

Key messages – extract from independent evaluation undertaken by Chris Robertson, Birmingham University

Quality Network Review in Educational Settings

1. The Phase 2 findings confirm those of Phase 1 in relation to the ‘transferability’ of the QNR approach from adult service to school settings. The person-centred outcomes approach can be used effectively in school settings and is valued by those involved in QNR review processes.
2. The integration of QNR outcomes with the Every Child Matters outcomes that are more familiar to people in educational settings appears to work well. Furthermore, the QNR outcomes offer an important ‘value added’ approach to looking at outcomes for children and young people because of the way that they focus on the individual rather than externally prescribed outcomes. The message here is clear. Both kinds of outcomes matter.
3. The QNR review process is an empowering one for everyone involved. It can also provide an opportunity to involve a diverse range of people in improving outcomes for children and young people with learning and related disabilities. The process can also involve children and young working alongside other review team members. The value of this kind of participation is significant, not tokenistic, and can fundamentally change the way that a school thinks about ‘how it does things around here.’
4. QNR resources - carefully developed and revised over time - can be used effectively in school settings. However, they would benefit from further adaptation to make them more user-friendly and relevant to the experiences of children and young people in schools, and the people who support them.
5. The QNR process does generate robust findings in relation to positive school practice and areas that may require further development. These findings have the potential, through careful action planning, to make a difference to the lives of children and young people. However, for this to happen, a commitment to action

is required not only of a QNR team, but a school as a whole. The implementation phase of QNR should, if at all possible, be monitored and evaluated. Where appropriate, a follow up review of Phase 1 and Phase 2 QNR projects would be informative.

6. QNR can be used to complement other approaches to school improvement and related self evaluation activities. Further evidence of how this is being done would be beneficial, and possibly encourage more schools to use the QNR approach.
7. The importance that QNR places on collaborative teamwork and accessible communication is a real strength, and is likely to afford wider opportunities for personal and professional development for everyone involved.
8. Other frameworks are used to examine the quality of inclusive education in school contexts (e.g. the Index for Inclusion; the Inclusion Quality Mark). QNR appears to offer 'something different' in the way that it focuses on the individual experiences of children and young people; the way that it acknowledges particular barriers to education and other aspects of life experienced by children and young people with learning and related disabilities, and; the way that it actively encourages people to change things for the better on the basis of first hand information.
9. The role of QNR coaches is critical to the success of review process. Well trained, mentored and experienced coaches are highly valued. In some contexts, further work may be required to ensure that a successful externally coached QNR has maximum impact in a school and is not regarded as a peripheral activity.
10. The weight of evidence in the QNR Phase 1 and Phase 2 pilot projects suggests that externally facilitated reviews are particularly valued by those involved **because** they are seen as more impartial than other types of developmental review. This poses a future challenge and dilemma. On the one hand, schools may wish to organise and run their own internal QNRs and this may reflect well on early development work carried out by QNR external coaches. On the other hand, internal QNRs may become too inward looking and institutionalised.

Further thought should be given to addressing these issues, and perhaps to identifying different ways that BILD supported QNR coaches can support schools. For example, this could include monitoring particular QNRs or validating processes.

October 09

DRAFT