



# Comprehensive School Reform Models: Primary and Secondary Educator's Summary

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There are many comprehensive school reform (CSR) programmes that promise to turn around under-achieving schools, and these have been increasingly adopted. This trend is driven by the recognition that school improvement efforts are complex and require a co-ordinated, systematic approach that addresses every aspect of a school.

CSR programmes are often developed and supported by not-for-profit organisations which provide professional development, materials, and support to networks of schools. Typically, they include the following elements:

- Innovative approaches to instruction and curriculum used in many subjects throughout the school
- Extensive, ongoing professional development, and coaches or facilitators in the building to help manage the reform process
- Measureable goals and benchmarks for pupil achievement
- Emphasis on parent and community involvement

However, there have been few sources of information for schools to assess which of the available programmes can really meet the needs of their pupils.




This review summarises research on comprehensive school reform programmes for primary and secondary schools, and was conducted by a group of US academics. They looked at *all* available evidence on CSR programmes designed for use with pupils of all ages, in order to establish what we know works. They examined all studies of relevant CSR programmes from all countries, as long as a report was available in English.\* (NB Most studies took place in the US). They were then able to assess and compare the effectiveness of these programmes. Descriptions and ratings for all the programmes are listed further down this summary.

The full report (which this review summarises) is available at [www.bestevidence.org.uk](http://www.bestevidence.org.uk)


\* The research team, led by Geoffrey Borman (University of Wisconsin), reviewed research on 29 CSR programmes, all in the US (NB Some of these are also available in the UK).

## Programme Ratings




Listed below are currently available programmes, grouped by strength of effectiveness. Within each group programmes available in the UK are listed first, and then the remainder in alphabetical order.

<b>Key to Programme Ratings</b>	
	<b>Strongest Evidence of Effectiveness</b>
	<b>Highly Promising Evidence of Effectiveness</b>
	<b>Promising Evidence of Effectiveness</b>





	<b>Greatest Need for Additional Research</b>
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### Strongest Evidence of Effectiveness

Rating	Programme	Type	Description	Contact / Website
	Success for All		Prescribed curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, and language arts that includes one-to-one tuition, a family support team, co-operative learning, on-site facilitation, and a building advisory team.	UK website: <a href="http://www.successforall.org.uk">www.successforall.org.uk</a> (Product training provided)
	Direct Instruction		Field-tested reading, language arts, and maths curricula with highly scripted and interactive lesson strategies, extensive writing, and frequent assessment of pupils.	US website: <a href="http://www.nifdi.org">www.nifdi.org</a> US contact: kengel@nifdi.org
	School Development Program		Offers a structure and process for mobilising teachers, administrators, and community members to support pupils' along six developmental pathways: physical, cognitive, psychological, language, social, and ethical.	US website: <a href="http://www.schooldevelopmentprogram.org">www.schooldevelopmentprogram.org</a> US contact: schooldevelopmentprogram@yale.edu






### Highly Promising Evidence of Effectiveness

Rating	Programme	Type	Description	Contact / Website
	Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound		Authentic projects and fieldwork, high expectations for all pupils, shared decision making, and regular reviews of pupil achievement and level of implementation.	US website: <a href="http://www.elob.org">www.elob.org</a> US contact: greg_farrell@elob.org
	Modern Red Schoolhouse		Curriculum with high standards for all pupils, an emphasis on character, and an individual education	US website: <a href="http://www.mrsh.org">www.mrsh.org</a> US contact: info@mrsh.org




Rating	Programme	Type	Description	Contact / Website
			agreement for each pupil. Technology is a key component.	
	Roots & Wings (Success for All)		Prescribed curriculum in the areas of literacy, maths, and social and scientific problem solving that includes one-to-one tuition, a family support team, on-site facilitation and a building advisory team.	Website: <a href="http://www.successforall.org.uk">www.successforall.org.uk</a>

