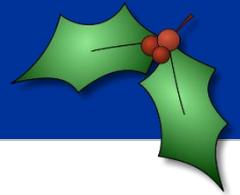


# Teaching Schools Council South West

## Newsletter – December 2017



Dear colleagues,

Season's greetings!

While this busy term comes to a festive close, our work in teaching schools is going strong. The opportunity to access funded support through the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) and the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF) is all consuming for some, however the feedback from across the region tells us that leadership capacity to give support, and the capacity to receive support in some schools targeted for multiple proposals is a very real concern. We have been continuing to work with colleagues in the DfE over the timescales for developing and delivering funded proposals and the need for a realistic calendar to support recruitment to build capacity in our schools.

Our challenge for the regional TSC team this term has been balancing the time spent supporting the SSIF process – bringing teaching schools together, brokering support and liaising with LA, MAT, Regional Delivery Division and Regional Schools Commissioner partners – with the wider role of teaching schools. We have needed to build our capacity to support ITT and teacher recruitment in teaching schools. Therefore we have seconded Alison Fletcher (Director of CLF Institute) until the end of the academic year to support the team. Alison comes with a wealth of teaching school and ITT experience and we look forward to her support.

Developing web-based opportunities to better navigate our school improvement and support infrastructure is a key issue, and within the region teaching schools are developing portals for multiple teaching schools to share schools support, CPD and professional learning information. Signposting to this will be coming via the TSC website shortly!

As leaders in the South West we have the opportunity to develop a culture of enquiry through all our teaching school activity – ensuring our regional workforce has the knowledge and skills to innovate and be creative in how we teach and lead in our schools to meet the needs of all children and young people. Dr Jim Rogers is collaborating with the RSC team and our regional Research Schools to bring together teaching school leaders to embed evidence informed, enquiry-led practice in our ITT, professional learning and school support programmes, and working with teaching school leaders to share good practice in peer to peer work in schools. Watch out for this theme in conferences during 2018!

Other initiatives have included the Women in Leadership coaching pledge commission to the TSC for on-going roll out across the region and the NLG advocacy role continuing to develop with recognition that the quality of governance in our schools and partnerships is a regional priority.

Nationally, members of the TSC are working with the DfE, the National Schools Commissioner, the College of Teaching and other key partners to represent teaching schools. Regionally we are reflecting the focus on Early Years and Special provision by building capacity in our regional team and expressions of interest will follow in the spring term.

Finally, the TSC SW team wish you a restful Christmas and a happy New Year!

Best wishes,

Jenny Blunden and Simon Cowley  
Teaching School Council SW Members



## Securing SSIF Success

Regionally, we have recognised the need to equip our Regional Teaching School Links with a better knowledge and insight on Teaching School capacity and capability, in order that we can help advise on development, and co-ordinate collaborative projects. To this end, we have been piloting a new Teaching School peer review, and this is ready to launch alongside a Teaching School SEF. While we understand the need for NCTL/DfE to capture capacity and impact on the data hubs, this is focused on our ability to support and help develop the system across the region. It is non-judgemental, and designed to be a positive process. More news will follow soon.

The beginning of this term saw the announcement of the SSIF round 1 outcomes and for some the disappointment of not being successful, and for others the dawning realisation that a lot needed to be done and very quickly. I have not known a start to term quite like it, and while we are all excited about the potential of the SSIF funding, and trying to ensure we have coverage and access to support, we also need to be mindful of the word 'strategic' and how best to respond. This is forming much of the 'behind-the-scenes' work, has hopefully helped with the second round and how we move forward from here. What the funding is allowing is a level of collaboration across the region not seen before, and for that I am very pleased. It also opens opportunities for meaningful engagement with research and evidence, something close to my heart, and it is encouraging to see opportunities for this to develop regionally. Teaching Schools have a pivotal role here. We are working hard to coordinate and support potential new Teaching Schools, which I hope will add further capacity through collaboration and not draw from the 'system' at an important time.

