

Welcome to the first Benfleet Teaching School Alliance Teaching and Learning Newsletter!

We have selected a range of interesting articles for all teachers and leaders at all levels in this newsletter – we hope you will find it useful and interesting to find out about current topics in the latest research about how to improve outcomes for pupils.

RESEARCH FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

- Do behaviour incentives improve exam results for low-achieving students?
- Mind the gap—reducing the difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils—what works?
- Do teachers stereotype pupils from poor homes?
- Buoyant students rise above exams or why it is good to be nervous before exams!
- Philosophy for Children—what impact does it have?
- Upcoming CPD opportunities
- Websites to explore
- Highest Impact for teachers in their classrooms
- Primary & Secondary Mastery in Mathematics events
- Courageous Leaders—LGBTI programme

WEBSITES TO EXPLORE:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/index.php?/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit>

The Teaching and Learning Toolkit – a fabulously easy website to use that is clear and simple. It shows what impact common interventions that we use frequently in school have at primary and secondary level, giving two scores – one for value for money, and another that tells us how many months difference these interventions will make to a child's progress.

“TELL ME AND I FORGET,
TEACH ME AND I MAY REMEMBER,
INVOLVE ME AND I LEARN.”

~ BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mind the gap – reducing the difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils – what works?

A new research report published by the Department for Education explores success and good practice in supporting the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, and concludes that schools have meaningful scope to make a difference. In England, the performance gap between pupils from more- and less-advantaged backgrounds is one of the largest among OECD countries. This research used school-level data, surveys, and interviews to identify schools that have successfully narrowed the gap, common features across these schools, and what lessons can be learned from success stories.

The authors found that between one- and two-thirds of the variance between schools in terms of disadvantaged pupils' achievement can be explained by school-level characteristics, suggesting that intake and circumstance are influential but do not totally determine outcomes.

- Promote an ethos of achievement for all pupils, rather than stereotyping disadvantaged pupils as a group with less potential to succeed.
- Have an individualised approach to addressing barriers to learning and emotional support at an early stage, rather than providing access to generic support and focusing on pupils nearing the end of key stages.
- Focus on high-quality teaching first rather than add-on strategies and activities outside school hours.
- Focus on outcomes for individual pupils rather than on providing strategies.
- Deploy the best staff to support disadvantaged pupils; develop skills and roles of teachers and Teaching Assistants rather than using additional staff who do not know the pupils well.
- Make decisions based on data and respond to evidence using frequent, rather than one-off, assessment and decision points.
- Have clear, responsive leadership: setting ever-higher aspirations and devolving responsibility for raising achievement to all staff, rather than accepting low aspirations and variable performance.

The report also has an accompanying briefing for school leaders which summarises the findings, identifies school risk factors and how schools can address them, and provides a list of suggested next steps.

Source: Supporting the Attainment of Disadvantaged Pupils: Articulating Success and Good Practice: Research Report (2015), Department for Education.

Interested in further information? Please contact us for details of our termly Pupil Premium Network Group suitable for both primary and secondary phases.

FREE SECONDARY MASTERY IN MATHEMATICS CONFERENCE

THURSDAY 12th JANUARY 4.00pm-6.30pm
THE APPLETON SCHOOL
Croft Road, Benfleet, SS7 5RN

The Benfleet TSA are delighted to offer schools the opportunity to attend this FREE funded twilight conference. Facilitator: John Mason, Emeritus Professor, School of Mathematics and Statistics.

To register:
www.benfleet-teaching-school.co.uk/events

Do teachers stereotype pupils from poor homes?

A study published in the Journal of Social Policy has found that teachers stereotype pupils according to their level of **poverty, gender, and ethnicity**.

The study used data from the Millennium Cohort Study, which followed almost 12,000 children born in the year 2000 in England. At age 7, for almost 5,000 children, teacher judgements on whether a child was "well above average/above average/average/below average/well below average" at maths and reading were collected. The children also completed tests in Word Reading and Progress in Mathematics. Results from the two assessments were then compared.

