



Celebrating Success; Embracing Partnership



#KyraJournal July 2018

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Welcome



A Warm Welcome to this edition of the **Kyra Journal**

A warm welcome to the final Kyra Journal of this academic year.

As another year comes to a close, it feels like the perfect opportunity to reflect on some of the highlights of the year, and to celebrate the hard work of our pupils and staff, who have continued to make the Kyra alliance a privilege to be a part of.

This edition begins with a focus on the amazing work of both of our Kyra Kids Councils this year. From trips to London, to exciting workshops, and a whole host of school visits, the Kyra Kids Councils continue to use pupil voice to make a real impact on our schools and practise. We also reflect on the hard work of our teachers, who demonstrate their determination to keep learning, improving, and reflecting upon their practice during our CPD sessions. Several of these teachers have kindly shared their experiences of these CPD sessions for us, including the new skills they have taken back to their schools and classrooms as a result. Our thanks go out to them for their unceasing dedication to be the best teachers that they can possibly be for our pupils!

For the fourth year in a row we have also undertaken a needs and impact survey of the Kyra alliance, an analysis of which can be found in this edition of the Journal. The survey has highlighted the many ways in which Kyra is making a positive impact, and has also pinpointed areas for further development as we move forward. Many thanks to everyone who contributed.

Recent weeks have also seen the running of Ignite Games in both Kyra Central and Kyra East. The games continue to go from strength to strength, inspiring children throughout



the county to get involved in sport through a fantastic day of sporting activities and fun. The article looks at how and why the games were originally established, their key purpose and desired outcomes, and more specifically at the games that took place this year.

Finally, we have included an interview with Alyson Bristow, Head Teacher of Newton-on-Trent CE Primary, who reflects on her years of headship at the school, including her impact and the legacy she leaves. There is certainly much to be learnt from her experiences, for aspiring and current head teachers alike, and we hope that you enjoy reading about her journey. We all send our most heartfelt thanks to Alyson for all of her hard work over the years, and wish her all the very best in her retirement!

The Journal concludes with our regular research and policy digest, containing an overview of some of the most important research and policy updates from the summer term.

A huge thank you to all for helping to make this year so successful.

Have a wonderful summer break!

Helen Barker

Kyra Kids Council

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The Kyra Central Kids Council, led by Ben Carver (Kyra pupil voice lead), was established in 2014. It is made up of pupils from school councils across the Kyra alliance, and provides pupils with the opportunity to interact with children from other schools across Lincolnshire, and to visit one another's schools. The key purpose of establishing the Kyra Kids Council was to ensure that pupil voice is kept at the heart of the alliance and its work, as well as providing an opportunity for pupils to experience enriching activities that may be difficult for individual schools to provide.

The Kyra East Kids Council was created in 2016 to give the children of rural East Lincolnshire the same opportunities as those in central Lincolnshire; to visit other schools, meet different children, take part in exciting activities, and enact pupil voice to make a positive impact within their own schools. Since many of the primary schools in East Lincolnshire are very small schools, the Kyra East Kids Council also provides valuable opportunities for pupils to meet with other children of their own age, who they may eventually go on to attend secondary school with. The Kyra East Kids Council is led by Tracy Cockram, Headteacher of Gipsey Bridge Academy, and its recent establishment has created even more opportunities for schools throughout the Kyra alliance to bring pupil voice to the fore.

How do the Kyra Kids Councils operate?
The children involved in the Kyra Kids Councils have regular meetings throughout

the school year, which include 'learning visits' to different schools that are involved. The focus of each meeting, including the learning walks and activities, is decided by the headteacher of the host school, and often the focus is placed on a key area within the school development plan. Kyra Kids Council meetings are usually made up of 4-6 pupils from each participating school, representing a range of different ages.

Pupils from the host school act as ambassadors for the day, greeting the rest of the council, directing them to the meeting hall, and leading the tours around their school. The school council leader introduces the theme of the visit, before pupils are placed into groups to engage in the planned activities. The activities are facilitated by the teachers but are very much enacted and led by the pupils each step of the way.

"It's great to see children, who have only known each other for a matter of minutes, interacting and engaging in purposeful discussions"

At the end of each meeting, pupils review what they have observed at the school, and feed back to the host school via discussion and a feedback form; the forms are later passed on to the head teacher to read through. As part of this feedback, pupils express what they were impressed by, and anything they feel could be improved further. They may also share their own ideas and suggestions to aid further development. The pupils are also keen to take away positive ideas and practice from the host schools and bring these suggestions back to their own schools, sharing them with their own school council and their teachers.

Ben tells us, "it's great to see children, who have only known each other for a matter of minutes, interacting and engaging in

purposeful discussions about the things they like about the host school, while also identifying ways to make it an even better place to learn." Through the Kyra Kids Councils, the children are able to play a really valuable part in school improvement by enacting pupil voice. Many head teachers have found the feedback from the Kids Councils to be some of the most useful they have ever experienced, leading to positive new initiatives and practice within their own schools. Tracy explains the positive effect that the Kids Councils have on the pupils, saying "the development of pupil voice through the Kyra Kids Councils really helps the children to develop important skills for life, such as listening effectively and expressing their own views with careful consideration. It also helps them to grow in confidence, take on responsibility and develop maturity."

What's been happening this year?

Kyra Kids Council – Central

The year began with an exciting trip to the Lincoln Guildhall; a fine setting for the first Kyra Central Kids Council of the year! The meeting took place in the Council Chamber, where the children worked in mixed school groups to generate ideas for the year ahead. Suggestions included a Kyra 'bake-off' competition, a summer picnic at Lincoln Castle, and a Kyra Kids talent show. All of the ideas were collated and shared with schools, and a summer picnic at the castle was arranged to take place during the summer term.

The second meeting of the year took place at Monks Abbey Primary School, with 52 pupils attending from eight different schools, including three schools joining the Kyra Central Kids Council for the first time! The theme of the meeting was anti-bullying, in celebration of Anti-Bullying Week. The children worked in mixed school groups to create different pieces of an anti-bullying jigsaw puzzle. Each piece of the puzzle included anti-bullying messages, suggestions of different ways that schools and pupils alike could help to prevent bullying taking place, and how schools could tackle any bullying that does occur. At the end of the activity all the puzzle pieces were placed together to complete the anti-bullying puzzle. The Kids Council then completed a maths focussed learning walk, took part in a discussion, and offered feedback based on their experience.

