



PARTNERS FOR
POSSIBILITY

Putting school at the centre of community

Results of the 2017-2018 internal evaluation *(summarised version*)*

Peer reviewed by:



* A full version is available on request from Magali@Symphonia.net

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SYMPHONIA
for South Africa

Registered NPO # 072-323 PBO # 930-029-675

PfP Internal Evaluation, summarised version, May 2018

The peer reviewer's opinion

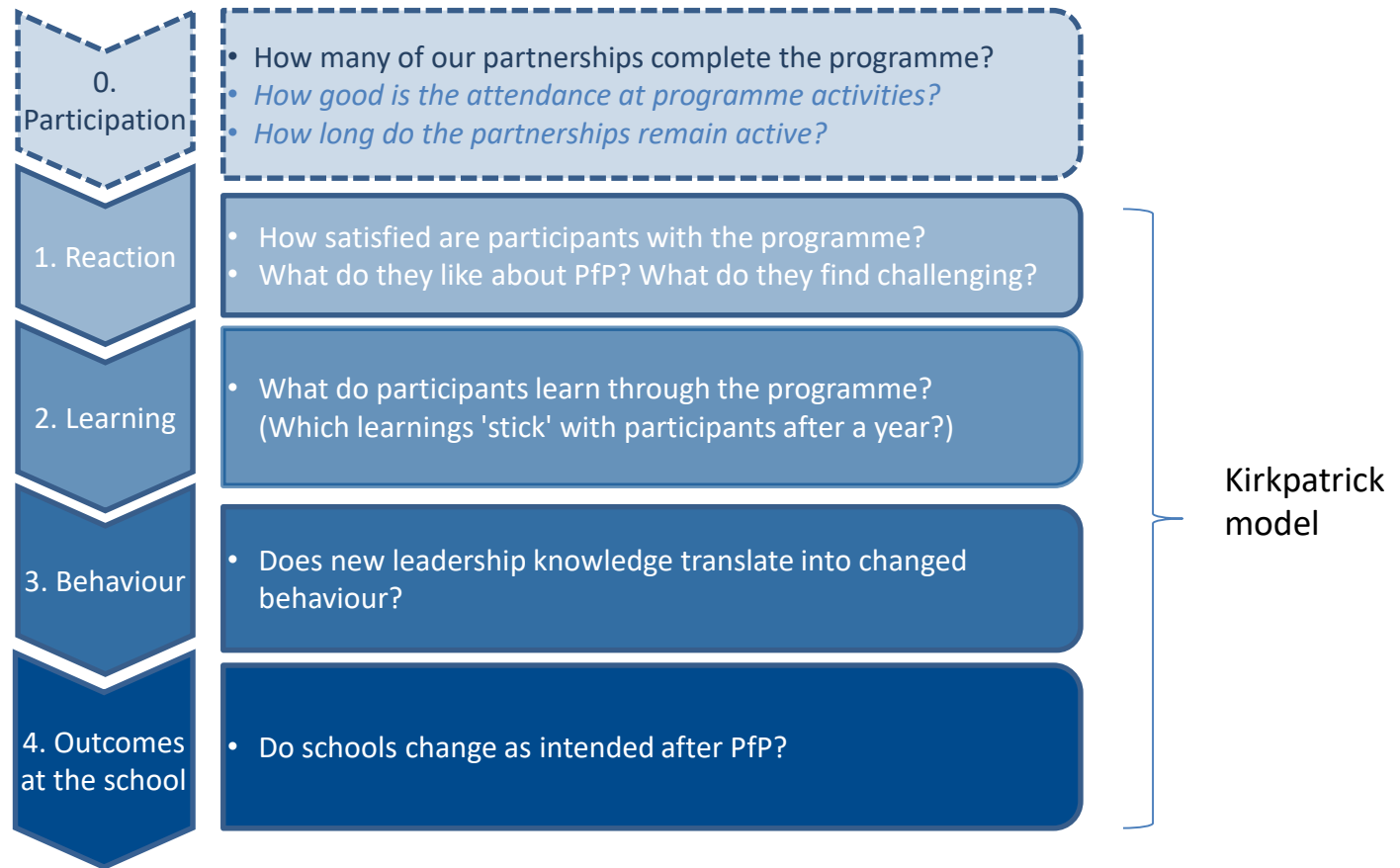


This evaluation was conducted internally and peer reviewed by Cara Hartley, M&E Consultant at PDG. She delivered the following opinion:

This evaluation report is a valid representation of PfP participants' completion rate, views and experiences of the programme. The results are based on accurate analysis.

A credible picture is emerging of a programme that consistently / predictably maintains a high completion rate and that is perceived by a large majority of participants to be substantially beneficial to their leadership and their schools, in line with the intended benefits of the PfP theory of change.





Adapted from: Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1994). Evaluating training programs: the four levels. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

- To **update / build on earlier findings** by providing **quantitative data** on:
 - Completion rate
 - Participants' satisfaction
 - Effect on business partners' skills
 - Effect on the school and community

(NB: most of the quantitative evidence is based on participants' self-reporting).

- To **examine outcomes and explore new questions** through **qualitative analyses**:
 - What principals learn (what 'sticks')
 - How their leadership behaviour changes
 - What qualitative changes happen at the school.

These tentative findings are marked as 'emerging themes' in the following slides, and will have to be probed in future research.

