



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Teaching schools: the school perspective

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Overview of teaching schools

Teaching schools are outstanding schools who work with other schools to provide excellent support and training and development to both new and experienced school staff. Since 2011 they have played a central role in the government initiative to empower schools to raise standards by developing a self-improving and sustainable school-led system. They do this through forming alliances with supported schools and strategic partners who help to deliver aspects of training and development.

Teaching schools are remitted to focus their work on six key areas, known as the Big 6:

- Initial Teacher Training
- School to School Support
- Continued Professional Development (CPD)
- Research and Development
- Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs)
- Succession Planning and Talent Management

As the seventh cohort of teaching schools come on board, this report aims to provide examples of the impact teaching schools have had across the country, highlighting areas of outstanding practice in the Big 6 and beyond.

Research and Development

Mary Rose Academy (Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance)

Mary Rose Academy is a cohort 2 teaching school. It has worked with alliance schools to develop research and development (R&D) practice within their alliance. Amongst their R&D activity the teaching school has focused on measuring progress in reading.

In 2013 it was identified that Mary Rose and Cliffdale Primary, as schools catering for pupils with severe and complex learning disabilities, lacked support and materials for teaching children with complex needs to read, making the demonstration of progress to Ofsted challenging. Working with the University of Sussex, an action research project was launched in 2014. This project focused on developing a holistic approach to the teaching of reading and allowed teachers to measure and assess progress in reading strategies that are additional to phonics and comprehension. This study linked directly to the new national curriculum and has implications for the assessment of reading in mainstream education.

One of the key outputs from this project was 'A progression in Reading for Individual Pupils'; this document is linked to the national curriculum, EYFS Development Matters and other reading strategies. It was presented by Mary Rose and Cliffdale Primary to 400 delegates at a Research Conference in November 2014. The tool is being used comprehensively across both schools and is currently being edited following feedback from staff before being rolled out to other schools. Mary Rose and Cliffdale are also now developing a strategy for the progression in writing.

As a result of the research project, a whole school focus on teaching reading, linked to the new curriculum has been implemented. At Cliffdale Primary Academy 100% of pupils met their level 3 in reading writing and maths in 2013 and 2014. In November 2013 the school received a Good rating, having been rated as Inadequate in May 2012. The November 2013 Ofsted report attributes progress in reading to new methods of teaching in phonics and visual word recognition that were researched and developed as part of the project.

Mount Street Academy (Kyra Teaching School Alliance)

Mount Street Academy is the teaching school for the Kyra Teaching School Alliance (TSA). Mount Street were designated in 2012, and has since worked with schools within and beyond their alliance to progress their research and development.

In 2013, St Margaret's CE Primary School, a member of the Kyra TSA, focused a research and development project on the impact of effective pupil feedback via digital technology. In the first year of the study 21 schools were involved in piloting a range of different interventions. Initial data showed signs of positive impact in reading and mathematics, indicating on average, 2 or 3 months accelerated progression. However, further research was needed to statistically support this. In addition, data suggested that certain interventions had a high impact on pupil outcomes and it was decided to focus on these areas in particular.

In 2014 St Margaret's went on to introduce a Professional Learning Community to encourage a uniform approach to interventions. 11 schools took part in a study looking at the impact of verbal and visual-digital feedback on progress. 231 pupils in key stage 2, 18% of which were FSM and 17% were SEND pupils, were involved. The school ran a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) in which children were split into two randomly allocated groups; either a traditional written feedback group or a digital feedback group.

The results showed a positive impact with the digital group making 26.2% better progress, (the equivalent of 5 months progression), compared with the written feedback group. This was even more significant for the disadvantaged pupils who made a 39.6% improvement, (equivalent of 8 months progression). SEND pupils made 46.6% progress, (the equivalent of 9 months progression).

When Holy Trinity Primary School (one of the schools involved in the research), was last inspected, Ofsted noted that the research had 'increased their standards in reading in recent years' with 'digital technologies [being used] to great effect to promote reading'.

As a result of the research St Margaret's CE Primary has significantly improved its results in reading, writing and mathematics to 100% of pupils achieving level 4, up from 86% in 2013 and 69% in 2012.

School to School Support

St Peter's Catholic Primary School (Billericay Community Trust Teaching School Alliance)

Billericay Community Trust Teaching School Alliance (TSA) is a large alliance with 89 member schools and 10 strategic partners across, schools, HEIs and Local Authorities.

