Tatiana Bogachenko.

Department of Education Staff for both the Governance and the Reference groups: Gary Hewitt, Dr Rosemary Cahill, Dene Cranwell, Leonie Clelland, Michelle Kriening, Dr Pat Kiddey, Wayne Walpole and Russell Bembridge.

The Reference group included Principals and Deputy Principals from the 5 (later reduced to 4) Centre Schools:

**Wattle Grove Primary School:** Julie Roberts

**Beechboro Primary School:** Ray Boyd, Gayle Higgins and Rachel Lehr

**Ballajura Primary School:** David Wanstall, Jane Schorer and Melinda Mavromatidis

**Calista Primary School:** Cathy De Thierry, Sophie Eddie and Louise Hughes

**Kingston Primary School:** Ashley King, Tanya Uren and Anne Curd.



### Resources

All resources created for the project are stored on a secure Connect portal for use by Interns and leadership teams involved in each round.

# IMPACT OF THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM

## Round Three

### 2021-2022 Round Three Professional Learning (PL) Program

Program began in June 2021 and finished in March 2022.

#### DAY 1 & 2 of PL Program

Starting Monday 31st May interns and principals had 2 days of professional learning with the Curtin team. This was followed by 2 days of visits to the Centre Schools for observations as a part of the Leadership Program.

#### DAY 4 of PL Program

Face-to-face professional learning with Curtin team - including presentations from round 2 interns and principals.

#### DAY 6 of PL Program

Face-to-face professional learning from the Curtin team - including journey presentation from 2 round two interns.

#### DAY 8 of PL Program

Due to COVID number restrictions day 8 was re-designed to host 60 people in an interactive on line experience.



#### DAY 3 of PL Program

Action based research with in interns schools. Includes a support visit from Curtin team for both the intern and principal.

#### DAY 5 of PL Program

Action based research in interns schools - includes refining and revising the action research plan and preparing for day 8 presentation.

#### DAY 7 of PL Program

Action based research with in interns schools. Includes a support visit from Curtin team to watch an explicit teaching lesson.

**95%**  
OF INTERNS



95% OF INTERNS AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM WAS UNIQUE.

**95%**  
OF INTERNS



AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM REPRESENTED EXCELLENCE IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING.



**95%**  
OF INTERNS

AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT THEY VALUED THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM BECAUSE IT WAS BASED ON CASE STUDIES OF HIGH PERFORMING, LOW TO MEDIUM ICSEA WA SCHOOLS.

“ The expertise of the Curtin staff was invaluable. ”

*Intern, Round Three*

**95%**  
OF INTERNS



AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM ENABLED THEM TO DEVELOP EXPLICIT TEACHING OF LITERACY PRACTICES AND PROCESSES THAT SUITED THEIR SCHOOL CONTEXT.

“ Listening to other schools' journeys and visiting the different schools was extremely beneficial ... seeing it in action! ”

*Intern, Round Three*







“ The Explicit Teaching Planning Placemat and Action Research Process Guide have been excellent in supporting our EI journey. They helped staff to see the journey we have already been on and where we can strive to be next. ”

*Intern, Round Three*

“ Having the team from Curtin come to observe and support implementing our action research project was extremely beneficial to our success. Their suggestions and positivity helped to drive this project in the right direction. ”

*Intern, Round Three*



**90%**  
**OF INTERNS**



AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THE PROGRAM RECOGNISED THE EXISTING STRENGTHS AND EXPERTISE OF THEIR STAFF.

**90%**  
**OF INTERNS**

AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THEY FELT VALUED FOR THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE.



**90%**  
**OF INTERNS**

AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THEY WERE ABLE TO CREATE AN ACTION RESEARCH PLAN THAT SUITED THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF BOTH THE STAFF AND THE SCHOOL.

**90%**  
**OF INTERNS**



AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED DIRECT OBSERVATION OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS AT THE CENTRE SCHOOLS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXPLICIT TEACHING OF LITERACY.

“ The rich discussions with presenters and between colleagues. The opportunity to discuss future directions with my principal was instrumental. The provision of models to guide the action research was a helpful starting point. ”

*Intern, Round Three*

# ACTION RESEARCH





“ Action research gave teachers a model that allowed them to be in control of the solving of ‘problems’ important to them.”

## ACTION RESEARCH

Early in the Professional Learning Program, the Curtin University CfEETL team introduced a model of Action Research as a 'tool' to assist 'Intern' teachers to initiate effective change in their own classrooms and across the whole school.