Level 0: Participation and completion

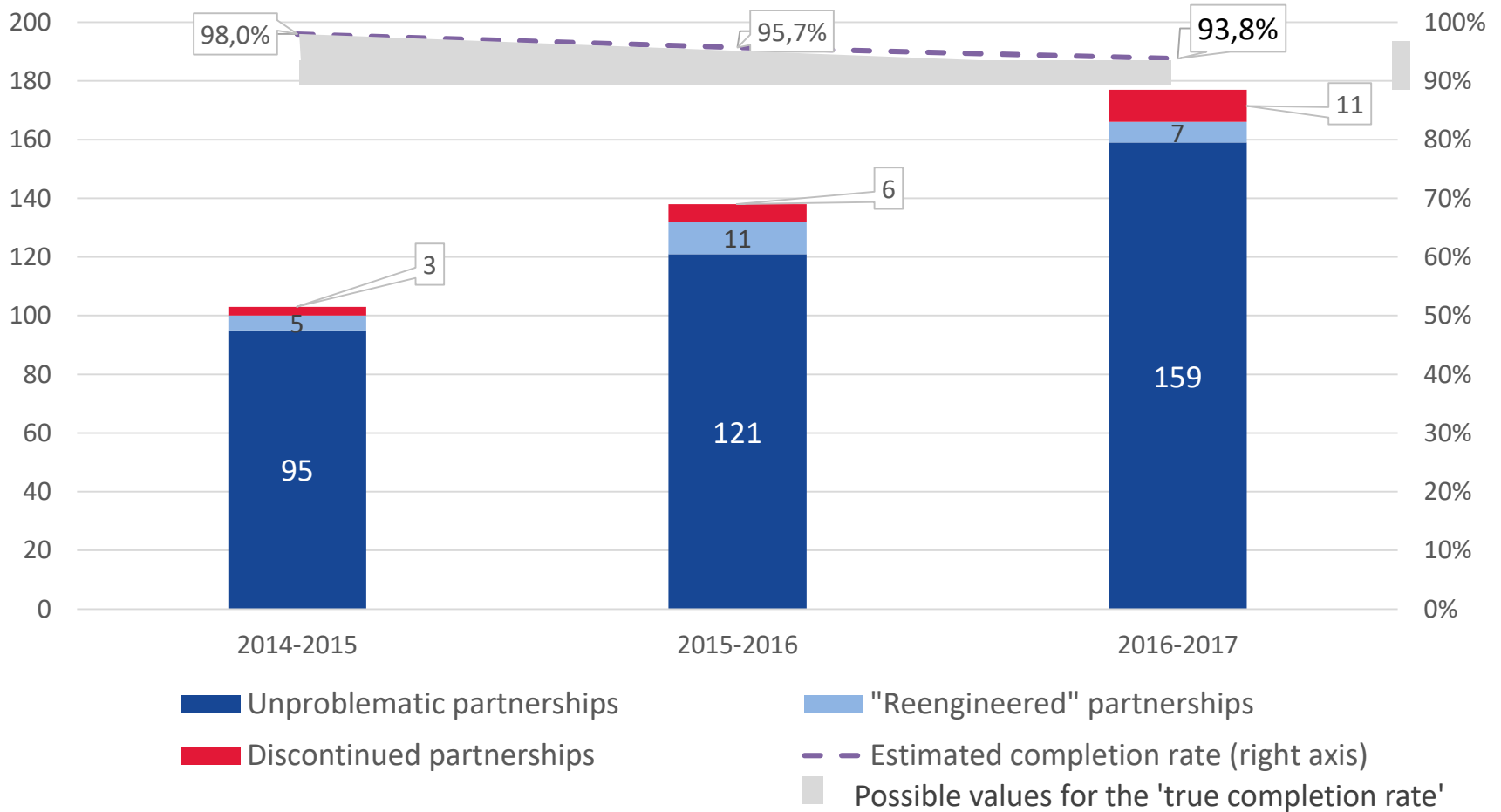
- **How many partnerships complete the programme?**
- What do we know about the reasons why partnerships are discontinued?
- How are 'problematic partnerships' treated?
- Can we identify some trends by comparing the data year on year?

Cross-boundary partnerships are almost always challenging and there can be no guarantee about the success of a relationship.

- We have developed a model, and provide a level of support through Learning Process Facilitators, that maximises the chances that partnerships will succeed.
- However, we recognise the need for personal commitment and therefore allow participants to withdraw from the programme if they cannot remain committed.

Our target therefore is that **90%** of partnerships will complete the programme.

Estimated completion rate: 2014-2017



Source: Symphonia admin records

(due to data limitations, the true completion rate may be slightly lower than estimated, especially for 2014-2016)

Note: "re-engineered partnerships" are partnerships where either the principal or the business partner gets replaced during the year.

- The **target of 90% completion has been consistently reached** in the last 3 years.
- The decline in completion rate has been small, suggesting that the programme has been able to manage its growth without compromising on quality. At **93.8%**, last year's estimated completion rate remains substantially higher than the estimated 84% of the first 5 years of the programme's existence.
- Compared to the early years, there have been fewer concerns related to business partners' commitment to the programme or to the quality of Learning Process Facilitators (LPFs)' facilitation.
Problems related to principals' commitment still sometimes occur, particularly in periods of 'rushed' onboarding.

Level 1: Reaction

Quantitative questions:

