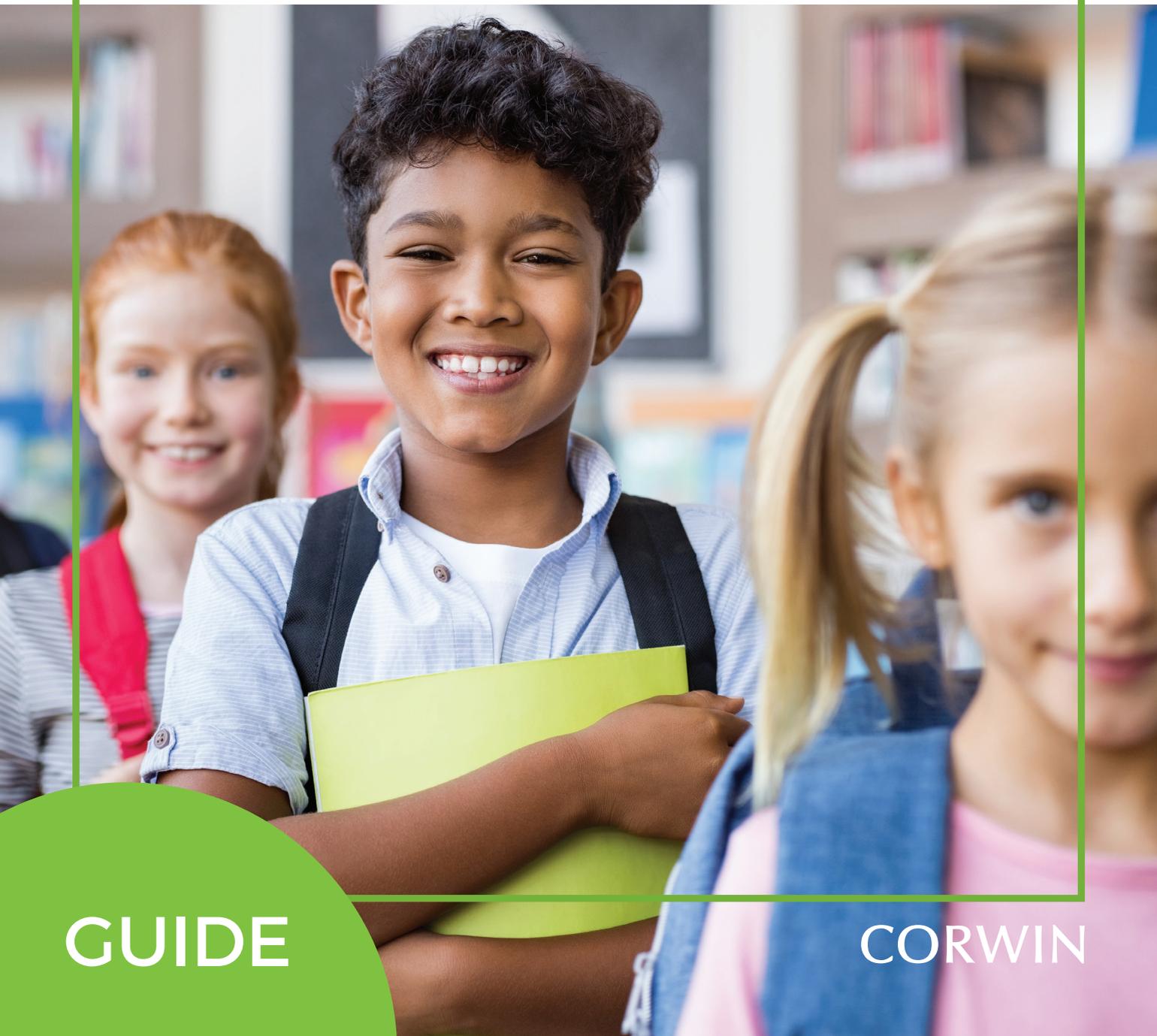


# How the 5 **Visible Learning** Strands Power **Successful School Change**



GUIDE

CORWIN



## The premise of Visible Learning is simple, but profound—learning is best when you can see it.

Making learning visible isn't something that just happens. It requires a few key mindset shifts. The first is getting into the habit of constantly thinking about your impact and your dual role of educator and learner. The second is the measurement and evaluation of that impact.

