

The transformative impact of coaching

Dr Christina Preston, Professor of Education, MirandaNet Fellowship,
Institute for Education Futures, De Montfort University

Dr Sarah Younie, Reader, Institute for Education Futures
De Montfort University

Researchers

Vesna Belogaska, MirandaNet Scholar, IRIS Connect European Development Manager
Atisha Parmar, MirandaNet Fellowship

*“Human interaction is the key to professional learning.
In-ear coaching is just one element in a suite
of very powerful human interactions that help us move forward professionally”*

[Mike Fleetham The Thinking Classroom](#)

The Golden Triangle

How can I better communicate my research to teachers and companies?

Researchers

Improved TEL:
Improved learning;
Better teaching
Increased sales
Better Research

Evidence

**EdTech
Developers**

**Teachers,
Learners,
Parents**

How is research evidence relevant to me and how can I find out what teachers and learners think of my product?

How can I find out what works when using technology to support learning?

First stage

MirandaNet Fellowship quantitative research into web based video PD

94% of teachers using IRIS Connect say their teaching has improved

88% say their confidence has risen

88% feel there has been a positive impact on collaboration

96% feel they are willing to take more risks

99% feel there are more conversations between teachers about teaching

Second stage

MirandaNet Fellowship qualitative research into web based video CPD programmes where 'real time in-ear coaching' is a key element

Scope and objectives

This project is intended to study the pilot programmes taking place in the UK to provide a European context and framework for a quantitative study into in-ear coaching.

MirandaNet second stage

Qualitative methodology

Literature search

- To identify potential questions
- Advice sought from international academics in the field

Data Collection

- Structured interviews
- Free answer section/critical incidents
- 6 Coachees and coaches

Data Analysis

- Grounded theme analysis techniques
- Involvement of interviewees as co-researchers
- Involvement of an expert IRIS Connect representative

Some key questions

Why is this CPD method effective?

- **Instant feedback** has **immediate impact** on teaching technique and/or class behaviour in real time
- Potential for **improving student outcomes** can be realised
- A coach from outside the school gives a **new perspective**
- A coach with the skills of empathy and discernment has **significant impact**
- Clear **evidence** that what is learnt in an in-ear session shows up in the next lesson plan.
- Sharing on the platform creates a **sustainable community approach to learning**
- The platform is a **unique professional resource** about pedagogy and practice



“

In-ear coaching actually saved my teaching career. I advise everyone to do it if they want to improve their professional learning and be confident. ”