The next Kids Council meeting took place at Willoughton Primary School, for the first ever Kyra Kids creative writing competition. The pupils who attended were all the winners and runners-up from two age categories, (Y1-Y3 and Y4-Y6) from the initial heats. These were held within their respective schools, where pupils had written their own pieces of fiction, all roughly 500 words long. The day started with an interactive, story-telling master class by the author of the Fabulous Four Fish Fingers, Jason Beresford. Pupils then spent some time reading each other's stories

before completing an oral questionnaire, which included answering questions on how their teachers help them with their story writing, and how their learning environments can help to enhance their writing. The older children also got the chance to take part in a writing workshop with Jason Beresford.

Morton Trentside Primary School hosted the next meeting, which offered the Kids Council the chance to observe their 'fit for life' daily fitness activities, where children from the school engage in 30 minutes of exercise each day. The council observed several Fit for Life activities taking place at the school, including circuit training, a one-mile run, and a dance activity. They then collaboratively created their own plans and posters to promote healthy lifestyles in mixed school groups. Pupils from Monks Abbey were so impressed by Fit for Life, they enthusiastically recommended the programme on their return to school. In response, the programme has been trialled each Friday ('Fitness Friday') of the summer term, and is now set to start daily at the school in September!

The year ended on a high with the Kyra Central Kids Council summer picnic at Lincoln Castle, where pupils engaged in a treasure hunt around the castle grounds, before playing games and enjoying some tasty food together. After lunch, the children created posters to help to encourage as many schools as possible to come along to Kids Council meetings in the future and join in the fun!

Kyra Kids Council - East

The Kyra East Kids Council was initially launched in September 2016. Its first year began in spectacular fashion with a trip to London, to visit parliament and to learn all about democracy in action. The pupils enjoyed a tour of the House of Commons, and also learned about the history of Parliament going back 750 years! The first year saw meetings on themes such as global learning, immersive learning environments and outdoor learning using Forest Schools. After such a successful first year, everybody was very excited to start year two of the Kyra East Kids Council in September 2017!

This year has seen even more thought-provoking meetings and valuable experiences taking place for the Kyra East Kids Council, with many different Kyra schools in the area choosing to get involved. For the first meeting, pupils got together at St Helena's C of E Primary School to create a Kyra East Kids Council banner. The activity, which included creating felt flowers, helped pupils new to the Council to get to know one another and be creative! This was followed by a learning walk around the school, where pupils looked for interesting ideas observed in lessons to feed back to their own schools.

"The development of pupil voice through the Kyra Kids Councils really helps the children to develop important skills for life"



In October, the Kyra East Kids Council got to experience an amazing trip to Kidzania in London. The purpose of the trip, as with the trip to Parliament, was to help the pupils to gain skills and understanding that would support them in their role as councillors. Kidzania is an indoor city, run by kids. The experience aims to provide children with a realistic insight into the adult world by giving them the chance to take up a profession, which earns them Kidzos (Kidzania currency), which can then be 'spent' on fun activities. There were many different professions for the children to try, including being a dentist, police officer, firefighter, actor, shopkeeper, ambulance driver, teacher, dancer, doctor or footballer. The children had a great time, while also learning a thing or two about personal responsibility, problem-solving, communication, resilience, and the importance of teamwork; all very important skills for Kyra Kids Council members to have!

During the spring term, Mareham Le Fen Primary Church of England School hosted a very exciting workshop on the 'Art of Brilliance', which was open to pupils from both the Kyra East and Kyra Central Kids Councils. The children learned all about having a positive mindset, expanding their comfort zones, developing bounce-back-ability (resilience), and promoting kindness and happiness in their school communities. The pupils were told that they could now be 'happiness ambassadors' at their own schools. On return to their schools they led assemblies about what they had learned at the workshop, which particularly focussed on some of the small actions we can make to help to spread more happiness on a day-to-day basis.

The final event of the year took place at New York Primary School, where pupils in the Kyra East Kids Council enjoyed a morning of multi-sport games together. The games included handball, basketball, capture the flag, and many more. It was another great opportunity for pupils from the different schools to get together, socialise, and have some fun as a reward for all of their efforts this year!

Throughout the year the Kyra East Kids Council have also been involved in attending meetings with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board. They have been training to become Junior Online Safety Officers, and have been spreading the word on the importance of online safety within their school communities and to parents. This has included assemblies about age restrictions on apps and games, staying safe on YouTube, stranger danger and e-safety, and being aware of fake news on the internet.

Both Kyra Kids Councils continue to go from strength to strength, providing a multitude of opportunities for schools and pupils alike. **If you would like to get involved, please email Ben Carver (Central Lincolnshire) at Ben.Carver@monksabbey.lincs.sch.uk or Tracy Cockram (East Lincolnshire) at Tracy.Cockram@gipsebridge.lincs.sch.uk who are both keen for as many Kyra schools to get involved as possible!**

Learning to Lead

Amy Tallentire – A Course Leader

A couple of years ago, myself and Ria Dunthorne were approached by Kyra, who asked for our help in developing a course for aspiring or recently appointed middle leaders. We were more than happy to help as it was a fantastic opportunity to support other teachers as they embarked on their leadership journey.



Together, Ria and I put together a course called 'Learning to Lead' with the aim of supporting delegates to develop the essential skills, values and attributes needed to become successful leaders. The content of the course stems from our firm conviction that you can learn to be a leader, and that great leadership skills can be learned and developed over time. Our central goal was to help the delegates to grow in confidence, ready to tackle the challenges ahead, by giving them the essential tools and skills necessary for effective leadership.

The course has a clear structure, set out over five separate sessions, which covers what we feel to be some of the key areas of leadership. However, within this structure, Learning to Lead has a flexible approach, and sessions have been shaped by the needs of the delegates. We begin Learning to Lead by asking what they are hoping to take away from the course, the areas they want to most develop, and what challenges they are currently facing. We can then ensure that we cover these areas and thread them through the course to ensure that they have been explored and discussed.

