



# COLLABORATION WORKS

## MERRY CHRISTMAS...

Dear Colleagues,

A warm welcome to what will be the last edition of 'Collaboration Works' for 2016!

As we finish the year, our membership has grown to an astounding 63 partners! We are pleased to welcome Sale High School, St Ambrose College, Oasis Academy and Wellfield Infants and Nursery School as Strategic Partners, and Broomfields Junior School and ESSA Primary & Secondary Primary School Academy as AFL Partners. These partners bring additional strength to our alliance, with new areas of expertise and they will be also supporting our School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) expansion plans.

In terms of impact at a strategic level the Teaching School is contributing to the Greater Manchester Strategic Partnership and I am also now representing our Trust on the Blackpool School Improvement Board which is running alongside the Blackpool Challenge. I am also delighted to share news that I recently gave a key note speech at the UK Sport and English Institute of Sport (EIS) Pathways Symposium in October, presenting to staff working in GB performance pathways about the impact of parental engagement from an educational perspective. [Click here to view online article](#). I have also been asked by the Youth Sport Trust to work at a more strategic level to help shape the Headteacher Engagement Strategy and to work on a project for aspirant Headteachers.

The Alliance for Learning has also had a high profile at several other prestigious events this term. Kal Hodgson (SCITT Director and Vice Principal AGGS) and Andrew Barrie (Maths Teacher, AGGS) both spoke at the Future Teaching Scholars National Conference back in September; and Stephanie Gill (AGGS Principal) and Kal Hodgson chaired/spoke at the Future of Training, Recruitment and Retaining Teachers event in Manchester earlier this month.

Our work around 'wellbeing' continues and one real area of focus for the Teaching School this year has been mental health. We have become increasingly concerned about the sharp increase in mental health issues in children and young people. One in ten children aged 5 - 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder - that is around three children in every class. We have successfully delivered Mental Health training to every secondary school in Warrington through our involvement in the 'Future in Minds project' and our own Mental Health First Aid courses launching January 2017 have sold out in record time. Don't miss the additional date in June - [click here to access the information](#). Another area that we are expanding is our 'Researchers in Schools' work, do read about this on page 2.

I am also really excited to advise that the Alliance for Learning have a new blog site: <https://allianceforlearning.wordpress.com> - please do have a look!

Thanks to all colleagues for your support, hard work and genuine belief in the power of collaboration. The Teaching School Team here at the Alliance for Learning (AGGS) wish you all a 'Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year'.

Best wishes,

**Lisa Fathers**

Head of Teaching School/  
Co-Principal BFET



# Initial Teacher Training/SCITT



The Greater  
Manchester Bright  
Futures SCITT

## SCITT

Our goal of developing skilled, reflective and creative practitioners who will enthuse and inspire future generations became a reality at the end of August 2016, when we saw our first cohort of 30 trainees graduate and start their teaching careers in schools across the alliance.

Our second cohort of 37 trainees started with us back in September, and have been enjoying getting to know each other and spending life in the classroom across their early years, primary and secondary settings. Initial feedback from the schools and their mentors has been positive, and the trainees themselves have all feedback on the quality of training programme. Part of our success in Initial Teacher Training is about how we look after our teachers in their first few years of teaching, so our improved NQT programme is integral to this.

As the New Year starts, our trainees will say goodbye to their first placements and spend the next term in a contrasting school within the alliance.

## Applications for September 2017

Applications for 2017/18 look promising as we have already interviewed and secured our first five trainees and have several more interviews in the diary!

## Teaching Assistants as Teachers?

As we all know, being a Teaching Assistant can provide a great platform towards becoming a qualified teacher.

Do you have any Teaching Assistants that shine in the classroom, who may be interested in becoming a teacher? Could the New Year mean a new career for them?

Please do ask that question and if anyone is interested in pursuing their career, please ask them to contact us for more information or pop along to one of our Information Evenings:

- 11 January 2017
- 9 February 2017
- 6 March 2017
- 20 April 2017

## School Experience Programme

We are pleased to advise that despite cuts to government funding, we are still able to offer school experience for anyone who is interested in teaching. We currently have placements available in Sciences, Maths, History and Geography.



If you know anybody that is interested in teaching please do ask them to contact us for more information or to visit the Department for Education website where you can [register with the School Experience Program](#) and search for Altrincham Grammar School for Girls.