James Ediker, Teacher, Slough Primary School

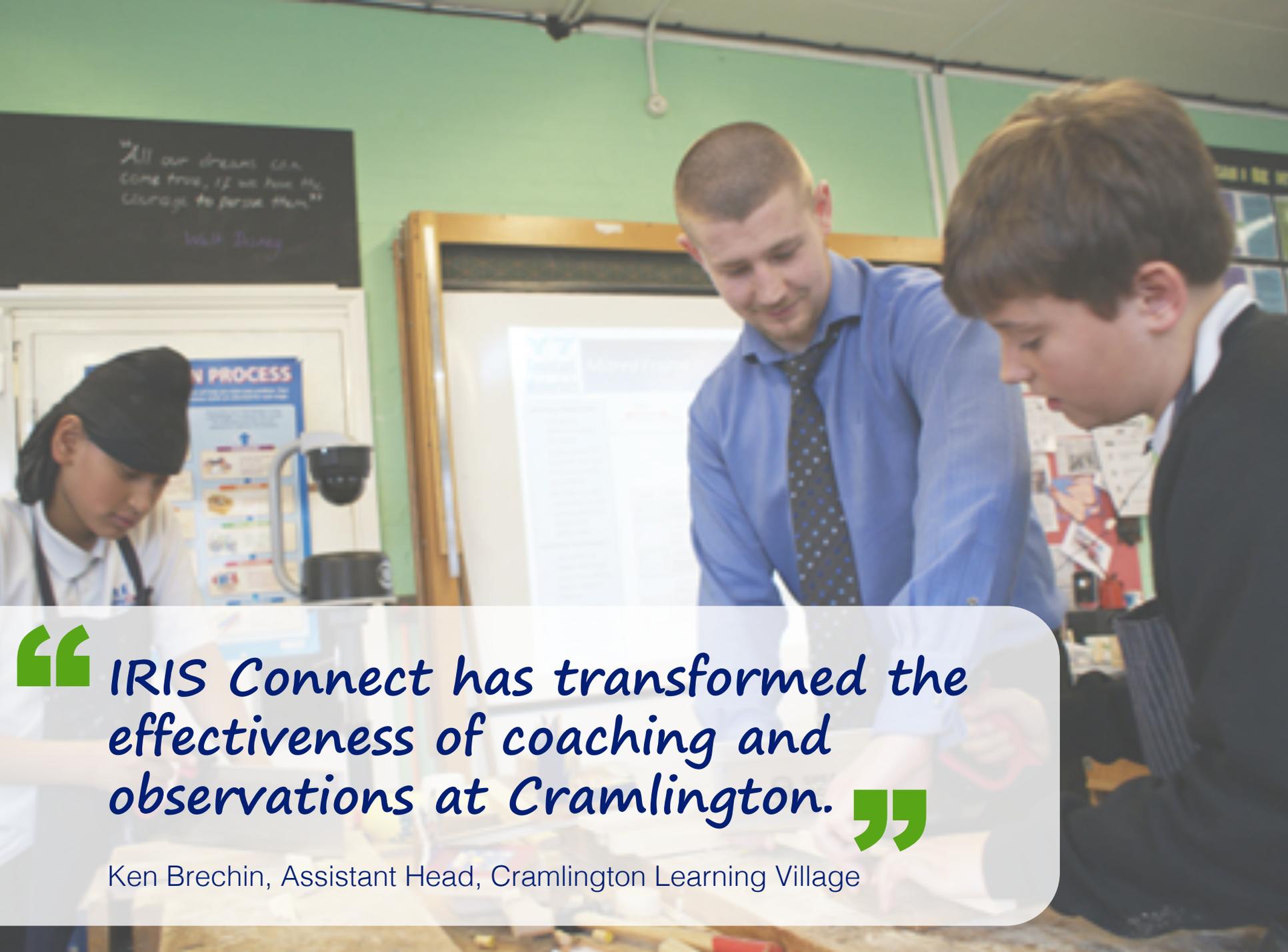
What are the pre-conditions for this method to be effective (1)?

School culture

- Focus on Teacher Learning
- Trust/Value/No-blame culture
- Clear link to whole school CPD program
- Collaborative learning with other schools
- The introduction and initial delivery of the program is essential (change management)

School management

- Positive and encouraging coaching approach
- Teacher in control
- Code of practice/not for performance management
- Motivate teachers for voluntary sign up
- Establish norms around video coaching



“ IRIS Connect has transformed the effectiveness of coaching and observations at Cramlington. ”

Ken Brechin, Assistant Head, Cramlington Learning Village

What are the pre-conditions for this method to be effective (2)?

Advice for coaches

- Ensure you can use the technology
- Develop trust, empathy and discernment
- Create a contract as a “live” document
- Agree the type of input with the coachee in advance
- Explain the benefit of clear focus
- Emphasise lesson planning for pedagogy not just content
- Be keen to learn from the coachee – non-hierarchical relationship/role reversal
- Alleviate anxiety (coffee and chocolate are good tools!)

Advice for teachers/coachees

- Inform and involve the pupils
- Use the equipment regularly in the classroom
- Be keen to learn and reflect
- Ensure constructive follow-up and feedback with coach
- Build feedback into subsequent lessons
- Avoid using the equipment where it might disturb pupils with learning difficulties



“

With In-ear coaching, teaching plans (lesson plans) stop being about delivering lesson content and become about the best ways of teaching learners.

”

Is in-ear coaching replicable and sustainable over time?

Reflections of users on the social learning value of using a platform

- Start with informal using of the platform to begin with and then build it up.
- Strong teaching is developed by in-ear coaching from the perspective of increasing self reflection and also the ability to share good practice within and across schools.
- Make full use of the platform: having a community inside and outside the school to share with is the best way to go forward.
- Sharing with other schools helps to build professional knowledge and expertise.
- Building up a bank of resources on the platform over time helps with sharing experience
- Teachers make show-reel video to share how changes in technique have developed and progress can be observed
- The case studies IRIS Connect provide are useful to help develop strategies.



