

Spirals of Enquiry Participant Pack

A collaboration between Whole Education and curious educators

Whole Education is a national network of schools and partners who are united in their belief that all learners deserve a fully rounded education.

Whole Education brings over 10 years experience in helping schools to network with and learn from each other as well as access to national and international leaders in education.

They define a whole education as one which:

- + Helps all children and young people to develop a range of skills, qualities and knowledge they need to succeed and thrive in life, learning & work
- + Makes learning more relevant & engaging, with young people taking ownership of their own learning
- + Supports learning across various settings (online, outside, at home and through volunteering and work) while engaging the wider community

Spirals of Enquiry Participant Pack

1. Welcome to Spirals of Enquiry
2. Getting started FAQs
3. Dates for your diary for 2019-20
4. Support during the year - your spirals coach
5. The 6 stages of the Spiral
6. Stages 1-3 reflection questions

Getting started guide

7. The scanning phase
9. Focus & developing a hunch
11. Preparing for taking action - theory of change
12. Reflections

School spotlights

13. St Johns CE Primary, Hindley Green
14. The Fallibroome Academy, Macclesfield

16. Meet the Team

Welcome to Spirals of Enquiry

For equity and quality



A very warm welcome to you and your enquiry team. We are delighted that you have chosen to embark on an enquiry-led professional collaboration with us this year.

Spirals is all about being open to new learning and taking evidence-informed action in your setting. As Linda and Judy (the originators of spirals in British Canada) often say, spirals is not an initiative - it is a way of professional being.

We hope that over the course of this year you will develop a greater understanding of your learners, go on a significant professional journey with your colleagues and embrace new learning and experiences as part of our national enquiry network.

We encourage you to be intentional in your use of spirals; set aside the time to meet with your enquiry team; take advantage of coaching of offer; and above all, keep asking the questions:

- What is going on for our learners?
- How do we know?
- Why does it matter?

We look forward to learning alongside you this year.

The Whole Education Team

Getting Started

FAQs

Who should be on my school team?

Your most important decision is the people you choose to be on your enquiry team.

As a rule, it should be 3 members of staff who are curious about what is going on for learners, motivated to do something new and are reflective and collaborative professionals. This is especially important in year 1 as the team will set the tone for enquiry-led collaboration in your school, so you want people who can inspire others.

We strongly recommend that at least one member is on SLT. We have made some suggestions below about who you might choose to include depending on your school priorities:

Classroom teacher | SENCo | Year Head | Pastoral Lead | Curriculum Lead | CPD Lead

You will need to choose a named project lead.

Setting Expectations

Spirals of Enquiry, like other models of professional enquiry, is not a silver bullet.

Spirals is a framework which supports collaborative enquiry to bring new perspectives, new learning and new ideas to complex challenges.

It works best when schools commit for a sustained period of time and teachers work together to challenge their assumptions and develop a culture of enquiry. The spiral will evolve and grow over time as each enquiry will throw up new questions to explore.

What is the time commitment?

3 days out: Launch, Midway and Sharing Learning
2 short breakfast / twilight meetings held locally
Time in school for

- Scanning (Est. 15 min per conversation)
- Team Meetings (Est. 2 per half term)
- Reflections & writing up impact (Est 1 hour x 4 - project lead only)

What sort of enquiry will we do?

The best answer to this is we don't know yet!
Teams who come into spirals with a preconceived idea don't get as much out of it as those who are open to being surprised and allow the enquiry to unfold.

You might identify a group of learners to focus on and you will definitely have ideas and assumptions about what you will find - but we encourage teams to simply start by asking the 4 key scanning questions and let that lead their enquiry.



Checklist:

- Identify 3 members for your team
- Decide who will act as project lead
- Send their contact info to Whole Ed
- Put all dates into the school calendar
- Organise a termly check in with your team for updates
- Plan for an opportunity for your team to share with all staff in summer term

Dates for your diary 2019-20

Face to face events

Training Events | Autumn 2019

East Sussex | 30th September
North West | 2nd October
London | 4th October

Midway Events | January 2020

East Sussex | 20th January
Coventry | 21st January
London (Exclusions) | 23rd January

Celebration of Learning | July 2020

North West | 7th July
Bedford | 8th July
London | 9th July

Additional Regional Dates

Some local groups will also have additional breakfast and twilight sessions in between the main days. These dates will be shared with you by group.

