

# What makes good teacher development?

Lia Commissar - Head of Impact



# About NIoT - Our mission

Our mission is to **improve the quality of teacher and leader development at a system level**. We do this by generating and **interpreting research**, applying the insights to the design and delivery of high-quality teacher development programmes, and **sharing it all with the sector**.

# Teacher Development Programmes Theory of Change

Final report

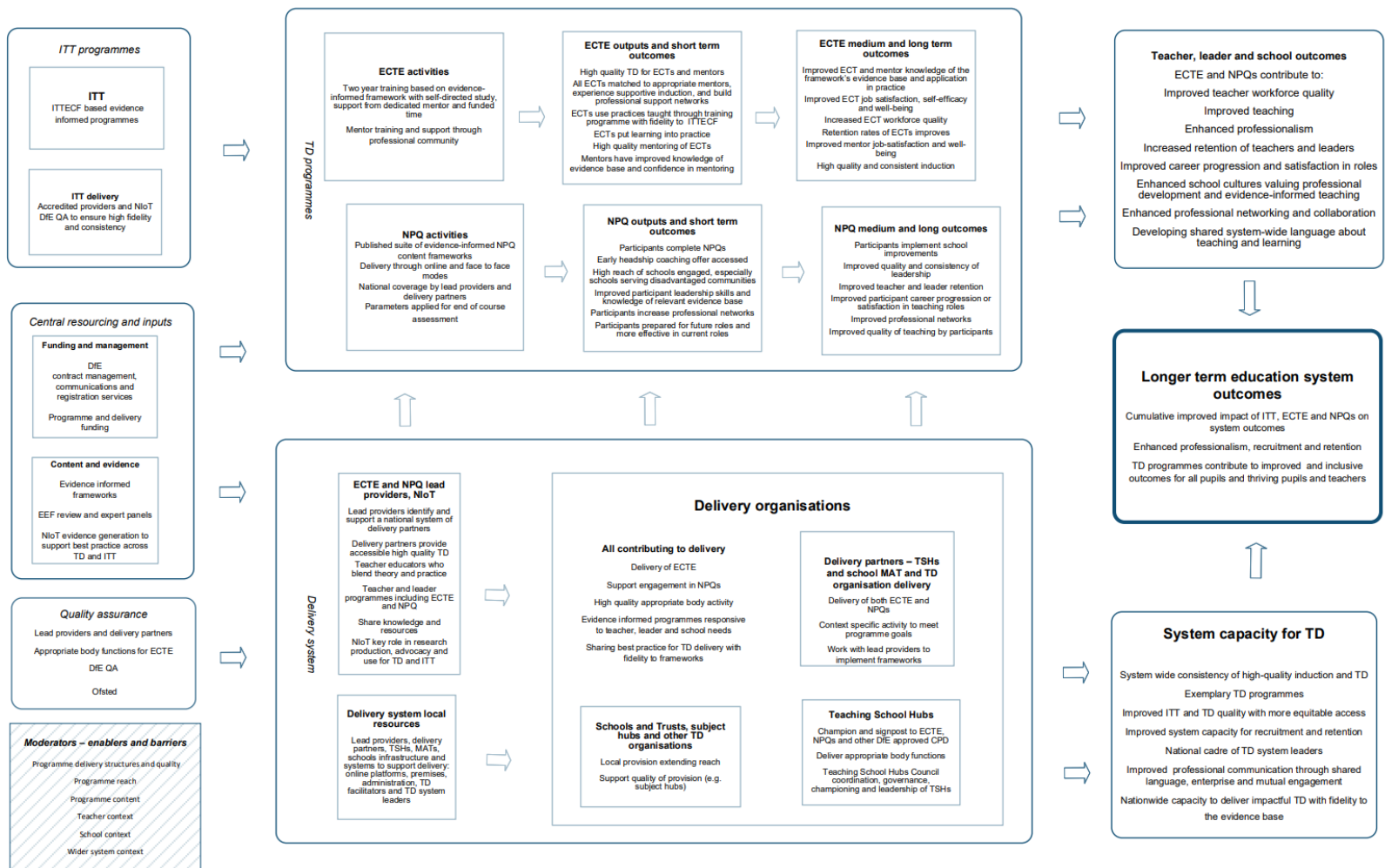
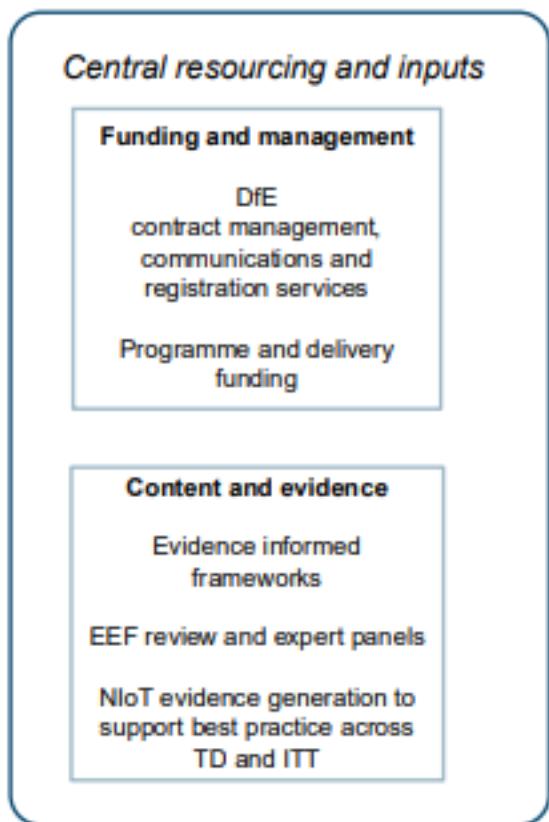
October 2025