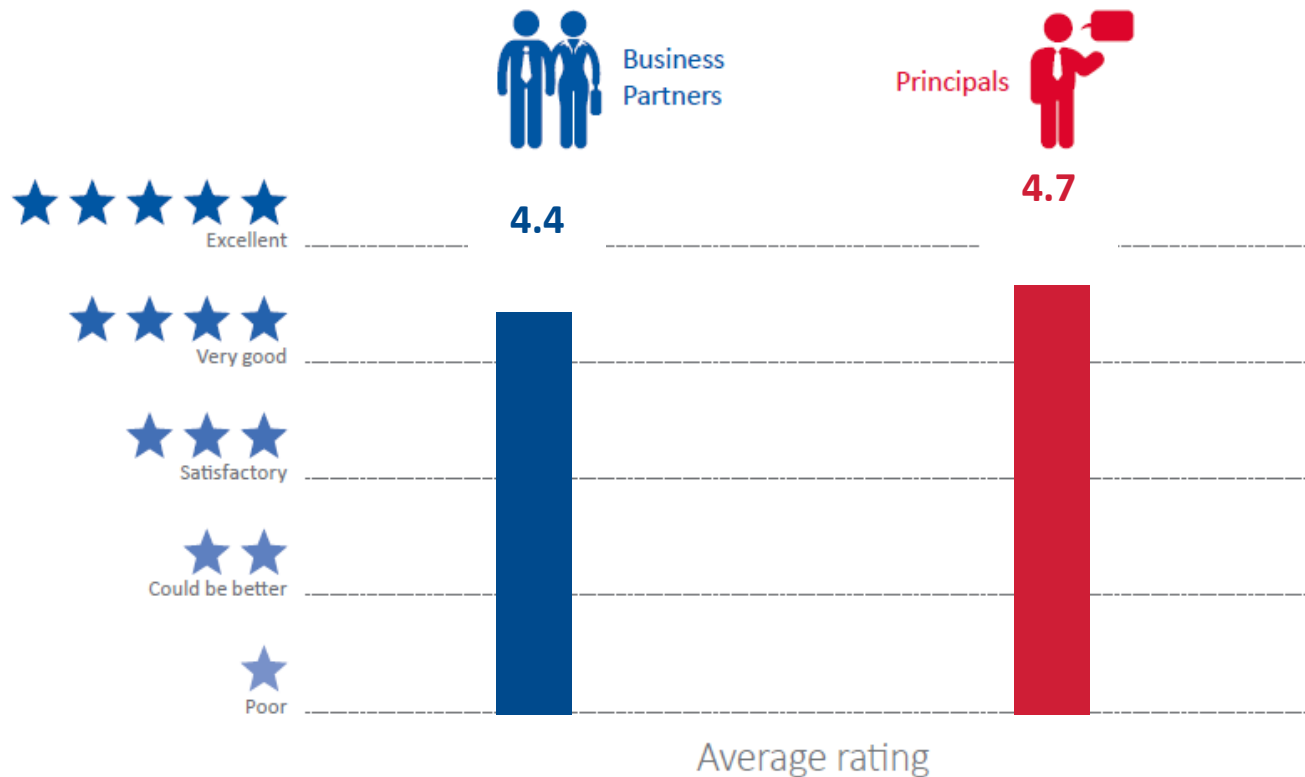
- How satisfied are participants with the programme?
(How many found it beneficial)
- What is PfP's **Net Promoter Score (NPS)**?

Qualitative questions:

- What do PfP's participants value about PfP?
What challenges do they experience?
Do they have suggestions for improvement?

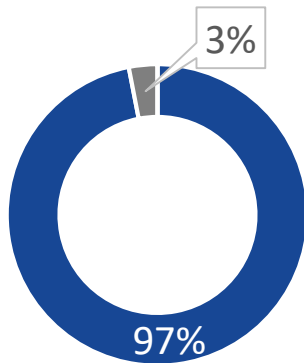
Overall satisfaction of the 2016-17 cohort

On a scale of 1 to 5, this is how the Principals and Business Partners have rated the programme.



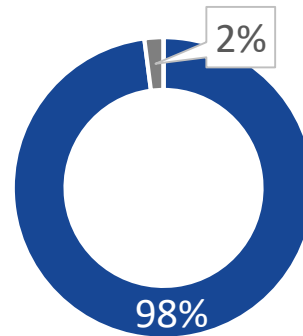
Source: PFP post-programme survey for principals and business partners (2016-2017 cohort)
Based on 98 responses for principals and 110 responses for business partners

Your participation in the programme was...



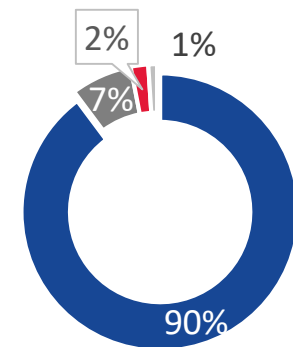
- definitely beneficial
- don't know / partially
- not beneficial

You would recommend PfP to other principals



- Yes, definitely
- Possibly
- No

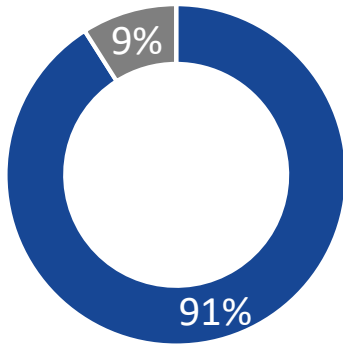
You intend to continue your partnership beyond the PfP year



- Yes, definitely
- Possibly
- No
- n/a

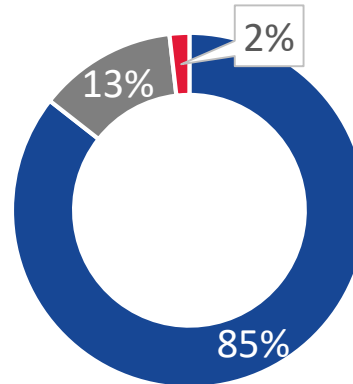
Source: PfP post-programme survey for principals (2016-2017 cohort)
Based on 98 responses (response rate: 52%)

Your participation in the programme was...



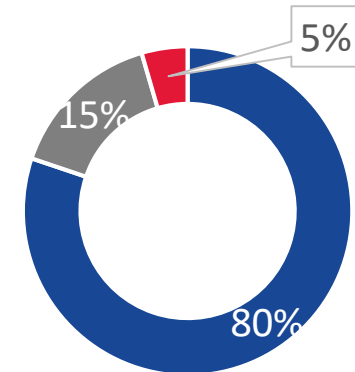
- definitely beneficial
- partially beneficial
- not beneficial