**Action research** – is a form of empirical research undertaken by participants in the research setting. It is especially useful for teachers to use in their classrooms/schools. After identifying a problem/issue, research involves a cycle of systematic investigation in which a possible solution is devised (based on literature and previous research) and implemented. Data is collected and analysed in order to evaluate the success of the solution. Successive cycles of intervention are enacted until the problem has been solved.

The action-research model (ARM), which was explained by the Curtin University CfEETL team, allowed teachers to be 'in-control' as agents of their own learning and directors of ameliorative change in their own contexts. Action research operated at three levels with the following benefits:

### Individual level

- allowed teachers to acquire deeper knowledge of the capabilities and needs of children in their class
- facilitated the trialling and refinement of lesson structures
- facilitated the trialling and refinements of teaching/learning resources

### Small group level

- allowed the identification of 'change champions' who worked closely with the 'intern' teacher
- enabled the 'intern' teacher to collaborate in a community of practice based on trust
- enabled collective identification of problems/issues and solutions
- facilitated the sharing of resources shown to be effective through the ARM

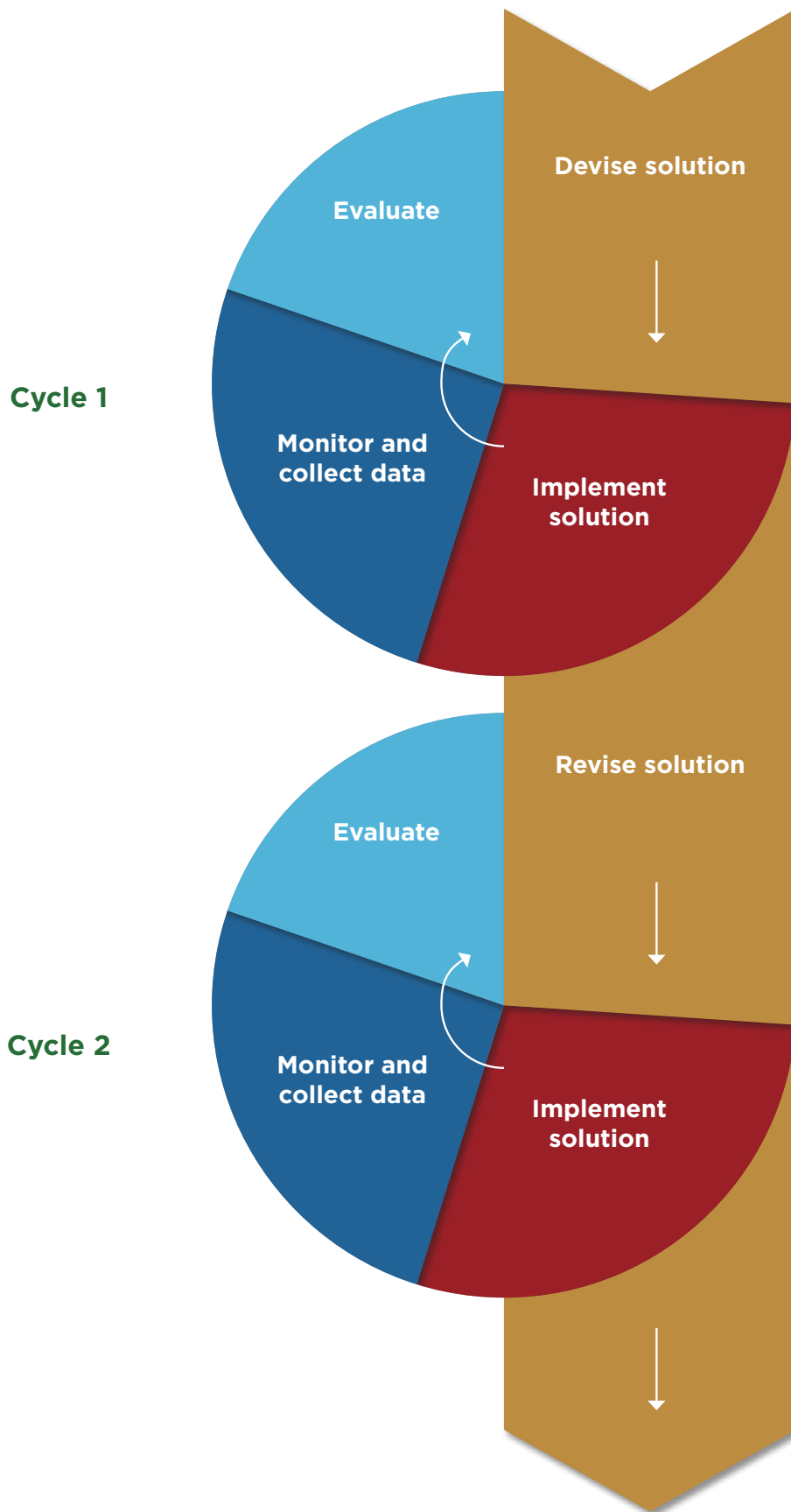