Authors: Mark Boylan, Emily Perry, Lucy Clague and Eleanor Hotham

# The Teacher Development Programmes Theory of Change

Department for Education Teacher Development programmes overarching Theory of Change  
 Created by Sheffield Hallam University

**Vision**  
 Improved pupil outcomes enabled by an excellent teaching profession through high-quality evidence-based CPD for teachers and leaders, leading to improved teacher quality and retention



**Think about the best professional development you've experienced / delivered:**

- what made it good?**
- how did you know?**

# Why focus on professional learning now?

- Growing expectations around PD quality
- Expanding and uneven evidence base
- Pressure on time, capacity and impact

# The challenge we are trying to solve

- Evidence is necessary but not sufficient on it's own
- Lots of research exists
- Hard to navigate and interpret
- Design matters as much as content

# Introducing the NIoT Evidence Portal

A **new free** resource for school and trust leaders and those responsible for professional learning

## What the Evidence Portal is designed to do

- Provide free access to rigorous global evidence
- Focus specifically on professional learning
- Support evidence-informed judgement
- Bring research and practice closer together

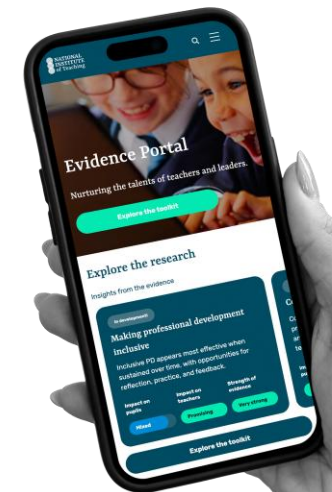


[www.evidenceportal.niot.org.uk](http://www.evidenceportal.niot.org.uk)

# Why does the Portal exist?

Each year **£1.4 billion and nearly 2 million working days** are spent on PD along with £1billion spent training new teachers so we need to make sure the training and development are as good as they can be.

The portal aims to bring **coherence to a crowded landscape**, offering a rigorous, sector-wide resource that strengthens professional learning decisions and supports meaningful improvement.