Liz Garman [liz.garman@twynhamschool.com](mailto:liz.garman@twynhamschool.com)

## Targeted Leadership Funded projects

This year we have four funded projects running across the region, which sees pairs of school leaders stepping up to develop their leadership skills and experience. One of the pairs is an established and successful middle leader in their own school who is prepared to experience working in another school to secure improved outcomes. The emerging system leader group take part in six twilight sessions, including a leadership review process and spend up to six funded days in the other school. During the project, they are supported by a coach who helps them reflect on their work. The final element is building a case study and sharing this with other system leaders. Examples of previous years include developing a targeted club approach for KS4 support, developing behaviour systems and supporting curriculum development across the primary years. The second of the pair is a staff member who is interested in developing their leadership skills in the home school and the funding allows time for this person to shadow and build their leadership skills by leading an in-school project, so balancing the capacity for the school allowing the more senior member of staff to work outside the school. The result of the projects to date include seeing increased leadership capacity through a take up of an SLE role, increased confidence in leadership skills in working across schools, which has led to school leaders stating a positive impact on retention. The four current projects are running in the Bristol area, Cornwall, Wiltshire and Dorset and it is heartening to see that schools who had been funded last year are running a range repeat self-funded experiences drawing on the materials developed from their previous involvement.

If you would like to learn more about the project please contact the RTSL in your area or the project lead below:

Chris Mitten [chris.mitten@me.com](mailto:chris.mitten@me.com)

## Working through the SRIB to plan more strategically

The Sub-Regional Improvement Board, SRIB, is now meeting each half term and enables the sub regional TSC lead and a team member to represent Teaching Schools. Representatives of the RSC team, LA, Diocese and the Regional Development Team have been meeting to discuss local priorities, which then enables TSC leads to work with the Teaching Schools in their area to plan Strategic School Improvement Fund bids, SSIF. In the coming months the Board will be able to discuss the impact of the earlier successful SSIF bids now impacting on those schools involved. The aim is to ensure that the local intelligence of the group can be applied to ensure that SSIF bids will deliver support in the right places. The meeting also considers the capacity of school led system leadership which in turn informs future rounds of system leader designations.

With SSIF Round 3 about to open it is clearly important that Teaching Schools are looking to work with those groups with capacity to delivering school improvement work across the sub-regions. The upcoming Teaching School meetings will allow for further collaboration to join up the available capacity, linking Teaching Schools together and ensuring additional capacity from MATS, LA and Diocese is factored into collaborative planning, which echoes other messages in this newsletter.

Chris Mitten [chris.mitten@me.com](mailto:chris.mitten@me.com)

### Peer Review and QA of Teaching Schools

Regionally, we have recognised the need to equip our Regional Teaching School Links with a better knowledge and insight on Teaching School capacity and capability, in order that we can help advise on development, and coordinate collaborative projects. To this end, we have been piloting a new Teaching School peer review, and this is ready to launch alongside a Teaching School SEF. While we understand the need for NCTL/DfE to capture capacity and impact on the data hubs, this is focused on our ability to support and help develop the system across the region. It is non-judgemental, and designed to be a positive process. More news will follow soon. The beginning of this term saw the announcement of the SSIF round 1 outcomes and for some the disappointment of not being successful, and for others the dawning realisation that a lot needed to be done and very quickly. I have not known a start to term quite like it, and while we are all excited about the potential of the SSIF funding, and trying to ensure we have coverage and access to support, we also need to be mindful of the word 'strategic' and how best to respond. This is forming much of the 'behind-the-scenes' work, has hopefully helped with the second round and how we move forward from here. What the funding is allowing is a level of collaboration across the region not seen before, and for that I am very pleased. It also opens opportunities for meaningful engagement with research and evidence, something close to my heart, and it is encouraging to see opportunities for this to develop regionally. Teaching Schools have a pivotal role here. We are working hard to coordinate and support potential new Teaching Schools, which I hope add to capacity and collaboration, and not draw from the 'system' at an important time.

Jim Rogers [jrogers@plpic.co.uk](mailto:jrogers@plpic.co.uk)

### Working to build system leader capacity; new TS and NLE plus support for new TSA

A new application round for Teaching School status is upon us and as has, reassuringly, created much interest. There are new opportunities for schools and leaders that are eligible to play an important role in our ever evolving self-improving system. For me, these opportunities are about true system leadership, leading and learning beyond one single institution. As a former school leader, ensuring that my community was outward facing, networking and learning from the best was fundamental to my school improvement plans. Teaching Schools, through their alliances, have unique opportunities to share, collaborate and develop evidence based pedagogies that make a difference. Recently, through the Strategic School Improvement Fund, Teaching Schools have come together, to work collaboratively on local needs and are able to access significant school improvement funding to make real impact across common improvement issues and with larger numbers of schools.

