Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is a methodology under development within the evidence-based framework adopted by Achievement for All 3As to measure the impact of the Achievement for All programme in schools. Since 2011, PwC, commissioned by Achievement for All 3As, has developed an independent social impact assessment of the programme. This has led to the development of a ‘Theory of Change Social Impact Assessment’ model that evaluates the four key areas of the programme: leadership, teaching and learning, parental engagement and wider outcomes. This paper will consider the approach taken and findings from PwC in the context of the Theory of Change Social Impact Assessment model.

Currently in c. 2000 schools (primary, secondary, special schools and academies and pupil referral units) the Achievement for All programme, a key part of government educational Special Educational Needs reform through the Children and Families Bill and Draft Code of Practice has reached over 77,000 targeted pupils’, 69,000 parents and carers, 9,000 school leaders and 25,000 teachers.

The methodology began with a wide reaching international literature search on each of the four elements, leading to a framework that would test the assertion that the Achievement for All programme would have a social impact in terms of reading, writing, behaviour, attendance and employability.

Indicative findings from a survey of 149 Achievement for All school Champions that is a random sample taken from the 1,076 social impact evidence base, showed that the majority of the targeted pupils exceeded progress in reading writing and maths of SEND pupils nationally by between 50% and 330%. Top performing schools completing the first year of the programme achieved 230% to 330% higher than national results for special education needs pupils (for 2011/12 between 6.50 and 9.15 Average Point Scores in English and maths). Overall, schools reported a 17% improvement in parent and carer engagement with teachers and with parent and carer engagement in children's learning. In addition there were also improvements in pupil attendance of 9% and in pupil behaviour of 8%.

The contribution to knowledge of this paper relates to both the development of the SIA model, theory of change and impact analysis.