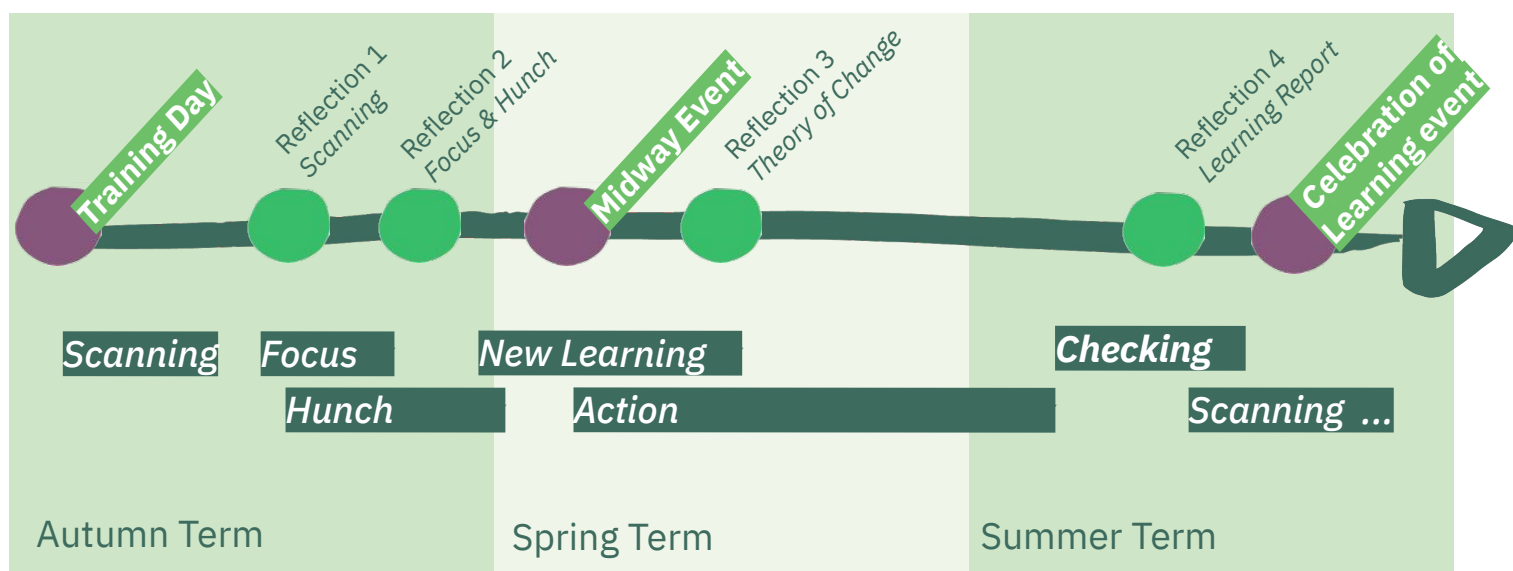
Deadlines for reflections 2019-20

- + Scanning Phase | 1st November
- + Focus & Hunch | 6th December
- + Theory of Change | 14th February
- + Learning Report | 26th June

Your reflections can all be submitted online. The link will be shared via your coach and the website.



Timeline for participants



Support during your enquiry

Spirals coaches



Your spirals coach is a school leader who uses the spiral in their own school.

They volunteer to support new school teams on their spirals journey - they offer advice, suggestions and a new perspective to support your enquiry team through their first cycle of enquiry.

Spirals coaches will touch base with your team via email over the year.

They will send helpful reminders of deadlines coming up and offer tips and support as you work your way through the spiral. Drop a quick reply to these emails to let them know how you're doing.



Your coach will also offer you a check-in call to talk through your spiral at any point.

We particularly recommend that you take up this option as you begin your Focus & Hunch stage as a different perspective to help shape your discussions is really useful.

Your coach is a great resource as they are your link into the wider spirals network.

They will help connect you to other schools and individuals who are working on similar enquiries. If you're looking for new learning on a particular topic they are likely to know someone or can help find them!