Children from low-income families, boys, pupils with any recognised diagnosis of special educational needs (SEN), and children who speak other languages in addition to English were less likely to be judged 'above average' at reading by their teacher – despite performing equivalently to their counterparts on the reading test. In maths there were fewer differences, although boys were more likely than girls to be judged relatively highly at maths. **Black Caribbean pupils were significantly less likely than their equivalently performing White counterparts to be judged 'above average' –** along with **children from low-income families**, and those with any **recognised SEN**.

The report suggests that efforts should be made to develop relevant interventions and strategies within teacher training and professional development; and avoid the reinforcement of stereotypes during policy intervention and associated publicity.

Source: *Stereotyped at Seven? Biases in Teacher Judgement of Pupils' Ability and Attainment (2015), Journal of Social Policy, 44(3)*.

Buoyant students rise above exams, or why it is good to be a bit nervous before exams!

A study of GCSE exam performance among 705 secondary school students in state-funded schools in England shows that **it is OK for students to be tense, but not good for them to be anxious, about high-stakes exams**.

The authors used self-reported data from the students to investigate the relationship between academic buoyancy (withstanding routine setbacks, challenges, and pressures), test anxiety (feeling threatened by exams), and high-stakes exam performance. **Buoyancy was defined as distinct from resilience (withstanding more severe adversity)**.

The students used the Revised Test Anxiety Scale to report worry and tension components of test anxiety and the Academic Buoyancy Scale to report academic buoyancy. Academic achievement was measured using average scores from English, maths, and science GCSE exams. Student data revealed that academic buoyancy was high where the worry component of test anxiety was low (and vice versa). This was reflected in exam results where low worry and high buoyancy were associated with better average GCSE scores. The tension element of test anxiety was unrelated to exam results.

The authors suggested that future studies could take past academic achievement into account and investigate other aspects of test anxiety, such as test-irrelevant thinking and off-task behaviours. They also suggested that insights from the study may inform interventions that aim to reduce test anxiety, improve academic buoyancy, and boost exam performance.

Source: *Academically buoyant students are less anxious about and perform better in high-stakes examinations (2015), British Journal of Educational Psychology*

Click here for a short Newsround video to share with pupils to help them manage their exam stress better

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/36193412>

TEACHING FOR MASTERY IN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS: SEE FOR YOURSELVES!

1.30pm-3.00pm Tuesday 6th December 2016 (Y1 lesson)

1.30pm-3.00pm Wednesday 7th December 2016 (Y6 lesson)

Kimpton Primary School, Hitchin, Herts. is hosting two Shanghai teachers who will be leading two free open sessions for participants to experience "Teaching for Mastery" style lessons. Attending this session will enable you to see teaching for mastery 'in action' and discuss strategies and approaches observed at a Q&A session.