So – if you want to apply to become a teaching school contact your RTSL and take some time to consider the guidance below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-schools-a-guide-for-potential-applicants>

Should you not wish to apply now, but to work with an existing Teaching School, in order to apply in the future there is an "Aspiring Teaching School Grant" that is worth considering as well. This is a welcome first step towards full teaching school status. Please see below.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-schools-funding-to-help-an-aspiring-teaching-school>

So this is a "call to arms" come and play your part as a system leader as we build the necessary capacity to lead a self improving system.

Tony Bloxham [tbloxham@educ.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:tbloxham@educ.somerset.gov.uk)



# National Leaders of Governance Advocates



As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, the management of National Leaders of Governance was devolved to the TSC South West. We now operate through 4 sub-regional NLG advocates who work alongside RTSLs as brokers of support for governance, with the added brief of raising the profile of the work of NLGs across the region. Their work is co-ordinated by a project manager, Julia Steward, based in Taunton. She reports to Tony Bloxham (RTSL for Region A) who has overall responsibility for the service on behalf of TSC SW. Advocates will be attending meetings in the sub-regions to give you an opportunity to find out more. They share a belief in the crucial role effective governance plays in securing the best for every pupil and a determination to build on good practice and raise the standard of governance in SW schools.

## Region A



**Geoff Mountjoy** ([geoff.mountjoy@btinternet.com](mailto:geoff.mountjoy@btinternet.com))

*I am excited to have been appointed as National Leaders of Governance Advocate for the sub-region covering South Gloucestershire, Bristol, BANES, North Somerset and Somerset. There are 16 NLGs to cover this large part of the region with a range of school experience and we intend to work as a team to provide the best possible level of support. My work as Regional Director of Legal Aid and Board Member for a Housing Association has placed a personal emphasis on promoting social inclusion. I believe strongly in the power of NLGs to support governing bodies and their schools to provide pupils with the opportunity to fulfil their potential in society. Having made a career change, I have spent the past 4 years as a Business Manager in 2 Bristol schools.*

## Region B



**Keith Clover** ([keithclover@hotmail.com](mailto:keithclover@hotmail.com))

*I have been a governor for over 20 years and have been a Chair of Governors for most of that time. My first involvement with school governance was with a school that was in Special Measures. During my time as Chair, working with a developing Governing Body and staff team, the school improved to Good in 2007 and Outstanding in 2010. The work of the Governing Body was recognised as being instrumental in the development of the school. I have chaired a number of boards on behalf of the LA and Diocese and also Chaired an IEB in Bath. I am proud to be a National Leader of Governance to support Chairs and Governing Bodies to fulfil the ever increasing role of governance in Local Governing Bodies and Academy Trust Boards and, as a sub-regional Advocate, to broker support in Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire.*

## Region C



**Ann Harris OBE** ([anncharris@aol.com](mailto:anncharris@aol.com))

*I welcome the opportunity to be a National Leader of Governance Advocate for the sub-region covering Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth. Increasing capacity is my priority, since at the moment four NLGs cover the sub-region. My working life was spent in education as teacher, headteacher, adviser and inspector. My passion for providing children with the best education possible remains. Effective governance makes a difference. NLG Advocates have the opportunity to contribute to the system by increasing capacity and brokering support to improve further the educational experience of children. I am greatly looking forward to meeting this challenge.*

## Region D



**Jackie Eason** ([jeason@governorconsultant.co.uk](mailto:jeason@governorconsultant.co.uk))

*I have been involved in school governance since 2000. I work for the NGA as a governor consultant, developing and delivering training for them. I particularly enjoy delivering at their national conferences as this allows me to get a feel for the issues developing around the country. As an NLG, I have been kept busy in schools supporting individual chairs to deal with tricky HR issues, joining governing bodies of maintained schools as they face challenges of improvement and governance development, and I am currently chairing two IEBs of schools in both key stages as they negotiate their way towards academy sponsorship. The work is ever varied and always rewarding and I am embracing my role as an NLG advocate, working to ensure that more NLGs are deployed to bring further improvement to the leadership in our schools.*