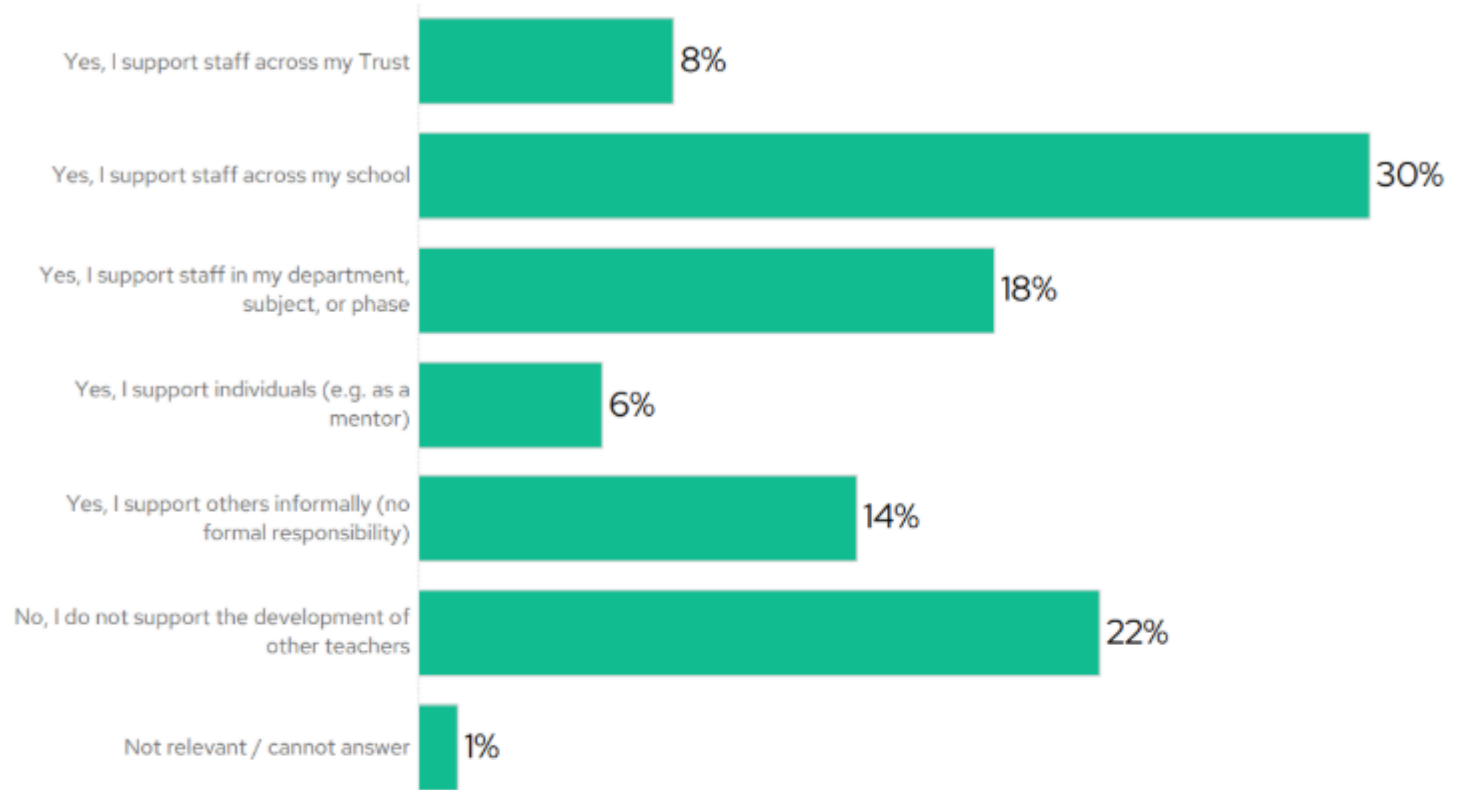
# Who is the Evidence Portal for?

The portal is for those who are involved in the **design and/or delivery** of initial or continued professional development.