How you can help

- + Remember that our coaches are all working in their own school and are busy people like you, so try to reply (even briefly) to emails so they don't have to chase you for a response.
- + Be open with your coach - they are here to help. If anything changes over the year, just let them know and they will do what they can to support you.

The Spiral of Enquiry

Stages 1 -6

You will receive a copy of the Spirals Playbook at the launch event. The Playbook will guide you through each stage of the spiral. You can also download the Playbook from the online resource folder at any time during the year.



The three big-picture questions



What is going on for our learners?

How do we know?

Why does it matter?

Top Tip: Start your enquiry team meetings by asking yourselves the 3 big picture questions above - what's going on for our young learners? And, what's going on for the rest of us?

You can use the spiral to go deeper in analysis. As well as using quantitative data to guide you (e.g. attendance, behaviour, reading scores etc), consider where the learning is leading - socially, emotionally, intellectually and academically.

The Spiral of Enquiry

Stages 1-3

You should be able to answer these questions following the training day:

What is scanning?

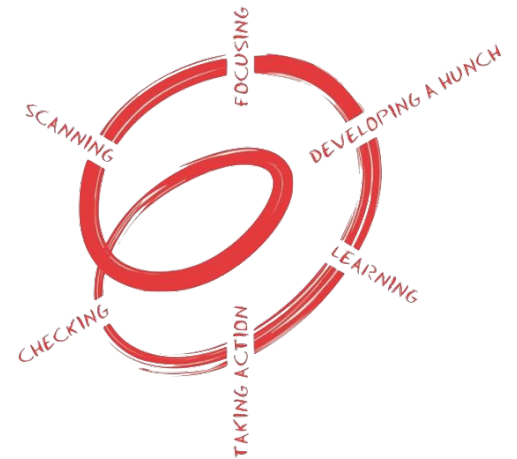
Why is it so important?

Who might I scan?

Where could I scan?

When might I scan?

How can we set up a safe space for learners to answer the questions?



What is a hunch?

What hunches do you already have?

Hunches are:

FACT or OPINION?

How do you identify a focus?

“ A focus is...

”

Advice you heard and you want to remember

“

”

Getting started

Scanning Phase

See Spirals
Playbook pages
20, 24-25

Why do we scan our learners?

The scanning phase is designed to support an enquiry team to collect a variety of rich evidence about what is *really* going on for their learners.

Too often, enquiry teams overlook their learners as a source of data. Spirals of Enquiry is based around the principle that it is important to challenge our assumptions by asking learners directly how things look from their viewpoint, as well as using all of the other data sources and information you collect.

What will they tell us?

The scanning questions are drawn from research on social and emotional learning and self-regulation, informed by the work of Kim Schonert-ReicHL and Helen Timperley. The questions are pivotal at the scanning and checking stages. They explore: the extent to which learners are **connected** to their school community (a key indicator of social and emotional wellbeing); and their capacity for **metacognition** and **self regulation**.

Who should we ask?

It is up to you as a project team to decide who to ask. The wider the sample, the more information you will have going into the focus stage.

Some examples from other schools:

- + Ask all learners in KS2
- + Ask 10 non PP and 10 PP 'high starters'
- + Randomly select 15 learners from Y10
- + Ask all boys who did not achieve age related expectations last year

How should we ask?

It is important to set up an environment where learners feel comfortable to answer the questions honestly and fully. This might mean that you need to do some pre-work e.g.

- + Have an adult who is known to the learner but not their direct teacher ask the questions so learners feel like they can be honest
- + Set aside time - 15 minutes is recommended - plan the conversation at a time when you won't be interrupted
- + Explain to learners why you are asking the questions and that you value their answers to help inform the work you are doing - this will encourage honesty
- + Stick as closely to the given question as possible but feel free to adapt if you feel it is necessary and definitely do ask follow up questions to get richer answers

Top Tip: Ask prompt questions

A good technique to build on learner responses.

Can you name two adults in this setting who believe you'll be a success in life?

- + What do they do to show you they believe in you?
- + What does success in life mean to you?

The scanning questions



1. Can you name two adults in this setting who believe you'll be a success?

2. What are you learning and why is it important?

3. How is it going with your learning?
4. What's next?

Can I adapt the questions if needed?