"Learning to Lead has a flexible approach, and sessions have been shaped by the needs of the delegates"

Another key goal of Learning to Lead is to make sure that the theory we discuss is put into practice. Delegates are sent away from each session with practical tasks to complete based on their learning. These practical tasks are then discussed and reflected upon by the group at the next session. By putting the theory into practice straight away, it becomes more deeply embedded and is more likely to be remembered and applied in future situations, once the course is over. The reflection element also means that practice can be improved upon next time, especially after discussion and feedback from the group, which often includes interesting ideas and suggestions from others.



Sessions are led by experienced and expert practitioners, who can very much speak from their own experiences of leadership, and share their best strategies and advice. This is ideal for those just starting out in middle leadership, who may be trying to work out how to deal with a multitude of new and unfamiliar situations! It is also an opportunity for delegates to ask any questions that they might have about leadership and their new role.

Finally, one of the things that has turned out to be most helpful about Learning to Lead is the connections that new and aspiring middle leaders get to make with one another. They are all very much in 'the same boat' and Learning to Lead gives them an opportunity to form a support network, discuss challenges, and reassure one another. The reflective sessions are also a great opportunity for everyone to share their experiences, and to give support and encouragement to one another. Delegates frequently swap email addresses and keep in touch when the course is over, and the support network that they have developed often remains long after the course is finished.

For the past couple of years Learning to Lead has been made up of a small group of around 6 delegates, which means that sessions can be easily tailored to the individuals involved, and that everybody can be actively involved in discussion. The course is made up of 5 sessions and usually runs over a 4-month period.



Laura Douglas – A Delegate

I attended Learning to Lead when I started my new role as 'progress leader' at my school. I found the course very useful, as well as interesting and engaging, and there was a very supportive atmosphere from day one. Many of us attending the course expressed concern at the prospect of having to hold staff to account and have difficult conversations; it was something that we had never had to do before becoming leaders! As several of us saw this as a significant challenge, it was made a top priority during the course. We were given lots of resources, including a proforma to help us to scaffold potentially difficult conversations, and we also engaged in role play scenarios to see how the conversations might play out in practice, and how we might deal with various responses and outcomes. This greatly increased my confidence in my ability to handle a situation like this should it come up in the future.

"It was fantastic to be able to learn from experienced leaders who could share their expertise and advice with us"

It was fantastic to be able to learn from experienced leaders who could share their expertise and advice with us. The session leaders were all very passionate and inspiring, and helped me to think about how I could make a real difference as a middle leader to the children and to my school as a whole. Some of the key things I took away from Learning to Lead were the importance of having a clear vision and communicating that to staff, developing positive relationships with staff, leading by example, and always keeping the core purpose of my role central to everything I do. I also really appreciated the opportunity to meet other middle leaders who were in a similar position to me. We had so much to talk about and it was great to have those conversations and to be able to reflect on our practice together. I would encourage anybody who is looking to become a middle leader, or is starting in a new role as a middle leader, to get involved, as it really helps you to make the transition successfully, and with a greater level of confidence.

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LeadLincs

The LeadLincs programme - a year-long leadership programme for those intending to step up to headship in the coming years - was run for the third consecutive year in 2017/18. The programme is funded by the local authority and is delivered by Kyra on behalf of Lincolnshire Teaching Schools Together (LTT). Here, Amy Wells (Deputy Headteacher at Ellison Boulters CE Academy) talks about how it has made a difference to her practice and her preparation for future leadership roles.

"The LeadLincs programme was a fantastic blend of inspiration, practical learning, and time for reflection supported by experienced leaders. The first day back in September really set the tone for the remainder of the year – it was great to meet and hear about the experiences of the other participants, and we also had a chance to really think about why we wanted to lead and the difference we wished to make to this generation of children and young people through an inspiring input from Michael Pain. We also met our coaches – experienced headteachers working across Lincolnshire - and benefited from shared training facilitated by Jane Creasey.

As the programme progressed, we really began to experience the practical side of headship and to hear from those who were already doing the job. We got the chance to hear from experienced heads about aspects of their work such as budget setting and financial planning, resource management and timetabling, the development of systems and processes, working with governors, and much more. This was all supported by really useful reading and resources, and I particularly benefited from the focus on Andy Buck's Leadership Matters book.

"The LeadLincs programme was a fantastic blend of inspiration, practical learning, and time for reflection supported by experienced leaders."



A core component of the programme is the opportunity to work alongside a coach and to apply some of your learning in a practical way. My own coach was Tracey Bowman, and not only did I get the opportunity to learn from Tracey and to receive her support and advice, I also had the chance to contribute to the leadership of improvement in one of her schools. One thing I took away from working with Tracey was an insight into the performance management of teaching assistants - something that we needed to take forward at my own school. Through observing how Tracey and her team approached this, I was able to go about refining the process and changing expectations in my own school, so that teaching assistants were more prepared for those conversations and that performance management was feeding into ongoing CPD and development opportunities. I also reciprocated the learning and support by working with Tracey on the planning and delivery of guided reading and pastoral reading in her school, providing coaching to subject leaders and completing monitoring and feedback tasks.



Above: Amy Wells

Finally, the programme also provided some helpful experiences and tips on making the transition to headship. One area many of the participants felt some initial trepidation about was the mock-interviews led by a panel of experienced headteachers. In fact, this was hugely beneficial because we all learned so much and it provided us with the experience and a degree of confidence for when the time comes to do it for real!

For me, the programme has been a fabulous introduction to the role of whole-school leadership and the wide-ranging work of a headteacher. When the time is right, I now feel ready and prepared to make the leap into headship. In the meantime, I feel even more ready and able to support my own headteacher and take on even greater leadership responsibilities which will be of benefit to my current school. Being on this programme really is a win-win for participants and their schools."





NQT Training and Support Package by Jade King

Kyra runs a range of training and support opportunities for primary NQTs, designed to complement and enhance the induction provided by the NQT's employing school.

Here, Jade King tells us about her experience of Kyra's training and support opportunities, and how they have helped her during her NQT year.