## Question 1 Overall Results



### Do you help develop other teachers in your current role?



# Meta-Review

**A systematic meta-review of trainee and in-service teacher professional development practices**

**440  
Reviews**

## **Research reviews were included:**

- evidence synthesis with a methods section (e.g., systematic review, scoping review, meta-analysis)
- focused on ITE, CPD or both (at all educational levels)
- published in English, between 2013 and 2025

## Meta-Review

**A systematic meta-review of trainee and in-service teacher professional development practices**

**440  
Reviews**

## Reviews

e.g. systematic reviews, meta-analysis, scoping reviews, narrative reviews

**50  
Studies**

### Teacher Collaboration

School-based collaboration as a learning context for teachers: A systematic review

**De Jong 2022**

**31  
Studies**

### Leadership of Professional Development

School Administrator Support of Teachers: A Systematic Review

**Martinez 2020**

**62  
Studies**

### Coaching & Mentoring

Mentoring and coaching of teachers: Thematic Synthesis

**Bond 2023**

Video as a tool to support teacher reflection and collaboration  
**Baecher 2012**

Lesson Study as a Vehicle for Collaborative Teacher Learning in a Secondary School  
**Cajkler et al 2014**

Using a Non-Coercive Process to Engage Mathematics Teachers in Lesson Study  
**Canonigo 2016**

School Contexts, Teacher Turnover, and Student Achievement  
**Kraft 2012**

Does New Teacher Induction Really Improve Retention?  
**Ronfeldt 2017**

Effect of National Board Certified mentors on mentee outcomes  
**Zhu et al. 2019**

Impacts of the Retired Mentors for New Teachers Program  
**DeCesare 2017**

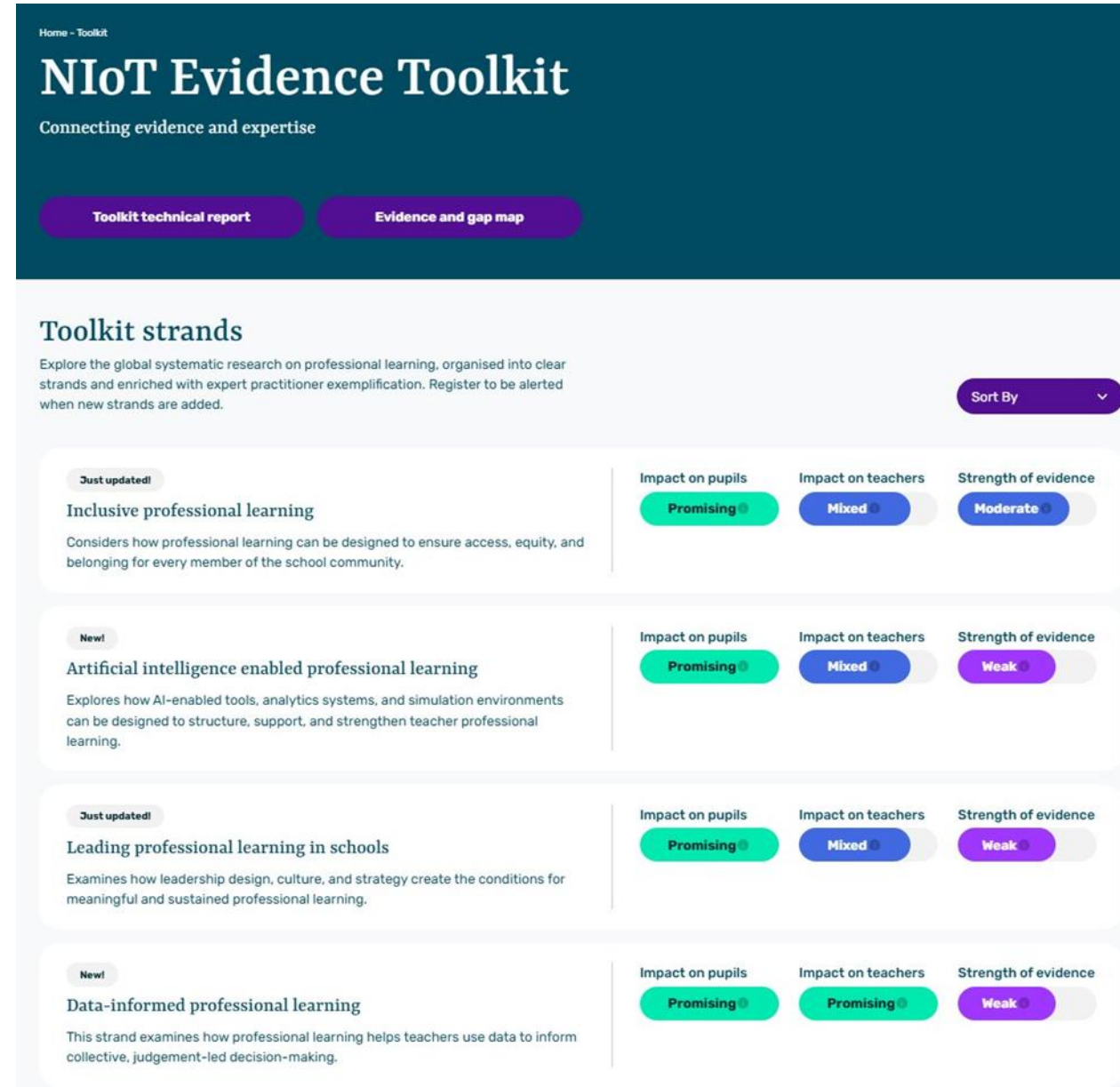
Exploring mechanisms of effective teacher coaching  
**Blazar & Kraft 2015**