### Promising Evidence of Effectiveness

Rating	Programme	Type	Description	Contact / Website
	Montessori		Interdisciplinary curriculum with self-corrective, manipulative materials, open time, free choice of activity, and learning driven by a child's interest. Work is matched to a pupil's development level.	UK website: <a href="http://www.montessori-uk.org/">www.montessori-uk.org/</a> (teacher training provided)
	Accelerated Schools		Gifted and talented instruction for all pupils that includes a participatory process for whole school transformation.	US website: <a href="http://www.acceleratedschools.net">www.acceleratedschools.net</a>
	America's Choice		Learning focused on all pupils reaching standards, varying only the time and resources needed, using prevention, early intervention, and acceleration strategies.	US website: <a href="http://www.ncee.org">www.ncee.org</a> US contact: <a href="mailto:schooldesign@ncee.org">schooldesign@ncee.org</a>
	ATLAS Communities		Educational programmes for primary and secondary pupils, including curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Includes whole-faculty study groups and school/pathway planning and management teams.	US website: <a href="http://www.atlascommunities.org">www.atlascommunities.org</a> US contact: <a href="mailto:atlas@edc.org">atlas@edc.org</a>
	Paideia		Socratic seminars, didactic instruction, and one-to-one tuition that prepares pupils to be life-long learners and to earn a living.	US website: <a href="http://www.unc.edu/paideia">www.unc.edu/paideia</a>



Rating	Programme	Type	Description	Contact / Website
	The Learning Network		Mechanism for continuous teacher professional development built into each school, with a use of classroom observation, action plans, and instructional dialogue as the vehicles for change.	US website: <a href="http://www.rcowen.com">www.rcowen.com</a> US contact: richardowen@rcowen.com



#### Greatest Need for Additional Research

Audrey Cohen - [www.audrey-cohen.edu](http://www.audrey-cohen.edu)  
Center for Effective Schools - [www.centerforeffectiveschools.org](http://www.centerforeffectiveschools.org)  
Child Development Project - [www.devstu.org/cdp](http://www.devstu.org/cdp)  
Coalition of Essential Schools - [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org)  
Community for Learning - [www.temple.edu/lss/cfl.htm](http://www.temple.edu/lss/cfl.htm)  
Community Learning Centers  
Co-nect - [www.co-nect.net](http://www.co-nect.net)  
Core Knowledge - [www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org)  
Different Ways of Knowing - [www.differentways.org](http://www.differentways.org)  
Edison - [www.edisonschools.com](http://www.edisonschools.com)  
High Schools That Work - [www.sreb.org/Programs/hstw/hstwindex.asp](http://www.sreb.org/Programs/hstw/hstwindex.asp)  
High/Scope - [www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org)  
Integrated Thematic Instruction - [www.kovalik.com](http://www.kovalik.com)  
MicroSociety - [www.microsociety.org](http://www.microsociety.org)  
Onward to Excellence II - [www.nwrel.org/scpd/ote](http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/ote)  
Talent Development High School - [www.csos.jhu.edu/tdhs](http://www.csos.jhu.edu/tdhs)  
Urban Learning Centers - [www.urbanlearning.org](http://www.urbanlearning.org)

## Review Methods

Borman et al. included 29 CSR models that had been replicated in at least 10 schools and had been evaluated in at least one study. They did an extensive search for all types of studies. Studies were included if they met the following criteria:

- Schools using each programme had to be compared to equivalent control groups
- Achievement data had to be sufficient to allow effect sizes to be computed
- Schools had to be in the US
- Pupils had to be in the regular education programme

Programmes were assigned to categories based on a combination of three criteria (Borman et al., 2003, p. 154):

1. Quality of evidence: Does the CSR model have research evidence from control-group studies and third-party control group studies?
2. Quantity of evidence: Does the CSR model have a relatively large number of studies? (10 studies overall and 5 third-party studies were required to be in the top category)
3. Statistically significant and positive results: Does the evidence from control-group studies show effects that are significantly positive?



## The Full Report

- For the full report, which this review summarises, see Borman, G.D., Hewes, G.M., Overman, L.T., & Brown, S. (2003) *Review of Educational Research* Vol. 73, No. 2, pp. 125-230. The full report is available at [www.bestevidence.org.uk/](http://www.bestevidence.org.uk/).