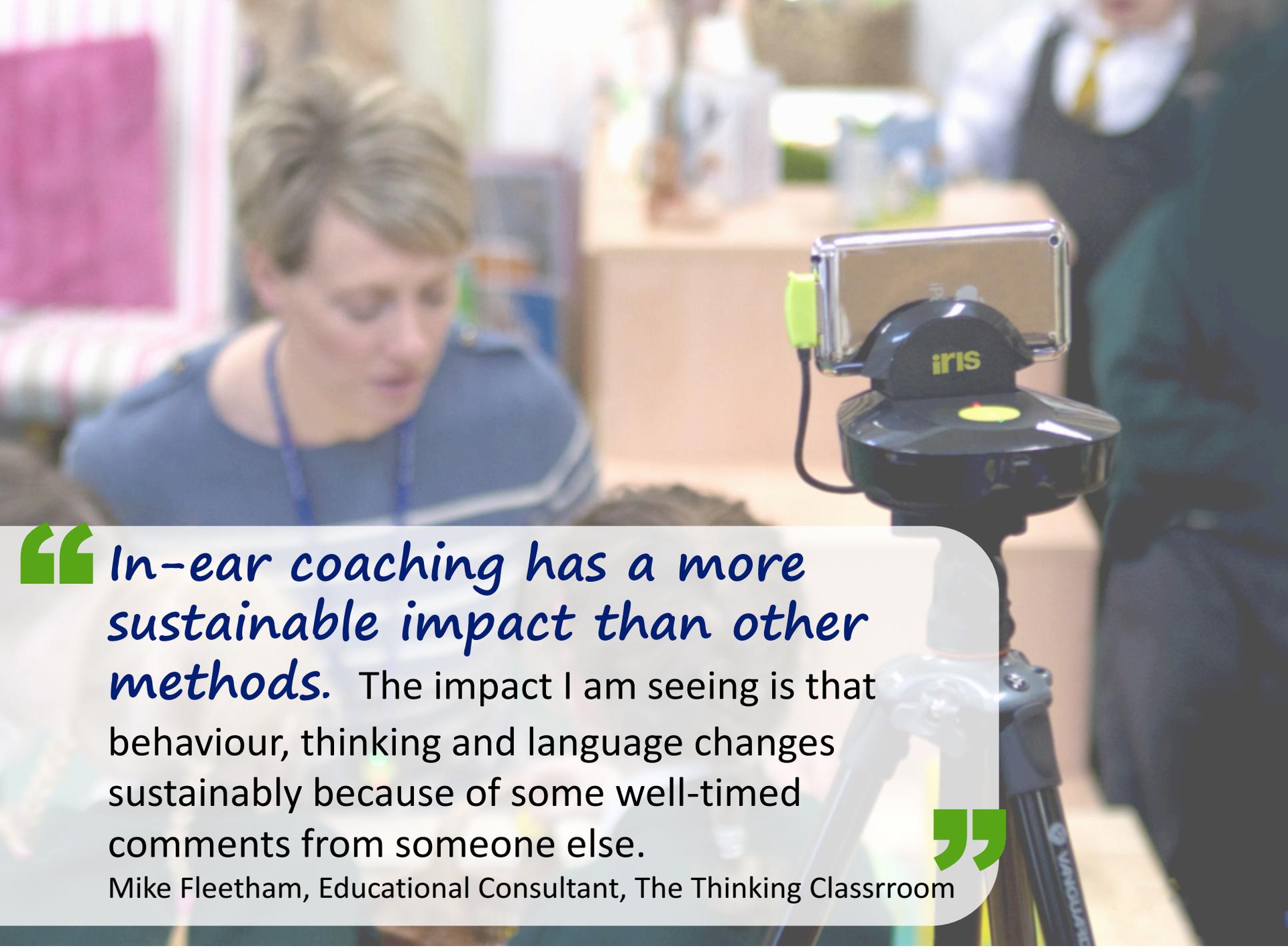
“ We find the platform is an essential element of this spread and sharing across the schools in the academy. The volume of sharing is amazing. We did not expect this change. ”

What is the impact over time?

