

# Leading Continuous Improvement

## The WHAT

### LCI1- We understand the present through effective review and evaluation of data

CLF leaders identify and understand priorities accurately because we are intellectually curious, we ask exploratory questions, and we are confident in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data and evidence.

#### When leaders are successful in this area:

- They gather quantitative and qualitative data
- Inferences and conclusions from data are accurate
- Data is presented in a way that improves understanding
- They don't rush into action

### LCI2 - We plan and implement change strategically.

CLF leaders use a recognised and robust process for implementation which recognises the importance of exploring, preparing, delivering, and sustaining; we make good decisions together, based on evidence, systematic analysis and sharing experience.

#### When leaders are successful in this area:

- Problems are thoroughly explored prior to action
- Implementation plans are detailed and collaboratively created
- Interventions are changed to suit their context
- Leaders maintain commitment until the end of projects

### LCI3 - We analyse impact.

CLF leaders proactively seek to understand the impact of interventions and activities on outcomes and understand the role of biases, validity, and reliability; we measure the impact of our work through the lens of disadvantage.

#### When leaders are successful in this area:

- They can identify team successes and failures
- They can pinpoint the impact of those on pupils experiencing disadvantage
- They understand the causes of successes and failures
- They proactively mitigate for data bias, invalidity and unreliability

## The WHY

Leading for impact is the strategic imperative that ensures every action undertaken by the CLF is **effective, equitable, and reliably delivered** to maximise positive change.

**1. Why Measuring Impact and Driving Equity Matters:** Proactively seeking to understand the impact of interventions and activities on outcomes is vital because it moves us beyond good intentions to genuine effectiveness and ensures resources are not wasted on ineffective efforts. A critical mindset regarding biases, validity, and reliability is essential to prevent flawed data interpretation and misguided decisions. Consciously measuring impact through the lens of disadvantage and disaggregating data to scrutinise how interventions affect the most vulnerable ensures we genuinely narrow achievement gaps and maximise our positive difference where it is needed most.

**2. Why Robust Implementation and Collaborative Decisions Matters:** Even the best strategy will fail without effective implementation and so it is essential for leaders to use a recognised and robust process for implementation which provides a clear roadmap. This systematic approach manages change, mitigates risks, and accelerates the translation of initiatives from concept to consistent, impactful practice. Effective implementation is built upon strong decision-making

and complex challenges demand that leaders make plans and decisions together, grounded in systematic analysis, robust evidence, and shared experience.

**3. Why Seeking and Applying Evidence Matters:** This commitment to evidence-informed practice is a fundamental quality assurance mechanism ensuring that our efforts are based on what is genuinely effective and what will contribute directly to our strategic goals. Without a critical lens and an understanding of bias, validity, and reliability, leaders risk drawing inaccurate conclusions and making misguided decisions that waste valuable resources and time.

## The HOW - Key Leadership Behaviours & Actions

**Define Clear Outcomes and Design for Evaluation Before Implementation:** Before implementing any intervention or activity, clearly define the desired specific, measurable outcomes and how they will be measured. Establish robust baseline data to provide a point of comparison. Incorporate evaluation mechanisms and data collection points into planning, considering the necessary data, timing, and analysis from the outset.

**Disaggregate Data and Interpret Results Through an Equity Lens:** Systematically collect, track, and analyse data broken down by relevant demographic groups, with a particular and explicit focus on those experiencing disadvantage. When interpreting the findings, specifically ask critical questions: How is this impacting our most disadvantaged groups? Are we widening or narrowing existing gaps? Are we inadvertently reinforcing existing inequalities?

**Critically Assess Validity, Reliability, and Mitigate Biases:** Actively seek diverse perspectives to challenge your own biases and use structured protocols to challenge others' biases. Critically question the sources and methods of data collection, asking: Is the data truly measuring what it intends to measure (validity)? Is the measurement consistent and repeatable (reliability)?

**Diagnose Need, Review Evidence, and Assess Organisational Fit:** Clearly identify the specific problem or opportunity the intervention aims to address. Research existing evidence, best practices, and lessons learned from similar initiatives. Evaluate how well potential interventions align with CLF's overarching mission, HEART values, existing strategic priorities, and current context.

**Use Collaborative Decision-Making Grounded in Systematic Analysis:** Clearly articulate the specific decision that needs to be made. Actively seek out and synthesise relevant data, research findings, and factual information to inform the decision. Use appropriate frameworks to break down complex problems and ensure inclusive forums facilitate the sharing of insights and diverse perspectives before the final choice is made.

**Develop a Clear Plan, Build Capacity, and Anticipate Barriers:** Create a detailed implementation plan outlining specific objectives, clear timelines, defined roles, and allocated resources. Ensure individuals and teams have the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to deliver the intervention effectively, and proactively identify potential obstacles and develop contingency plans to address them.

**Monitor Progress, Provide Ongoing Support, and Gather Formative Feedback:** Implement the intervention systematically, regularly track key performance indicators (KPIs) and process measures to ensure implementation fidelity. Offer continuous coaching, mentoring, and adaptive support to individuals during delivery. Collect real-time feedback from those directly involved to identify early issues and opportunities for immediate adjustment.

**Share Findings Transparently, Act on Data, and Embed into Practice:** Communicate findings transparently with relevant stakeholders, regardless of whether the results are positive or challenging. Use the data to make evidence-based adjustments, pivot strategies, cease ineffective activities, or scale successful ones. Finally, work intentionally to make the new intervention a routine and embedded into daily practice.

## Further Study

- [Thinking, Fast and Slow - Danile Khaneman](#)
- *Switch* - Dan and Chip Heath
- *Measure what matters* - John Doerr