

The Primary Network



Issue 14 May 2011

In this issue: How to make the most of your membership
• Wyre pupil parliament • Games in the classroom •
What can I do to help my child reach their potential in
mathematics? • Primary school visit opportunities

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Follow us on Twitter

The Primary Network team are on Twitter.

Go to http://twitter.com/primary_network to follow us and keep up-to-date with all SSAT primary activities.

Would you like your school to be featured in our publications?

We are always looking for interesting and innovative stories from our member schools to feature in our newsletter to share with our network of schools, and for new images to brighten up our publications.

If you would like to input into our newsletter or see images from your school used in future issues of the Primary Network newsletter please contact the team on primarynetwork@ssatrust.org.uk



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Welcome

Sue Williamson, Strategic Director, Leadership and Innovation Networks, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust

Our primary network continues to grow and the SSAT is committed to providing member schools with local, regional, national and international opportunities for networking. At the end of March, we held a successful 5th primary national conference at the Emirates Stadium. Dr Neil Hopkin, Chairman of the National Primary Headteachers Steering Group, spoke passionately about the opportunities for primary headteachers to lead the education agenda.

There is a rapidly changing education landscape and this is the time for primary headteachers to provide leadership and curriculum development through teaching and learning in the second decade of the 21st century.

To support the work of the national primary headteachers steering group and to provide value for money membership offer, we have appointed Dan Thomas, Head of Regional Networks (North West) to run the Primary Network. He will be supported by Kirstie Andrew-Power, Head of Regional Networks (South East), Michael Shepherd, Headteacher, Rina Jain Naha, Project Manager and Emma Coward, Project Officer. We will also be utilising the expertise of primary headteachers and practitioners around the regions.

We want to offer bespoke training and consultancy to meet the needs of individual schools and clusters. We are also hoping to establish headteacher steering groups in all nine regions to ensure that our regional offer is attractive and relevant.

The 6th primary national conference will be held at the same time as the SSAT 19th national conference from 30 November – 2 December 2011 in the ICC, Birmingham.

Speakers will include Sir Ken Robinson and Alan November.

Please look out for information on the global entrepreneurs project, which was launched at the Emirates Stadium. We want to raise the money to build nine schools – three in Sri Lanka, three in Nepal, three in Lagos, as well as support girl's education.

We are organising a global entrepreneur's programme that will encourage students to identify a problem, design and market a solution.

There will be prizes for the best teams, including a trip to the 8th iNet international conference in Al Ain, Abu Dhabi in the UAE.

We want your students to demonstrate how creative they are. Events will be held in each region and we are working with Claire Young, a finalist in the *Apprentice*.

We value every school's membership and want to hear views on developing the network. Please contact Dan Thomas who would love to hear from you with any questions or feedback or if you want to discuss your needs and how through membership, the SSAT can best support you. Dan can be contacted via dan.thomas@ssatrust.org.uk.



If you have any further questions on any of the above, or want to discuss your needs and how through membership the SSAT can best support you, please contact primarynetwork@ssatrust.org.uk

Welcome to new members



We would like to welcome all of our new members since our last publication in January 2011:

Alban VA CofE Middle School, [Bedfordshire](#)

Battledown Centre for Children and Families, [Gloucestershire](#)

Hawes Down Junior School, Mead Road Infant School, Parish Church of England Primary School, [Kent](#)

Abbey Hey Primary School, Camberwell Park Specialist Support School, Cheetham CofE Community School, Hambleton Primary School, Sacred Heart RC Primary School, St Francis RC Primary School, [Lancashire](#)

Kirton Lindsey Primary School, [Lincolnshire](#)

Arnot St Mary CE Primary School, Barlows Primary School, Fazakerley Primary School, Holy Name Catholic Primary School, Longmoor Community Primary School, Northcote Primary School, Our Lady and St Philomena's Catholic Primary School, Our Lady and St Swithin's Catholic Primary School, Rice Lane Infant and Nursery School, Rice Lane Junior School, St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, St Teresa of Liseaux Catholic Infant School, St Teresa's Catholic Junior School, [Merseyside](#)

Hampton Hill Junior School, [Middlesex](#)

Priorslee Primary Academy, St Peter's CofE Primary School, [Shropshire](#)

Althorpe and Keadby Primary School, Berkeley Infant School, Berkeley Junior School, Bottesford Infant School, Brigg Primary School, Bushfield Road Infant School, Castledyke Primary School, Crowle Primary School, Enderby Road Infant School, Frodingham Infant School, Grange Lane Infant School, Gunness and Burringham CofE Primary School, Holme Valley Primary School, Lincoln Gardens Primary School, Luddington and Garthorpe

Primary School, Messingham Primary School, Saint Augustine Webster Catholic Primary School, Saint Norbert's Catholic Primary School, Scunthorpe CofE Primary School, South Ferriby Primary School, St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Ulceby St Nicholas CofE Primary School, Winterton Junior School, Wootton St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Wrawby St Mary's CofE Primary School, [South Humberside](#)

Epworth Primary School, Shortbrook Community Primary School, Watercliffe Meadow Community Primary School, [South Yorkshire](#)

Cheam Park Farm Junior School, [Surrey](#)

Bexhill Academy, Town End Academy, [Tyne and Wear](#)

Martin Frobisher Infant School, [West Yorkshire](#)

Goddard Park Primary School, [Wiltshire](#)

We would also like to welcome our new iNet members:

British School of Bucharest, [Romania](#)

Sir Keith Park School, Southbridge School, [New Zealand](#)

Christ The King R.C. Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, High Street Primary School, Jenner Park Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, Palmerston Primary School, Roath Park Primary School, Rhws Primary School, Romilly Primary School, Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant, Ysgol Gymraeg Sant Curig, [Wales](#)

How to make the most of your membership

As a primary member school it's imperative that you work with us to gain the most from your membership. Here are some simple steps to get you started:

1. Register on the website

If you have not already registered please go to www.ssatrust.org.uk, scroll down and click on 'Register' in the right hand column. Every member of staff in your organisation can create their own personal account. Once you are signed in you can search 'Primary' or go to www.ssatrust.org.uk/primarynetwork where you will find information on all of our upcoming events, past newsletters, contact details for the primary network team and national primary headteachers steering group (NPHSG), research papers, case studies and leadership and CPD opportunities.

2. Contact us

Our contact details can be found on the website and in every issue of our Primary Network newsletter. Whether you need some advice about a problem at your school, wish to submit an article to our next newsletter or research paper for the website, would like to raise an issue for our next NPHSG meeting, or have any other query; we want to hear from you. You can also stay up-to-date with us on Twitter, type **Primary_Network** into the 'Find people' section and follow us.

3. Talk to your cluster

Many schools in our network have found working as a cluster to be a beneficial way of using their membership. With our wide range of leadership and coaching opportunities as well as offers on tailor-made workshops bespoke to your needs, schools often find working within their region to be the most effective means of utilising all that is on offer. Affiliating as a cluster of six or more schools also makes you eligible for a discount member rate.