The power behind Visible Learning lies in these mindset shifts—and the five key strands that provide the backbone for evaluation and learning. In this guide, we'll outline:

- The five key strands behind the Visible Learning research
- How the strands can be interpreted
- Questions to ask yourself to start using these strands as a lens through which to view your impact

Maybe you're brand-new to the Visible Learning research. Perhaps you've taken a look, and you're wondering how to translate that research into action. Or, maybe you've read one (or two!) of the books and are looking for what's next. For that reason, we've placed prompts throughout the pages like this one  to point to you the resources you need.

## Let's get started!

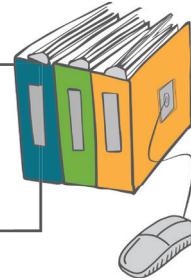
# The Five Strands: An Overview

The Visible Learning movement begins with the Visible Learning research, which is the world's largest evidence base on what works—and what doesn't — to best move student learning forward.

Developed by Professor John Hattie, Visible Learning is the examination and synthesis of 1,600 meta-analyses, comprised of 96,000 studies involving 300 million students around the world. The research answers a question all of us want to know: of all the things we do as educators to accelerate student learning, which ones have the most impact?



**WANT MORE?** Our Visible Learning Meta<sup>x</sup> online database is the where you'll find all the Visible Learning research—to take a look, head to [visiblelearningmetax.com](http://visiblelearningmetax.com)



These strands are woven throughout the research and provide a backbone for evaluation and learning.



1

## The Visible Learner

As educators, the best thing we can do for students is give them the tools to understand their own learning so they can articulate where they are going, how they will get there, and what comes next.

2

## Know Thy Impact

Understanding and evaluating the impact we have on learning helps to connect what we do as educators with what students learn.

3

## Visible Teaching & Leading

How we think is more important than what we do. Our goal is to have teaching be visible to the student, and learning be visible to the teacher.

4

## Effective Feedback

Giving and receiving effective feedback reduces the gap between where students are in their learning journey and where they need to be.

5

## Aligned Systems & Processes

The movement is bigger than just you—it's about a collective. Combining all the above, the most effective leaders and teachers are those who understand how to manage school and classroom systems and processes to support sustainable change.

# Mindframes

Before we take a deep-dive into each of the Visible Learning strands, we want to introduce some new ways of thinking about learning. These ways of thinking—or “mindframes”—are a big part of that mindset shift we touched on in the beginning of this guide.



**According to Hattie’s research, one of the most important influences on student achievement is how teachers and leaders think about learning.** Mindframes are important to the success of school change so Hattie identified—and co-wrote a book about—ten of them. In fact, these mindframes are so impactful that 81% of analysed schools experienced increased focus on mindframes in schools as a result of implementing Visible Learning+ professional learning!

Mindframes are more than simply the way educators think. Rather, it’s about why they do the things they do in the day-to-day of their classrooms. Anyone who is familiar with the author and lecturer Simon Sinek and his “Golden Circle” will recognise this. Sinek believes it’s more important to know the “why” behind something rather than the “what” or the “how.” In the case of Visible Learning, this “why” is the passion and enthusiasm that inspired educators feel to have an impact on students, and that manifests itself in these ten mindframes. The mindframes are broken up into three categories—impact, change and challenge, and learning focus.

## Impact Mindframes

- I am an evaluator of my impact on student learning.
- I see assessment as informing my impact and next steps.
- I collaborate with my peers and my students about my conceptions of progress and my impact.