You know your learners better than anyone so of course you can adapt the questions if you feel that this would benefit them. We do recommend that you stick as closely to the original questions as possible as they have been tried and tested across the world and are crafted from extensive research. However, see below how you might prepare learners or adapt the questions.

Explore the meanings before starting.

- + Particularly around success and what does success mean e.g. in a class discussion

Timesave:

- + If short on time just ask the first 2
- + Narrow your sample of learners down

Reword the questions.

- + For example, 'Who in school has got your back?' for the first one.
- + See below for an example of how a primary teacher reworded the questions for a Year 1 group.



Checklist

- Has your enquiry team agreed which learners you will ask the questions?
- Is everybody clear on the structure of the conversations you will have? E.g. have you agreed some common prompts?
- Do you have a tool to capture the responses of learners? (See Google Drive)
- Have you arranged a suitable space and time to ask the questions? Remember if you are short on time just ask the first two questions or a smaller sample of learners.
- Have you planned your next enquiry team meeting to review the responses and begin the focusing stage?

4 key questions for learners...

- Can you name 2 people in this setting who believe you will be a success in life?
- What are you learning and why is it important?
- How is it going with your learning?
- What are your next steps?

How I adapted these for my learners:

- Do you like school?
- What do you like about school?
- What do you dislike about school?
- Who wants you to be the very best you can be? (successful)
- Who believes you can be the best you can be?
- Does anyone think you are amazing at something? (If yes ask who and what at?)
- What do you have to do to be the very best you can be? (successful)
- In school, what are you good at?
- If you could change one thing about school, what would it be?

Scan

Year 1 children completed the questionnaire verbally with a familiar adult.

10 children were asked the questions. The group included boys and girls, HA-LA children, EAL children and children who had not received red cards.

Resources

Remember to check the shared google drive where you can find helpful resources like a spreadsheet to record responses and questions adapted for learners with special education needs.

Getting started

Focus & Developing a Hunch

See Spirals
Playbook pages
26-29

What is the purpose of these stages?

The purpose of the focus and hunch stages is to identify common themes arising through the scanning phase and to narrow down your enquiry to a particular focus.

Developing a hunch is interwoven with focusing because it encourages your team to prioritise areas where they have some control and to look inwards to consider, **what do we as adults do to contribute to this situation?**

New learning and taking action will be much more successful when project teams take the time to identify a focus area which is genuinely meaningful to them and within which they have agency.



Top Tip

You should only focus on something which is in your control and you can do something about

What is a hunch?

Essentially a hunch is an assumption, a view or a belief which you and your team hold about what is going on for learners in your school. You likely have lots of hunches about lots of things.

This stage is about voicing your hunches and acknowledging that they are not necessarily fact and should be tested. It requires humility on the part of the project team to be reflective and seek out new information, so they have a full picture before moving on to new learning.

Why are these stages important?

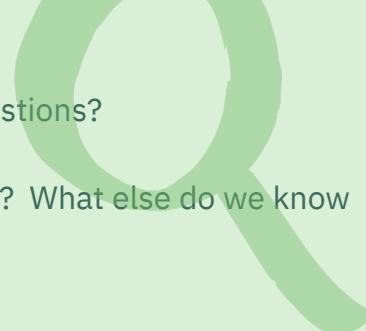
You can't do everything and so it is absolutely essential that you take the time to reflect on what you have learnt in the scanning phase, gather more evidence and test your assumptions before choosing a **focus** area for new learning.

Your time and resources are limited so when you do make a choice for a focus area there are a few things to remember:

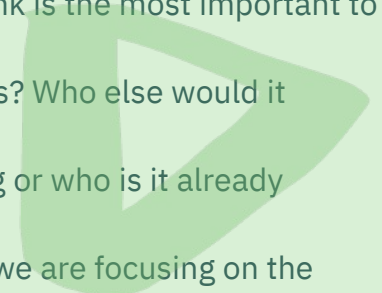
- + Start with ideas & practices that show promise
- + It should be realistic - start small and have the potential to grow
- + It should be directly informed by learner voice in the scanning phase - don't ignore what they are saying. Go back and ask more questions if you need to!
- + It should impact on as many learners as possible so look for common threads

Question prompts for your project team to discuss

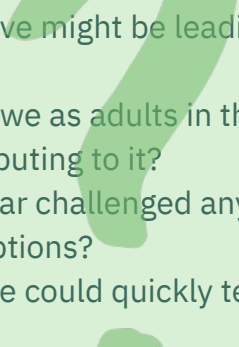
Reviewing Scanning | Following the scanning questions, come together as a team to review.