## Project Manager



**Julia Steward** ([chrysalis@jhsteward.com](mailto:chrysalis@jhsteward.com))

*My role is to ensure consistency across the region, to identify common issues and to develop strategy to ensure that we operate as effectively as possible within the parameters of a limited budget. As a former governor and as a leadership coach working with headteachers, I have a dual perspective on some of the issues associated with raising the quality of governance. I led the implementation of the NPQH programme across the South West until 2007, a role which demanded an understanding of the challenges of communication in a region of geographical, economic and cultural diversity. My commitment to this project stems from my belief in the power of effective school governance to change communities, and the power of education to change lives.*

# Developing Deep Mathematical Learning in Early Years

We are excited to be working in partnership with Wimbourne Teaching School to represent the Jurassic Maths Hub and lead a work group for a National collaborative project led by NCETM. The Devon work group is being attended by schools across Devon who have all wanted to be involved at the start of this new initiative.

The Devon work group is being led by ASTSA SLEs Helena Palmer (Maths) and Julie Edwards (EYFS). Both SLEs have extensive experience of working in schools in Early Years settings and carrying out school to school improvement work, contributing to numerous national action-based research projects in both areas of expertise. Julie said, "It is very exciting to be involved at the grass roots to develop a pedagogy and resource that can be used nationally. The opportunity to work with maths Hubs across the UK has meant that already we are having a shared dialogue about how we can move Maths teaching in the EYFS forward."

NCETM have said that although there has been a clear Primary / Secondary focus via NCETM work on teaching for mastery this has led to schools and practitioners questioning how their Early Years provision is developing mathematical learning. The work undertaken in this project seeks to ensure firm mathematical foundations, based on deep and connected understanding, are developed and embedded ready for Year 1 learning and beyond.

The project aims to ensure that Early Years practitioners have an awareness of the key concepts in Early Years maths provision and the opportunity to study one concept in greater detail, using some of the principles of teaching for mastery. This concept will be developed through a focus on subject knowledge, how to plan for challenge, how to develop this provision across the setting and how to ensure professional learning is developed across all staff members in the provision. There will be the opportunity to share some examples of practice to contribute to a developing resource.

## Digital Schoolhouse and Science at Crypt

Award-winning Digital Schoolhouse has opened its doors at Crypt school. Crypt Science teacher, Susan Green, has been trained to deliver the Schoolhouses' innovative computing lessons.

Shahneila Saheed, Education Director at Digital Schoolhouse says, "We are incredibly excited to be working with Susan at Crypt School. Digital Schoolhouse educators support and inspire primary school teachers to deliver creative computing with confidence. Pupils are inspired to learn about computing and the wider benefits that creative digital skills have on their lives". Thanks to Digital Schoolhouse, The Crypt is working with University of Gloucestershire to enrich the computing opportunities for Gloucestershire school children.

## High Quality Professional Development that Makes an Impact

The Crypt has joined forces with the National STEM Learning and Network in Gloucestershire. This government-funded scheme delivers CPD to increase teachers' subject and pedagogical knowledge. This in turn increases teachers' confidence, motivation and competence in teaching STEM subjects. The recent course taking a cross-curricular approach to Science, Maths and Literacy was well-received. Our CPD sessions will ultimately increase students' engagement, achievement and STEM literacy.

## DIARY DATES

Taunton TSA – System Leadership in a Self-Improving System Conference - *23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018*

Jurassic Coast TSA Annual Conference – *Standing up for the Arts - 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018*

Torbay TSA Annual Conference – *24<sup>th</sup> May 2018*

SW Teaching Schools Conference - *Joining the Dots – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018*

## PHONICS FOR FLUENCY

All Saints Teaching School, in conjunction with Ventrus, Plymouth, Dartmoor and Kernow Teaching Schools, have been successful in securing funding to develop an approach to professional development that will train local system leaders to deliver highly effective support for teachers and leaders in schools to improve children's fluent reading using systematic phonics.

This collaboration will build on a previously successful phonics project, piloted by All Saints Teaching School, and share their expertise to support over 20 Specialist Leaders of Education across the South West, developing system leadership skills while deepening phonic subject knowledge and expertise.