Establishing genuine change in practice and behaviour that can be transformative

Examples in the data are:

- Teacher moderating strong regional accent so that the pupils can understand the teacher
- Working on open ended questions
- Developing dialogic talk in the classroom
- Teacher changing aggressive and negative tone
- Pupils being more reflective about behaviour and positioning in class
- Pupils respecting the teachers desire to improve
- Creating a community of teachers who share and support
- Evidence of improvements in pupil outcomes to use in OFSTED and Pupil Premium submissions

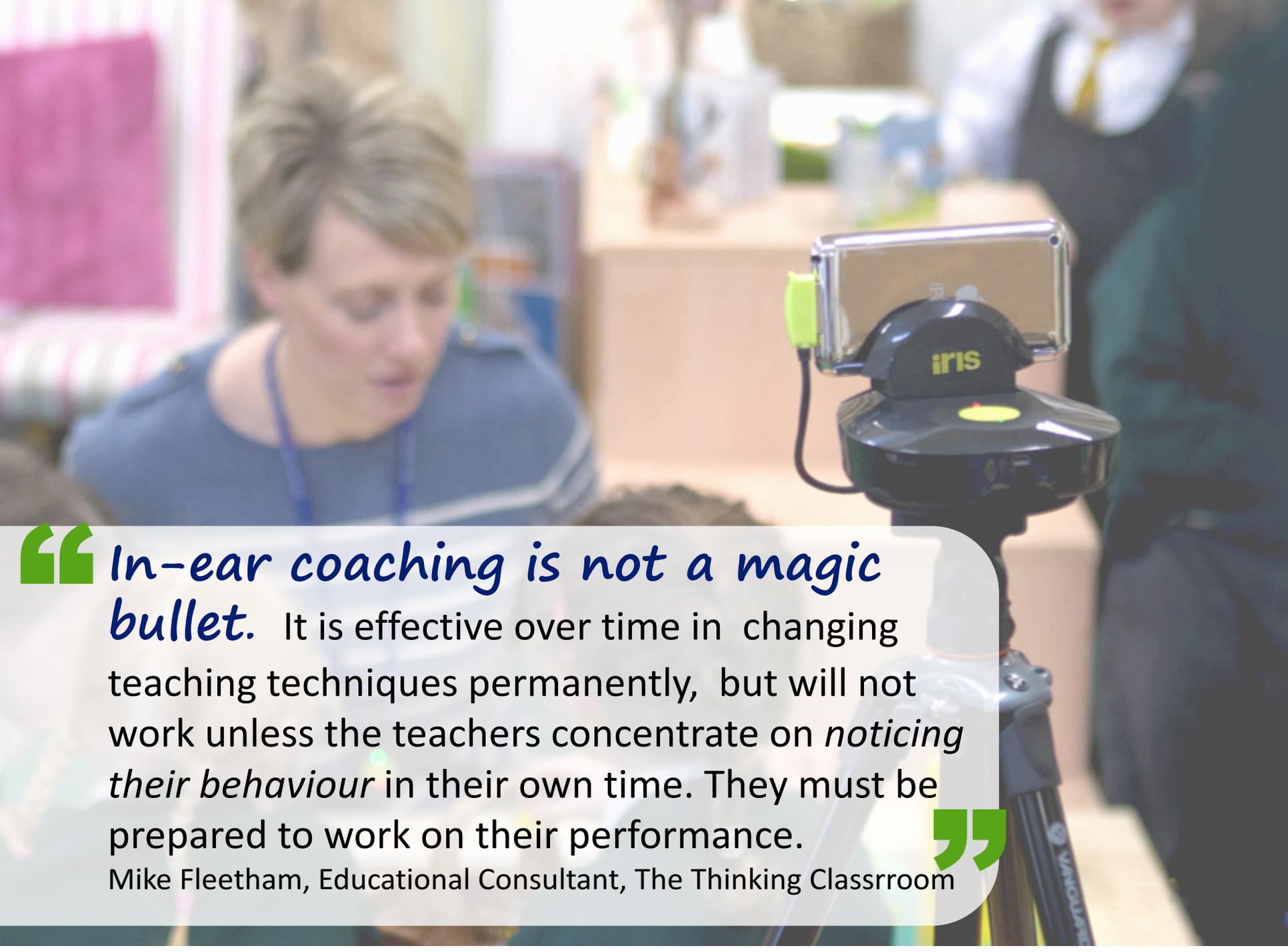


In-ear coaching has a more sustainable impact than other methods.

The impact I am seeing is that behaviour, thinking and language changes sustainably because of some well-timed comments from someone else.



Mike Fleetham, Educational Consultant, The Thinking Classroom



“ In-ear coaching is not a magic bullet. It is effective over time in changing teaching techniques permanently, but will not work unless the teachers concentrate on *noticing their behaviour* in their own time. They must be prepared to work on their performance. ”

Mike Fleetham, Educational Consultant, The Thinking Classroom

If you were planning a research study into in-ear coaching what would be your core questions?