- a. How did it feel to ask the scanning questions?
 - b. How do we think the students felt?
 - c. What do we notice from the learner responses to the scanning questions?
 - d. What surprises us?
 - e. What common themes and patterns do we notice in the responses? What else do we know about these learners?
 - f. How would we summarise what is going on for our learners?
 - g. Are we sure? Is there anything we might need to check?
- 

Focusing | Bring any additional data you need to this e.g. behaviour / attendance

- a. Which area or theme identified from the scanning phase do we think is the most important to address first? Why?
 - b. How would addressing this issue change outcomes for our learners? Who else would it impact?
 - c. What do we know about this area already? What is already working or who is it already working for?
 - d. What additional information or input might we need to check that we are focusing on the most impactful thing?
- 

Developing a Hunch | This requires honest reflection from your project team.

- a. What do we believe might be leading to this situation?
 - b. How do we think we as adults in this school are contributing to it?
 - c. Has anything so far challenged any of our beliefs or assumptions?
 - d. Are there ways we could quickly test our hunches?
- 

✓ Checklist

- Have you reviewed the scanning data, looking for common themes?
- Have you set ground rules for challenging each other's hunches in a respectful way?
- Have you agreed an area to focus on, which your whole team can work on?
- Have you made sure this is a focus area you can do something about?
- Have you tested your hunches?
- Have you booked into your midway event for new learning?

Remember to submit your reflections on the focus and hunch phase by Friday 6th December

Theory of Change

Preparing for taking action

Where are we now? (Scan, Focus, Hunch)

Changes you will make

Changes to school culture (beliefs, values, leadership)

How will you make these changes - policies, roles, relationships, structures?

Changes in the classroom (T&L, assessment)

What new learning did you do that suggested this as a promising idea or practice?

Evidence for checking

What will look and feel different in school? What will staff be doing that is different?

What would it take to convince you that you're making progress?

What will be different for learners? How will their experience change?

What clues will you be looking for and what evidence can you collect?

What outcomes will you expect to see? For learners? For staff?
When will you check these?

Reflections

To be submitted online

As you finish each stage of your spiral you will need to submit a short reflection to summarise your enquiry. Templates for reflections will be shared with you electronically and can be submitted by one member of your team.

Scanning phase reflections

Deadline | 1st November 2019

- 1) Which students did you ask the scanning questions to and why?
- 2) Who asked the questions? Why was this person chosen for the task?
- 3) How did you feel during the scanning conversations? How do you think your learners felt?
- 4) What did you notice during the scanning conversations? Did anything surprise you?

Complete the following sentences...

- 1) *Before asking learners the four questions, I used to think...*
- 2) *Having asked the questions, I now think....*

Focus & Hunch phase reflections

Deadline | 6th December 2019

1. Which of the areas you identified from scanning do you think is the most important to address first? Why?
2. What other evidence (eg: behaviour/attendance data) have you used to check that this is the right place to start?
3. How would addressing this focus area change outcomes for your learners? Who does it impact and how?

1. What are some of your team's beliefs and assumptions about what is going on for learners?
2. What did you identify that the school does that contributes, positively or negatively, to the specific situation of your learners? Have you tested this in any way?
3. What so far has challenged or confirmed your beliefs or assumptions?
4. Have you discussed these areas with adults related to the learners (eg: families, social workers, etc.)? If yes, what were the findings?

Checking phase reflections

Deadline | 26th June 2020

1. What did you do/change?
2. What outcomes did you want to see? Were you satisfied with the results?
3. What was the impact of the actions on learners' experiences? Please provide specific examples, including statistics /quotes/anecdotes.
4. What will you do next? How will you build a sustainable model?
5. How do you know your actions have made enough of a difference to your learners' experiences? What did they tell you?
6. What will you do next?