4. Know your regional representative

Our practitioner-led NPHSG influence and shape the way forward, defining the needs and areas for support. They drive our agenda and support the development and delivery of our work. The SSAT's guiding principle is 'by schools, for schools' and in keeping with this approach, the NPHSG listen carefully to what schools need. All regions and types of school are represented within the group. A list of all members can be found on the website, please make yourself aware of whom the representative is for your region and contact them with any issues you would like raised at the next meeting. In addition we also have SSAT heads of regional networks who regularly hold primary events in your region, please find details on our website.

We look forward to working with you further!

'By schools, for schools' really does work and as a result powerful professional development and networking has raised standards and expectations at Cathedral School.' Sylvia Morris, Headteacher, The Cathedral School of St Saviour and St Mary Overy, Southwark



The Wyre Pupil Parliament: A positive contribution from children to the 'Big Society'

Helen Ife, Headteacher, Garstang St Thomas' CE School, Lancashire

During an educational trip to a disadvantaged area of Santiago in Chile, a group of colleagues visited a school that had a council made up of representatives in each year group. Children took on different areas of responsibility, e.g. one child was a secretary of health and successfully raised money for a sick bed. The children spoke about their needs and wants but also understood that things don't come too easily and money is needed to support such requests. They were however, being heard and their simple requests looked like they were materialising.

On returning to my school, we decided to set up a school council with children in roles of responsibility. Two years down the line we have a school council and a separate body of year 6 children who make up the 'cabinet' and meet with the senior management to initiate change in the school. Past year 6 pupils have changed our dining routine and this year's project is creating a more effective award system.

The opportunity has arisen where we can take this further and out to a wide-ranging audience. Last year Wyre primary schools received a grant of £10,000 to create a Pupil Parliament covering the whole of the Wyre area of 36 primary schools from the hills of Bleasdale down to the coast of Fleetwood which can represent the problems associated with rural isolation to that of a seaside resort. With the funding in place, a group was established with colleagues from schools in the six district areas. Children representatives were trained by David Bone the pupil facilitator for Lancashire and understood the running of a parliament with a treasurer, secretary, chair and vice chair. The parliament has three representatives from each district

who were elected within the district training sessions. The Wyre Chamber in Poulton-le-Fylde was to be the venue of the parliament launch. The local Wyre Children's Trust board (made up of multi-agencies) were to be the audience along with the Mayor and Mayoress of Wyre, Garstang and other local councillors.

Children from each district presented their concerns through discussion, questions and answers. They talked about their concerns from road safety, vandalism to raising money for dogs for the blind. Issues were presented in a variety of ways Photo story, PowerPoint, poetry, video clips and just plain talking!

The delegates were impressed and commented favourably about the day: 'Who would have believed that such young people presented such a mature programme?'

'I will take these issues very seriously'

As for the children?

'A chance to change the world!'

'I learnt loads; I think it would be great if a trust board member was assigned to every district'

So where next? The council at Wyre have said the children can use their chamber for the next parliament meetings following a constitution written by the children suggesting they meet three times a year and feed issues back to the Wyre Children's Trust Board.

As adults, we need to keep this going and children need to see that their efforts and importantly their voices are heard and contribute to the change and reshaping of their environment and futures.



Do you have something exciting and innovative happening in your school or with your local schools which you would like to share with our network? If so please email primarynetwork@ssatrust.org.uk

Games in the classroom

Dawn Hallybone, Senior Teacher and ICT Coordinator,
Oakdale Junior School, Redbridge

'Secret Learning' is how a pupil in my class referred to games based learning. Learning with games within a junior school, is not playing games all day, but using games as a contextual hub for learning. Titles off the shelf such as Wild Earth African Safari, Mario Kart and Just Dance are just some of the titles that we use within our school.

These games on the Wii and other titles on the DS and PS3 are used to engage and enhance learning within the classroom – these are tools that the children are using at home on a daily basis. As technology is changing and becoming more accessible, it is worth using these tools within the classroom.

As children work through games – they learn to 'fail' and what they need to do to 'fail better' – they have to process a range of information and often act quickly on that information to progress further. This is similar to what we ask them to do in their learning.

The games enable children to be part of an immersive environment with high quality graphics that draw the children in and can inspire their writing as well as social skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Brain Training on the DS is used to improve the pupils' mental mathematics – pupils are competing against themselves on the console not with others in the classroom, which can also add to the self-esteem of the child.

Consoles on the DS are expanding all the time – with titles such as Word Coach that can help with spellings, French and Spanish Coach that can work with MFL within the primary classroom as well as books that can now be read on the console including mini quizzes that the children complete at the end of every

chapter. The same principles apply on the Wii – in terms of game play this is very small it is using it as a tool that is important the same way that a teacher may use a film, book or object to engage with a topic. For example, using Wild Earth African Safari on the Wii the children were able to go 'on safari' through using the Wii once a day for a short period – 20 minutes. The children were able to learn about different habitats by actually exploring one, write travel guides for the National Park, research different animals, diary writing, research animals within their habitat and compare and contrast their habitat to our local forest one.

This is just one topic that has been used there are many others. Of course there is a budget implication if using in schools, we are part of the Redbridge Games Network that pools a small amount of money from each school into the network. This enables teachers not only to share practice but also to share resources, as these can be bought centrally and then used by schools as they wish. This means that the outlay from each school is not large. We have also used games that the teachers have as well as children, and brought in our own gaming technology. If schools do this there is the obvious security issue and the realisation that not all children may possess such technology at home.

We have been using games based learning for three years now, and have learnt a lot along the way. For me, as a teacher it is another resource that I make use of within my classroom alongside traditional tools and technological tools. It is a familiar tool for the children used in a different context with learning underpinned by the teacher involved, enabling the children to engage with their learning in a different way and putting the learning in their hands.



The Redbridge Games Network blog is www.redbridgegamesnetwork.blogspot.com

Engaging with parents

Michael Shepherd, Headteacher, Hawes Side Primary School, Blackpool

We all know that engaging parents is vitally important. In this case study one primary school shows us how they successfully achieved this.

When Michael Shepherd arrived at Hawes Side Primary School in 2005, he found that parents were interested in what their children were doing at school, but he felt they were not engaged. He worked hard to transform that situation, with coffee mornings, Meet the Teacher evenings, and a home-school group.

Two of the school's most effective current strategies are:

- **The Everyone Reading in Class (ERIC) programme.** Parents participating in ERIC come to the school and read with children. Participation in ERIC has steadily increased and plays a significant role in improving the quality of relationships across all sides of the home-school-child triangle.
- **Learning Logs.** Children create personal project folders to work on at school and at home.

In 2007, efforts to improve engagement were further boosted when the school was invited by the SSAT to take part in the Parental Engagement Quality Standard (PEQS) programme, which provides a self evaluation toolkit for parental engagement in primary schools. But there were barriers to overcome. Michael says: 'Some parents' ideas about school are based on their own memories, which can cloud their attitudes. We have to ensure they feel welcome at the school, and help them understand how their children learn.' A key strategy in overcoming these barriers was to listen and respond to parents' requests. Parent-led initiatives include numeracy and literacy classes and workshops to help parents engage with the school's approach to

learning. 'We're currently running some ICT workshops for parents, where children get the opportunity to help parents with software they commonly use in school,' says Michael.