"I made full use of Kyra's NQT package, and attended all six Kyra NQT training sessions, as well as the Lincolnshire Teaching Schools Together (LTT) peer moderation sessions for teachers 'New to Year 6'. It was a brilliant opportunity to build on what I'd learned during my training year, and to continue to be as proactive as possible with my professional development. I took many new ideas and strategies away from the sessions, as well as useful resources. The sessions also made it really clear that teacher training is not the end of the learning journey, but just the beginning!

I found the information and advice on teaching a creative curriculum particularly useful, and got some brilliant ideas for the classroom, which included a lesson on how to mummify hotdogs as part of a project on Ancient Egypt, and modelling the solar system using fruit for a project on space! I went on to teach both of these lessons to my class, and the children absolutely loved it! It really brought the learning to life for them.

The Kyra training sessions were also a great opportunity to talk to other NQTs and develop a support network. Not only were we able to share teaching ideas and strategies with one another, but also our ups and downs, so that none of us felt alone in our journey. We also discussed strategies for coping with workload, and behaviour management strategies too. I learnt from these discussions that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to anything in teaching, and that different things work with different classes and for

different teachers, so it's important to be open-minded and flexible! I also found it really useful to talk with the other NQTs about the SEN needs that pupils have in their classes, and what they have put in place to help, and I picked up some really helpful approaches which I then took back to my own classroom.

"The Kyra NQT package has really helped me to make the most my NQT year, and to use it as an opportunity to grow and flourish."

The Kyra moderation sessions which I went to for teachers 'New to Year 6' were extremely valuable for me, especially as I teach in a small school, and my class includes pupils from years 4, 5 and 6! The mix of year groups can make it especially confusing to keep track of whether a pupil's work is at the expected level (or below, or above) for their age. The moderation sessions helped me to keep on top of this, and helped me to be confident and thorough in my assessments. They also helped me to reflect on my teaching, as through comparison of my pupils' work with the work of other pupils of their age, I could recognise where their strengths lay, and also which areas I needed to focus on with them to help them improve further. For example, I realised through the moderation sessions that my year 6 pupils had very good use of vocabulary, but that I needed to do more work with them on punctuation.

Overall the moderation sessions were very enlightening and definitely helped me to improve my assessment skills. I was also very grateful for the moderation sessions because during my NQT year I actually ended up being externally moderated. It was as a result of the Kyra moderation sessions that I felt very confident going into this, and my assessments were judged to be accurate by the external moderator.

I would recommend making use of the Kyra NQT package to newly qualified teachers without hesitation. It allows you as NQT to build on the things you learned in your training year, and to continue to take on board new ideas and strategies to keep improving. It also helped me to feel more confident, and it was great to have a support network of NQTs around me to reflect with. NQT year is a very important year, which can sometimes be tough, but the support from Kyra NQT package has really helped me to make the most my NQT year, and to use it as an opportunity to grow and flourish."

Kyra's Annual Needs

and Impact Survey 2017-18



Colleagues holding a range of roles across Kyra schools responded to the recent annual impact and needs survey, which sought to assess the experience of professional partnerships within Kyra, and the impact of professional development and collaborative opportunities on their professional practice.

Respondents' overall experience of their partnership with Kyra during this current academic year (2017-18) has been overwhelmingly positive, with 91% rating their experience as 'very positive' and the remaining 9% as 'positive'. Likewise, 90% felt that being part of Kyra had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and/or leadership within their school.

It is clear that the opportunities to network and share ideas and best practice provided by being involved with Kyra are highly valued, and that respondents feel the many learning and development opportunities – from ITT and NQT to leadership level – are having a positive impact on practice, both within and beyond the classroom. They also value the high quality professional development and resources available to them through

the alliance, as well as the opportunity to collaborate with others who share their vision around maximizing children's potential.

"CPD is always of a high quality, with myself and my staff always coming back with something positive that we can use to improve our practice."

Headteacher, Kyra Primary School

"Without these precious moments for reflection, sharing best practice, evaluating impact to drive school improvement, our purpose would be a challenge, rather than an opportunity."

Headteacher, Kyra Primary School

The wide variety of provision open to all across the Kyra alliance is again universally well-received – with colleagues responding to the survey citing the headteacher forums, Kyra newsletters, leadership development, school-to-school support, and other professional forums and networks amongst those most highly rated. Most importantly, however, the opportunities for children provided through being part of Kyra – such as the Ignite Games and the Kids' Council – are also very highly rated, demonstrating the benefits of school-to-school partnership for the children and young people who are the heart of all we

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do within our schools and local communities. Likewise, almost four fifths (79%) of those responding to the survey were keen for Kyra to develop even more opportunities for children across the alliance and to get more involved in this development.

Kyra offers a wide range of professional development and training opportunities for colleagues at all stages of their school-based careers, including teachers, teaching assistants, middle and senior leaders, school business managers, governors, and system leaders. Again, opinions of the quality and range of these opportunities was overwhelmingly positive, with respondents commenting on the great support available to NQTs and how the professional development available to them helps to improve the confidence of teachers who are new to Kyra schools. Likewise, they appreciate that there are consistently high quality development and training opportunities available to them throughout their careers in school, whether they are teachers looking to improve their classroom practice or progress into leadership, senior leaders seeking system leadership opportunities, school business managers linking with others to improve their professional practice, or school governors having the opportunity to work with others to help drive school improvement through their support and challenge to school leaders.

Collaboration is the cornerstone of the Kyra alliance, and those responding to the survey note the wider opportunities available to them in terms of joint practice development and being able to meet regularly with peers to discuss children's progress at different stages in their journey through school, as well as opportunities to engage with research – citing the Mobilise project in particular. Kyra's core focus on being ambitious for the children in its schools and communities is a particular strength with regard to the professional development and training offered, with colleagues noting the shared collective moral purpose of both those participating in and those delivering the training.

"...the high quality JPD and training offered by Kyra professionals, who have a shared collective moral purpose, means that the 'light' is spread over our many schools."

Headteacher, Kyra Primary School

"Kyra provides a good forum for networking and a professional dialogue."