## Fill vacancies in Maths and Physics (from Sept 2017) with the Researchers in Schools Programme

The Brilliant Club recruits, trains and places PhD students and PhD graduates in non-selective state schools to work part-time as tutors or **full-time as teachers**. Working with the Greater Manchester Bright Futures SCITT, they have already placed and trained 10 PhD graduates as new subject teachers in the North West, and have worked with 26 schools in the region through the Scholars Programme.

RIS trainees gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in year one and in year two complete their Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year in the same school. All trainees spend one day per week working towards the aims of the programme, including delivering university access activities and maintaining their research expertise.

**For further information please contact Simon Quick, School Placement Manager, Researchers in Schools**  
[simon.quick@researchersinschools.org](mailto:simon.quick@researchersinschools.org)



# Professional Development

There has been a very positive start to the new academic year, with more schools engaging in our range of high quality leadership and teaching and learning programmes than ever before!

Here are some comments from training over the last few months:

*"The content, organisation and delivery was all outstanding - surpassing my expectations"*

*"The training was high quality and engaging throughout"*

*"Helped me to clarify a strategy going forward"*

*"Reiterated importance of strategy. Encouraged me to continue with the implementation of some ideas for literacy across the academy"*

*"Increased my knowledge and confidence"*

Don't miss out our CPD offer for 2017:

## Teaching and Learning

- Want to upskill your 'good' teachers to become consistently 'outstanding'? Our [Outstanding Teachers Programme](#) returns on 20th February 2017
- Participating in a Challenge Partners QA Review at another school is considered by many senior leaders to be 'the best CPD ever'. Our [Challenge Partners Peer Review](#) session runs on 12th June and is free to Senior Leaders in Challenge Partner schools

## Leadership Development

- Coaching - our three phased Coaching programme aims to improve coaching skills and embed a coaching culture in your school. [Coaching in Context](#) starts on 22nd May, [Foundation Coaching](#) on 24th May and [Higher Level Coaching](#) on 28th June.
- Are you a senior leader? Looking to collaborate with another school, in order to develop essential leadership skills? Then sign up for our [Leadership Residency](#) which takes place on 28th April 2017 and 12th July 2017

## Mindfulness & Wellbeing

- Have you ever wondered why some children behave the way they do? Why they choose to sit at the back of the room? Why they struggle to concentrate? Our [Advanced Mental Health with Early Trauma](#) course on 8th May is facilitated by Lisa Wisher - a qualified Mental Health Social Worker, Psychotherapist (in Advanced Training) and adopter.
- Mental Health - Did you know that mental health problems are as common in students as adults? Our [Mental Health First Aid](#) course is accredited by Mental Health First Aid England, is delivered by approved facilitators and is an essential course for the current climate. We have limited dates left on this programme so hurry to avoid disappointment



- In addition to the Mental Health courses we have running at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls we have courses running at Lewis Street Primary School on 7th and 9th February 2017 and Bolton Whites Hotel on 22nd and 23rd March
- At the Alliance for Learning we offer a variety of Mindfulness courses, working with groups or individuals, to enable them to discover new and effective ways of coping with emotional issues, health problems, relationships, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, lack of energy and motivation. Our [Mindfulness Skills for Life](#) course starts on 8th May, [Mindfulness Teach Paws.b](#) starts on 3rd June and our [Mindfulness Teach. B](#) starts on 13th July 2017

## NQT Conference

The first of our two NQT Conferences for this academic year was a resounding success. Held on 15th November, NQTs across the Teaching School Alliance came together to listen to thought-provoking presentations from a variety of esteemed presenters on hot topics as diverse as 'Beyond Behaviour' and 'High Quality Marking and Feedback' through to 'The Science of Teaching' and 'AFL and Questioning'.



It was a pleasure to see such a strong cohort of early career teachers committed to fostering their own professional development and the welfare of their students.

Our second conference will be held on 14th June. This conference is FREE if AGGS is your appropriate body or £150 for all others. More details about the itinerary and booking will be circulated in due course.

## Flexible CPD Service

In addition to all of the above we are really excited to be able to offer a flexible, bespoke CPD service for our schools. Many schools are asking us to put teams of facilitators together to deliver on-site training either as twilights or as part of whole school INSET days. This term we have been delivering training in this way at many schools across the whole North West.

