

Welcome to the thirteenth North West Regional Delivery Partner (RDP) update from the Great Heights Academy Trust team as part of our contracted work to match and monitor system leaders for the Trust and School Improvement Offer (TSIO) for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

This and future newsletters plus other TSIO information/guidance can be found on [our webpages](#).

This TSI offer is a core aspect of a sector-led School Improvement strategy and the Department of Education's work with schools and trusts through the RSC regional teams. As the contracted body supporting the matching of System Leaders in the NW, we will be your first point of contact during matching and when matched - a.bennett@greatheightstrust.org.uk

Kindest regards

Amanda Bennett OBE

In this TSIO newsletter:

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2. Narrowing Attainment Gaps between Ethnic Groups
3. National School Trust Report
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RDP Updates - Completion of TSIO 22-23 deployments and TSIO 23-24 FAQs

Completion of TSIO 22-23 deployments

Polite reminder: the DfE require all TSIO 22-23 commissioned System Leaders to have returned their end of deployment claim forms by the 1st of March 2024 in preparation for the financial year end.

Please could these be sent to n.foulkes@greatheightstrust.org.uk.

Please contact Nicola if you need any help with this or any further information.

TSIO 23-24 FAQs

[Click here](#) for answers to:

- *Can I deploy someone else to either support me to deliver the offer or to deliver the offer on my behalf?*
- *How will I receive payment for the support I provide?*
- *Will I receive expenses?*
- *How will the impact of the offer be monitored? Is there a role for the system leader in ongoing monitoring?*
- *A trust has asked me to provide school level support to their eligible schools rather than trust level support. Is this appropriate?*
- *Can schools and trusts be offered support by exception where they do not meet the eligibility criteria?*

Narrowing Attainment Gaps between Ethnic Groups

Published just before the Christmas break [this study](#) aims to find out whether schools closing the ethnicity achievement gap have done so by focussing on ethnicity, or as a result of other approaches.

This work was commissioned by the DfE in partnership with the Cabinet Office as part of [Inclusive Britain](#), the government's response to the independent Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report.

This study contributes to action 30 of Inclusive Britain that commits the DfE to:

"investigate the strategies used by multi-academy trusts who are most successful at bridging achievement gaps for different ethnic groups and raising overall life chances"

The research sought to answer three main questions:

1. Where schools and trusts have closed attainment gaps between pupils from different ethnic groups, has this been the result of a deliberate strategy (i.e., focused on raising the attainment of pupils from specific ethnic groups)?
2. What practices have schools and trusts used to close attainment gaps and foster a sense of belonging for all pupils (including those from different ethnic groups)?
3. Can we draw practical lessons about closing attainment gaps between pupils from different ethnic groups from the work of schools and trusts (including lessons that are applicable to schools and trusts working in different contexts)?

[The report](#) may be useful for leaders of schools and trusts.

How trusts and schools narrow attainment gaps between ethnic groups: a preliminary investigation

National School Trust Report

In June 2023, 395 trust accounting officers across England shared their voices with the sector body, the Confederation of School Trusts. The [second annual report](#) uncovers the top priorities for trusts nationally.

Inside are key facts, insights and expert commentary on:

- Current challenges; financial sustainability and growth
- Future priorities; improving the quality of education and workforce development
- Strong and resilient trust insights; governance and accountability and system leadership and civic responsibility

One of the key findings was that multi-academy trusts are worried about financial stability.

New Programmes, Guidance and Offers

Three new EEF projects launched to widen access to evidence-informed programmes

These programmes have each shown positive impacts on pupil attainment when tested in large-scale, rigorous EEF trials. The EEF is providing funding, secured through the Department for Education's Accelerator Fund, so that these programmes can be made available to schools and settings this academic year at little or no cost.

Early Years Settings: [Maths Champions](#)

This programme, developed by the National Day Nurseries Association, delivers high-quality professional development to early years educators to support improvements to early maths provision in PVI, maintained and school-based settings. Practitioners receive online training and one to one support with reviewing current maths provision, and planning and implementing steps to improve maths practice over the one-year programme duration.

Our most recent independent evaluation of Maths Champions found that children taught by practitioners who received the programme made, on average, three months' additional progress in both maths and language development.

Primary Schools: [Ark Curriculum Plus's Mathematics Mastery Primary](#)

Mathematics Mastery Primary, developed by Ark Curriculum Plus, provides a whole-school approach to primary maths teaching, characterised by greater emphasis on mathematical thinking and problem solving, as well as a systematic approach to embedding mathematical language, and purposeful use of manipulatives and visual representations.

Our independent evaluation of the programme found that children who received the programme made an average of two additional months' progress in maths.

Secondary Schools: [Embedding Formative Assessment](#)

Based on Dylan William's research, Embedding Formative Assessment supports secondary schools to make effective, consistent use of formative assessment techniques to boost pupil engagement, and in turn improve academic outcomes.

Our independent evaluation of Embedding Formative Assessment found that pupils in schools that delivered the programme made the equivalent of two additional months' progress in their Attainment 8 GCSE score.

These programmes are available nationally, with schools and early years settings able to sign up and start programme delivery this academic year. Schools and early years settings can express an interest in these projects now.

Also new from the EEF:

Appetite amongst teachers for flexible working approaches, but limited research into their impact

Three new evidence reviews on strategies to support recruitment and retention

The reports look at:

- flexible working
- workload
- leadership and culture

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/appetite-amongst-teachers-for-flexible-working-approaches-but-limited-research-into-their-impact>



[A collection of short videos](#) answering the most common questions about inspection of early years provision. You will hear from an Ofsted Early Years Regulatory Inspector about inspection activities and Ofsted's role and gain an insight of what to expect.

Regular Updates on the TSIO

We hope you, your colleagues and those you work in partnership with find this newsletter supportive of your work. You can find copies of previous and future editions on our [RDP pages on the Great Heights website](#).

Thanking you for your continuing support, *Great Heights Academy Trust Regional Delivery Partner (RDP) Team*

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