## Primary Research Studies

# Demo

# At the heart of the Portal: the Evidence Toolkit

- Organised by professional learning approaches
- Each strand synthesises multiple reviews
- Designed for interpretation, not prescription



Home - Toolkit

## NIoT Evidence Toolkit

Connecting evidence and expertise

[Toolkit technical report](#) [Evidence and gap map](#)

### Toolkit strands

Explore the global systematic research on professional learning, organised into clear strands and enriched with expert practitioner exemplification. Register to be alerted when new strands are added. [Sort By](#)

<p><b>Just updated!</b></p> <h4>Inclusive professional learning</h4> <p>Considers how professional learning can be designed to ensure access, equity, and belonging for every member of the school community.</p>	<p>Impact on pupils</p> <p><b>Promising</b></p>	<p>Impact on teachers</p> <p><b>Mixed</b></p>	<p>Strength of evidence</p> <p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p><b>New!</b></p> <h4>Artificial intelligence enabled professional learning</h4> <p>Explores how AI-enabled tools, analytics systems, and simulation environments can be designed to structure, support, and strengthen teacher professional learning.</p>	<p>Impact on pupils</p> <p><b>Promising</b></p>	<p>Impact on teachers</p> <p><b>Mixed</b></p>	<p>Strength of evidence</p> <p><b>Weak</b></p>
<p><b>Just updated!</b></p> <h4>Leading professional learning in schools</h4> <p>Examines how leadership design, culture, and strategy create the conditions for meaningful and sustained professional learning.</p>	<p>Impact on pupils</p> <p><b>Promising</b></p>	<p>Impact on teachers</p> <p><b>Mixed</b></p>	<p>Strength of evidence</p> <p><b>Weak</b></p>
<p><b>New!</b></p> <h4>Data-informed professional learning</h4> <p>This strand examines how professional learning helps teachers use data to inform collective, judgement-led decision-making.</p>	<p>Impact on pupils</p> <p><b>Promising</b></p>	<p>Impact on teachers</p> <p><b>Promising</b></p>	<p>Strength of evidence</p> <p><b>Weak</b></p>

# Understanding Toolkit strands

## Inclusive professional learning

Considers how professional learning can be designed to ensure access, equity, and belonging for every member of the school community.