Chair of Governors, Kyra Primary Federation

Whilst opinions of schools' partnership with Kyra are all positive, respondents noted some areas where they felt there could be further improvement, including: additional support for the small schools in the alliance – possibly through establishing a small schools forum;

further support with recruitment, which is a particular issue for many schools; communication through the regular newsletter and keeping everyone up-to-date with relevant events; opportunities to engage with coaching opportunities for middle leaders in particular; and clarity around the purpose and remit of the many professional forums, so that all are clear about the benefits of joining. However, respondents also noted the onus on schools and their leaders and wider staff to ensure they take more advantage of the many and varied opportunities available to them through the alliance.

In terms of planning ahead for the 2018/19 academic year, it was felt that Kyra could consider: providing additional support around robust curriculum development and design; offering mid-year moderation within schools; further development of the work around the use of teaching assistants; and support for emotional wellbeing for staff as well as pupils.

Whilst Kyra has a particular strength in identifying talent and expertise and harnessing these through engaging a range of staff in the delivery of training and development, colleagues felt that the staff in their schools have even more to offer the wider alliance, such as: strong and effective governance; expertise around SEND and inclusion; expertise around KS1 English and maths; strong curriculum development and design; and experience of supporting emotional wellbeing. Many of these could therefore be harnessed to address some of the areas cited above as requiring further attention from Kyra over the coming year and beyond.

Thinking ahead to the coming academic year, respondents noted a wide range of areas they wished to prioritise or improve within their own schools, in particular middle leadership, governance, and the overall quality of teaching and learning, as well as an ongoing focus on English and maths, and the moderation of children's work.

The weekly bulletin received from Forum Education (now Forum Strategy) – which sets out key strategic, policy and research developments – is also highly valued, with those respondents to the survey who currently receive the bulletin all keen to continue to receive it.

Finally, as well as highly valuing their partnership with Kyra, those responding to the survey are clearly committed to collaboration with a range of other stakeholders – including other schools within and beyond the county, the Diocese and the local authority – for the benefit of both staff development and supporting their ambitions for children through improving outcomes for pupils.



The Ignite Games



The Ignite Games is a non-competitive day of sporting activity open to pupils from all Kyra schools. Each school is invited to bring along a select number of pupils who teachers feel would most benefit from taking part in physical activity in a friendly, non-competitive atmosphere, to boost their confidence and enthusiasm for sport. The focus of the day is purely on participation, trying out new activities, and having fun in a supportive setting.

The Ignite Games was first established in 2014 by Richard Dennis, a PE Teacher and SLE Lead from Monks Abbey Primary. The aim of the games, which is reflected in its name, is to 'ignite' a spark of enthusiasm for sport and physical activity in children across the Kyra alliance. Richard explains, "the Ignite Games is particularly aimed at children who have sporting potential but are lacking in confidence, or require some extra encouragement to boost their interest and get them inspired." Another reason for originally establishing the Ignite Games comes from Richard's own experience of PE at school. He explains, "when I was in year 5 I had a teacher who inspired me to get into sport. Without their encouragement, I may never have found my passion, and that would have been a real shame. I wanted to start the Ignite Games to provide children with the same opportunity I had to discover a love for sport."

The Ignite Games aims to provide an enjoyable day of sporting activities, in the hope that this will not only motivate the

children to become more interested in sport, but also encourage them to go on to join an extra-curricular sports club. "Developing an interest in sport has many positive benefits for children" says Richard, "exercise is vital for good health, and engaging in sport also gives children the opportunity to discover their talents and develop new skills, boosting their confidence as a result. Getting involved in sport is also a great way for children to socialise, work as part of a team, and have fun."

"Over 1000 pupils have now attended the Ignite Games since its initial formation, and if we have managed to encourage any of those children to get more involved in sport in any way, then the games are fulfilling their purpose. One child in particular stands out for me, who was very much lacking in confidence when it came to sport before attending the Ignite Games. After the event his attitude completely changed; he found the confidence to join sports clubs and became very passionate about sport. From then on, he played and talked about sport all the time. The Ignite Games proved to be the catalyst that enabled his interest and talent for sport to develop and flourish."

"Exercise is vital for good health, and engaging in sport also gives children the opportunity to discover their talents and develop new skills, boosting their confidence as a result."

The Ignite Games has now also been established in Kyra East by Andy Clarke, head of Spilsby Primary Academy, and was held for the second time in Kyra East this year. Andy explains, "we took the lead from Kyra Central, and wanted to replicate their success for the pupils of East Lincolnshire. We share the same purpose, which is to

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ignite a spark of passion for sport, and engage children in sporting activity who, without that encouragement, may not otherwise have the confidence or motivation to get involved. It has had an amazing impact so far, and the children who attend absolutely love the event; the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive! They get to make new friends, learn lots of new skills, and often come away much more passionate about sport, and keen to get involved in a club."

While the Ignite Games now takes place in both Kyra Central and Kyra East, they each take their own individual approach to the day, while sharing the same ultimate aims and outcomes. Here we will take a look at this year's games in both locations.

The Ignite Games 2018

Kyra Central

This year saw the games split into a KS1 games and a KS2 games, giving pupils of all ages the opportunity to join in the fun.

The KS2 Kyra Central Ignite Games took place on 28th June at Pembroke Primary Academy, with 61 pupils attending on the day. Coaching companies from across Lincolnshire came along to lead the sessions, including Multi Sport Pro, Hurricane Sport, Synergy Sport, and Bassline Tennis, creating a multitude of exciting sporting activities and opportunities for the pupils involved. Year 7 Sports Leaders from Pembroke Academy also got involved in running and supporting activities for their younger peers. The day consisted of a circuit of activities which everybody got to try and enjoy, including new age curling, mini sticks hockey, fencing, tennis and tag rugby.

The chance to try out lots of different sports helped the pupils attending to reflect on the kind of physical activities that they most enjoy taking part in. They were also able to get information from the coaches about different sports clubs on offer locally, and even information about how to get coaches to come into their school to lead sessions. Teachers were also able to watch the professional coaching in action, to pick up some tips to take back to their own schools!

"When the adults around them really make the effort and volunteer their time and energy to support children to get involved in sport, it gives children the boost they need to take part."

