



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Teaching schools newsletter

Welcome to the February teaching schools newsletter.

You may have seen the announcement by the Secretary of State last month regarding the creation of six additional opportunity areas to the six announced in October. The twelve Opportunity Areas will be Bradford, Doncaster, Fenland & East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich, Stoke-on-Trent, West Somerset, Norwich, Derby, Blackpool, Oldham and Scarborough. School improvement and raising standards will be at the heart of the Opportunity Areas programme, as attainment is critical to breaking the link between circumstances of birth and success later in life. Teaching Schools clearly have a vital role to play in terms of raising standards in Opportunity Areas. If you are situated in, or near, an Opportunity Area and would like to be put in touch with your local lead then do contact the team via the following mailbox: opportunity.areas@education.gov.uk.

Over recent weeks we have asked your alliances to complete the Key Information Form, supplying us with detailed data for the work your alliances delivered in 2015/16. The response from teaching schools to this exercise has been really positive and engagement with this process has been better than we've previously experienced. Thank you for being so supportive; this data will contribute to the most accurate picture we've had of the programme so far and will support the teaching school programme's continued development and engagement with the government's broader ambitions for school improvement.

Gillian Hillier

Deputy Director - Teaching Schools and School Improvement

Teaching Schools Council

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A note from the chair of the Teaching Schools Council, Andrew Warren

Some months ago, a young child approached and asked me where my hair had gone! Somewhat surprised despite being a little follically challenged, I replied, "I lost it!" "Oh", replied the child and I could see that she was puzzling over why I hadn't made more of an effort to find the missing hair! I wanted to explain that it's not like looking for your phone or lost keys ...but the child had moved on to play in another part of the playground.

What are you looking for? It seems quite an appropriate question as school leaders wrestle with budgets and funding, alongside the usual challenges of running schools and managing staff. I have found it helpful in my own setting, to focus on the end goal, the prize; that of ensuring that every child goes to a great school. That is, every child, irrespective of background and postcode having the opportunity to go to a great school. Making this a reality is the supreme challenge in playing our part in the school-led system and when I'm feeling "lost", this becomes my point of reference.

What am I looking for? Opportunities to work with teaching schools, MATs, RSCs, LAs, Dioceses, the DfE ...to make this a reality for every child and young person.

Andrew Warren

Chair of the Teaching Schools Council

Key messages

Teaching School funding

A number of you have been in touch in recent weeks to ask about continued funding for teaching school alliances. As advised in March 2016 we're delighted to confirm that it is our intention to continue funding of £40,000 per year beyond the 4th year of operation (all spending beyond 2019-20 is subject to future spending review). This recognises the important role teaching schools will play in the new approach to school improvement.

System leader application rounds

The application rounds for national leaders of education (NLEs)/national support schools (NSS) and teaching schools will open from 6th February to midnight 26th February. It is a targeted application round focusing on the areas of greatest need. The web pages will include details of target areas and guidance for applicants when the rounds open.

An application round for national leaders of governance is planned for March; the website will be updated with the details when we have them.

Any individual or school wishing to apply can express an interest ahead of the rounds opening by [email](#) to the Designations team.

Key Information Form (KIF) - next steps

The portal for data collection is now closed and our analysts are working on the data you've supplied for 2015/16.

We will be running this exercise again in September for the academic year 2016/17. We are committed to developing this process in partnership with teaching schools and have created a feedback survey to gather your views, which is open until 13th February. We have already captured a lot of feedback that has been supplied to the team by [email](#). **Thank you** on behalf of the team for your tremendous response to this demanding exercise.

It is our ambition that the KIF portal will eventually be open year round for teaching schools to manage their alliance data. To get to this point, we need to reflect on your feedback and make the right decisions regarding the framework and improvements required to the portal. Consequently, it is possible that we will not be able to open the portal again until later in the year. We will notify all teaching schools when we have more information.

SLE opportunities

Specialist Leaders of Education (SLE) update

Thank you to everyone who provided updates and recently designation data via the key information form process. We received information for over 900 new SLE designations, bringing the national total to over 8500.

An updated version of the SLE Toolkit is now available. The updates include:

- Addition of the Certificate template and guidance documents, allowing teaching schools to print certificates for designated SLEs
- A link to the new online Designation Returns Form (DRF), including changes to the information we capture
- An updated FAQs document

We are now using the online DRF that we used within the KIF process to receive SLE submissions. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve this process, please complete the KIF feedback survey.

Other opportunities and information

Timelines for schools: mandatory and useful information

The Spring 2017 Need to Know timeline is now live. The termly timeline is the Department's main way of communicating significant information on new policies, and/or changes to existing policies, to schools, colleges, governors and employers. They are intended to help schools/colleges to plan ahead and prepare for the academic year.

National leaders of governance: Would any of the schools you support benefit from help to improve their governance?

An effective governing body creates robust accountability and assurance for educational and financial performance. It provides strategic leadership and direction to organisations and is crucial to their success.

National leaders of governance (NLGs) are experienced chairs of governors who volunteer to provide school-to-school support to improve governance quality and build capacity, supporting schools to improve.

There are over 500 NLGs available to work with you through:

- coaching/mentoring chairs of governors
- external reviews of governance

NLGs can also take on a short-term chair role of an Interim Executive Board or a school defined as coasting, RI or Inadequate or at risk of falling into these definitions.

Please make use of this valuable resource. NLGs can be found on the school-to-school support directory or NCTL provide a free brokerage service. Please contact governors.mailbox@education.gov.uk with your requirements.

Are you in need of a Spanish Modern Foreign Language Teacher?

Spain's Visiting Teachers Programme provides opportunities for schools in England to recruit high quality teachers from Spain to not only teach the language but also immerse pupils in cultural aspects.

Visiting teachers from Spain will be available from September 2017 for one year initially, with the option to renew annually for up to a length of 3 years. The contract will be between the school and the visiting teacher and schools will be responsible for paying their salaries.

Schools looking to recruit teachers through this programme will need to sign up in February 2017. Please visit Spain's Visiting Teachers Programme webpage for further information and to register your interest.

How can workload associated with planning be reduced?

Are you using the three teacher workload reports to help remove unnecessary teacher workload in your school? The three independent reports can be used to address unnecessary teacher workload in marking, planning and data management.

Have you used the Planning and Resources report to remove unnecessary workload for your teachers? In this month's newsletter we want to draw your attention to the principles in the Planning and Resources Report. These principles include:

- Planning a sequence of lessons is more important than writing individual lesson plans
- Planning should not be done simply to please outside organisations

We would urge schools to review their planning practice and policy, using each of the five principles in the report to ensure that planning is always productive and manageable.

Please let us know what you think about the planning report and how you are using the recommendations by contacting: workload.solutions@education.gov.uk .

Women Leading in Education: regional networks

In March 2016 NCTL launched a coaching pledge to support women leading in education.

Coaches who have pledged their time are listed on an online coaching directory that women teachers can use to find a coach. The directory now lists coaches by region, making it easier to navigate and identify a suitable coach.

Teaching Schools are encouraged to share this opportunity with both women teachers who would benefit from leadership coaching, and system leaders who would like to coach. Women teachers can register for free leadership coaching here.

If you would like to register as a coach, more information is available here.

Have you seen?

- Roger Pope's latest blog [Schools taking control of the narrative!](#)
- New, shareable animations that explain what NLEs and NLGs do to support schools.

Useful links

GOV.UK



Get in touch

Details of how to contact us are available on GOV.UK.

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