You would recommend PfP as a LDP* to other business leaders



- Yes, definitely
- Possibly
- Not at all

You intend to continue your partnership beyond the PfP year



- Yes, definitely
- Possibly or n/a
- Not at all

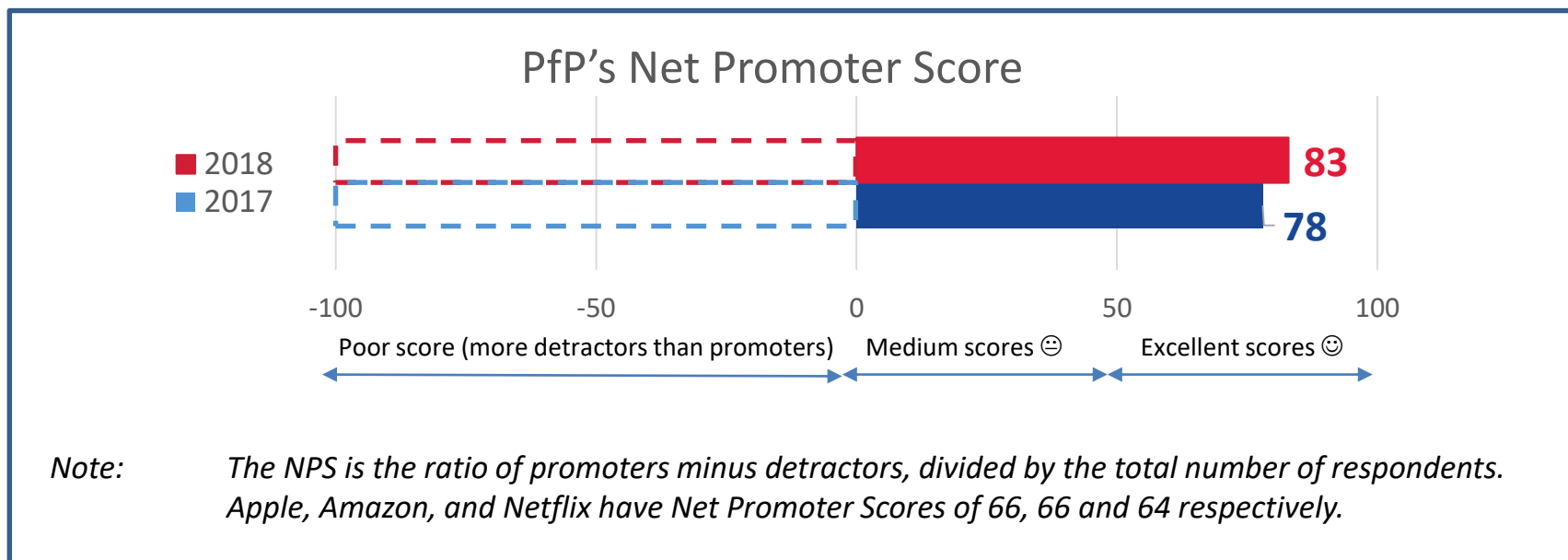
* LDP = Leadership Development Programme

Source: PfP post-programme survey for business partners (2016-2017 cohort)
Based on 110 responses (response rate of 58%)

Net promoter score (NPS)



- In 2017 and 2018, the international agency **HR.com** surveyed PfP participants and asked them to indicate how likely they were to recommend participation in this programme to their peers.
- Based on the survey answers a Net Promoter Score* was computed.
- The NPS was consistently found to be in the 75-85 range (any score above 50 is considered excellent).



Source: HR.com surveys, 2017 and 2018. (based on 180 responses in 2017, 121 in 2018)

What principals value most in PfP



(emerging themes that will need to be probed in a future evaluation exercise)



Source: Post Programme Survey (2016-2017 cohort), analysis of qualitative feedback from principals (65 principals gave open comments – the vertical axis shows the number of mentions of the theme)

NB: Respondents were not required or prompted to provide comments, hence the small number that did. There were virtually no negative comments from principals.

What business partners say about their PfP experience



(emerging themes that will need to be probed in a future evaluation exercise)

47 comments are **positive**

What they value most 😊😊

* A chance to grow as a leader	<i>'My range of skill in each dimension has been significantly extended.'</i>
* Insights into the education sector	<i>'I have learned how difficult education is and my eyes have been opened to the challenges.'</i>
* A platform to 'make a difference' and 'give back'	<i>'I clearly hear and see the differences in the Principal and all the things she's implementing in her school.'</i>

What they also appreciate 😊

* World class courses	* The opportunity to cross boundaries
* The practical learning	* The 'out of comfort zone' experience

21 comments also refer to some challenges

Most frequent challenges 😞

* Difficult communication with the principal (5 mentions)	<i>'The communication with the principal's side became non existent and therefore I ended the process without a principal.'</i>
* Difficulty to find the time (4 mentions)	<i>'Full participation is more time consuming than is obvious at the outset.'</i>
* Lack of time for a sustainable impact (4 mentions)	<i>'A program needs a long time to make sustainable community change.'</i>

9 comments include **suggestions**

Most frequent suggestions 👍

- * Extend the programme
- * Adjust the coursework
- * Tighten the recruitment procedure

Source: Post Programme Survey (2016-2017 cohort), analysis of qualitative feedback from business partners

- Overall, satisfaction levels are **very good**, and are confirmed by the **Net Promoter Score of 78-83**.
- The (internal) post-programme survey results are consistent with the (external) HR.com survey results and with previous evidence, confirming validity.
- The **principals'** answers to qualitative questions confirm that **they find value in the current programme design**, including:
 - The Community of practice sessions
 - The opportunity to network with business people.
- The **business partners'** answers to qualitative questions confirm that they find value in:
 - The **leadership growth opportunity** (this is important to note, as they usually don't join PfP for that purpose)
 - The opportunity to **challenge their perceptions** of the education sector.

Level 2: Learning

- What did participants learn on the programme?
Specifically: how much of the learning 'sticks' after 1 year?

What principals have learnt through PfP



(emerging themes that will need to be probed in a future evaluation exercise)