The KS1 event was held at Lincoln Carlton Academy on 21st June and 82 children took part. The groups experienced scatterball, cricket and mixed team games provided by Carlton Academy teachers and Kyra staff. Offering a separate event for our younger pupils allowed the



activities to be accessible and fun for even the youngest participants.

The games were all mixed gender, mixed ability, and non-competitive, so that everybody could get involved and enjoy themselves. Despite the hot weather on both days, the children really threw themselves into the activities. The coaches created fun and engaging sessions, and the children gave 100% back in return with high levels of enthusiasm and engagement.

Vision for Education kindly sponsored both events for the fifth year running, providing all refreshments, as well as medals for all the participants. Richard reflects, "awarding medals to all the children is key to promoting participation, rather than competition, and that is very important for young people who may need their confidence building in regards to physical activity and the enjoyment of sport. We want all children, from all backgrounds, to get involved in sports, and I think the non-competitive nature of the Ignite Games is vital in achieving this. The efforts of all children are recognised, to encourage more pupils to get involved in sport. We also hope that the Ignite Games, as a free and highly inclusive event, helps to address the disparity that can often be found in sport. We want all our children to have an equal opportunity to get involved in sport, especially those pupils who may not have the chance to get involved in clubs outside of school due to financial restrictions. We aim to achieve this by providing as many sporting opportunities as we can through school."

Kyra East

The Kyra East Ignite Games took place on 14th June at Spilsby Primary Academy with pupils from seven different schools attending for an exciting day of sporting activities. The event was led by Andy and Louisa Roberts, the PE lead at Spilsby, who organised the events taking place on the day. Pupils participating in the games were encouraged to help prepare for the day by designing a logo and slogan the games; the final slogan agreed upon was "One Team, living the dream!" reflecting the inclusive nature of the games, as well as the fun experienced by all on the day itself.



The structure of the day was based around a carousel of sporting activities, and each year group took turns in having a go at each one. The activities were led by sports teachers from the different schools attending, a local tennis coach, and JB Sports Coaching, with support from a number of sixth form volunteers from King Edward VI Academy in Spilsby. Refreshments for the day were kindly provided by Sainsbury's!

"I think the games very much accomplished our aim of igniting that spark of enthusiasm and passion for physical activity"

There were a wide variety of sporting activities put in place for pupils to try, including Tri-golf, tennis, goal-ball, basketball, football, target-time, and a rather challenging obstacle course! The pupils all had great fun making new friends, trying new things, and taking part in the day. At the close of the games, every pupil received a certificate for taking part, and a certificate was also awarded to one child in particular for demonstrating excellent teamwork.

Andy reflects on the success of the day; "the children all seemed to thoroughly enjoy the opportunity that the Ignite Games provided, to meet new friends and learn new skills, and they certainly came away 'buzzing' after the day's events. I think the games very much accomplished our aim of igniting that spark of enthusiasm and passion for physical activity for the pupils who attended, and I am sure we will see the results of that in increased engagement in sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs in the year ahead. The Ignite Games also affords a fantastic opportunity to promote important values to the pupils attending, such

as teamwork, perseverance, confidence, respect, and resilience, and the games this year certainly provided a brilliant opportunity for pupils to develop these key life skills."

How to get involved

Both Richard and Andy would like to encourage more schools to get involved in the Ignite Games, so that even more pupils across Lincolnshire can benefit from the opportunities that the day offers. "When children watch events like the Olympics or the World Cup, it can certainly inspire them to take part in sport, but I don't think that it is anywhere near enough on its own" Richard says. "I think what really inspires them to get actively involved is the encouragement and opportunities provided by events such as the Ignite Games. When the adults around them really make the effort and volunteer their time and energy to support children to get involved in sport, it gives children the boost they need to take part. Events such as the Ignite Games really have the potential to inspire the next generation to get involved in sport and engage in physical activity, hopefully initiating a life-long passion which will contribute to long-term health and wellbeing for the rest of their lives."

For more information on taking part in the Ignite Games, email Richard (Kyra Central) at Richard.Dennis@monksabbey.lincs.sch.uk, or Andy (Kyra East) at Andrew.Clarke@spilsby.lincs.sch.uk



Alyson Bristow

A Reflection on Headship



Alyson Bristow has been the Head Teacher of Newton-on-Trent C of E Primary School since March 2010. Prior to this, she was Assistant Head at Priory Witham Academy and Deputy Head at Usher Junior School. Since Alyson is retiring at the end of the Summer Term 2018, we have taken the opportunity to talk to her about her life as the Head Teacher of Newton-on-Trent Primary, the changes and improvements she has made to the school in this time, and what she hopes her legacy will be.

Tell us about your journey towards headship at Newton-on-Trent?

I taught for 15 years at middle schools in Suffolk and Worcestershire, and was Deputy Head at a school in Worcestershire before moving to Lincolnshire. When I came to Lincolnshire I became Deputy Head at Usher Junior School, and then went on to become Assistant Head at Priory Witham. It was always my intention to become a head teacher eventually, and I completed my NPQH in preparation. I also took part in the 'Heading for Headship' programme for aspiring head teachers (the equivalent of which would be 'Lead Lincs' today). My initial move to headship was quite sudden and unexpected, however, I was contacted and asked if I could take over as Acting Head of Newton-on-Trent quite out of the blue, as the previous head had had to leave the post very suddenly. It was an interesting start to my headship journey as I was straight in at the deep end, but it helped me to learn some important lessons about headship very quickly!

What were the key priorities at the beginning of your headship?

The situation I had inherited was far from straight-forward and there were a lot of issues that needed to be handled straight away. Parents and teachers alike were shocked and confused by the sudden change in leadership, and it was my job to make it clear that I was there to help with the situation as best I could, and to support everyone as much as possible. My first job was to listen to the concerns of parents and staff, and demonstrate to them that I was truly taking on board their worries. I made as much time available as necessary to talk to everybody who wanted to see me, and allowed them to be heard. I then communicated how I was going about addressing the issues raised. I think it's because of this that just about all of the parents

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and staff stuck with the school even though it was a turbulent time; ultimately, they showed faith in me that I could set things right, and that meant a lot.