Much of what happens at Hawes Side – in and beyond the classroom – begins with the children. Pupil-led working groups include:

- The Teaching and Learning Group, which researches theories of learning.
- The Podcast Group, called The Poddies, which provides items of news, often directing people to the school blog.
- The Web2 Group, a team of Y6 pupils who seek out and recommend Web 2.0 applications.

Another important pupil group is the News Team, which runs one of the school blogs, an important vehicle for parental engagement. This pupil-centered focus is important for parental engagement, because pupils who are inspired often fire up the same interest in their parents. For example, Learning Logs have been well received and they are an excellent example of how hand-made books can be supported with the use of software for making documents. They are filled with cuttings, pull out sections and collections, all focused on a specific topic and built up by students, with the support of proud parents. Logs have been so successful in strengthening the home-school link that the school plans to provide opportunities for parents to work on them at school with their children.

Teaching and learning at Hawes Side is heavily enriched with ICT. Staff are well equipped to ensure that the pupils have the necessary skills. They're encouraged and taught to use a wide range of publishing, writing, and multimedia software. These



skills play a large part in motivating parents who want to keep up with their children and also want to be able to use technology at home more effectively. This has particularly been the case with the use of ICT to handle images and video. The Learning Logs play their part here, because although they are paper folders, they invariably show evidence of considerable online research. They also provide an opportunity to exercise ICT publishing and text and image handling skills.

Hawes Side uses email and text messaging services for routine communication with parents. Text messaging permits easy selection of groups or individuals, and is popular with the parents who find it familiar and informal. They and the children like to receive encouraging 'well-done' messages. The most innovative use of ICT for communication at Hawes Side, however, is the use of blogging, the first school blog began five years ago and last year the school added to this a 'campus based' approach which has seen more classes and pupil groups developing their online presence. The first blog began as teacher-driven tool for use with pupils, developed with the SSAT, to encourage lower ability writers by giving them an online publishing presence.

One of the school's ICT team, James Maloney, however, soon extended the blog to become a 'front of house' service by using it to publish notices, in conjunction with newsletters hosted on the school website. A group of children called the news team took responsibility for content of the blog, gathering news and ideas from other groups and individuals around the school. It became an instant success and a way for pupils to engage with each other



on a different level. For example, one pupil who was bright but less socially involved was encouraged to make some blog pages about his interest in the game Warhammer. The rest of the class saw him in a new light and that way he gained respect. 'His mother was so happy to see how her child was developing socially,' says James. Parent forums were introduced to the blog to encourage discussion among parents and between parents and the school. Parents use the blog mainly to ask questions and pass ideas to the school.

Relieved of the responsibility of providing content across a school-wide blog, the news team is becoming a support team that helps all the classes with the technical aspects of their blogs.

The SSAT Parental Engagement Quality Standard (PEQS) recognises schools' work to include parents in supporting their child's learning. To find out more about the PEQS, please visit www.ssatrust.org.uk/peqs or email engagingparents@ssatrust.org.uk for more information.

Networking for Excellence

Graeme Dow, Headteacher, Anchorsholme Primary School, Blackpool

Despite the 05.00 start from Preston my foundation/KS1 leader (Caroline Lang) and I were looking forward to an exciting opportunity to network with primary colleagues from across the country who are engaged in innovative approaches to inspiring the most effective teaching and learning. We were not to be disappointed and were even treated to a bit of Saturday Night Fever!

'By primaries for primaries', more specifically 'by primary practitioners for primary practitioners', was very much the key feature of this fifth impressive gathering of primary practitioners from across the country. The pre-conference publicity reminded us that 'collaboration is more important today than ever. As the role of our local authorities diminishes we need to ensure we still have access to advice, support and expertise through networking.' It was clear from the opening statements that this was to be an opportunity for classroom practitioners to share and see 'What we look like at our best' and to give us all the courage to innovate in these challenging times for education but above all be safe in the knowledge that 'we are not alone.' (Close Encounters – 1977)

We are going to stay in 1977, and with the film theme, as I reflect on the opening address by Dr Neil Hopkin. Little did we know that we were about to be treated to an impromptu flash back to Saturday Night Fever. Neil opened by reminding us about the powerful outcomes of effective collaboration and the tremendous benefits of effective partnership particularly in the light of the potential reduction in the role of local authorities. His key message was that now, more than ever before, is the time for us to be brave and innovate. He then demonstrated this by breaking out into a Ricky Gervaise style dance routine and

encouraging the audience to join in. When called to be brave he inspired many to follow his example!

Bill Lucas challenged our thoughts about the key responsibilities for leading learning. He drew our attention to the research and writings of authors including Guy Claxton (his writing and research partner), Gever Tulley (five dangerous things you should let your children do!) and Anne Langers. He also posed a number of searching questions 'How do we create opportunities for intuition?', 'When do we have our best ideas?', 'How do we create the opportunities for real collaborative learning?' He wanted us to challenge previous concepts and measures of intelligence and open our minds to the much broader dimension of intelligence and the valuable role of social intelligence gained through effective collaboration. He concluded by confirming that 'powerful learning occurs when teachers become motivated learners and when children are given the opportunity to teach'.

Next were the workshops provided by eager classroom practitioners including lifelong learning through technology, an early year's curriculum that wows and everyone's a leader. I attended the creative workshop presented by Katy and Jo from Ashbrow Infant and Nursery School. They 'wowed' us with suggestions of how to make connections with children's creative thinking. They set us a number of 'missions' to capture children's real creativity with activities such as rocket making and 30 uses of an object as inspired by 'Whose line is it anyway?' They also shared some of their experiences in developing their school as a forest school, see <http://shareit.yhgfl.net/kirklees/ashbrow>. My second workshop was led by two highly motivated practitioners, Louise



5th primary national conference

Thursday 31 March 2011,
Emirates Stadium, London

and Victoria from Mowlem Primary School, who had experienced first hand the impact art based SEAL activities has on a class of children with special needs associated with emotional literacy and interpersonal skills. They used masks, drawings and puppet characters to open up communication with their children about feelings and emotions.

Lunchtime presented an excellent opportunity for networking. This was an opportunity to speak in greater detail with the practitioners, keynote speakers and to reflect with colleagues the important messages of the day. Throughout the day we were fantastically entertained by the children from Whitchurch Middle, Ferry Lane's singing of Freedom songs and Sir William Burrough with their dance interpretation of Harry Potter. In the afternoon workshop I attended a presentation about games based learning. Redbridge Game Network is a collection of schools with significant experience of using console type games to stimulate learning. Mario Kart to stimulate boys writing, Endless Ocean for diary writing and descriptions and dance games for those challenging rainy lunchtimes. They also have applications that enable children to produce their own games. For more details about their exciting work visit <http://redbridgegamesnetwork.globally.com> and <http://www.itscotland.org.uk/usingglowandict> for more information about GBL research in Scotland.