The project has got off to a great start with over 20 SLEs already attending the first Train the Trainer day where they received guidance and materials for supporting schools with phonics pedagogy, provision and leadership. These SLEs have now started their diagnostic visits into schools where they will work with phonic leaders to develop practice. Alongside that, SLEs have begun facilitating subject knowledge workshops for many members of school staff to attend.

In total, these Specialist Leaders of Phonics will work with over 60 schools between them!

## CLOSING THE GAP - THROUGH DEVELOPING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN KS2 MATHS

This SSIF project is a partnership between All Saints TSA, Bridging the Tamar Learning Alliance, Torbay TSA, Jurassic Coast TSA, Plymouth TSA and Ventrus TSA – an alliance of alliances! The project is impacting on 44 schools across Devon and Dorset as well as 23 Specialist Leaders in Education.

The aim of the project is to close the gap in KS2 Maths through developing excellent Maths leaders who can develop teaching and learning in the classroom. The project is a blend of professional learning through conferences and network meetings which are then personalised through bespoke face to face visits with their SLE. The project combines developing best practice in professional development through the use of techniques such as Incremental Coaching and Lesson Study. This is supported by subject specific pedagogy and knowledge.

The sustainability and scalability of the project will be through the development of the 23 SLEs across the region, who will be able to disseminate the approach in their wider school to school support work. We have also linked with Kernow TSA who are running a SSIF Maths project to ensure best practice and learning is shared across the South West region.

If you would like any further information please contact Tracey Cleverly:

✉ [tcleverly@astsa.org](mailto:tcleverly@astsa.org)

☎ 07921 808516

🌐 <http://astsa.org>

## Aspiring Teaching School Funding Applications now open

Following on from a successful first round of applications from Teaching Schools supporting high performing schools to be able to apply for Teaching School status through the Building Capacity Grant fund, the newly named Aspiring Teaching School Fund (ATSF) has now opened. The ATSF launched on Monday 6 November and will remain open until 2019, with grants being issued in termly cycles.

The ATSF will support Teaching Schools to work with high performing schools (known as 'aspiring teaching schools') in cold spots, that have the potential to become teaching schools within 2 years, working with them to develop an action plan to help them close their development gaps.

If you think your school could meet the criteria to become a teaching school within the next 24 months, and you are located in a target area (high performing schools need to be in targeted areas), you should contact your local Teaching School Council member, Teaching School Alliance or Regional School Commissioner to explore working with a Teaching School to submit a bid.

Target areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-schools-target-areas/teaching-schools-cohort-12-target-areas>

To consider whether an aspiring teaching school will realistically be ready to apply for teaching school designation within the next 24 months, please read the teaching schools eligibility [criteria](#).

For more information about applying for the ATSF [click here](#).

If you would like further information about the new ATSF and request a full application pack, please contact: [aspiring.teachingschool@education.gov.uk](mailto:aspiring.teachingschool@education.gov.uk)

James Passmore - [jpassmore@corsham-pri.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:jpassmore@corsham-pri.wilts.sch.uk)

### **ITT Open Days**

We are holding a series of open days for anyone interested in training to become a primary school teacher in future. We have had a fantastic response to the days held in October and November, and are looking forward to the next day on Wednesday 10th January 2018, from 10.00 – 11.30am. There are salaried and non-salaried places available, both of which provide Qualified Teacher Status (the non-salaried route also provides a PGCE qualification). There's no obligation to apply for the programme after the visit. As Lindsay Palmer, Head of the Teaching School, said "We're very happy to talk to anyone who is interested in finding out more, whether they're set to apply now for training in September 2018, or whether it's something they're thinking about in the future." Potential applicants can register their interest by visiting our [website](#). If you do not currently offer primary ITT and would like to share the details of our upcoming open day with any contacts you have, it would be greatly appreciated.

### **Incremental Coaching with Andy Buck**

On Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, The Mead Teaching School is hosting a one-day conference with Andy Buck focused on Incremental Coaching. The feedback from his day in February 2017 was overwhelmingly positive, and we are delighted to host Andy again for what promises to be an informative, fun and inspiring day. Andy will provide focused information on how leaders can introduce incremental coaching into their schools; the first part of the day will look at the key principles and practice around coaching and a leadership coaching style and the second half will provide an opportunity for participants to consider what incremental coaching is and how to implement it in school. Places always go quickly for Andy's events, and we would recommend booking early to avoid disappointment. Discounts may be available for group bookings, please contact [teachingschool@themead.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:teachingschool@themead.wilts.sch.uk) to find out more.