St Peter's, designated as a teaching school in 2012, is a large primary school with over 400 pupils and FSM of 1.7%.

National Leader of Education (NLE) support from the Billericay Community Trust TSA was brokered by Essex Local Authority (LA) for Vange Primary School (25% FSM). The school met with their NLE and the LA to create a personalised action plan for next steps that reflected their individual needs.

At Vange Primary funding was used to provide coaching at Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) level by an experienced practitioner from Buttsbury Infant School (a member of the TSA). The support provided included the practitioner doing joint planning and delivery of lessons, in addition to providing coaching support. Staff from Vange Primary also visited Buttsbury to observe lessons there. This support was used to ensure that EYFS practice remained at least Good at the school, as, in the 2010 Ofsted inspection, this was the only area that achieved a Good rating. At this inspection the school was rated as Satisfactory overall. The 2013 Ofsted report specifically cites support from local schools as a factor in the improvement in teaching and learning at EYFS level at the school; it achieved the Local Authority's goal of retaining its Good rating at the inspection.

As a result of this support Vange Primary received an overall Good rating at their 2013 inspection. The school's work with partners was specifically cited as playing a part in their improvement in the inspection report. In addition, Vange Primary's key stage 2 level 4 results in reading writing and maths rose from 70% in 2012 to 75% in 2014.

Harrison Primary School (The Pioneer Teaching School Alliance)

Harrison Primary is a 600 plus primary school with FSM of 4.2% Harrison is the teaching school for the Pioneer Teaching School Alliance (TSA). They have supported a number of schools with higher FSM rates.

Haselworth Primary is a small primary school with 37.5% FSM. From the Pioneer TSA, they received support from Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) who were deployed to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and key stage 1 with a focus on writing and phonics. They were looking to improve engagement in writing activities, review the teaching of phonics and raise the expectations in writing in year 1. To do this the SLE worked with teachers to develop creative writing spaces and to ensure that pupils were given effective opportunities to write. A second SLE was deployed at key stage 2 to develop teaching and learning in conjunction with the Deputy Head. The SLE worked with staff to review systems and procedures to raise standards and ensure that resources were being targeted correctly. The SLE provided peer-to-peer support, reviewing what went well and what needed improvement. Staff at Haselworth Primary were also provided with the opportunity to observe good and outstanding practice within the alliance and teaching school staff attended strategy meetings at the school.

Since receiving this support Haselworth Primary has seen level 4 results in reading writing and maths increase from 47% in 2012 to 71% in 2014. Alongside this in their 2013 monitoring report, Ofsted recognised that Haselworth have benefitted from the support of the Pioneer TSA. The school moved from Requires Improvement in 2008 to Good in their 2015 inspection.

Harrison has also supported Siskin Federation, a school with 34.9% FSM. Siskin Federation is an alliance member of the Pioneer TSA. Harrison deployed SLE support to the school to provide support in behaviours for learning as well as the quality of teaching and learning. The teaching school has also attended strategy meetings at Siskin Primary and undertook lesson observations. In the 2013 Ofsted report, behavior, the quality of teaching and pupil achievement all rose from Satisfactory to Good. The school's current Executive Head was appointed after she was recognised by the LA for the work she had done on behalf of the Teaching School Alliance in other local schools.

Siskin has seen its level 4 results increase from 54% in 2012 to 88% in 2014. It has also improved from Satisfactory in 2011 to being rated as Good by Ofsted in 2013.

St Elphege's RC Infants' School (South London Catholic TSA)

St Elphege's RC Infants' School is the teaching school for the South London Catholic Teaching School Alliance (TSA) based in London. The school is a 3-7 years catholic school and has been involved in supporting a number of schools within the region. The support has been delivered through on-going professional development; working in schools to drive improvement and to develop systems and procedures to ensure teaching and learning is good or outstanding.

The major focus of this work has been to support Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School that was placed in special measures in September 2013.

The alliance deployed Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) to provide teachers with a deeper understanding of what makes a good lesson in Mathematics and English. The support particularly focused on mixed ability classes and how they are differentiated appropriately to meet the needs of all learners. Clear guidelines were provided on how the quality of teaching impacts upon pupil progress and attainment. As a result the school implemented a system to track progress and attainment to ensure targets were challenging and ultimately achieved.