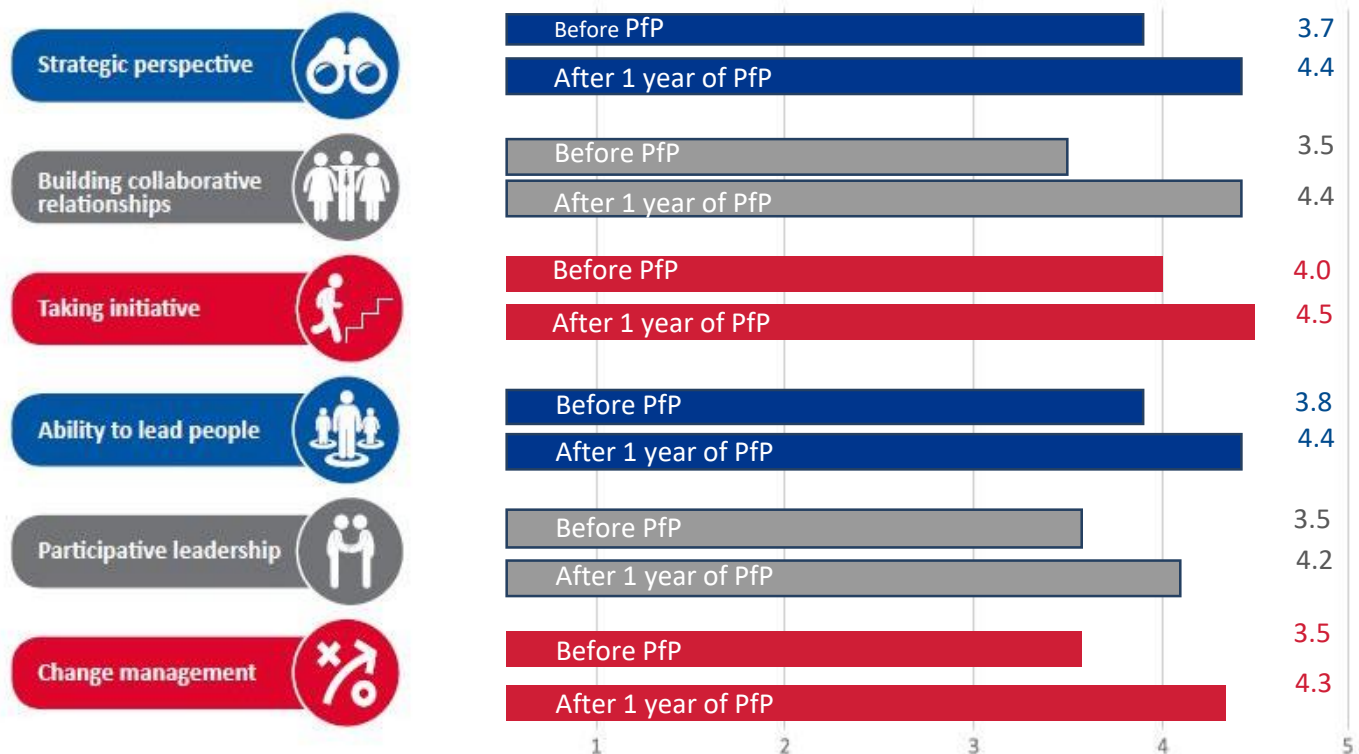


Source: Post Programme Survey (2016-2017 cohort), analysis of qualitative feedback from principals (65 principals gave open comments – the vertical axis shows the number of mentions of the theme)

NB: Respondents were not required or prompted to comment – hence the small number of comments.

What business partners have learnt through PfP

This is how, on average, **business partners** assessed their level of skill in the following 6 areas*, before and after a year of PfP.



* These are the 6 Most Important Leader Competencies according to the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL)

1 = poor to 5 = excellent

Source: Post Programme Survey (2016-2017 cohort), based on 110 business partners (58% response rate)
(The 'before PfP' rating is as assessed by the business partners retrospectively at the end of the programme)

- **Principals' learnings** are in line with PfP's Theory of Change:
 - Improved **listening skills** was the strongest theme to emerge for learning. *(A key assumption that underpins PfP is that listening enhances thinking and strengthens relationships)*
 - Thinking skills for dealing with challenges and complexity
 - Contracting, consulting, and communicating skills to mobilise stakeholders effectively.
- **Business partners' learnings** are in line with the findings from the UNISA study. The most improved competencies, on average, are:
 - The ability to build **collaborative relationships** (+0.9)
 - The ability to **lead change** (+0.8).

Note: these results are subject to self-reporting bias.

Level 3: Behaviour

- How does new knowledge about leadership translate into improved leadership practice?

What principals do differently after PfP

(emerging themes that will need to be probed in a future evaluation exercise)



Source: Post Programme Survey (2016-2017 cohort), analysis of qualitative feedback from principals (65 principals gave open comments – the vertical axis shows the number of mentions of the theme)

- As a programme that emphasises action learning, PfP has the ability to induce effective changes in the leadership practices of the principals.
- Qualitative evidence confirms that new leadership skills translate into **changed in behaviour for principals.**
- The new behaviour is in line with the Theory of Change:
 - Stronger display of **confidence** / more **assertiveness**
 - More **engagement of staff in decision-making** and better management of meetings
 - More proactive **engagement with school stakeholders**

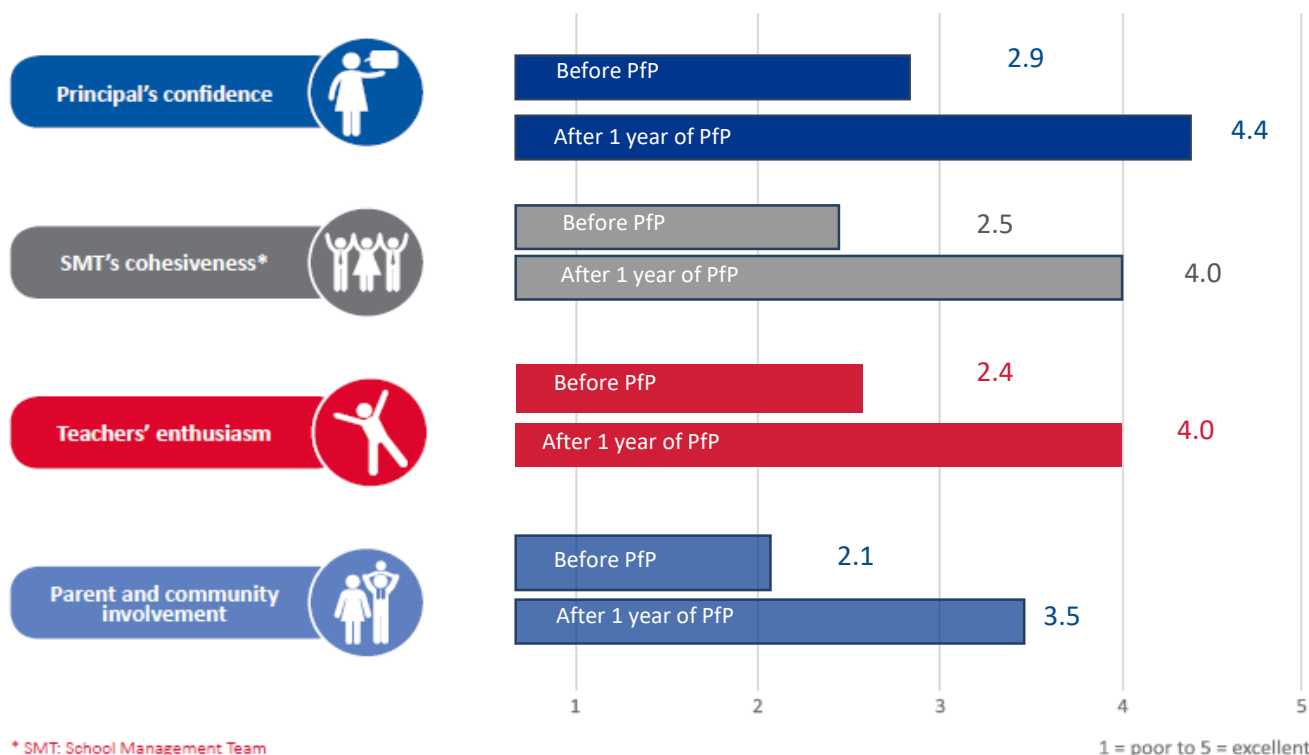
Note: these results are subject to self-reporting bias.