### Whole school level

- involved all colleagues in identifying whole school strengths and challenges in English/Literacy by using a research tool devised by the CfEETL team at Curtin University
- enabled a whole school approach, drawn from evidence based practice developed in their own school and matched to the specific needs of the context
- created a whole school vision with clear and improved expectations for teaching and learning
- enabled the 'intern' teacher to develop their leadership skills, leading to several successful Level 3 teacher applications



# MODEL OF ACTION RESEARCH

## Identify Problem/Issue



# OUTCOMES FROM ROUND THREE



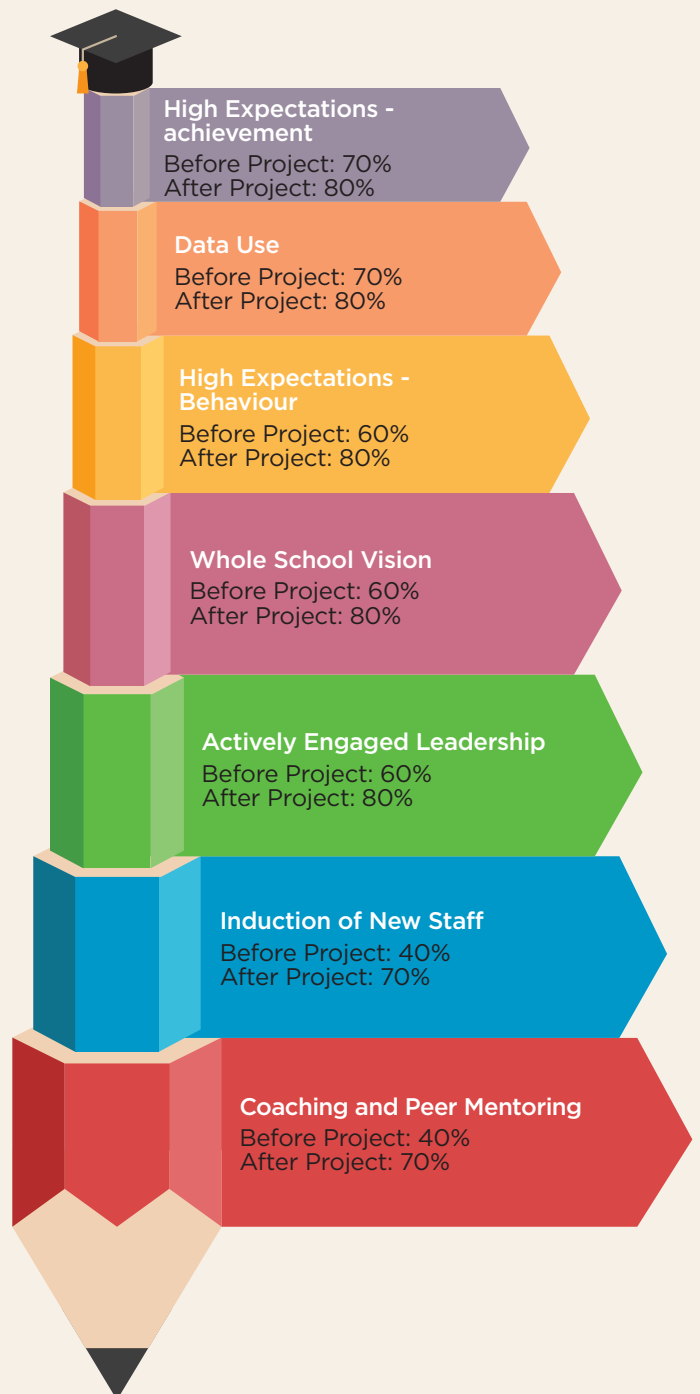
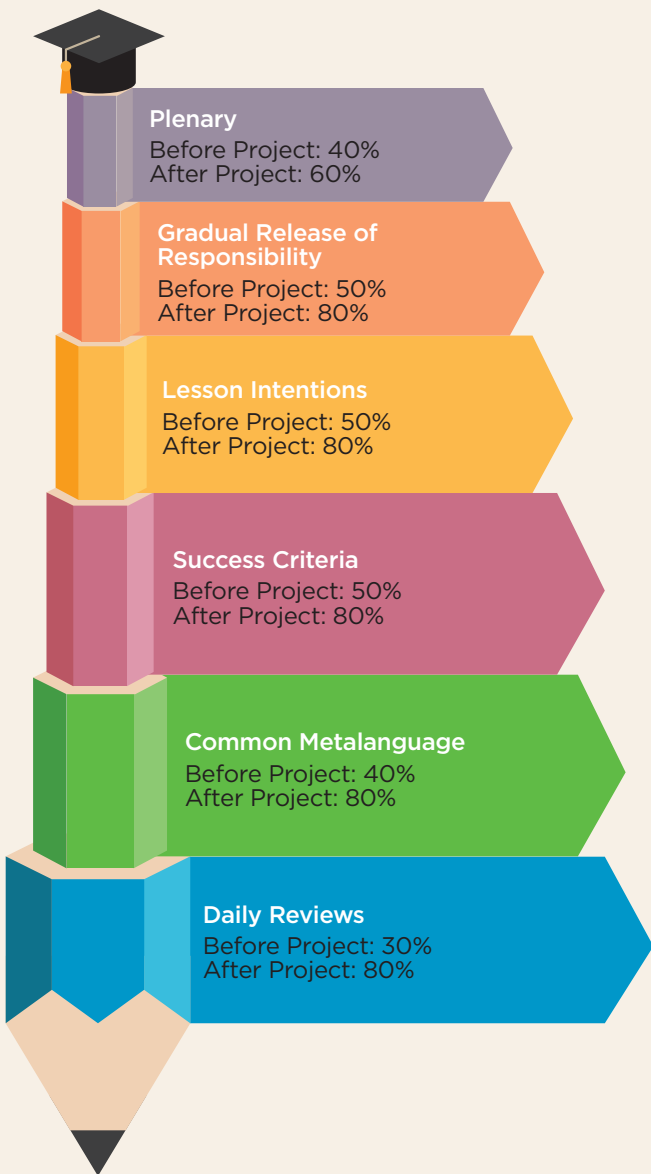