## Change & Challenge Mindframes

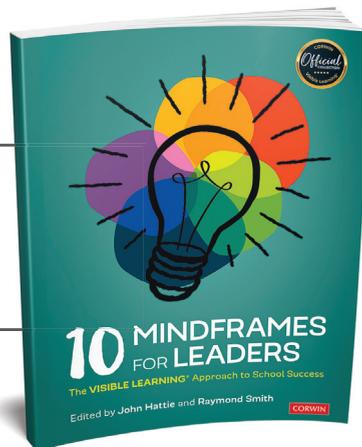
- I am a change agent and believe all students can improve.
- I strive for challenge and not merely “doing your best.”

## Learning Focus Mindframes

- I give and help students understand feedback and I interpret and act on feedback given to me.
- I engage as much in dialogue as monologue.
- I explicitly inform students what successful impact looks like from the outset.
- I build relationships and trust so that learning can occur in a place where it is safe to make mistakes and learn from others.
- I focus on learning and the language of learning.



**WANT MORE?** Take a deeper dive into mindframes, with our book *10 Mindframes for Leaders* by [CLICKING HERE](#)

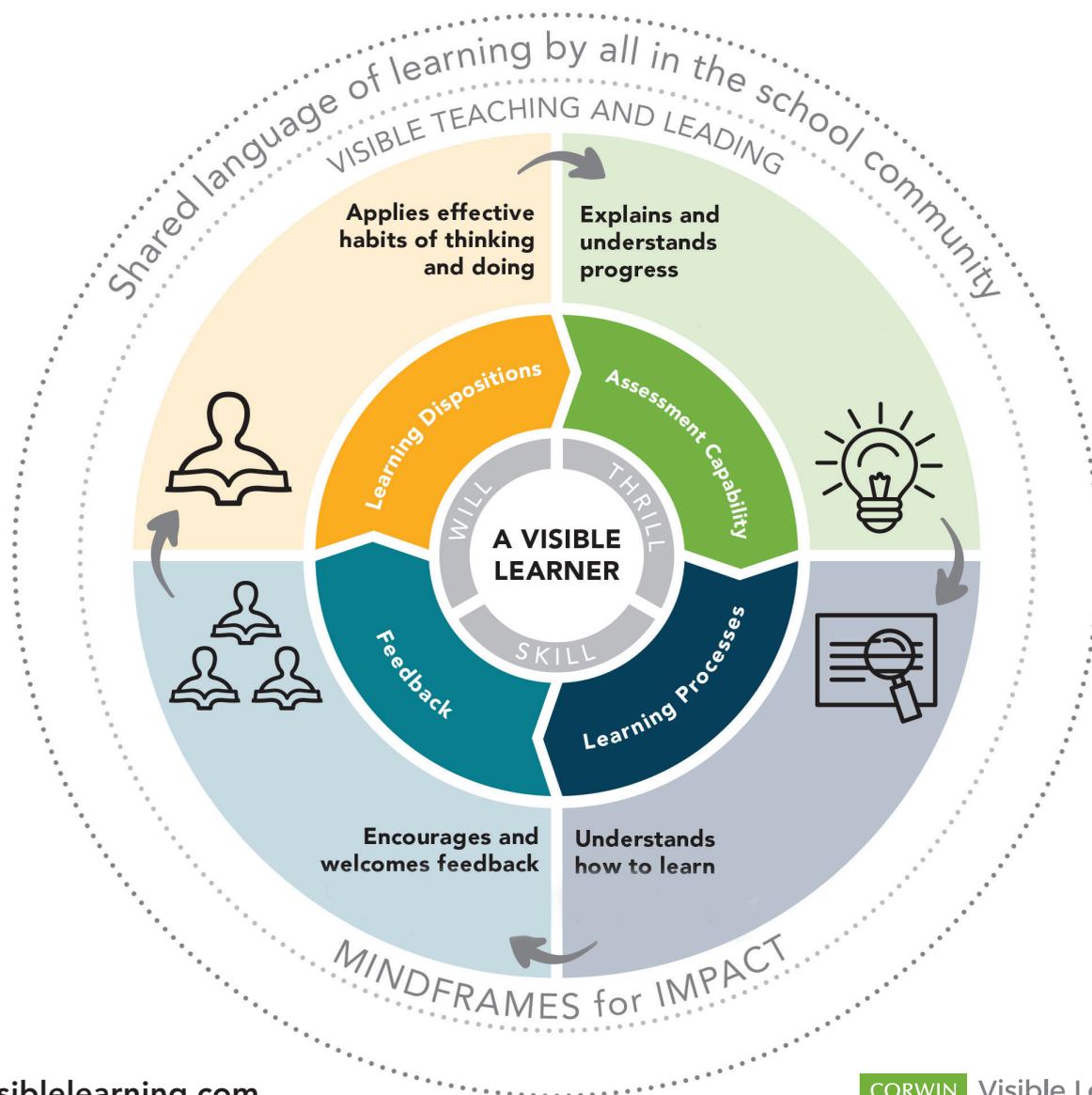


# Strand 1: The Visible Learner

On the very first page of this guide, we say that learning is most powerful when you can see it. But what does this mean, exactly? Our definition of a “Visible Learner” is a teacher who can see learning through the eyes of their students, and students who see themselves as their own teachers.

When students have the skills to assess their own learning, we refer to this as assessment-capable. Building assessment-capable learners is one of the most important things we can do when it comes to moving students forward. Instead of assessment decisions being made by teachers on behalf of students, it’s more of a collaborative effort between a student and teacher.

**You might be asking, “Okay, that sounds fantastic! How do I do that?”** The first step is making students part of their own learning process from the very start — and this means taking time for both you and your students to learn about the learning process and developing a shared language for what learning means in your classroom or school. In fact, developing a language of learning across your school is an integral first step toward your Visible Learning journey as a whole, according to John Hattie’s research.

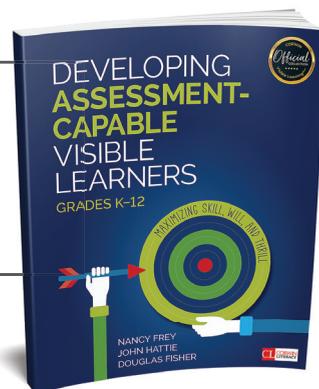


When students participate in the assessment of their own learning, they:

- Begin to recognise and understand main ideas and apply learning in different ways and situations
- Are more able—and more motivated—to access, interpret, and use information from their assessments that can affirm—or further—their own learning

Part of the success criteria around this strand is to agree on a shared definition within your school of what assessment-capable learning looks like in your context. This makes it easier to know if you've made an impact.

**WANT MORE?** Our title *Developing Assessment-Capable Visible Learners, Grades K–12* takes you through how to increase your students' capacity to learn and thrive: **Get your copy by [CLICKING HERE](#)**



## Strand 2: Know Thy Impact

Understanding the impact a school, leader, or teacher has on the students in their care is essential to refining, adapting, and changing to improve student outcomes.

**At this point, however, you might be asking: “What does impact mean in this case?”** It's a question without a distinct answer, mostly because impact is something that needs to be defined within a school. Impact will mean something very different to two different schools.

**One point we want to stress:** there's a reason that this strand is “know thy impact” instead of “know my impact.” For an action to truly be successful—and stick—in a school, there needs to be collective action among teachers, students, and leaders to gather, analyse, and interpret their impact. Books and learning resources can only go so far. It's teachers and leaders working together collectively that brings about real change.

**Your Turn:** While there's no silver bullet, there are three key questions that can help you and your peers define what impact means in your context. Take some time to work through these questions as a school and document your discoveries and decisions:

- Is there a shared understanding of how students progress through a curriculum?
- Is there a desired magnitude for the impact, and how do you evaluate the magnitude?
- What is the pervasiveness of the impact? How does it spread to all students?