Level 4: Outcomes at the schools

- Do schools change as intended after PfP?

Average shift in the major 4 areas, after 1 year

This is how, on average, the **principals** have assessed the following 4 areas at their schools, before and after a year of PfP.

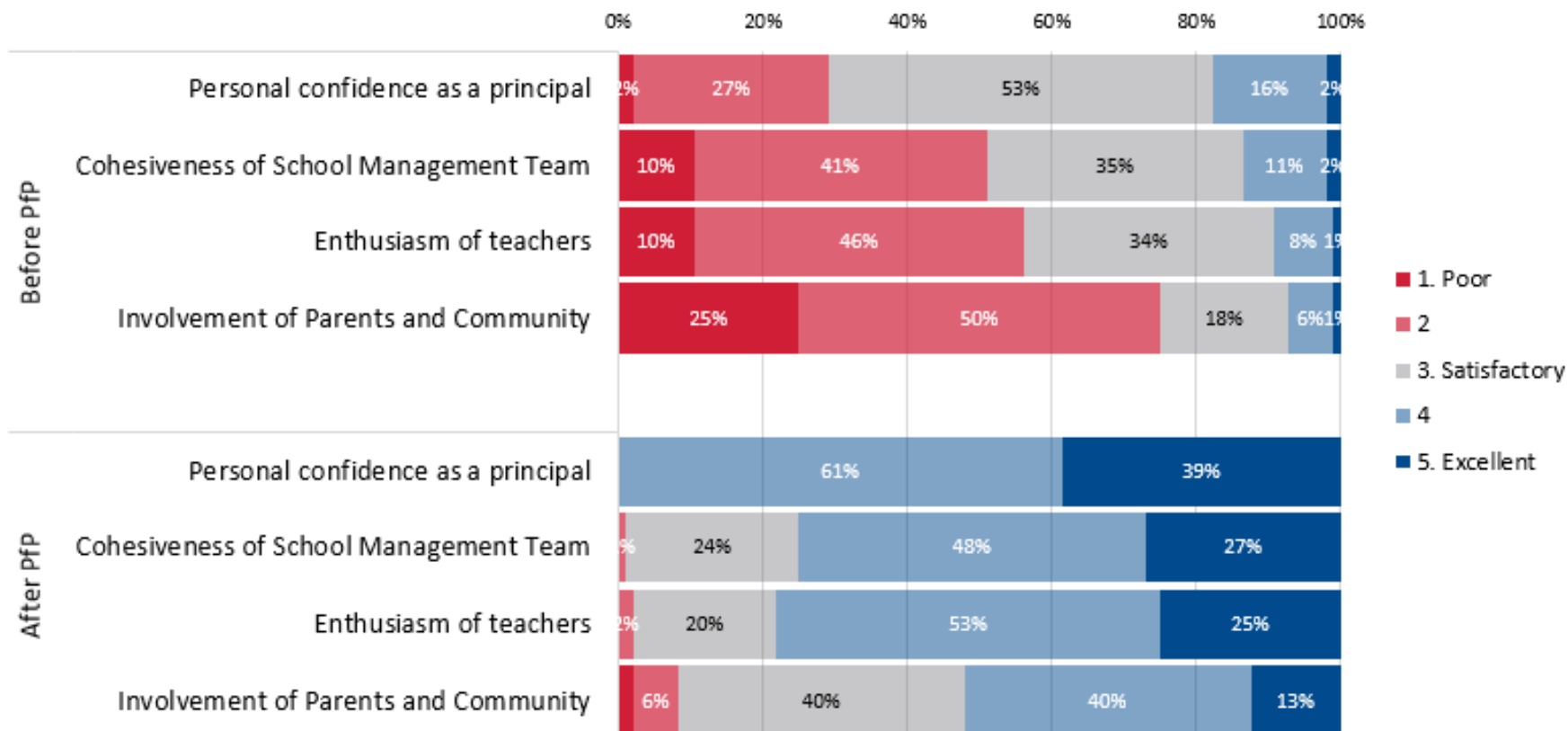


Source: Post programme survey (2016-2017 cohort), based on 98 responses.
(The 'before PfP' rating is as assessed by principals retrospectively at the end of the programme)