This support has contributed to Regina Coeli moving out of special measures to Good at its Ofsted inspection in March 2015. In the report, Ofsted state that "Middle leaders

have considerably developed their roles since September because partners in the teaching school provide good support and work alongside their counterparts”.

The school's performance has also seen a significant improvement in their attainment of Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths going from 68% in 2013 to 81% in 2014.

Initial Teacher Training

Challney High School for Boys (Chiltern Teaching School Alliance)

Challney High School for Boys has been teaching school for the Chiltern Teaching School Alliance since 2011. They were designated as a School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) provider in 1992 and have been providing initial teacher training (ITT) as the Chiltern Training Group since this time.

The SCITT offers Secondary PGCE training. Participants are awarded QTS on completion of their qualification. Participants on the course can train in a number of subjects, including priority areas such as Science, English, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages and Computer Science. In 2014 the SCITT was rated as Outstanding by Ofsted, the "strong commitment of partner schools" was cited a leading to "highly coherent training programmes".

Challney High School for Boys also offers a choice of salaried and unsalaried School Direct routes. For 2013/14 eight out of 10 trainees (2 having withdrawn) successfully passed the programme and went on to complete their NQT years.

The TSA has formed an interesting partnership with Edge Hill University in the North West, working across the regions to deliver placements for B Ed and PGCE students. The alliance undertook this partnership with Edge Hill University as a way of providing students from Edge Hill with the opportunity to experience teaching within a different context, in Luton schools, in the hope that they may consider Luton as a location to start their teaching careers. This scheme has also benefitted Edge Hill by offering alternative placement provision to trainees, as schools local to Edge Hill are overwhelmed with demand for teaching placements. In 2013/14 the alliance hosted 25 Edge Hill students; six of these (24%) went on to take NQT posts in Luton. In 2014/15, this has increased to hosting 40 students from Edge Hill, with 17 (42.5%) having already secured NQT posts in the Luton area for September 2015.

Bygrove Primary School (London East Teacher Training Alliance)

Bygrove Primary offered School Direct initial teacher training (ITT) prior to its designation as a teaching school in 2013. In the year before they became a teaching school they trained 26 participants. Bygrove Primary and the London East Teacher Training Alliance (LETTA) recruited its first cohort of initial teacher trainees as a teaching school in 2013. 100% of the trainees completed the School Direct programme with PGCE, all were graded as Good or better, and 100% have gone on to be employed.

Since becoming a teaching school the alliance has been able to increase its trainees for 2014-15 to 41. They are also due to offer the same number of places in the 2015/16 academic year. Applicants can apply for a number of salaried and unsalaried routes focusing on key stages 1 and 2. In addition, 12 of this year's 41 places were allocated to the Early Years Foundation Stage and key stage 1 programme which was developed with the University of East London.

LETTA continue to develop its ITT package and was successfully appointed as a School Centred Teacher Trainer (SCITT) in July 2014. Courses will be on offer via this route in the 2015/16 academic year.

Notre Dame High School (Hallam Teaching School Alliance)

Notre Dame High School in Sheffield was designated as a Teaching School in 2011. The growth since the initial year of School Direct in 2012–13 reflects a wider trend away from traditional HEI training routes, with schools choosing to take a leading role in training up their own future NQTs.

In 2012-13 Notre Dame recruited and successfully trained 2 School Direct trainees, achieving 100% pass rate. In 2013-14 this grew to 30 trainees across 14 schools, and again to 58 trainees across 28 schools in 2014-15. The alliance has expanded further in 2015/16 to offering 120 places for teacher trainees. This represents the recruitment of three local teaching school alliances that will undertake their training through Notre Dame's successfully accredited 'Sheffield SCITT' on top of their own 'provider' provision. Recruitment for the 2015-16 academic year has already exceeded initial allocations, significantly in problem recruitment areas such as Maths and Physics.

Employment rates for the alliance's trainees stand at 100% for both 2012-13 and 2013-14, with a similar rate anticipated for 2014-15. The improvement in the standard of candidates is demonstrated through Headteacher reports that 'NQTs who have come

through the alliance's ITT are of a higher calibre than those going through alternative routes' (DfE Teaching Schools Evaluation Case Study Feb 2015).

Notre Dame High School has also built upon their teacher training programmes by offering a full package of early career support for their trainees. They offer support with pre and post ITT Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) programmes, along with NQT and RQT development schemes which include talent spotting for fast track leadership positions.