**WANT MORE?** Visible Learning+ professional learning can assist your school in establishing ongoing cycles of impact and implement an action plan. To know more, [Click Here](#).



## Strand 3: Visible Teaching & Leading

“It is critical that the teaching, (leading), and learning are visible. There is no deep secret called ‘teaching and learning’: teaching and learning are visible in the classrooms of the successful teachers and students...in the passion displayed by the teacher and the learner when successful learning and teaching occur...” says Hattie about the Visible Teaching & Leading strand.

Think about a teacher—or leader—that’s made a positive impact on your own learning. What was it about that person that contributed to your learning, or made you excited to learn? Chances are, they did one or all of the following:

- Shared their passion and interest with you
- Took the extra time and effort to make sure you understood what you were learning
- Visibly displayed their excitement about what they were teaching and learning
- Gave you feedback — and learned from the feedback you were able to give them

 **Your Turn:** This is a strand where the mindframes that underpin Visible Learning are important to keep in mind. Ways of thinking like, “I am a change agent,” “I strive for challenge,” and “I build relationships and trust” are all important when concentrating on making learning visible in this way. Reflect on these mindframes by asking yourself the following:

If I am a change agent, do I believe that I have efficacy, and am I working with my peers to create a climate that fosters an increased sense of efficacy?

If I strive for challenge, what are some opportunities to teach my students that making errors and working through productive struggle are the best way to learn?

If I build relationships and trust, what are the ways that I work to build positive relationships with my students, or help them building positive relationships with each other?

 **WANT MORE?** If you’re not quite sure how to engage with our evidence-based, systemic Visible Learning+ professional learning for your school, **start by reaching out to our Education Improvement Advisors by CLICKING HERE.**



## Strand 4: Effective Feedback

One of the most powerful messages of Visible Learning is the significance and necessity of feedback in the learning process. This feedback isn't just for learners—but also for teachers. However, sometimes there's a mismatch between how teachers and students experience feedback.

**At its core, feedback is supposed to narrow the gap between where the learner is and where they're meant to be.** When you make the shift from giving feedback to helping learners receive it, that's what starts to make the learning visible for both students and teachers.

 **Your Turn:** Many of the ten mindframes we touch on at the beginning of this guide explore the importance and significance of feedback, specifically this one: "I give and help students understand feedback and I interpret and act on feedback given to me."

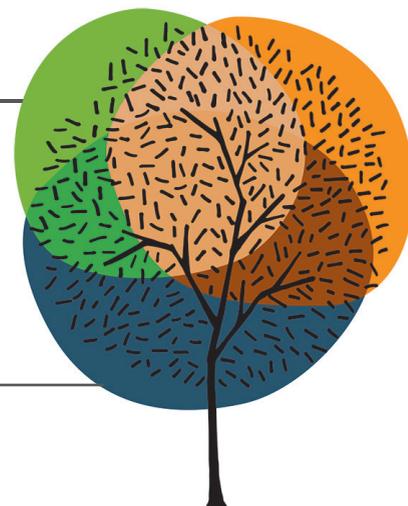
To cultivate this mindframe, take a critical and thorough look at your own feedback behaviour by asking yourself, "Am I an educator who prefers to give feedback, or am I a teacher who prefers to demand it?" "Am I a teacher that shows I can receive, interpret, and act on student feedback?"

Another action item might be to have a colleague listen to the feedback you provide in your classroom and specifically look for the "where to next?" feedback. Once you're able to gather this evidence, you'll be able to understand your feedback preferences.

Like the other Visible Learning strands, effective feedback may begin with you in your individual classroom, but it's important to discuss effective feedback at the school to make sure there's a shared understanding of giving and receiving feedback.

As stated, feedback is for teachers and learners alike. Engaging students in a feedback process is very common along the Visible Learning+ journey and it is recommended that students provide and seek feedback, according to John Hattie's research of over ten years of seeing schools implement Visible Learning+.