I also inherited some fairly serious financial difficulties and upheaval, but I was very fortunate that an excellent School Business Manager was appointed shortly after me. She was very experienced and knowledgeable and did a fantastic job of getting the finances back on track. At this point, however, pupil numbers were low, so I was also faced with the challenge of increasing pupil numbers, so that the school's continuation was viable. One of the key ways the governors and I addressed this was by engaging with local pre-school providers, with a view to setting up our own pre-school provision at the school. We worked with Sunflowers Nursery School in Saxilby who set up an offshoot of Sunflowers on our site, which was called Sunbeams. Most of the children who attended Sunbeams went on to start in Reception at our school, and this steadily increased our numbers. Sunbeams also began offering wrap-around provision, which included a breakfast club and after school club, and this also helped to attract more families to the school.

How did you forge links between the school and the local community?

When I started as head, the level of interaction between the school and the local community was not particularly good, especially considering the size of the village (which has a population of under 500 people). I could see early on that relationships needed to be forged more strongly, and that bridges needed to be built. The village church, St Peters, is located immediately next door to the school, and so that was where I first focussed my attention. The church became the first community group which became actively involved with the school. I helped the church to receive a grant to aid the support it could give to the local community, including our school. The church was then able to install a table top oven, which meant we could use it for (school lunchtime and) cookery club. The grant also helped the church to put on the village toddler group, monthly socials, and regular soup and roll lunches for the local community.

"I'm very proud to say that thanks to the help of local people, Newton-on-Trent Primary is now a central and integral part of the village community, and that benefits everyone."

The space provided to us by the church means we are extremely lucky to have a very large and beautiful school hall, and the pupils greatly benefit from this. I personally think it is brilliant that the village church can be used by the children like this every day, rather than just standing empty, and I think that the majority of the community would agree! Our school and the church now work very closely together for the local community. An example of this is that we now have a joint school and church summer fete, instead of holding two separate events. The Post Office is another key part of the village, and they have been actively involved in supporting the school with fundraising events. We also have an after-school gardening club at the school each week, which parents help to run. All in all, I'm very proud to say that thanks to the help of local people, Newton-on-Trent Primary is now a central and integral part of the village community, and that benefits everyone.

How have you developed the curriculum since becoming head at Newton-on-Trent?

We've tried to develop our curriculum over recent years to be as broad and engaging as possible, and to offer our pupils plenty of opportunities to learn in a creative, hands-on way so that they can learn while having fun at the same time. For example, we put on a 'Science Day' every year where each classroom hosts 3-4 activities to capture pupils' interest and get them excited about science. Activities includes things like making ice-cream and creating slime! We also put on a school trip to a science museum.

Another way that we engage pupils in their learning is by planning and creating mysterious 'happenings' to introduce certain topics. This helps the children to become totally immersed in the learning, as they investigate our constructed scenarios and try to find out more. A recent example of this was when pupils investigated the mysterious landing of an alien in the playground. We left 'debris' from the landing, including pieces of machinery and 'alien slime', and pupils had to research its potential origin and interview members of the local community, before writing accounts of the event. We also used the alien landing to help to spark our pupils' interest in space for a science project.

"We've tried to develop our curriculum over recent years to be as broad and engaging as possible"

A second of example was when we placed a replica of the 'Tardis' from Dr Who in the playground. Again, the local community got involved and Police Community Support Officers cordoned off the Tardis with police tape, and provided evidence bags to collect 'evidence' that we had planted on our sports field. This led to all sorts of related activities in different areas of the curriculum which the pupils were then extremely engaged with, including writing newspaper

articles, creating 'missing' posters, and writing letters to Doctor Who to persuade him not to resign from his post!

What enrichment opportunities have you put in place for pupils at the school?

When I first became head at Newton-on-Trent there were no residential trips for pupils. Now KS2 pupils take part in an annual PGL residential, and KS1 and Reception camp overnight in the school grounds at an event in the summer term called 'Camp Newton', which includes games, songs, and toasting marshmallows!

We also recently used some of our Sports Premium funding to host a 'Basketball Wow' day, where a world-famous basketball player, Paul Sturgess, came to visit the school. Paul stands at an amazing 7ft 8 inches and is currently the tallest man in Britain! The visit was a really special and memorable day for all of our pupils, who all absolutely loved it! Paul shared some very empowering messages with the children, about how important it is to be proud of who you are and the things that make you unique. He also helped to promote the importance of healthy living and participating in sport, as well as encouraging the children to always try their best to fulfil their potential in every area of life.

More children than ever at Newton-on-Trent are also receiving instrumental lessons. When I first started as Head, only 3 pupils were having instrumental lessons, now roughly a quarter of pupils in the school are learning an instrument through the company 'Jam Music', who we hire in order to offer pupils this opportunity within school. As well as this, the whole of KS2 are involved in 'Young Voices' each year. They learn 10-12 songs in the autumn term; the same songs which thousands of other pupils are learning in other schools across the county. This culminates in an annual concert at Sheffield arena, where 5,000 children come together to sing the songs they have learned to a packed-out audience of family, friends, and teachers. It's a fantastic experience for the children and one which we then build upon within our partnership of schools, the Centurion Partnership, through an annual arts event.

"Being involved in the Centurion partnership has been very beneficial for our pupils, especially since Newton-on-Trent is a small school"

The Centurion Partnership is a collaboration of seven small rural schools in Lincolnshire. Each of the schools gets involved in Young Voices, and following the event the pupils within our partnership get the chance to sing together again at our partnership arts event. The event also gives individuals and groups of children the opportunity to perform an instrument, sing, dance, or otherwise share their talents! The partnership also facilitates a 'Band on Tour' day, where several pupils from different schools in the partnership who play musical instruments come together as a band, and perform in each of the seven schools. As a school we also take part in the Centurion Partnership sports day, where a carousel of sporting activities are provided for pupils, including games, races, and fun fitness activities such as Zumba.

Being involved in the Centurion Partnership has been very beneficial for our pupils, especially since Newton-on-Trent is a small school. Pupils have the opportunity to make friends beyond their own school, and to take part in larger scale activities which would not otherwise be possible.



Above: Pupils with the Doctor Who Tardis and basketball player Paul Sturgess with Alyson and pupils too.



How has being part of the Centurion Partnership helped you as a head teacher over the years?

