**Talk Matters Evaluation & Learning Partner- Clarification Questions & responses.**

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| **1, Do you expect the impact evaluation to involve an experimental design? Experimental methods would likely require participation of schools/LAs outside the programme; are these methods expected? If so, will the VRU support with brokering this participation?** | Given the programme design, the VRU does not have set expectations regarding the impact evaluation methodology. If the applicant believes that a Quasi-Experimental Design is appropriate and feasible for key programme outcomes, the VRU will support in brokering participation / data access from schools outside the programme. |
| **2, How much iteration are you expecting on the theory of change during initial validation workshops? Is the current logic model fairly mature/tested?**  **3, Or are you expecting to use this as a starting point only? (for example, we'd be keen to understand how you envisage the role of funding for wellbeing initiatives vs. pure oracy focus)** | The Theory of Change is iterative, both at the VRU and local levels. A key aspect of the model is that boroughs have the flexibility to develop their projects according to local context and priorities. We expect some boroughs to have developed draft versions by the time the Evaluation and Learning Partner starts working with them, and others to start from scratch.  The role of the funding for social and emotional learning and wellbeing initiatives is to contribute to the necessary conditions for the oracy intervention to succeed. Stakeholders and academics, the VRU consulted highlighted the fundamental and urgent need in schools for increased wellbeing, for children and staff, for learning to happen at both the individual and organisational levels. |
| **4, Are there already data frameworks and data sharing agreements with schools and borough in place? Or will this be the responsibility of evaluation/learning partner to set up?** | The VRU assumes boroughs will have data sharing agreements with schools already in place, however the Evaluation and Learning Partner will be expected to create an agreement with the boroughs once it has been agreed what data needs collecting. |
| **How much funding do you expect schools will allocate to the school level wellbeing programmes, and is this also in scope for the evaluation?** | The VRU is allocating £10,000 per school per year for wellbeing and parent/carer engagement initiative. Some boroughs will commission certain services and ring-fence some cash for each school; other boroughs will give the amount directly to the schools. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that each schools creates a strategy and plan for how this funding should be spent, and supports schools to do this.   This element is in scope for the evaluation. It is likely that each school's wellbeing plan will be different, meaning the evaluation method may need to be qualitative. The VRU is particularly interested in if and how the chosen wellbeing strategies contribute to improving oracy outcomes. |