 **WANT MORE?** Our professional learning sessions within the Impact Series dive deep into school capability to measure growth in relation to these strands. Check out the session "Feedback That Makes Learning Visible" which helps shift the conversation from giving feedback to receiving feedback so you can evaluate your impact. **To know more, visit our website by clicking here.**



## Strand 5: Aligned Systems & Processes

The four previous strands we've outlined in this guide will be the most effective for powering successful change if schools have systems and processes in place to ensure there is a shared knowledge and understanding of what impact is being made on student learning.

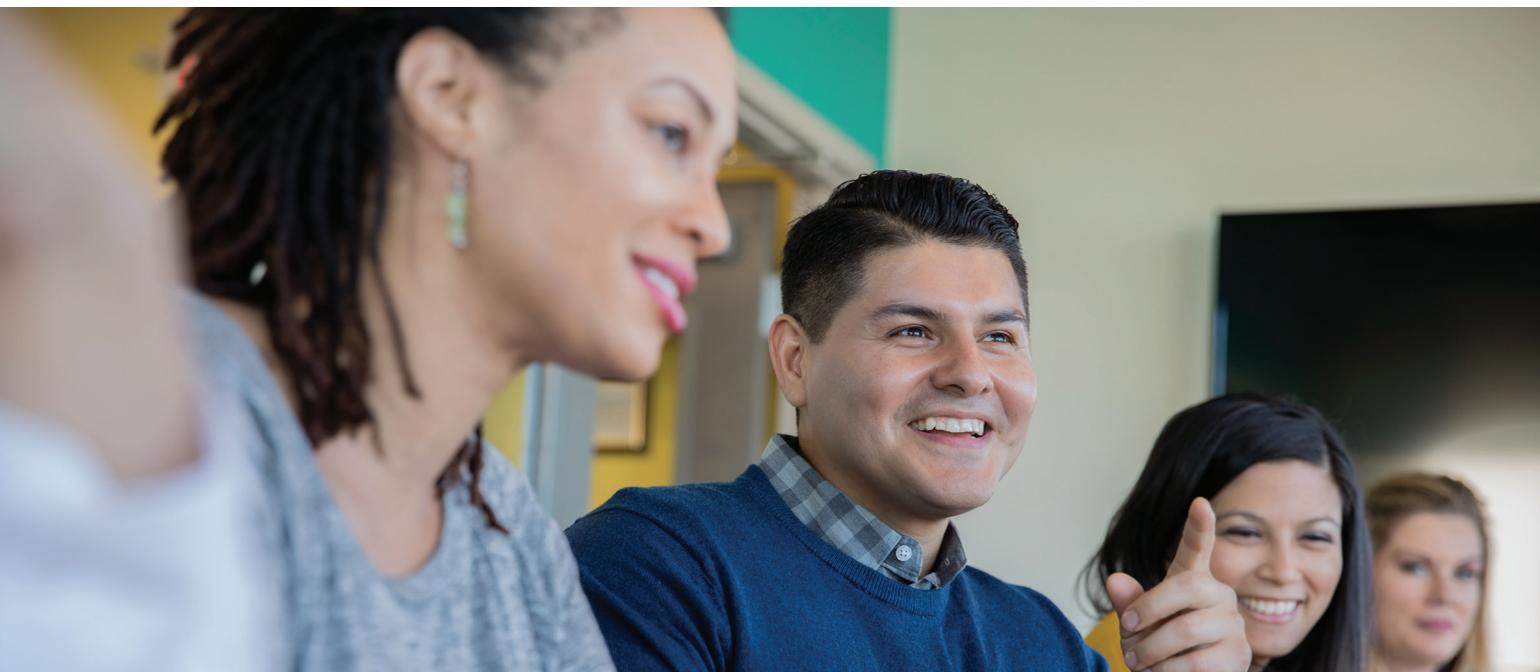
**There are two parts to this alignment.** The first is having an aligned culture and climate of trust and respect — where everyone is thinking through the lens of the same mindframes. Celebrating progress, engaging in dialogue just as much—if not more!—than monologue, and collaborating with your peers—it's a critical part of building a Visible Learning ethos in your school. Even though the mindframes are "I" statements—they're also "we" statements.