To register for one of these events:
<http://matrixmathshub.co.uk/?p=841>

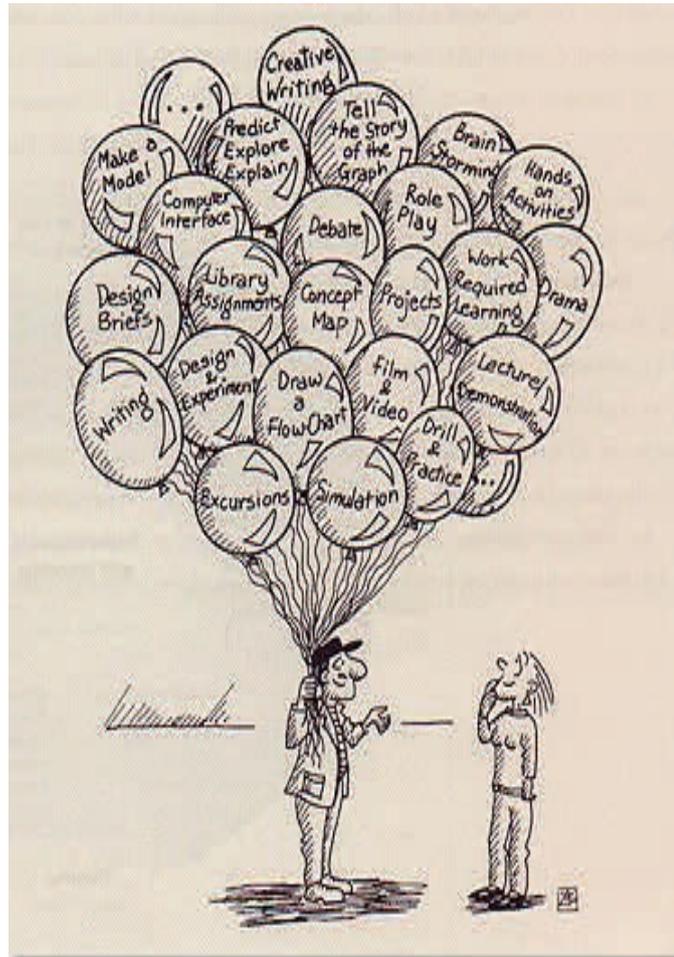
The Education Endowment Trust (sometimes also known as the Sutton Trust Toolkit) is used extensively in schools to share best value and practice in 5–16 education. It is designed to be an accessible and easy to interpret guide to what works in schools, based on extensive research. The difference it can make to pupils' outcomes is clear—they list the difference these types of approaches can make in *months*.

According to the Trust, here are the aspects of teaching that have the greatest impact on pupils' learning in all phases. Many of these will already be familiar to you.

How many can you tick off on your list?

HIGHEST IMPACT FOR ALL TEACHERS IN THEIR CLASSROOMS ARE:

- ◆ **Feedback (8 months difference)**
- ◆ **Meta-cognition and self-regulation (8 months difference)**
- ◆ **Collaborative learning (5 months difference)**
- ◆ **Reading comprehension strategies (5 months difference)**
- ◆ **Homework (5 months in secondary/2 months in primary)**



Philosophy for Children – what impact does it have?

A new report, published by the Education Endowment Foundation, has shown that children taking part in a trial of Philosophy for Children (P4C) made approximately two additional months' progress in reading and maths.

The authors, from Durham University, conducted an evaluation of the programme from January to December 2013 in 48 English schools. A total of 3,159 pupils in Years 4 and 5 took part in the trial, of which 1,550 were in a treatment group and 1,609 in a control group. Teachers were trained in P4C and pupils received, on average, one period of P4C per week.

P4C is centred on nurturing philosophical enquiry. The aim is to help children to become more willing and able to question, reason, construct arguments, and collaborate with others. It is intended to lead to improved self-confidence, as well as cognitive improvement and academic attainment. Pupils participate in group dialogues focused on philosophical issues. These are prompted by a stimulus (e.g., a story or video) and are based around a concept such as 'truth', 'fairness', or 'bullying'.

The evaluation found evidence that P4C had a positive impact on pupils' Key Stage 2 (KS2) progress in reading and maths. Gains in KS2 were greater in all subjects for pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM). However, results on the Cognitive Abilities Test (a different outcome measure not explicitly focused on attainment) showed mixed results. Pupils who started the programme in Year 5 showed a positive impact, but those who started in Year 4 showed no evidence of benefit.

Click here to see a very short explanation of what P4C is by Will Ord, the UK's most famous P4C practitioner:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xb0zagTsaqI>

This works for any age group – primary and secondary.

For an interesting TED Talk on P4C – click here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DLzXAjscXk&index=2&list=PLRAI_WnbL7Z2EcvAyc6bN7hhUVCSWJ0QL

Interested in training? Please contact us to arrange 'Philosophy for Children' training suitable for NQTs/ITTs & primary teachers.

Do behaviour incentives improve exam results for low-achieving students?

Low-achieving students respond to incentives to increase their effort and engagement at school and do better than predicted on GCSE exams as a consequence. That is the main finding of a discussion paper published by the University of Bristol.

