

Investigating the impact and cost-effectiveness of school-community partnerships

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Any commitment to sustained partnerships within schools should raise questions about returns gained relative to investments made. However, capturing the diversity of potential outcomes and comparing this to investments to conduct traditional economic analyses is very challenging in the context of Schools as Community Hubs. Economic evaluations need to enable investment to be compared with tangible benefits that are observable, as well as future benefits that may be experienced by those outside the immediate school community.

This paper will present a contemporary but practical approach to investigating cost-effectiveness, through Value for Investment methodology. It will be applied using available evidence on the impact and investments in school-community partnerships in Australia, highlighting how economic evaluation evidence can be used in decision-making at a school level.