Alison Peacock took us through the key elements of the Cambridge Primary Review. As an innovative primary school leader she felt the CPR was going to offer realistic opportunities for genuine empowerment for teachers. In conclusion she encouraged us to consider the importance of building a personal repertoire of expertise and to remember

that there is not just one way to do things. Then came the Chariots of Fire moment (last film reference... honest!). Guin Batten, Olympic rower posed the question 'What does it take to be the best?' She introduced us to her dimensions of achieving success in sport: mental toughness, people skills, knowledge, breaking barriers and Planning for success. She gave specific examples of how these can be achieved in the world of education. In conclusion she stressed that success comes when you know your dreams, set realistic goals and break down progress into small achievable steps and the need for innovation, bravery and the relentless pursuit of recognising and achieving potential. She was quite simply an inspiration. The conference closed with Sue Williamson explaining the SSAT's commitment to the funding of books and libraries in areas of significant need throughout the world through the Room to Read charity. Sue saw this as a fantastic opportunity for children to engage in a global entrepreneur project with real purpose. For more details visit <http://globalcitizens.ssatrust.org.uk/idea/room-read>. She also drew our attention to John Wood who initially created this project and wrote *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World*. For more details visit www.leavingmicrosoftbook.com.

When I got back home, I reflected on its purpose 'networking for excellence'. Undoubtedly some powerful networking had taken place and excellence had been shared by primary practitioners for primary practitioners. It is about these practitioners that my lasting memories will dwell. Their boundless enthusiasm for learning is having a huge impact on the children they care for and one can only be left inspired by the outcomes that result from their tremendous efforts. I eagerly look forward for the next opportunity to network for excellence!



If you would like to find out more about the 5th Primary National Conference please visit www.ssatrust.org.uk/primarynetwork

Michael Shepherd the former Head of the Primary Network at the SSAT has written a blog post about the primary conference have a look at his link <http://smichael920.wordpress.com/2011/04/05/networking-for-excellence/>

Primary networks in the South East and London have joined forces to respond to what our schools say they want.

This led to the first of our 'speed learning' events

But what is speed learning?

Speed learning is similar to speed dating! It is the opportunity to share and learn with other like minded colleagues in a short space of time. Knowing how precious everyone's time is – the 'speed learning' events provide an intensive but fun learning opportunity. Colleagues leave each event having picked up a series of top tips and short term strategies as well as one or two longer term ideas and thoughts.

Which topics have been covered at the speed learning events?

At our first two events, colleagues shared practice with: encouraging boys to read and write, creative curriculums, new technologies, positive behavior strategies, literacy, parental engagement, getting high achievement in mathematics, philosophy for children, languages, independent learning and internationalism.

These activities go some way to meet our aspiration in London and the South East to provide members with access to innovative school leaders and teachers locally and regionally (tapping into national and international excellence) to enable us to innovate and create according to the needs of our own schools.

Then our first teaching assistant networking activities

Our schools were very keen to recognize and celebrate the key role our teaching assistants have in encouraging and enabling learners to progress.

Over 100 of our teaching assistants met to explore how to manage the challenge of taking a whole class of children. This session included looking at establishing the teaching assistant as a confident, calm, assertive and happy practitioner by

working on voice control, body language, positive behaviour management and further developing our emotional intelligences.

The second phase of the network is looking more closely at colleagues sharing experiences and exploring practical and useful positive behaviour management strategies and developing a 'by teaching assistants, for teaching assistants' memo of best practice.

Next the launch of our new technologies networks

The network is for teachers and leaders excited (or intrigued) by the potential for new technologies to enhance learning and who are keen to develop activities and share practice between schools on the development of new technologies to support learning such as Web 2.0 and mobile devices to support learning.

Finally piloting the first of the primary school student leadership Olympics 2012 networks

A chance for pupils in the South East and London to work with an Olympian and plan some exciting activities for their school to celebrate the Olympic and Paralympic games coming to the UK. Pupils are supported in planning student led projects not only in sports but all other areas of school and community life.

Out and about in the South East... Ideas and strategies from the members

A simple 'top tip' from Alexandra Infants School, Bromley

Headteacher Michelle Lewis wanted to ensure that all children at the school had a positive eating experience at lunch time and encourage excellent table manners.

To achieve this vision Michelle and her team simply reviewed the meal time set up



'A really good mix of being presented to and being asked questions, this is proper networking, very good event.'

'I've learned more in an hour than I have in a year'

'I love the set up of the event; speed learning is a good title - I learned a lot very quickly! This will impact on me and on my school.'

and put the following strategies in place:

- The school bought: cheerful, gingham table cloths in the school colour – red and cheerful red jugs, cutlery holders and bread baskets.
- Created a café style atmosphere in the school hall where the expectations for behavior are the same as a restaurant.

Children arrive at the 'café' and lay their place at the table, placing cutlery and cups in the correct places. Children are bread monitors and serve their peers to start the meal. They are expected to use their knife and fork correctly and support and encourage each other to behave as you would in a restaurant.

Meal time staff were trained to encourage and support the children in enjoying their café experience, in ensuring table places are correctly laid and an orderly tidy up happens. Children enjoy their lunch in a cheerful café where the atmosphere is calm and orderly. All for the price of some hard wearing table clothes, jugs, cutlery holders and bread baskets – and time invested in staff development!

Taking mathematics to outstanding at Blackfield Primary and Fawley Federated Infant schools

We are often asked to highlight primaries where achievement in mathematics is successful – at Blackfield Primary and Fawley Federated Infant school, mathematics results are outstanding and significantly buck national trends.

Mandy Hooper, Learning Leader has been sharing practical classroom ideas and strategies across the primary networks in the South East and London, and uses the mnemonic: mathematics to show the different aspects of the federation's strategic vision for growing mathematicians (with the bonus of also achieving goals of independent and effective learning).

| | |
|----------|----------------------------|
| M | Motivation |
| A | Active learning |
| T | Thinking |
| H | Heuristics |
| E | Enquiry learning |
| M | 'Me' |
| A | Assessment |
| T | Talking |
| I | Integrated approach |
| C | Creativity |
| S | Spirituality |

Instilling in our young children a love of learning French at Westfields Junior, Farnborough

Westfield's staff share the range of activities they are involved in to encourage a love of the language and culture – but crucially to monitor the progress children are making with their French skills through the key stages and in preparation for transition:

- making lessons fun and practical
- lots of singing French songs and making up rhymes
- making and using puppets
- teachers using digital video to record pupils presentations in French
- each child builds a portfolio of progress within French
- children self and peer evaluate their presentations and work
- French learning book is shared with parents
- themed assemblies in French including storytelling, language development and cultural experiences
- the annual French trip
- producing and presenting a French play
- daily conversations between staff and children in lessons and around the school
- a French food tasting day
- a boule competition.

Westfields have also set up local teacher networks to share and develop resources together and work with their local secondary school around transition activity and sharing expertise.