### **Early Years Connect**

In Spring 2015 The Mead Teaching School were successful in securing funding from the NCTL for driving a sector-led improvement strategy embedded within a model of peer challenge and support. Eighteen months on, and Early Years (EY) Connect has been instrumental in creating an evolving partnership approach to improvements in Early Years practise and outcomes within areas of Wiltshire. Part of this project involved the recruitment of Early Years Practise Development Partners (EYPDPs) to work alongside identified settings to support a creative and reflective process of change and quality improvement. The model aimed to establish, and is continuing to further develop, a culture of peer support and challenge; a system-led approach to Early Years improvement that will grow capacity within the sector. The project last year had a focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable two year olds; supporting effective speech and language development; readiness for school and SEND and the systems and processes supporting transition especially for the most vulnerable children, with this remaining as EY Connect further develops into this academic year. Through Notes of Visit, case studies and presentations there are some clear examples of raising quality and impacting on the sector. Each EYPDP has good knowledge of what high quality Early Years practice looks like and uses this knowledge to enable them to support their settings to focus on appropriate areas to develop. Last academic year EYPDPs identified a range of areas to develop that would enhance the language and communication opportunities for children. These included: increasing opportunities for small group work; looking at the environment and how conducive spaces and areas were for promoting language; looking at resources including sensory exploration, quality of books, real life resources, visual aids, mark making and role play areas; use of observation and assessment tools such as the Every Child a Talker (ECAT) Audit and Early Years Observation Tool; parental engagement including the use of home learning bags; displaying children's work to encourage conversation; taking into account children's interests and fascinations and promoting the Early Talk Boost training and Blast sessions. Funding to sustain the work for a further year has been secured and EY Connect is now evolving to provide support within a broader geographic area.

If you have questions or would like to find out more about our research, please contact Kyra Ings, Teaching School Administrator at [teachingschool@themead.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:teachingschool@themead.wilts.sch.uk)

## The Cornerstone Teaching School – empowering and developing the best practitioners.

As a hub for the SSAT, we are successfully delivering the **Lead Practitioner** Programme, and seeing a significant and positive impact on School Improvement for partners with whom we are working.

We have also been developing our own lead practitioners through the Programme to review and develop our whole school approaches, and use their experience on the Programme to inspire, nurture, and lead colleagues, whilst helping to develop the next generation of leaders.

*“The proof of the pudding ...”*

We have used, for example, the action research and evidence elements of the programme to further develop our whole school approaches to food, health and well-being which have involved a complete transformation of mealtimes and improved our approach to food education, teacher training, school sports, staff well-being, and supporting vulnerable children. We deliver CPD Programmes on all these aspects, but this initiative brings them together in daily practice. Visitors to other programmes here such as *‘Beyond Monitoring’* have also been interested in further work with us on this whole initiative and accordingly, we have been encouraged to offer bespoke consultancy packages - working with schools to implement similar systems, and, on the way, meet all the recommendations of the School Food Plan to transform what children eat in schools and how they learn about food.

Each day, we have a family dining system where the children sit and eat together in mixed year groups with the older children supporting and serving food to the younger children. The balanced, nutritional menu is prepared by a qualified chef and his staff, from scratch, and there is no ‘serving hatch’; the food is delivered to the tables. This eliminates queuing and walking around the hall with trays of food, and improves behaviour.

Children are helped to understand the need to make choices about healthy lifestyles, giving them the chance to try new foods and develop new tastes alongside teaching them why they might want to choose a healthier, balanced diet. This ‘food culture’ includes the teaching of cooking, an understanding of healthy living and an enjoyment and engagement in sport and exercise.

There are efficient pre-ordering systems to reduce waste, and the staff and teachers eat with the children, encouraging them to try new foods. Too often in the UK schoolchildren spend their time queueing for food, grabbing it and getting out to play. This ‘scoff and off’ attitude is very different from cultures where prolonged family meals are the norm, and where empathy and social skills are developed, improving mental health and well-being.