**The other piece of this alignment is having a documented system and process for your Visible Learning efforts.** If you're reading a Visible Learning book with a teacher team, or you've attended a Visible Learning event to learn more, that's wonderful, and we're happy to have you as part of our movement.

However, for Visible Learning to really impart change at the school level, it's critical to have a plan for how you'll engage with the continuous self-evaluation and evidence gathering required to determine the areas of school improvement you'll focus on and the decisions you'll make. The evidence is clear: Visible Learning+ has helped teachers become more inspired and passionate, which has a positive effect on students' learning. But the journey doesn't end there. **Visible Learning+ is an ongoing process which results in years of accelerated learners, strong teaching groups, and effective school change.**



**WANT MORE?** Through Visible Learning+ professional learning, we work with schools to establish an impact cycle for this ongoing inquiry and knowledge-building. The evaluation model of Visible Learning+ is based on these five key strands, thus enabling your team to make the best decisions for your school. Visible Learning+ provides school leaders and teachers with the tools to turn Professor John Hattie's research into action for deep and sustained improvement over a three-year period. For more information, visit our website by clicking [here](#).



# Next Steps

These strands are the foundation for additional Visible Learning efforts—if you understand these, it opens the door to understanding the Visible Learning data and how it can be used to improve school-wide student outcomes.

What these strands don't provide, however, is a series of steps or a concrete path for a Visible Learning journey. **That's where Visible Learning+ comes in.** Visible Learning+ is professional learning that takes the research and key strategies of Visible Learning and puts them into practice.



## Understand what works

Build a common understanding and language of learning across your school around what works (and what doesn't) to accelerate learning and monitor progress.

## Collect and analyse your evidence

Understand where you are now in implementing high-impact practices so you can chart where you want to go and how to get there.



## Implement and assess your impact

Develop and implement a professional learning plan based on your evidence that will enable you to track progress and assess your impact.



For learning outcomes, and to get started on your Visible Learning+ journey, contact your Education Improvement Advisors **HERE**.

# Supporting Resources for Visible Learning

If you're not ready to dive into professional learning quite yet, here are some additional resources for furthering your Visible Learning journey. These pathways are designed to provide deeper knowledge into the research, implementation, and overall movement of Visible Learning; as well as complement Visible Learning+ professional learning.



## Official Books Collection

The Official Collection offers practical resources that distill the insights found in the Visible Learning research so that all teachers and school leaders can apply the strategies that have the greatest impact on student learning. The collection includes books that are authored or co-authored by Professor John Hattie and explain and interpret the ever-growing body of research around Visible Learning.

**See the Official Collection and purchase books [HERE](#).**

## Professional Learning through Blended Model

We are pleased to offer online self-paced courses for all staff as well as live virtual leadership sessions to suit your school's needs. The highlight of these professional learning courses is the learning content in all staff courses and the leadership sessions is identical to a full day face to face professional learning course with a consultant in your school.

Engage in face-to-face (F2F) one day workshops, select from our Synchronous Video Conferencing (SVC) options or engage in Asynchronous, consultant facilitated 2-6 week 6-hour online courses (A6C).

**Know more by [CLICKING HERE](#).**



## Virtual Events

At a Corwin event, expect a quality professional learning and development experience and tools that you can bring back to your school. You'll meet fellow educators who share your concerns, passion, and commitment to improving teaching and learning. You'll exchange ideas with the top experts in the field. No matter what event you choose to attend, you'll walk away with new strategies, ideas, and a larger network of like-minded individuals.

**Register for an upcoming virtual event [HERE](#).**