'Loved the speed learning and picked up so many different ideas. Haven't had any opportunities for networking like this before so please, please can we have more'

'Exceptional value and very, very good quality CPD, learned more in two hours than all the other courses I've been on. This networking solution to keeping a focus on professional learning through tough budget cuts.'

'I didn't realise SSAT did primary and love the approach - more of it please'

If you would like further information on any of these schools or details of events in your region please email primarynetwork@ssatrust.org.uk

What can I do to help my child reach their potential in mathematics?

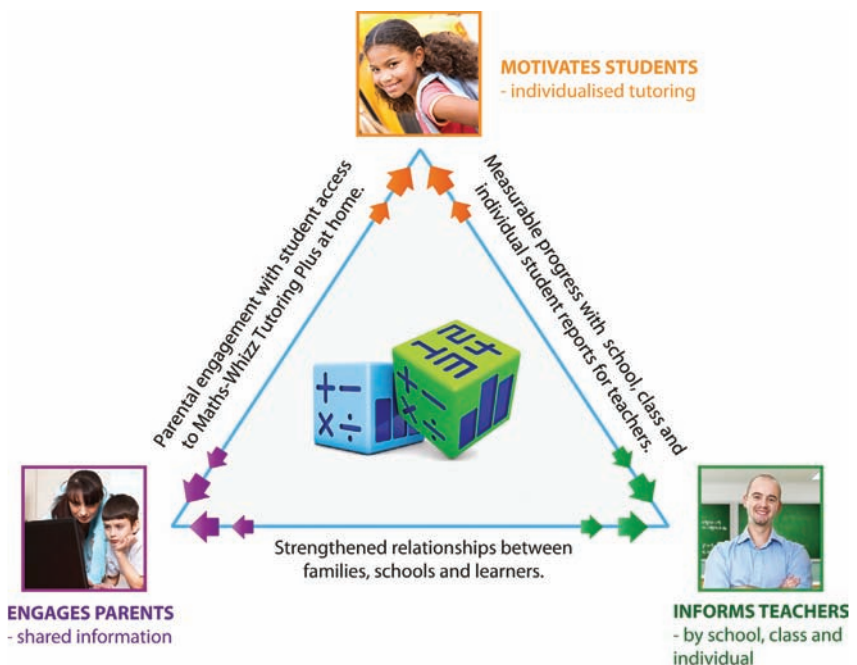
Mathematics teaching has changed. Once upon a time it was enough that parents understood multiplication, fractions and percentages. Not that we necessarily understood how it all worked – simply that it did. These days parents are confronted with an ever-growing list of numeracy vocabulary. Not so bad when explained by a teacher at parents' evening; it goes without saying that I want my six year old to understand why she does things. However, when I tried to explain the 'how' to her in my pre '99 numeracy strategy way a couple of days later, Erin started crying; this is when I realised I had to find a way in to 'her' numeracy world.

A whole industry of teaching in cyberspace is emerging, driven by struggling kids and frantic parents, all trying to manage the work loads of a modern mathematics curriculum and get a handle on terms such as chunking and gridding. Deliverability of a scalable, consistently excellent numeracy teaching solution is something many schools aim to deliver.

Official attention is also being drawn to something teachers have known all along - schools that successfully engage parents in learning are the ones that are most able to deliver excellence consistently, because there has been a joint commitment made to improving learning outcomes.

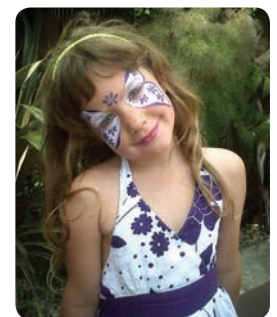
Companies such as online tutoring specialists Whizz Education recognised the importance of this from the outset. This has meant that Maths-Whizz, with its award-winning numeracy tutoring content, has created a learning system that is able to be reactive as well as truly responsive.

This is because it engages students, parents and teachers in a Triangle of Success. A key tool for this is the fact that Maths-Whizz sets Maths Age as the



Triangle of success

base-line of attainment. Maths Age is understood by parents and teachers alike because it reflects the student's unique ability within the setting of the national curriculum. This mutual understanding is the foundation of a participatory shared, learning environment and is proven to make the maximum difference to achievement. It is also the key in terms of creating motivation, leading to successful self-directed learning.



Erin

Now, back to my six year old. After said conversation I decided that no more would I be asking my 14 year old son for advice as to how to help Erin do her place value homework. I came across Maths-Whizz when I googled 'place value' and realised that instead of being particularly complicated it was actually designed to help her learn the value of numbers and where they fitted (for example in 1,220, the place value of the number one is thousands).

Even before I signed Erin up on a paid subscription, Maths-Whizz allowed me to

understand why she was being taught the way she was. To be honest we haven't looked back and her Maths Age has gone up from 7.2 to nearly 8.2 since mid August.

More recently, she has also been working on multiplication. Instead of showing her the way I had been taught and confusing her, I was able to preview the Maths-Whizz exercise she was about to do and so participate in her learning. This preview helped me to understand the 'grid method' (based on the idea of splitting the two or more numbers being multiplied, into their tens and units and adding them).

Erin's school doesn't use Maths-Whizz, however, because I am proud of her achievements I am able to share them with the school... and because Erin is proud of her maths she is able to share it with me.

Maths-Whizz were proud sponsors of the SSAT 5th Primary National Conference and winners of the 2011 ERA Award for Innovation. It can be purchased directly for schools and can be part funded by PTAs using Gift Aid. Call 0203 3286 564 to find out more.



Fact box

The following statistics are based on an online survey from January this year run by Maths-Whizz based on 1,016 respondents – age 5-13.

Motivation

87% of children want to be good at mathematics and nearly half of all respondents (47.5%) said that getting better at mathematics was a motivation in itself.

Just **18%** said they wanted to improve to please their parents

Nearly **80%** of students preferred an online teaching environment

Nearly **70%** said that experience with the Maths-Whizz online tutor had improved their attitudes to mathematics

Kids start to dislike mathematics at age 9

Younger children broadly either love or like mathematics, older children have a more nuanced view, and positive opinions of mathematics plunge at age 12.

Key point: Children are self-motivated. However, as they get older their confidence dips, which can lead to very negative attitudes towards mathematics at the upper age range. The turning point for this is age 9.

For more information on the research conducted please visit www.whizz.com/about/research.



Reading rockets at Godmanchester Primary

Reading is an essential life skill that, if not acquired at an early stage in a child's education, can severely limit their future prospects. Teaching a child the rudiments of language and – more importantly – encouraging them to pick up and engage with a book in the hope of engendering a love of reading can be extremely challenging.

Indeed, recent Department for Education statistics reveal that 53% of boys have not reached a 'good level of development' by the age of five, compared to 35% of girls. As Sir Michael Marmot of University College London observes, poor levels of early development can lead to poor performance at every school stage, and even a lower status in later life.

However, many primary schools across the UK are bucking this trend and producing consistently high results of English in terms of reading and writing through a combination of Renaissance Learning's Accelerated Reader (AR) Advantage program and the application of AR Best Practices.