We employ our own trusted school nurse, who visits the classrooms helping to deliver an understanding of nutrition, as part of a health and well-being programme. This is combined with opportunities for positive engagement in sporting opportunities and physical activity as well as teaching the children, through cooking lessons, about different cultures and food types, and the pleasure of food. These are not one-off lessons – changing habits and forming new ones is a process, where the children are engaged, and learning, through making active choices in a whole-school approach where the dining service is at the heart of the day.

Of course, this radical approach requires support from governors, leadership, staff, parents and the children. All, in their different ways, see and experience the benefits. Overall, there seems no doubt that investment in our future generations is seen as being money well-spent, with the long-term cost savings being immeasurable.



## **'Let's go on an awesome, Arctic adventure', The Crypt Teaching School, Gloucester & Wicked Weather Watch (WWW)**

Yes, it was off to the Arctic again with Emma Espley from The Crypt Grammar School and consultants from WWW, but this time in much more challenging circumstances, with 90+ pupils and their teachers from 7 local primary schools.

The day began at 9.00 am. After registering and allocating them to a 'country' group (relating to those found within the Arctic Circle), pupils pieced together a jigsaw puzzle of the Arctic region whilst other schools arrived. We made use of Google Earth to take participants on a virtual trip to the Arctic, asking them to contemplate the direction that we would have to head, how far it would be, how long it would take to travel there and by what means. An inflatable globe was used for a different perspective of the Arctic and then they congregated around the huge, interactive, physical, circumpolar map.

Groups amalgamated to form a larger group in preparation the morning's rotation of 'hands-on' activities. Some went into the ICT Suite and a neighbouring classroom to consider two enquiry questions namely; What are the challenges facing the Arctic today? What will the Arctic look like in the future? Children had an opportunity to access Google Earth 'zoom in' on the Arctic with the aim of developing their place and locational knowledge. They conducted a search for their 'country' and then double-clicked the map to gain a more detailed 'bird's eye view'. Clicking on various icons to gain further information, access



Children found this fascinating and could have easily continued exploring with Google Earth.

Satellite images, taken of the same place, at the same time of year were analysed, but a few years apart (Sept. 1984 compared with Sep. 2016) and played 'spot the difference'. The children noted the extent of the ice had changed, the shape of the land area was different etc.

Pupils then moved into a neighbouring room to attempt a card sort, mix and match caption and image activity, in order to 'drip-feed' further factual detail. Pupils were surprised by the size of a polar bear (up to 4m when standing and having paws measuring 30cm by 20cm) and the fact that they are not white, the number of people that live within the Arctic Circle, the areas of green and trees that are visible and quite 'normal-looking' villages. Near the end of the session, children thought about what they now knew about the region and the various images they had seen. Children were challenged to come up with ten words about the Arctic.

There were fantastic words on their lists, which teachers will be able to follow-up in literacy/English work in school.

Three 'country' groups had great fun in the main school hall! On the way, they met wildlife on land and in the sea and came to appreciate how their habitats are under threat due to climate change. Children had time in the D&T Food Tech room doing a spot of cooking, contemplating the source of the required ingredients, discussing their own carbon footprints relating to their consumption of food and introducing the concept of food miles. As you can well anticipate, their refrigerator biscuit footprints did not linger around for long! After groups had experienced all 3 sessions, it was time for lunch! The children had a chance to chat with Hazel Richards, who had not only trudged 65 km across the snow pulling a sledge, but also taken part in the world record-breaking Polar Ocean Challenge, led by Sir David Hempleman-Adams. Hazel displayed her kit, which the children were able to view or handle and talked to a highly attentive audience about her first-hand experiences of the Arctic. Then the youngsters' had time for questions.

## RESEARCH POSTER COMPETITION

The Chartered College of Teaching's [first online research poster competition](#) is now open for submissions. The poster competition, and subsequent poster competitions, offers the opportunity for teachers who have carried out small-scale research or inquiry in schools to share approaches and findings with the Chartered College community.

You can [submit a poster](#) based on research you may have done as part of a formal programme such as initial teacher training, a Masters, doctoral programme or a leadership programme, or based on an action research or inquiry project you may have done individually or as part of a school project. The focus of this competition is particularly on practitioner research – that carried out by teachers or others working in a school or other education setting - and the intervention does not need to have had positive results for your project to be worth sharing.