The project, included more than 10,000 Year 11 students in 63 schools. The schools were recruited in the poorest parts of neighbourhoods in England and were randomised to one of the following treatment groups: financial incentives, non-financial incentives, or control. Students in the incentive treatment groups earned rewards every half-term based on inputs such as attendance, conduct, homework, and classwork, rather than for outputs such as assessment results. The financial incentive rewarded students with cash up to the value of £80 per half-term, while the non-financial incentive offered students the chance to qualify for a high-value event determined jointly by the school and students, such as a sporting event or trip to a theme park.

The researchers hoped to find that the incentives would improve effort and engagement and ultimately lead to improved GCSE performance even though the results themselves carried no rewards. The analysis showed that overall the impact of either financial or non-financial incentives on achievement was low, with small, positive but statistically insignificant effects on exam performance. However, among students with low predicted GCSE grades, those in the intervention groups got better marks than students in the control group, with treatment effects stronger for the financial incentives than the non-financial incentives (particularly in science). For students who were expected to do well, and already making an effort at school, the incentives made little difference.

More Details here: [Understanding the response to financial and non-financial incentives in education: Field experimental evidence using high-stakes assessments \(2016\), Discussion Paper 16 / 678, University of Bristol Available at: http://www.beib.org.uk/](http://www.beib.org.uk/)

Upcoming CPD opportunities from Benfleet Teaching School Alliance

December 2016

Thursday 8th December
4.00pm-5.00pm
The Appleton School

Effective communication skills for teachers working with children and young people
Cost: £10 per delegate

January 2017

Tuesday 10th January
3.45pm-5.00pm
The Appleton School

NQT/ITT Programme—Session 6
Basic First Aid & managing care plans
Cost: £20 per delegate

Thursday 12th January
4.00pm-5.30pm
Kingston Primary School

Primary Learning to Lead Programme (7-sessions)
Session 1: Leadership & Management
Cost: £200 per delegate (full programme of 7 sessions)

Thursday 12th January
4.00pm-6.30pm
The Appleton School

FREE Secondary Mastery in Mathematics conference
Facilitator: John Mason, Emeritus Professor
School of Mathematics and Statistics

Friday 13th January
2-hour pm sessions
Local secondary schools

Active Learning approaches for English, PE, Science, Geography, Drama, Art and MFL—suitable for ITTs/NQTs
Cost: £20 per delegate

Thursday 19th January
3.45pm-4.45pm
The King John School

KS2/3 Primary Science course (3-sessions)
Aid transition towards KS3 science.
Cost: £60 per delegate (price includes all 3 sessions)

Tuesday 24th January
3.45pm-5.00pm
Hadleigh Junior School

NQT/ITT Programme—Session 7
Assessment for Learning & writing school reports
Cost: £20 per delegate

Thursday 26th January
4.00pm-5.15pm
The Appleton School

Coaching & Mentoring for School Direct mentors
(2 twilight sessions)
Cost: £30 per delegate

Monday 30th January
9.30am-3.15pm
The Appleton School

Cover Supervisor training
(one-day certificated course)
Cost: £150 per delegate

FOR BOOKINGS: www.benfleet-teaching-school.co.uk/events

COURAGEOUS LEADERS: COACHING & MENTORING PROGRAMME FOR LGBTI TEACHERS

LAUNCH EVENT: THURSDAY 19TH JANUARY 2017

Are you an LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Intersex) teacher looking for promotion in your field?

The Courageous Leaders is a free programme funded by the DfE that can offer workshops, personalised coaching & mentoring sessions, NLE advice for application forms for promotion and support with any issues/barriers to promotion.

To register, please email Jane Robinson at: director@wickfordtsa.co.uk

We hope you have enjoyed the first issue of our newsletter and welcome any comments or contributions. Please contact Denise Mair on: DeniseM@thekjs.com if you have any feedback, suggestions or articles you wish to share in our next newsletter.