“Positive outcomes are outlined by all schools involved, particularly in the areas of teaching practices and whole school practices.”

At the end of the year long program Interns took part in a self-evaluation of the following teaching practices and whole school processes. The graphs show the average of results before and after the project and definitions of the various areas can be found on the glossary page at the end of the report.

### Teaching Practices

### Whole School Processes



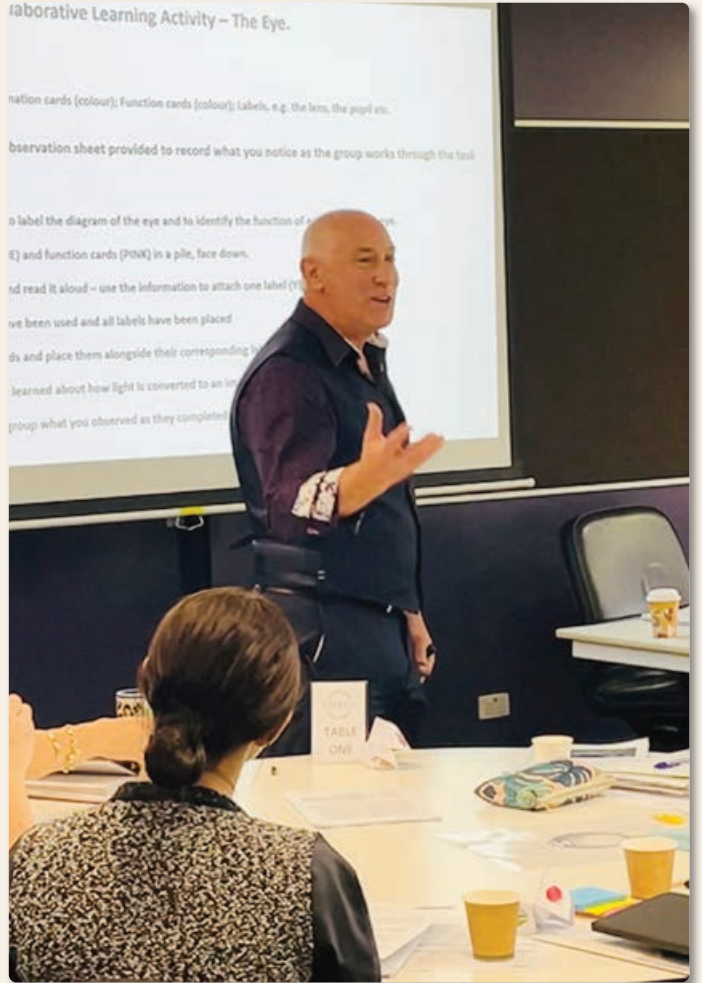




The Centre for Excellence in the Explicit Teaching of Literacy project consisted of bitesize steps that scaffolded innovative practice in teacher professional development for improved literacy teaching and outcomes.

Greatest increase in *teaching practices*:  
Daily Reviews and Common Metalanguage

Greatest increase in *whole school processes*:  
Coaching/ Peer Mentoring and Inducting New Staff



Based on our initial research and the action research undertaken by interns in their individual schools, we conclude that explicit literacy teaching **requires effective systematic whole school change.**

As a result of being involved in the internship program Interns reported improvement in the following areas:

### Whole School

- Scope and sequence documents

**100%**  
of interns

- Assessment plans

**100%**  
of interns

- Sharing of resources in a commonly accessed place

**100%**  
of interns

- Common lesson framework

**100%**  
of interns

### Students

- Ability to answer questions
- Engagement in classroom activities

**95%**  
of interns

- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling

**90%**  
of interns

- Oral language

**85%**  
of interns

As a result of being involved in the program interns reported an improvement in their ability to teach the following aspects of literacy:

### Teaching

- Vocabulary
- Meta language
- Oral language
- Questioning skills



- Reading fluency
- Comprehension - literal and inferred
- Sentence construction
- Writing quality



- Phonics
- Reading accuracy
- Spelling




“ My sincere thank you to all people involved and allowing us to be involved. Curtin staff were so supportive during their visits ... they asked thought provoking questions that ensured I continued to strive for better. ”

*Intern, Round Three*

# PROJECT DELIVERABLES





“ As part of the project remit, the Curtin team provided a suite of deliverables. The following are examples of Curtin meeting and exceeding these project requirements. ”

# PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Outlined below are the ways in which Curtin met the expected project deliverables set out by the DoE, and exceeded these by providing additional resources and outcomes.

## Research

**The Curtin University team recognised the ‘deliverable’ identified in the project remit was inadequate and used their knowledge and expertise to devise a more rigorous and thoughtful approach.**



Initial Expectation –

- three visits to Centre Schools
- three hours in each school to collect data for case studies.

Curtin University team’s Actual Outcome –

- seven visits to Centre Schools (including 5 consecutive whole days of research)
- conducted 113 individual classroom observations
- undertook 147 individual interviews
- produced 5 detailed case narratives, which were used in the PL program (these were highly valued by ‘intern’ teachers and were used in PL in their own schools.



## Formal Launch

Initial Expectation -

- hold an official launch of the Centre for Excellence in the Explicit Teaching of Literacy.



Curtin University team's Actual Outcome -

- held an official launch of the Centre for Excellence in the Explicit Teaching of Literacy attended by the State Minister for Education, Sue Ellery; senior WA DoE staff; Acting VC John Cordery, the Curtin University Research team, Principals of Centre Schools and 'intern' teachers and Principals of Round One schools.

## Centre for Excellence Films

The Curtin University team spent approximately 3 weeks preparing for filming, liaising closely with a professional team of film makers. They spent a further week in the five schools shooting the films.



Initial Expectation -

- six three and half minute films.

Curtin University team's Actual Outcome -

- produced 6 films of approximately 7 minutes each
- additional films were produced to capture the full range of excellent teaching
- conducted a film awards evening at The Backlot Cinema to celebrate the work of key staff at the Centre schools.

## Follow-up Support

The Curtin University team was responsive to the differing needs of individual 'intern' teachers and schools, and committed additional resources to meeting their needs across the entire project.



Initial Expectation –

- two mentor visits to each school.

Curtin University team's Actual Outcome –

- two mentor visits to each school
- online meetings with groups of 'intern' teachers between visits and PL days
- established a private CfEETL Facebook page, enabling 'intern' teachers and the Curtin University team to liaise
- provided online support sessions during Covid restrictions.

## Accreditation

- Curtin University offered post-graduate credit for units in its M.Ed program to any 'intern' teacher who wanted it
- the Curtin University team wrote references of endorsement for 'intern' teachers applying for Level 3 Teacher status.