The winning posters will be selected in a range of categories by a panel made up of teachers, school leaders and researchers. Entries will be judged on quality of research design or approach, relevance and interest of the research area to practice, quality of written communication, and quality of visual communication. There will be prizes for the best poster in each of the above judging criteria, as well as prizes for different settings, for example the best Early Years, SEND and Post-16 projects, and for different groups of entrants, for example ITT students.

The competition is free to enter and winners will receive book bundles and tokens, as well as having their posters on display at the Chartered College's [Annual Conference](#) in February.

All posters that meet the entry requirements will also be displayed on the website in an online poster conference after judging is complete. The closing date for this round of submissions is **31st January 2018**. Full details of the competition, as well as examples and guidance on creating a poster can be found on the Chartered College of Teaching [website](#).



Following the success of last year's middle leadership training the West Country TSA will be launching SSAT's National Award for Middle Leadership to a new cohort of aspiring and established Middle Leaders in January. This programme which provides ten high quality training delivered through a mix of day events and twilight sessions has proved to be very popular with schools. As part of our growing CPD offer we are also pleased to announce that our partner schools are using the TSA as a vehicle for sharing best practice and expertise. A date for the diaries is March next year when Exeter Maths School are hosting a workshop to support secondary teachers in creating a culture of challenge in Maths.

The West Country TSA continues to enjoy working in collaboration with TSA from across the region. This year has seen our alliance work with Venustus and North Devon TSA to successfully launch NQT SW, providing schools with access to high quality NQT induction and CPD. There are currently twenty six NQTs registered with NQT SW, all of whom will be benefitting from expertise drawn from across the TSA. The success of this programme clearly demonstrates the value of TSA working collaboratively to maximise resources to maximise benefits for participants. We are also working with Somerset Partnership Teaching School to provide high impact Science CPD and have an exciting two day course planned, starting in January, for primary colleagues on developing the role of Science Subject Leaders. Finally, we are also incredibly excited to have formed a partnership with Dartmoor TSA to develop the Women Leading in Education South West programme. In October, we were awarded grant funding to implement a regional delivery model for the women into leadership coaching pledge. Through bringing the Women Leading in Education SW network and the coaching pledge grants together both TSA are looking forward to growing a portfolio of services to support women in the South West on their career progression. The first of which will be our launch conference in January.

## Forest Oracy Project

The Forest Teaching Alliance has been working with our primary partners on developing a project across primary schools in the Forest Of Dean that focuses on oracy in young children. The aim of the project is to improve the standards in speaking and oral comprehension in young children – EYFS/KS1. The project is being coordinated by Julia Dowding, Headteacher and Forest Teaching Alliance Board member from Mitcheldean Endowed Church of England Primary and is fully supported by the Forest Teaching School Alliance with Dene Magna School setting aside funding to support the work of the project in these initial stages and to continue to support the programme once fully developed.

Oracy – the development of speaking and oral comprehension in young children has long been an area our partner schools have been concerned about and the initial response to the proposed project was extremely positive when it was launched back in October. Since then, nine schools have signed up to be part of the pilot group which included schools from all areas of the Forest of Dean including Lydney, Coleford & Cinderford

The Forest Teaching Alliance set two pre-requisites for becoming part of the pilot groups of schools for the oracy project. Firstly, participating schools had to be able to identify data that demonstrated the need for intervention whether that was in the form of data indicating pupils below ARE/input from a speech therapist/baseline testing or ELG descriptors. Secondly, pilot schools had to commit to cascading the work of the project to other schools in their area of the Forest of Dean by sharing the results or outcomes and methodology of the project.

As part of the Oracy project, The Forest Teaching Alliance are excited to be working with Pie Corbett, the creator of the Talk for Writing approach to learning to help develop the project and support the training within each of the pilot schools, which is due to start this December, with the pilot project beginning with the pupils in the schools in January.

This is a really exciting project and we look forward to providing updates in due course.

**If you would like to submit material for the next newsletter, please ensure that this is sent to Jess Wright ([tsc-sw@truro-penwith.ac.uk](mailto:tsc-sw@truro-penwith.ac.uk)) before 28 February 2018**



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