Submitting reflections

We use an online platform, survey monkey, to collect reflections during the year. The links will be shared by your coach as well as on the Whole Education website.



School spotlights

Written in their own words.



School: St John's CE Primary School, Hindley

Line of Enquiry: How can we develop pupil premium children's progress in writing?

Scan: We carried out face to face interviews with a group of 20 pupils from Years 1 to 6. We also gave out written questionnaires to all pupils in KS2. We noticed that our pupils were very unsure about how they could improve their work, in particular their writing. They were over-reliant on the teacher to tell them how to improve, and struggled to take ownership of their own progress.

Focus: Our focus became empowering our pupils to understanding the learning process more clearly by making the skills of learning more explicit. Part of this involved the pupils becoming more reflective and skilled at self and peer feedback and critique.

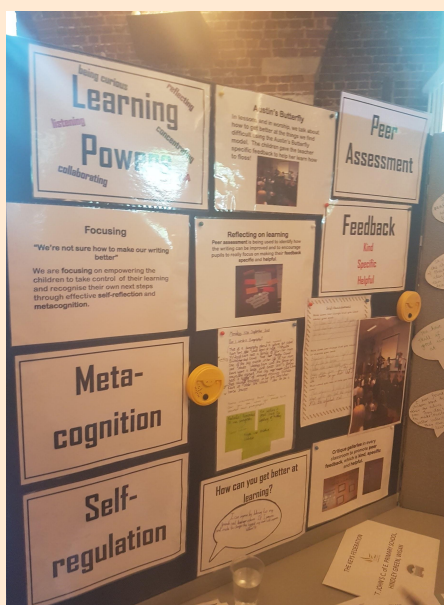
Hunch: We focus too much on results and outcomes rather than on the learners' needs. Sometimes the way we give feedback isn't helpful for pupils as we give them too much rather than encouraging them to reflect and identify how they can improve. We therefore, aimed to build on the pupils' independence and metacognition by increasing pupil involvement and ownership of their learning and encourage less teacher-led talk.

“ Don't settle for your first hunch! Dig deeper if you need to. ”

New professional learning: We researched Guy Claxton's learning powers and started to develop our own unique way of introducing these to the children through stories, displays and into the daily classroom dialogue. Staff learning sessions were focused on metacognition and developing the pupils' verbal reasoning skills. We used these to discuss our feedback and marking practices and how we could develop these to change the pupils' attitudes to their learning journey. We have shared the pedagogy from the Education Endowment Foundation research on self-regulation and metacognition with staff.

Taking action: Each class created a 'critique gallery' to encourage reflection and train the children to give feedback that is 'specific, kind and helpful'. We have adapted the way we give feedback, involving the pupils more in the process through self and peer assessment. We have started to introduce 'learning powers,' beginning with the ability to reflect on learning.

Check: There's now a greater evidence of peer assessment and self-reflection in the children's work books. The classroom dialogue has shifted more towards the how we learn rather than the 'what' we are learning.



“ I am getting better at learning because I now listen to the feedback from my teachers. I can help others to get better by giving them feedback to help them to know how to improve. ”

School: The Fallibroome Academy, Macclesfield

Line of Enquiry: Developing a growth mindset in art at secondary school

Scan: The scanning conversations revealed a general tendency for a growth mindset, yet a fixed mindset in art. Learners felt they could improve their general intelligence and talent but not so much when it came to art. Learners felt they were only confident in certain areas such as drawing and not others like sculpture. Students had a variety of different learning needs and areas they wanted to improve

Focus: The coaching call helped me to narrow my focus to the one most prevalent strand from the initial student responses. It helped me to focus on the most common area, which I felt would make the most impact – growth mindset in art.

Hunch: The main belief that you ‘can’t improve your ability in art’ tended to stem from primary school, early experiences, and upbringing. I therefore planned to focus on what I could do in the present to change these experiences by showing a new perspective to learners.

New learning: I researched Carol Dweck’s *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* which explores growth and fixed mindsets. I also undertook professional learning by visiting other schools. My main professional learning was the power of growth mindset and student voice. I learnt how to plan a scheme of work which underpinned improving student confidence in art. I had to be innovative and creative in my approach to this scheme of work to find ways which would enhance students’ confidence.