Impact on pupils

**Promising** ⓘ

Impact on teachers

**Mixed** ⓘ

Strength of evidence

**Moderate** ⓘ

# Inclusive professional learning

Considers how professional learning can be designed to ensure access, equity, and belonging for every member of the school community.

Impact on pupils

**Promising** ⓘ

Impact on teachers

**Mixed** ⓘ

Strength of evidence

**Moderate** ⓘ

[Download strand](#) ↓

## What is it?

For this strand, inclusive professional learning (PL) refers to how professional learning is designed and delivered so that it creates an inclusive culture across a school or trust. The primary focus is on how PL supports teachers and other staff to develop more inclusive practice with pupils. A connected aspect of this is how PL is itself designed inclusively for staff, in terms of how it is structured, accessed, and experienced.

Research suggests that inclusive PL can shape knowledge, skills, and staff beliefs about pupils' experiences of difference, equity, and participation. In relation to how PL is experienced by staff, the design of PL itself...

[Read more](#) ▾ | [Expand all sections](#) ▾

## Key findings

### Jump to section

[What is it?](#)

[Key findings](#)

[How effective is the approach?](#)

[How to implement it well](#)

[Barriers to effective implementation](#)

[Other considerations](#)

[Summary](#)

[In practice](#)

[References](#)

Stay updated or share your experiences!

# Beyond the Toolkit: Your Questions

- Responding to real sector questions
- Questions submitted by the sector
- Transparent, rapid evidence reviews
- Clear about limits and gaps
- Evidence use as a shared endeavour



## Real questions from practice

We know that not every professional learning question can be answered by the Toolkit alone, so here we share evidence-informed responses to the questions that matter most to teachers, mentors, and leaders. Each answer is grounded in rigorous research and written to be practical and relevant to your work.

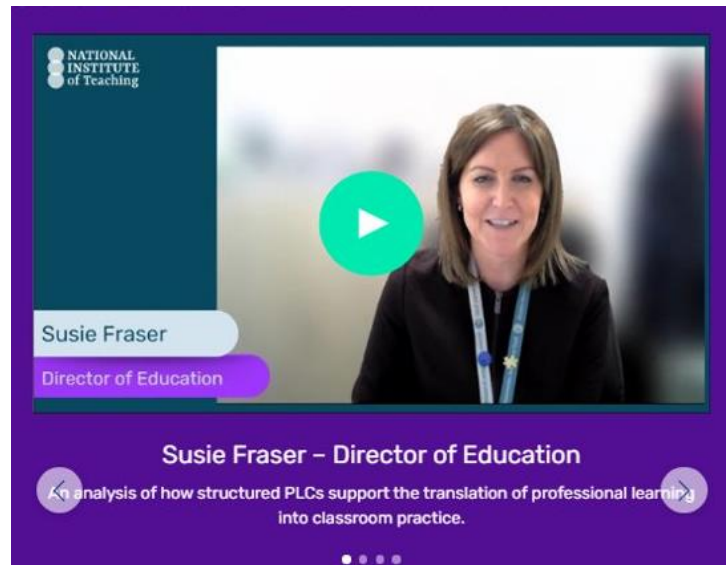
---

**What motivates teachers to engage in professional development?**

+

# Practice insights and examples

- Connecting evidence and real practice
- Short films and reflections
- Examples from schools and trusts
- Shared as learning, not models
- Honest accounts, not case studies to copy



# Thoughts or questions



# A chance to reflect

**1) Pick a strand and have a read** ([Evidenceportal.niot.org.uk/toolkit](https://evidenceportal.niot.org.uk/toolkit))

**2) Note down:**

- How can the Evidence Portal support your work?
- Any immediate reflections on things you might consider / change in your practice supporting others?
- What else would you like to see included that would support your work?
- Any questions

**3) Discuss**

# Reflections and questions



# Explore and Get Involved

The Evidence Portal is free and evolving

You can:

- Explore the Evidence Portal
- Share the portal with your networks
- Share feedback or examples of practice
- Help shape future development



[evidenceportal.niot.org.uk](https://evidenceportal.niot.org.uk)

**Thank you**