## Professional Learning Program

The Curtin University team included three highly professional and knowledgeable experts in professional learning, who recognised the need for flexibility and innovation.



Initial Expectation –

- design 8 days of professional learning, repeated for 3 cohorts over 3 years.

Curtin University team's Actual Outcome –

- devised a flexible model of professional learning
- revised the content of the PL program each year, following feedback from the previous cohort
- revised the content of the PL program to take account of the differing needs of each cohort.

## Resources

The Curtin University team had extensive experience as teacher practitioners of resource development and used their knowledge to enhance the project remit.



Initial Expectation –

- devise 5 case studies based on Centre Schools
- devise 6 units of work.

Curtin University team's Actual Outcome –

- created 5 rich qualitative narratives for 'intern' teachers and their Admin teams
- created 6 units of work
- devised over 40 different resources which were used in the delivery of professional learning and schools
- provided each 'intern' teacher and their Principal with a file that included all resources developed
- sourced and selected numerous project relevant research articles (included in the file)
- devised a model of whole school development (highly valued by intern teachers and Principals)
- devised a model of essential elements for the explicit teaching of literacy.

# GLOSSARY





## GLOSSARY

**Action research:** a form of empirical research undertaken by participants in the research setting. Research follows a cycle of systematic investigation in which a problem is identified. A possible solution is devised (based on literature and previous research) and implemented. Data is collected and analysed in order to evaluate the success of the implemented solution. Successive cycles of research are enacted until the problem has been solved.

**Governance Group:** members of this group included colleagues from Statewide Services the Curtin School of Education team. Its purpose was to manage the progress of the program and ensure the completion of project deliverables.

**Reference Group:** members included colleagues from Statewide Services; the Curtin School of Education team and Principals of Centre/Mentor Schools. Its purpose was to monitor the ongoing implementation of the project; identify and report challenges and affordances; and recommend ameliorative changes.

**Centre/Mentor schools:** at the start of the project five schools were identified by the WA Department of Education. These schools had demonstrated sustained success in literacy teaching and were performing better than similar schools, based on their ICSEA score. The Curtin team conducted ethnographic research in each school in order to create five case-study narratives, which become integral to the initial two days of the professional learning program. During Rounds 2&3, four schools also adopted a mentoring role. This allowed intern teachers and their Principals to see, first-hand, how these schools operated. Teachers and Principals of mentor schools also provided professional advice to intern teachers and their Principals.

**Intern(s):** over the course of the project there were 60 interns. These were teachers who participated in the professional learning program, spanning four terms.

**Intern school(s):** schools with a participating intern teacher. In addition to the intern, small teams of teachers were created, led by the intern teacher, to drive initiatives triggered by the professional learning program. Principals of these schools actively supported change.

**Professional Learning:** the program included: five days of face-to-face professional learning delivered by the Curtin team; three-days research, conducted by interns in their schools, two support/mentor visits by the Curtin team to each intern school, and visits by interns to mentor schools (Rounds 2&3).

**Teaching Practices:** pedagogical practices used within the classroom.

**Daily Reviews:** Activate children's prior knowledge and connect it to what is already known at the beginning of a lesson.

**Plenary:** The time at the end of the lesson to review and consolidate what has been learned.

**Success Criteria:** What students will say, do, make, or write to demonstrate they have met the lesson intentions.

**The Gradual Release of Responsibility:** The goal is to provide appropriate instruction, for students by modelled and guided practices towards their independence.

**Lesson Intentions:** Ensure children have a clear understanding of each lesson's purpose.

**Common Metalanguage:** Common language used and understood by both teachers and children to describe explicit literacy teaching.

**Whole School Processes:** processes and procedures that are used consistently by all teachers.

**Data Use by Teachers:** Data about student progress is used to determine future teaching and learning

**Coaching and Peer Mentoring:** Experienced teachers coach and mentor other teachers on staff.

**High Expectations for Behaviour:** Teachers set clear expectations for behaviour and believe children will meet them.

**Whole School Vision:** All staff have the same vision for improvement for both teaching and learning

**Actively Engaged Leadership Teams:** The leadership team understand literacy teaching and learning and are actively supporting teaching staff.

**High Expectations for Achievement:** Teachers understand that all children, irrespective of background, have the potential for high achievement. They set targets and plan their teaching for learning that will both challenge and support children to meet high levels of achievement.

**Induction of New Staff to Whole School Procedures:** A process for new staff to understand the context and requirements for each school's procedures.









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