Godmanchester Community Primary School in Cambridgeshire has been using AR, together with the STAR Reading baseline assessment component of the software, for over 12 years. During that time KS2 results in English have risen consistently, with over 90% of pupils leaving the school with at least Level 4 in Reading and Writing. These results exceed the average for Cambridgeshire, which is already above the national average.

Prior to the introduction of AR at the school, pupils were lacking motivation to read and write, as AR leader Lesley Fisher explains: 'They had no real concern for discovering new vocabulary or exploring creativity through words. Too often we saw that our boys struggled with the skills of reading and writing. At times it was not due to a lack of academic talent or intelligence; they just had too many thoughts and ideas in their minds and could not express them quickly enough on paper. This was causing personal frustration and exasperation in the classroom – something we needed to address for the good of our pupils' long-term academic and personal success.'


In addition to implementing the software, together with AR Best Practices such as 40 minutes daily reading practice, Godmanchester also utilised Renaissance Learning's NEO 2 writing tool to close the gap between boys' and girls' writing standards. This versatile writing device also allows pupils to complete AR quizzes on the books they have read from the comfort of their own desks.

'The school has reaped enormous benefits from adopting a whole school reading culture through the use of modern technologies. Teaming our reading and writing strategies has resulted in fantastic achievements; our pupils have been at the heart of this success,' explains Mrs Fisher.

Following the measured application of AR Best Practices, Godmanchester was awarded Reading 'Model School' status by Renaissance Learning in 2009 and deemed 'Outstanding' by Ofsted during an inspection in 2008.

For more information about Accelerated Reader Advantage and the positive impact it is making at primary and secondary schools across the UK, please visit: www.renlearn.co.uk/reading.



 **Renaissance Learning™**
Advanced Technology for Data-Driven Schools™

Filmmaking

Ben Sperring, Cayley Primary School

Filmmaking stemmed from a whole school goal to embed opportunities to work with and analyse multimedia within the curriculum. We wanted to provide children with opportunities to critically analyse films from a variety of countries and cultures and develop their skills in filmmaking – pitching, writing, storyboarding, filming, editing and presenting. Our goal was to provide a real life context for learning that was both highly motivating and within their immediate frame of reference.

Firstly we secured funding to purchase the necessary equipment and train members of staff. We received a small grant from Canary Wharf Film Fund and purchased some digital video cameras, tripods and a membership to Cineclub.

Cineclub is a network of young filmmakers, who work in small groups during after school clubs or youth clubs, to produce short films which adhere to the Cineclub manifesto. The programme provided training for two teachers, leading to the formation of our first after school filmmaking club for upper key stage 2 students.

Due to the popularity of this club with the children, we sent another member of staff on Cineclub training and began a second club for years 3 and 4. In summer term, 2010, all children from Cayley took part in National Schools Film Week. This gave each class the opportunity to visit a local cinema for a free screening. These visits were accompanied by pre and post visit learning opportunities in the classroom.

Cayley also took part in a variety of activities led by a Tower Hamlets initiative called Fast Forward Film. These activities included screenings of films relevant to the curriculum (anti-bullying, Islam awareness) and opportunities for children to participate in half-term workshops.

Having membership to Film Club: a free service that assists state schools in setting up film appreciation clubs: has provided the opportunity to run a lunchtime film appreciation club. This enabled children from years 3 and 4 to view a wide range of films from different countries and cultures and discuss their likes and dislikes. The club has been very successful and hope to expand it to accommodate other year groups. In the spring term, Cineclub leaders led whole-staff INSET on filmmaking and animation. The goal was to communicate the enthusiasm children had for filmmaking and motivate staff to use some of the equipment in their classrooms.

Staff are now experimenting with filmmaking in their classrooms – year 3 and reception are using animation software and year 6 have used video cameras and editing software. A group of year 5 children are creating their own film at lunchtimes. In each of these cases teachers have commented that children were engaged in using the technology and can see its potential in supporting learning. In February, the upper key stage 2 Cineclub joined other schools at the Stratford Picture House, to view their films on the big screen. The commitment of the children is very evident, with a core group attending for over 12 months and training newcomers each term. Parents' response has been positive – some asking for the club to run twice a week to accommodate greater numbers of children.

Embedding opportunities for filmmaking in the curriculum makes learning fun and relevant. It encourages children to think critically and fully engage in their learning. Although we are in the early stages of filmmaking, it has proved successful in stimulating the minds of the children and encouraged them to value and share their own cultural experiences with children at Cayley and the wider community.



cineclub
the young filmmakers network

Further case studies, reports and information on the Primary Specialism Pilot can be accessed via www.ssatrust.org.uk/primarynetwork

Working with the community

Many schools are highly committed to working with their community. Schools in England have a long history of working with others to enable children to achieve and to flourish. School leaders understand that children are in school for only a small proportion of their time, and that many of the factors which enable young people to succeed can only be addressed by looking beyond the school gates. Primary schools with their strong parental links have huge experience of working with others to ensure the best outcomes for children.

The SSAT is conducting a survey with primary schools to establish the issues school leaders view as their priorities and challenges in relation to community engagement. We know that among secondary schools, the key priorities are to raise aspirations, to promote adult learning as a way to help families to embrace a culture of learning, to address key issues in the local community, and to support community cohesion. Their challenges are staff capacity, funding and engaging parents. We have already had a number of responses to the primary survey, and the initial findings provide a fascinating glimpse into the way primary schools are engaging with their community.

School leaders identified their key priority for community engagement as helping children to develop a sense of belonging. Other priorities include building the school reputation, and enhancing parental engagement, supporting health and wellbeing and strengthening citizenship. Perhaps unsurprisingly, time is the number one challenge and the key barrier to further developing community programmes. Schools have however found creative ways to establish strong community programmes by working with partners, whose own staff are able to add capacity and resources. In some schools a learning mentor leads the partnership work, in others, pupil voice has been the key driver, and has enabled

children to play a key role in talking to local groups. Parental engagement appears as both a key priority and a key challenge. This is an area where schools want to share information and learn from those schools who have implemented successful strategies. School leaders say they want guidance and support, access to toolkits, templates and case studies and want to belong to networks with other schools to share good practice. They are also keen to find ways of engaging their staff on the power of community links for improving outcomes for children and bringing in additional resources.

The other frustration some schools have highlighted is that of the reputation of their school. They want their neighbours, local organisations and other schools to know more about the good work they are doing. Some said that they like awards and accreditations. Others wanted to find ways of welcoming local people in, to build strong support for the school and for learning.

The survey will be open until Saturday 30 April 2011, and we are keen to encourage as many schools as possible to participate. It takes a few minutes and can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/s/5NFSBG8.

Every school that completes it will receive a copy of Teach Your Granny to Text (a social action resource produced by children). There is also a free prize draw and one school will win £500 worth of community consultancy, where a highly experienced SSAT consultant will provide inset or other tailored support.