Do pick up the phone for a conversation if this sounds useful!

For more information please visit: <http://allianceforlearning.co.uk/courses/professional-development/>

# School to School Support/ Specialist Leaders of Education

We are delighted to announce that following our September/October recruitment window we appointed 11 SLEs to join our team, further enhancing our support offering. Our second recruitment window is open as we look for SLEs in MFL, data and pupil premium. Please visit our [website](#) for more information and an application form.

Our SLE team have a proven track record of working with primary, secondary and special schools and the capacity and integrity to undertake support for schools in challenging circumstances. If your school requires the support of one of our SLEs please do pick up the phone!

Our Teaching School has been involved in the designing and writing of national English and Maths SLE training. We are proud we have been involved in this important work.

We also offer subject and thematic reviews in a range of subjects and have been particularly busy with Maths and SEND reviews throughout autumn. If this is something your school would like to explore please do contact us.

## Spotlight on an SLE

Name: **Laura Lakin**

School: **Culcheth High School**

Position: **Assistant Headteacher**  
(Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Reporting)



Working as an SLE is both a privilege and a pleasure in equal measure. The work is varied and different each time, but normally involves working with departments/colleagues who are looking for either a little extra support, encouragement or advice to take a next step in something they are working towards.

Being a SLE is about being professionally supportive; coaching; reflecting and asking the right questions to help colleagues find the answers for themselves. When you get this right, you can trust in the knowledge that the developments and achievements you achieve during your SLE deployment will be sustainable. As an SLE you get to nominate your specialisms, for me that is my first love of Geography and secondly my passion for anything pedagogy, curriculum and assessment related. So in short you get to work on the things that interest you the most. Every deployment is different and for different reasons, but all deployments begin with establishing good working relationships, being clear on the objectives and outcomes and then getting down to some purposeful work to make an impact and move forwards.

SLE support is specific and tailored to the needs of the school or the individual. Quite often the simplest steps make the most impact. Asking the right question to

challenge a mind-set or an area requiring development "because that is how we have always done it" may be all it takes to make the change or development required. But additionally, because SLE partnerships are normally spread over a number of hours or days, it means that this process can be very supportive and completed together, to gradually build confidence, gain a new skill or develop an aspect of a course or curriculum.

For me as an SLE, the most enjoyable aspect is knowing that you may have helped, even in just a small way, to support another teacher, department or leader to move forward and achieve their professional goals.

## School to School Networking Opportunities

Another strand of our school to school support work that continues to grow in popularity is that of our alliance networks. Our established networks meet throughout the year, details of upcoming meetings can be found below:

### English

1st March & 28th June 2017, Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, 4.00pm

Please email Claire O'Hara [COHara@aggs.bfet.uk](mailto:COHara@aggs.bfet.uk)

### PSHE & Citizenship

16th March 2017, Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, 4.00pm

Please email Emily Bower [ebowyer@aggs.bfet.uk](mailto:ebowyer@aggs.bfet.uk)

### Teaching & Learning

26th January 2017, Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, 4.00pm

Please email Claire Critchley [ccritchley@aggs.bfet.uk](mailto:ccritchley@aggs.bfet.uk)





# Research & Development



## What do Psychological Scientists do?

**Date/Time/Venue:** 1 February 2017, 1.00-4.00pm, University of Manchester

This informal event will include interactive talks presented by scientists from the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health. Each speaker will make reference to, and exhibit an object that they use in their everyday research; the object will be used as a starting point to explain aspects of their work.

The event is free of charge and students who are interested in Psychological Sciences (Psychology & Clinical Psychology) are encouraged to attend. Those students considering/studying psychology at GCSE and A Level, may be particularly interested. Places are limited to 25 per school/college.

To reserve event tickets, please visit the Eventbrite webpage:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-do-psychological-scientists-do-tickets-20548197211>

## Manchester Access Programme 2017 Cohort Recruitment (Year 12)

The aim of the Programme is to support entry to The University of Manchester, or another research-intensive university, through the completion of a portfolio of work demonstrating specific knowledge and skills.

Potential **MAP** students need to be in **Year 12** and reside or study in Greater Manchester. If you work with any of these schools please do share this information with them. Applications are assessed against a range of essential and priority criteria, such as attendance at state school and college, and having parents/carers with no Higher Education experience themselves.