Distribution of schools by strength of each area



Principals' feedback on the impact of the Pfp programme after 1 year



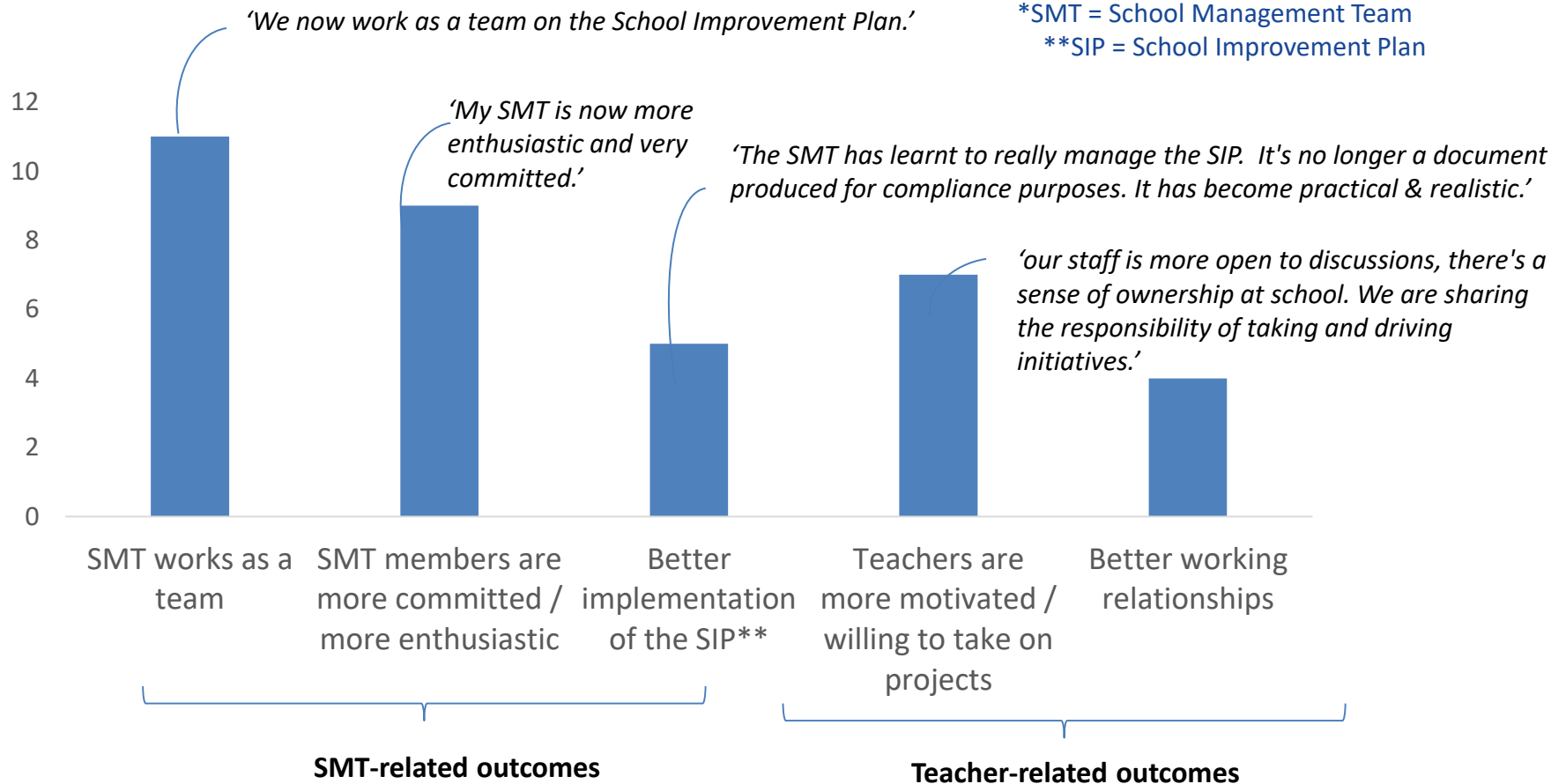
Source: Post programme survey (2016-2017 cohort), based on 98 principals' responses.
 (The 'before Pfp' rating is as assessed by principals retrospectively at the end of the programme)

What has changed for the SMT* and the teachers



(emerging themes that will need to be probed in a future evaluation exercise)