Continuing Professional Development / Succession Planning and Talent Management

John Cabot Academy (John Cabot Academy and Cabot Learning Federation TSA)

The John Cabot Academy and Cabot Learning Federation TSA (CLF TSA) is a cohort 1 teaching school, designated in 2011. The alliance leads seven development programmes across seven stages of career development. It encourages succession planning and talent management within the alliance. It provides access to programmes linked to both the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders (NPQML) and National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders (NPQSL) with an expectation that by year three a teacher will be ready to undertake leadership responsibility (NPQML). Further to this, the alliance expects that participants undertaking the Emerging Senior Leader course will undertake an action research project that impacts on a school other than their own.

The alliance also supports the progression of staff to headship through delivery of National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), offering secondments and exchanges between partner schools to broaden and deepen learning and experience of school contexts that an emerging headteacher may not have yet acquired. The alliance also now offers progression routes through to becoming an Executive Leader and setting up a multi academy trust through a programme of one to one support, governor support and capacity building seminars.

The alliance's aim to identify and talent spot the next set of middle and senior leaders across the teaching school alliance and beyond has seen 126 teachers and support staff complete the Emerging Leaders programme, 57 the Middle Leaders Programme and 69 the Emerging Senior Leaders programme. Since 2011-12, 294 staff from the teaching school alliance have completed internal leadership programmes

From the first cohort of NPQH in 2013, 13 (38%) participants have been appointed to headship positions since they started the programme. Additionally, since 2011-12, as

well as these NPQH graduates, the alliance has developed 2 Executive Principals, 6 new Principals (promoted from Vice Principal) and 8 new Vice Principals (promoted from Assistant Principal) across the CLF TSA.

Also of interest is the work the alliance has undertaken on the 'Teachers for Tomorrow' programme. This is a programme for 16-19 year olds who wish to become primary and secondary teachers. The programme provides students with the opportunity to plan and deliver lessons alongside experienced teachers within the alliance. Four former School Direct students are now teaching years 1 and 2 within CLF, and 14 out of 19 (74%) of the 2012-13 cohort have gone on to take education related degrees or plan to take a PGCE after their degree.

The alliance also has a commitment to increasing the number of senior female leaders in its schools. This has historically been an area of low representation in the region. In 2011 as the TSA was set up the CLF had five secondary academies, all of which were led by men. As at June 2014 the alliance has Good and Outstanding female leaders in the following posts across the alliance:

- 64% of CLF Vice Principals are female
- 14% of Secondary Principals are female
- 50% of Primary Principals are female
- Female Chief Operating Officer
- Female Lead of the CLF Teaching School
- Female Director of CLF Post 16

In order to facilitate this growth, the alliance has shown a commitment to promotion from within. Secondments and opportunities to 'step up', have also provided aspiring female leaders with vital experience across a variety of settings and contexts, including movement from inner city settings to coastal areas, and a Vice Principal at a Requires Improvement School gaining experience at the John Cabot Academy, which is rated Outstanding. Offering the opportunity to gain experience across different contexts also has the impact of allowing senior colleagues from John Cabot the capacity to provide support at other local schools.

Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs)

Cotgrave Candleby Lane (Cotgrave Candleby Lane Teaching School Alliance)

Cotgrave Candleby Lane is a cohort 1 teaching school. The teaching school alliance consists of primary, secondary and special schools across urban, rural, small, large, special and faith schools in the East Midlands.

In 2013 the alliance provided Specialist Leader of Education (SLE) support to Lover's Lane Primary School following their Ofsted inspection in December 2012, in which the school was rated as Requiring Improvement.

SLE support was provided to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at the school to help develop the school's literacy and maths opportunities for children in the EYFS. The 2012 Ofsted inspection report stated that the number of children reaching the required standards in their phonics test was below expectations.

The SLE provided support in timetabling and planning as well as on the structure of lessons in order to increase the opportunity for active learning in maths and literacy.

Teachers and teaching assistants at Lover's Lane were also provided with the opportunity to visit the SLE's school to observe classroom set up, planning, assessment and resourcing.

As a result of this support Lover's Lane has seen its level 4 results for reading, writing and maths improve from 56% in 2012 to 89% in 2014. Alongside this, the school's most recent Ofsted inspection saw it improve from Requires Improvement to Good in November 2014 and the proportion of children in year 1 achieving the required standard in the phonics screening test was above average.

The report for this visit states that "Work with the school's partners has made a highly positive impact on teaching and on pupils' achievements".



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