SSAT's community team have been working with secondary schools for over 10 years, having worked with nearly 2,000 schools last year alone. They offer a wide range of support on partnership working, community cohesion, parental engagement and fundraising. There are a number of free toolkits, templates and guidance at www.ssatrust.org.uk/community.



The survey findings will be used to tailor specific resources and support to meet the current needs of primary school leaders.

For further information on the primary survey please email radhika.bynon@ssatrust.org.uk

Coming soon: Succeeding (and surviving!): your first year in teaching (primary)

The SSAT has worked with; Geoff Barton, Headteacher, TES columnist and well-known writer, senior primary teachers and talented new primary teachers, to produce a friendly, practical guide for NQTs. The guide provides tips and guidance on all aspects of your first year, from making a positive first impression and effective classroom management to dealing with parents evenings and writing reports. You might wish to send new teachers a copy of the guide before they join you in September, or use it as part of your induction programme.

The publication will be available through the SSAT e-shop from the beginning of May. For further details, please contact Lisa Pashouros at lisa.pashouros@ssatrust.org.uk.

How to achieve 'outstanding' through building winning teams

With a record of four consecutive 'outstanding' Ofsted inspections, Redbridge Community School led by executive headteacher, Richard Schofield and headteacher, Lindy Barclay, attribute their success to the development of highly effective teams.

Serving one of the most disadvantaged catchment areas in the country, the staff at Redbridge have consistently demonstrated how it is possible to confound expectations and achieve success completely against the odds. At the end of their last Ofsted inspection the Lead HMI described the school as 'Team Redbridge' in recognition of their outstanding success. As leaders of the school for almost two decades Richard and Lindy have developed an ethos that encourages everyone to pull together for the good of the team.

Drawing inspiration from leading figures in the world of sport and business they have not been afraid to try out new ideas and take risks. Working closely with such inspirational people as rugby world cup winning coach Sir Clive Woodward they have developed a highly practical approach to team building that is transferable to any organisation. A days training is offered to help senior leaders learn some of the fundamentals about team building and how to turn dysfunctional groups into high performing and dynamic teams. If you are interested in this training please email matthew.gould@ssatrust.org.uk.

Literacy network

Join our free Literacy Network, a vibrant forum in which member schools and leading practitioners share their best literacy and English practice. Benefits include half-termly e-newsletters featuring thought provoking articles, best practice ideas, opportunities to network, top tips and strategies. Our primary section is constantly developing with top tips and strategies that can be used at key stages 1 and 2, as well as for transition into key stage 3.

Members also receive preferential rates on new publications, with all our publications available at a **25% reduction** when you join the network. Primary Love Literacy is our new publication packed with teaching and learning strategies for literacy that primary school teachers can use when teaching the different curriculum subject areas; invaluable for lesson planning and great for injecting variety into your teaching and learning practice. We also ensure you have priority access to tailored bespoke packages to support you and your school's literacy or English needs through consultancy, training seminars and partnership with other schools.

If you are interested in sharing your expertise and supporting primary schools through consultancy, we'd be delighted to hear from you. To join the network or to share best practice email literacy@ssatrust.org.uk. For the full range of literacy support and opportunities go to: www.ssatrust.org.uk/literacy or call **020 7802 0785**.

Celebrating the success of the Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme® (TEEP) in primary schools.

‘High quality training that is practical, experiential, challenging and fun.’

Developed by the Gatsby foundation and now embedded in the SSAT, TEEP is an exciting and challenging training framework drawn from the latest teaching and learning research. The TEEP model of effective teaching for effective learning is made up of three significant components. Delegates will experience a range of activities that support the implementation of TEEP in the classroom, all of which they are encouraged to take away and use in their own practice as our primary colleagues note:

‘TEEP has put together all the pieces of the jigsaw in enabling me to move on our teaching and learning further. Through using the model first hand it has shown me what a powerful impact it can have on learning.’

Peter Hallsworth, Headteacher, Ashover Primary School

‘We are beginning to use TEEP as a planning framework at my school and it is so exciting. TEEP has reminded us all about our core purpose – teaching for learning, putting the learning and the learner right back in the driving seat. I have planned lessons with my teachers and we are exploring the framework and making it our own. The training has been fantastic. Just what I needed as a headteacher. Lets get back to what really matters – the children and best learning. I am so looking forward to taking the next step towards a TEEP friendly school. We are putting time in to work collaboratively on planning, delivery and observation. TEEP has put the ‘t’ back into our team’.

Anne Winstrom, Headteacher, Whitchurch First School

‘I think TEEP will excite, inspire and motivate staff to further expand their range of strategies and techniques to provide high quality learning.’

Éadaoin Kelly, Brindishe Schools

‘My teaching has been significantly enhanced as a result of my TEEP training, due to my deeper understanding of the need to teach and review skills rather than outcomes. With my year 6 class, we collaboratively established a set of effective learner and teacher behaviours and decided what they look like and how we can achieve them. We all refer to these regularly, and they are clearly displayed in the classroom as a visual reminder. Likewise, we have established class protocols for collaborative learning which have been very successful. I can’t wait to continue my own learning as my knowledge and understanding of the TEEP model progresses.’

Anna Baker, Blackfield Primary School

‘The most important aspects of TEEP for me have been putting the learner at the centre of their education. My year 2 class have revelled in gaining ownership of their learning. They have reflected deeply at the review stage and identified the need for a ‘collaboration’ toolkit. They have then devised their own toolkit and successfully put it into practice. They help themselves to our reward systems however they must be able to articulate why they believe they deserve one. Use of language ownership and a coherent system which builds upon our already existing practice are the three most exciting and valuable aspects of TEEP.’

Diane Rowland, Whissendine Primary School



To find out more visit www.ssatrust.org.uk/teep or email TEEP@ssatrust.org.uk and request information from the TEEP project team.

The Specialist Schools & Academies Trust Lead Practitioner® Accreditation in primary schools

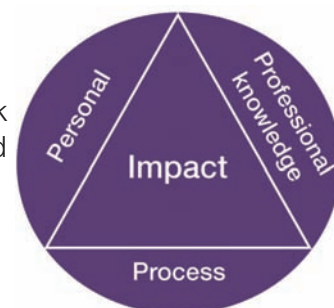
The SSAT Lead Practitioner (LP) Accreditation recognises the work of those who not only demonstrate outstanding expertise in their field but also lead colleagues to improve their practice. Already proving to be a highly valued development tool in the secondary sector, the SSAT are pleased to see this success growing in the primary setting. Sean and Ross talk of their experiences.