## Discover Days

Discover Days offer a unique chance to experience subject areas that you are interested in before committing to a particular choice of course or university. Last few places available for Criminology and Engineering Days here:

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/aspiring-students/discover-days/registration/students/>

## The Brilliant Club

The University of Manchester is continuing its work with [the Brilliant club](#) during the 2016-17 academic year. The Brilliant Club is an award winning charity that exists to widen access to highly-selective universities for pupils from under-represented groups. They recruit, training and place doctoral and postdoctoral researchers in non-selective state schools across the country.

In The Scholars Programme, PhD tutors deliver programmes of university-style tutorials to small groups of pupils, from Year 6 through to Year 12, which develop the knowledge, skills and ambition that help those pupils to secure places at highly-selective universities. Students on the programme attend research-intensive universities for trips at the start and end of the programme. Please see [the website](#) for more details and if your school is interested in joining the programme please contact: [hello@thebrilliantclub.org](mailto:hello@thebrilliantclub.org)



# MATHS HUB

What a busy start to the year it has been for NW1 Maths Hub, not only have we had our funding confirming for the next 2 years, secured the licence to run Teaching A Level Maths with MEI for the next academic year and significantly increased the number of maths SLEs; but we are leading in the national on problem solving across all phases and our Singapore Primary Network has been recognised by DfE as one of the strongest in the UK!

I am sure you will have seen lots of press coverage regarding the benefits of Singapore-style teaching and how it could help to raise standards of maths in our classrooms. In November, two Primary Mastery for mathematics specialists from NW1 Maths Hub embarked on a two week professional teacher exchange to Shanghai, China.

Ms Hagsharfi (St Mary's C of E Primary School, Manchester) and Ms Ellithorn (Lowercroft Primary School, Bury), joined 70 other English primary school teachers on a programme coordinated by the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) and funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The Shanghai teachers will return to the UK in January 2017 to teach alongside their English colleagues.

Simon Mazumder, NW1 Maths Hub Lead, said: "The impact of this project so far across all the schools involved is very positive. I am confident that both Fiona and Dianne will bring back very valuable experiences that will enhance their roles as Primary Mastery Specialists in maths in the Greater Manchester area. It is important to add that the Chinese colleagues who have visited us thus far have also benefited for this exchange, taking away many ideas to enhance their own practice."



We have also been working closely with a number of schools to develop and implement the mastery curriculum. Staff and pupils from St Mary's CofE Primary School were delighted to welcome Maths No Problem and their film crew to their classroom on 18th October, to see how they are responding to the new Singapore Mastery system of teaching and learning mathematics.

Fiona Hagsharfi, who is the NW1 Primary Lead and Assistant Headteacher at St Mary's is responsible for the maths curriculum and lead for maths mastery in these national collaborative projects, commented: "Our work with NW1 Maths Hub has been instrumental in driving up standards in maths. A study by UCL Institute of Education and Cambridge University, shows that children who were taught through the Singaporean "maths mastery" approach learn faster than their classmates – making, on average, an extra month of progress in a calendar year. This is certainly the belief here at St Mary's as we have seen a massive improvement in the standard of maths here over the past two years."

St Mary's is one of 30 primary schools who have adopted the new method of teaching in order to raise standards in maths. To find out more about joining the Maths Hub and their Singapore Network please contact Simon Mazumder at [smazumder@aggs.bfet.uk](mailto:smazumder@aggs.bfet.uk) or 0161 912 5912.

## Maths CPD

Does your school have specific Maths CPD needs this year? This is a flavour of some of the courses we have coming up:

[KS2/3 Multiplicative Reasoning](#) - starting 26th January 2017

[Primary Maths PD Support](#) - starting 10th January 2017

[Making Sense of Maths for Post 16 GCSE Resit](#) - starting 30th March 2017

[Core Maths Level 3](#) - starting 19th January 2017

[Secondary Maths PD Support](#) - starting 10th February 2017

[NW Maths Hub Summer Conference](#) – 11th July 2017

For more information or to book onto one of the above courses please contact Sarah Ludlam on [sludlam@aggs.bfet.uk](mailto:sludlam@aggs.bfet.uk)