*SMT = School Management Team
**SIP = School Improvement Plan

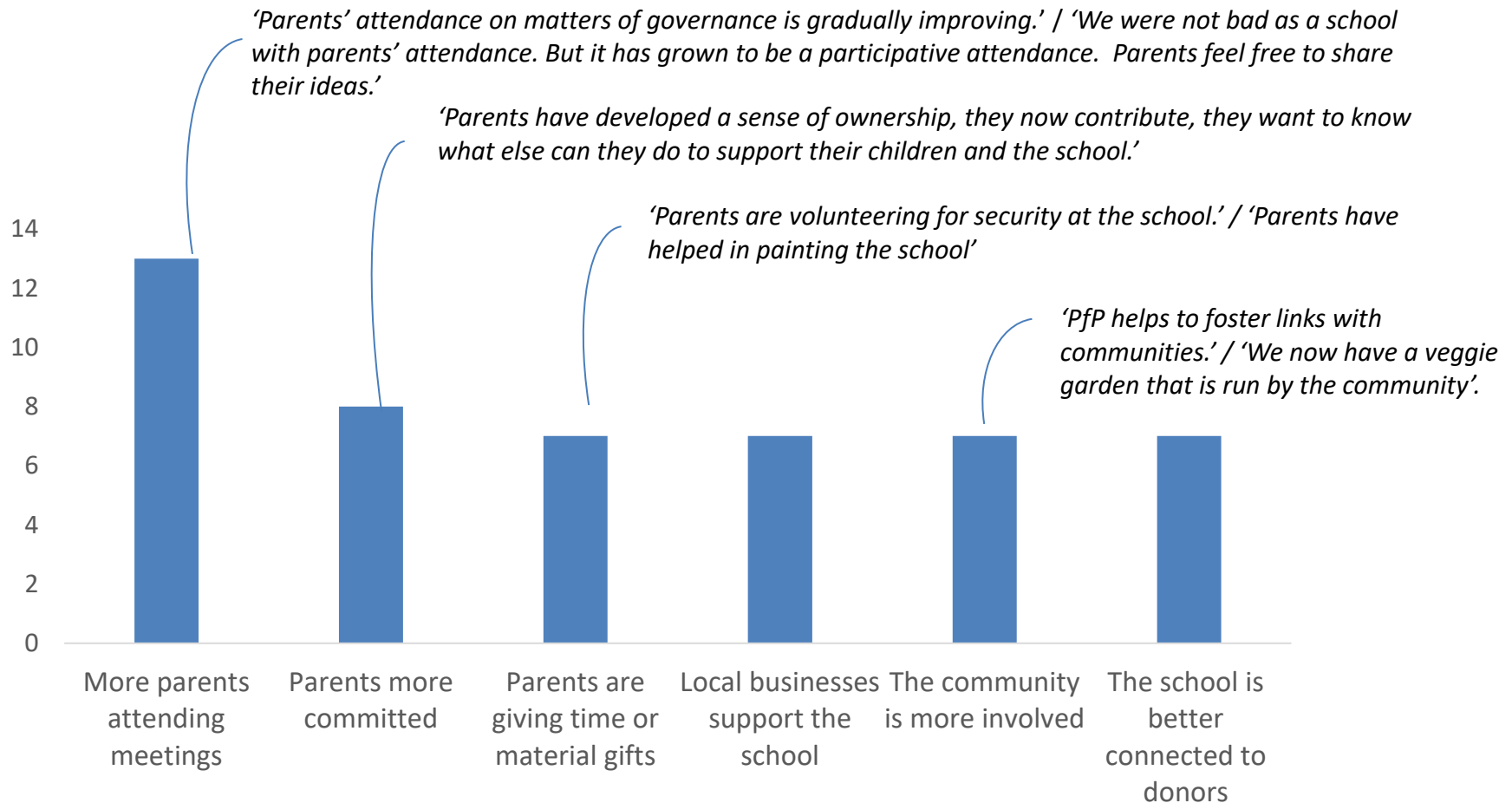


Source: Post programme survey (2016-2017 cohort), analysis of qualitative feedback from principals (65 principals gave open comments – the vertical axis shows the number of mentions of the theme)

Involvement of the parents and community



(emerging themes that will need to be probed in a future evaluation exercise)



Source: Post programme survey (2016-2017 cohort), analysis of qualitative feedback from principals (65 principals gave open comments – the vertical axis shows the number of citations of the theme)

- The outcomes at school level from the 2016 survey are generally confirmed, but more nuanced through the higher number of response options.
- At **School Management Team** level, the evaluation generated a clearer understanding of outcomes.
70% of principals have seen a **definite improvement** in their SMT's work (average shift of **+1.5**).
- The reported improvement at **teacher** level is of the same magnitude as the SMT improvement (average shift of **+1.6**).
- At **parental** level, **63%** of schools saw a **definite improvement in** attendance at meetings. The reported average improvement in involvement is **+1.4**. The receipt of gifts from the **community** remains fairly limited but, when it occurs, is often very meaningful for the schools.

Note: These results are subject to self-reporting bias.

The evaluation design did not allow for verification of medium and long-term changes, particularly with respect to learner outcomes.

Overall conclusion on the evaluation

2017-2018 metrics*



In spite of a decline, the completion rate has been **consistently above the 90% target** for the last 3 years.

Estimated completion rate:	93.8%
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Both business partners (BP) and school principals expressed **very high satisfaction levels**.

Average rating: BP	4.4/5
Principal	4.7/5
Net promoter score	83*

Business partners strengthen important leadership skills. **Principals** acquire skills in listening, stress management, contracting and consulting

increase in BP's score:	
- change management :	+0.8
- collaborative relationships:	+0.9 (average)

There is evidence of **better leadership practices** among principals: more confidence, and better engagement with staff and school stakeholders.

<i>Proportion of principals who report definitely improved practice:</i>	96%
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Principals report substantial improvement in their schools' readiness for change. Observed changes are consistent with the PfP Theory of Change (and are expected to deepen in the following years).

Increase in score:	
- SMT Cohesiveness:	+1.5
- Teacher enthusiasm:	+1.6
- Involvement of parents / community:	+1.4 (average)

*The Net Promoter Score is the only metric that does not refer to the 2016/17 cohort
The level 3 metric is not particularly meaningful as that level was assessed mostly qualitatively

Selected quotes from participants



*'I had a challenging working relationship with the SGB until I joined this programme. I used some of the skills I learnt from Time to Think and also interacted with my business partner. Right now **I harmoniously work with them**. With my SMT, we used to do things haphazardly even though we had a School Improvement Plan. Since I attended one of our COP meetings, I now am able, with the assistance of SMT and SGB, **to implement the SIP**.'*

*'With the kind of network I have established within our circle, I definitely see a lot of potential as we principals share good practices and our business partners impart those much-needed skills on how to run our institutions professionally. I am a changed person through this programme. I now enjoy going to school, not to 'work' but **to offer my services**.'*

Peter Selaelo Makgato, Carter Primary School, Alexandra



*'I have grown in **confidence** as a person and leader. I've used the circle methods for meetings, our staff is more **open to discussions** and feel that they are heard when they voice their opinions. There is a **sense of ownership** at school, teachers are volunteering their time and services. Our **children are benefitting** because our teachers are listening more.'*

*'I'm open and relaxed. Teachers and learners come and talk to me. We are **sharing the responsibility** of taking and driving initiatives. Staff members are at ease. We are working on changing our curriculum to serve our children's needs.'*

Colleen Rustin, St Anthony's R.C. Primary, Cape Town



*'I would encourage any business leader who has spare capacity and who is wanting to contribute to our country's education system. PfP shares an opportune platform towards achieving this ideal. Not only does it focus on **giving back**, but there are great **leadership development takeaways** from this awesome programme.'*

Itu Kekana, Business partner,
Saulridge Secondary School, Atteridgeville

*'The **training was excellent** and the sessions where we had to practise what was trained proved to be invaluable. I used some of the methods with my team with great results. The understanding of social and bureaucratic issues were an **eye opener** and has DEFINITELY changed the conversation that I am having within my circle of influence. The **networking** resulted in a lot of enablement and therefore upliftment which stretched beyond the school. The relationships and respect for each individual in the circle are priceless.'*

Ardiela Savahl, Business partner,
Seyisi Primary School, Port Elizabeth





*'This programme allows you to **give back to the community in a meaningful way**. I am 20 years in business with at least 12 years in the professional industry where you are exposed to several leadership and training principles which was limited to the professional environment. However **PfP challenged me to practise my learnings** over the years within the education environment with its unique matters. This develops you as a leader in so many ways.'*

Jeremy de Mink, Business partner,
Glen Bridge Special School, Diep River / Cape Town

*'PfP is an awesome concept. I have learned how difficult education is and **my eyes have been opened to the challenges**. I feel this was a test year and would like to continue. It does impinge on one's time, but **the reward is there** provided the leader wants to be involved.'*

Pat Roberts, Business partner,
Masibambane College, Orange Farm / JHB