“ **Narrow your focus after the initial scanning. Use the questions and listen to the students. Respond. You’ll be amazed at the difference these simple steps make. I really enjoyed this project and felt it made an impact on my learners’ confidence** ”

Taking action: I showed students Ron Berger’s Austin’s butterfly clip about how you can improve in art and a clip about Chuck Close’s art. He is a disabled artist and the clip showed how he improved despite difficulties, reinforcing the message that practice can lead to improved results. I arranged for a Year 13 art student to show how her work had improved over time and talk to the class about her art journey.

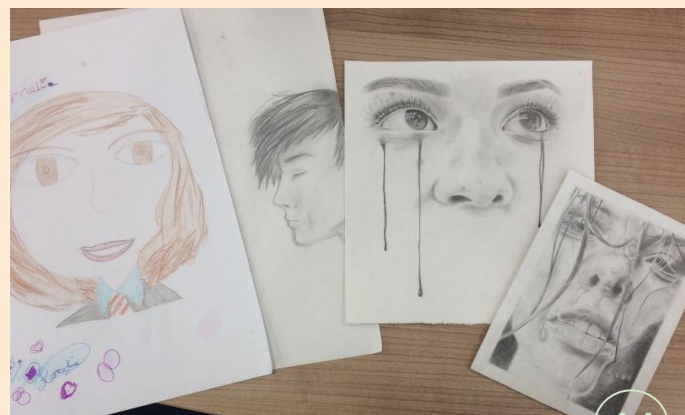
I also re-planned a scheme of work based on improving in art and gave students the freedom to use any materials of their choice to improve in a medium they were not confident with, resulting in a highly differentiated project. I set them a task to redraft a work of art 5 times to get it to their best potential.

Checking: I used surveys, semi-structured interviews and assessed pupils’ artwork to track their progression. I collected quantitative data with google forms, showing pie charts, graphs, numerical data. Face-to-face interviews, students written reflections and google form reflections provided me with qualitative data. All pupils reflected an increased belief in themselves as artists and their ability to improve over time with practice.

3. Did it influence your attitude to your own artwork and if so, how?

Yes. It made me think that I am at the start of my art journey

Reflection from a student in Y9



Work shared as part of a presentation from Y13 on self portraits from Y7 - 13



Meet the team

Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser - originators of the Spiral

Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser lead the Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education and the Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network in British Columbia. They are deeply committed to achieving equity and quality for all learners—and to networking for innovation and improvement both in Canada and internationally.

They are Canadian representatives to the OECD international research program on Innovative Learning Environments. They have also served as principals, district leaders, and policy advisors with British Columbia's Ministry of Education.

Tw: jhalbert8 // Tw: Kaser_Linda



Rosie Leonard-Kane, Programme Director

Rosie is Head of Programmes at Whole Education. Rosie is passionate about professional development and improving the quality of teaching & learning in the classroom. She recently completed her MEd focusing on teacher wellbeing and motivation. She previously worked at School 21 as Lead for Coaching.

Tw: lk_rosie



Julie Temperley, Programme Consultant & Research Director

Julie has been working with Whole Education and Spirals since 2013. She is a researcher, evaluator, story teller, programme designer, consultant, coach and more! Her areas of expertise are education and health.

Julie is a Senior Associate with the Innovation Unit as well as Director of her own research company. She has previously worked for the Centre for Use of Research and Evidence (CUREE) and National College for School Leadership (NCSL).



Your Spirals of Enquiry international family

WE think of the Spirals of Enquiry network in the UK, facilitated by Whole Education, as a family of like-minded educators working together to make a difference for their learners. But just like all families, we also have our far-flung cousins around the world.

By joining Whole Education's Spirals of Enquiry network, you are becoming part of a thriving international community. Of course in British Columbia, Spirals of Enquiry has been deeply embedded in their schools system and teacher training for 20 years. In addition, there are Spirals of Enquiry networks in Australia, Catalonia, Sweden and New Zealand.

Inquiry is about being open to new learning and taking informed action.

The Spiral of Inquiry is not an initiative – it is a way of professional being