Sean Sly, Royds Infant school, accredited associate LP, considers that the online assessment is an extremely powerful tool as it highlights what aspects are your strengths whilst outlining what you could do to further develop. 'As a teacher who consistently achieves either good or outstanding as part of lesson observations as well as leading staff beyond my year group, my headteacher opted to put me forward for the LP accreditation as it is a good tool to assess strengths and areas for development. The criteria are split into ten different strands where you are able to grade yourself. It became apparent that in order for me to develop my skills I needed opportunities to share my experiences and lead staff beyond my school and since then I have sought those opportunities with SSAT and school support. The framework is very user friendly and I was able to gain support through meetings with colleagues going through the accreditation and from the SSAT. The evidence that I submitted were things that I had already completed as part of my teaching role both in and beyond the classroom. Being awarded the LP accreditation has allowed me to develop my personal knowledge, understanding and skills. It has consequently led to further opportunities like the Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme

(TEEP) which has developed not only me personally but other staff at school and consequently the children. I cannot speak highly enough of the LP accreditation and the opportunities that have arisen as a result'.

Ross Silcock, Halstow Primary school has attained AST status and has taught for nine years, becoming the first accredited primary LP in 2009. 'Undertaking the LP accreditation process was a fulfilling and rewarding experience. It enables you to reflect on your practice, recognise and celebrate your achievements and focus your attention on where you need to be headed next. When I started I assumed it would be about the national projects I had been involved in, the whole school initiatives I had led, and yes, they form part of it, but actually it is much more about what you're doing every day; conversations you're having with colleagues to move them on in their practice, emails you're sending, small groups you're leading and ideas you're sharing. Without realising it many primary practitioners will already be doing lots of what you need to be doing. I started thinking about how I could demonstrate the impact of what I had done and how it looked in practice? Using a few projects I had worked on to address all of the criteria I collected evidence which was a mixture of email testimonies, written policies, evaluations and feedback. By thinking about and reflecting on what I do on a daily and weekly basis I found the LP accreditation process straightforward and rewarding.

Looking forward, it helped my understanding of the areas I need to think about next. It's given a focus and direction and is a process which I think will benefit everyone, whether a teacher or learning support assistant.'



To apply for Lead Practitioner Accreditation, visit www.ssatrust.org.uk/practitioners or email lpaccreditation@ssatrust.org.uk

The accreditation costs per person, are **£275** for member schools and **£350** for non-members.

New technologies news

A new era begins for the ICT Register

The ICT Register www.ict-register.net is a dynamic community of schools willing to help guide your journey with ICT. With the demise of a number of agencies which hitherto, have supported schools with their adoption of ICT, the ICT Register network and the unique services it offers are needed more than ever. The new technologies team are taking this opportunity to rebrand and remodel the ICT Register, to provide the much needed school to school support with enhanced links to professional development networks and activities. Watch this space! Exciting times are ahead!

ICT Register showcase conference 28 June 2011, Loughborough

'Informative, innovative, inspiring – it's a really worthwhile day!' 2010 delegate

This increasingly popular ICT Register showcase conference unites practitioners from all ages and phases from across the world. An inspiring programme of showcases and rondoval sessions led by ICT Register classroom practitioners is currently being planned. The whole event is geared towards giving schools the inspiration and knowledge to develop ICT in their school. Book this event via the SSAT website. We look forward to seeing you there!

Primary student digital leaders coming soon!

The new technologies team will be expanding the successful student digital leaders network over the next few months to support primary colleagues in introducing and developing their own schemes. This free primary network will support schools in engaging students in a culture of innovation and support for staff in using effective learning technologies. Current secondary work can be found at <https://www.ssatrust.org.uk/achievement/future/Pages/Studentdigitalleaders.aspx>.

To express interest in the new network (including developing the primary-focused courses) please email newtechs@ssatrust.org.uk.

Thinking about academy status but want to know more?

Ask the experts!

A free service for SSAT members. Post your questions online to our panel of academy experts including academy finance managers, the YPLA, academy principals, education solicitors, academy governance experts and headteachers of newly converting schools. What does academy status mean for governors? What is a GAG? Do we need to prepare annual accounts? What is it really like to lead and manage autonomously of the LA?

Read these and more as well as posting your own question at www.ssatrust.org.uk/academies/applicant/Pages/default.aspx.

Academy conversion support

The academy conversion support package offers a comprehensive range of support tailored to meet the needs of both individual and groups of secondary and primary schools converting to academy status. As part of this support, we have partnered with professional services providers that offer legal and financial expertise during conversion. In addition, a dedicated SSAT account manager will project manage and coordinate the conversion, together with peer-support provided from a recently converted academy to ensure a successful and smooth transition.

For more information about the package, please contact rowena.bridge@ssatrust.org.uk.

Primary school visit opportunities

Following the positive feedback we received from delegates who attended the primary school visit opportunities organised last year we are pleased to offer a further five visits to schools that have been identified as having unique experiences which they are happy to share with our primary network.



The five primary school visit opportunities are:

| Theme | School name | Location | Date |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| The day will be centred around ICT and negotiated learning | Robin Hood Junior and Infant School | Hall Green, Birmingham | Wednesday 8 June 2011 |
| How we use ICT seamlessly to maximise learning and make learning fun. | Lever House Primary School | Leyland, Lancashire | Tuesday 14 June 2011 |
| How the school embeds outdoor learning into the curriculum in an innovative fashion. | Edwalton Primary School | Edwalton, Nottingham | Friday 24 June 2011 |
| Teaching in the outdoor environment and managing the transition from foundation stage (reception class) to year 1. | Bedgrove Infant School | Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire | Thursday 30 June 2011 |
| The day will be centred around using technology and parental engagement. | Hawes Side Primary School | Blackpool, Lancashire | Thursday 7 July 2011 |

Each school visit will be a full day event for all members of staff.

For further information and to book your place(s) please email primarynetwork@ssatrust.org.uk.

If you would like to offer visits to your school to share the work that you are doing, please do let us know. Schools are telling us that they regard this as a really supportive benefit of membership to the SSAT and we hope to be able to continue and increase the school visits experiences throughout the year.

‘An inspiring day which provided a wealth of ideas and information from a working environment. Thank you.’ Jane Pike, Harwood Meadows Primary School

‘Thank you for the fantastic visit. I look forward to more opportunities to share good practice in the future.’ Natalie Hazeldine, Brooke Hill Primary School

National primary headteachers steering group

Chair

Dr Neil Hopkin, Executive Headteacher, Federation of Rosendale Primary School, Christchurch CE Primary School and Children Centre, London
neilhopkin@rosendale.cc

Vice Chair

Michael Shepherd, Headteacher, Hawes Side Primary School, Blackpool
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Richard Hunter, Headteacher, Robin Hood Junior and Infant School, Birmingham
rhunter@robinhood.bham.sch.uk



The next meeting of the national primary headteachers steering group will be taking place on Tuesday 24 May 2011.

The group represents all types of primary schools and all geographical regions and helps design, develop and deliver our work.

At our next meeting we will be considering the main issues facing primary schools for the coming year and beyond so that we can focus our work on these specific areas.

If you have any issues that you would like the group to discuss at this meeting, please contact the chair of the steering group **Neil Hopkin** at neilhopkin@rosendale.cc and he will keep you informed about our progress.



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Please feel free to contact any member of the Primary Network team with any questions or for further information on our network. Alternatively email the whole team on primarynetwork@ssatrust.org.uk.

For up-to-date information on all our work visit www.ssatrust.org.uk/primarynetwork.