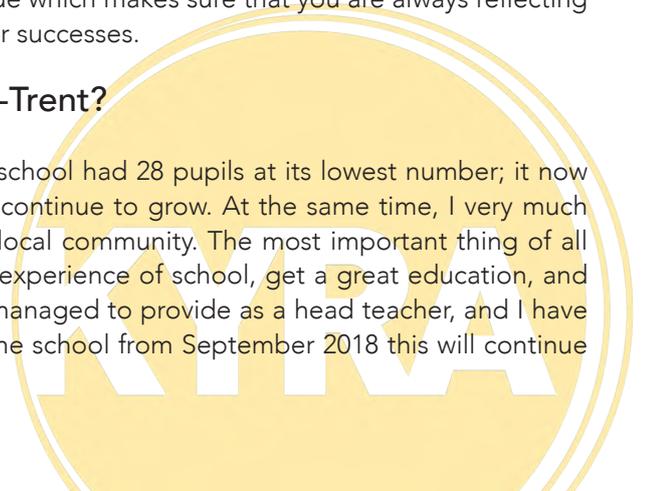
I have always really valued that the school is a part of the Centurion Partnership, and I have tried to make sure that we are as actively involved as possible. Not only does it provide fantastic enrichment opportunities for our pupils, but it has enabled us to be very 'outward facing' as a school. One of the best things about being in the Centurion Partnership has been the opportunity to be involved in peer review. The schools within the partnership help each other to improve by peer reviewing one another. Often the peer reviews are based around certain focus points discussed beforehand, and include observations of lessons, book scrutiny, and talking to children and staff. Following the review, feedback is given through a report in which strengths are identified and improvement points are raised.

"It's important to continually have that professional dialogue which makes sure that you are always reflecting on and improving your practice as a school, as well as celebrating your successes."

This then leads to a tailored improvement workshop, led by 'Improvement Champions' who have been trained for the role through Kyra. During these workshops, there is bespoke training which helps each school to improve in the areas identified in the peer review. The school that has been reviewed will then continue to have further CPD and regular meetings to track progress in these areas. It could come across as an intimidating process, but it isn't at all, because it is all done very supportively, to help each school within the partnership become the best that it can possibly be. I think it's very important that we are happy to open our doors to one another, and that we welcome the input and feedback of others. It's also important to continually have that professional dialogue which makes sure that you are always reflecting on and improving your practice as a school, as well as celebrating your successes.

What do you hope your legacy will be at Newton-on-Trent?

Since I started as the head teacher of Newton-on-Trent Primary, the school had 28 pupils at its lowest number; it now currently has 53 pupils, and I would definitely like to see the school continue to grow. At the same time, I very much hope that it will retain its family feel and remain at the heart of the local community. The most important thing of all is that the children who attend Newton-on-Trent Primary enjoy their experience of school, get a great education, and discover a love of learning. I hope that this is something that I have managed to provide as a head teacher, and I have every confidence that with Aimée Riley as the new head teacher of the school from September 2018 this will continue to be the case for years to come.





Key research and policy updates from the Summer Term

Pupil premium strategies

The National Governance Association (NGA) published (4 July) its new research report – ‘Spotlight on Disadvantage’ – which explores the governing board’s role in spending, monitoring and evaluating the pupil premium. To inform its research, NGA conducted a survey of 875 governors and trustees as well a document analysis of 36 pupil premium statements. The key findings from the report are summarised below (source: NGA):

- While the majority of schools are making evidence-driven decisions when spending their pupil premium, some are still too inward-looking.
- Schools should adopt a more holistic outlook when deciding how to spend the pupil premium.
The survey data and analysis of pupil premium strategies show that many schools focus largely on teaching and learning initiatives. This is despite many of the key barriers to attainment identified by schools in the pupil premium strategies requiring more pastoral attention.
- There was clear variation in the quality of pupil premium strategies published on schools’ websites. Some schools were better at accounting for how the money would be spent, rationalising spending decisions and measuring success.
- Pupil premium usage is not the only determinant of disadvantaged pupil progress and attainment. The survey data revealed a clear correlation between outcomes for all pupils and outcomes for pupil premium pupils. Geography was also a factor in influencing outcomes for pupil premium pupils.
- Pupil premium was viewed positively by governing boards who responded to the survey, but funding pressures are presenting a challenge to its effectiveness. Many schools fund initiatives through the pupil premium which should generally come out of the school budget. To mitigate against this, pupil premium funding needs to be protected in real-terms and accompanied by a more sustainable financial settlement for schools.

Further details can be found: <https://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/July-2018-Sept-2018/Characteristics-of-the-most-effective-pupil-premiu.aspx>

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Preparing for literacy

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) published (15 June) its latest guidance report – 'Preparing for literacy' – which is part of a series of reports that the EEF is producing on the theme of literacy. This latest report focuses on the teaching of communication, language and literacy to children between the ages of 3 and 5. The report focuses on pedagogy and approaches that are supported by good evidence; it does not cover all of the potential components of successful literacy provision. The report makes several core recommendations, along with some specific suggestions regarding how to achieve the recommendations, which are summarised below (source: EEF):

- Develop children's early reading using a balanced approach:
 - Promising approaches to develop early reading include storytelling, activities to develop letter and sound knowledge, and singing and rhyming activities to develop phonological awareness.
- Develop children's capability and motivation to write:
 - Provide a wide range of opportunities to communicate through writing and develop children's motivation to write.
 - Support children to develop the foundations of a fast, accurate, and efficient handwriting style.
- Support parents to understand how to help their children learn:
 - Promising strategies include: encouraging parents to read to children before they can read, then to begin reading with children as soon as they can; and running workshops showing parents how to read and talk about books with their children effectively.
- Use high quality assessment to ensure all children make good progress:
 - Ensure clarity of purpose about the different assessments used in your setting.
 - Collect a small amount of high quality information to ensure that: children who are struggling receive the right type of support; and time is used efficiently by avoiding rehearsing skills or content that children already know well.
- Use high quality targeted support to help struggling children:
 - Small-group support is more likely to be effective when: children with the greatest needs are supported by the most capable adults; adults have been trained to deliver the activity being used; and the approach is evidence-based and has been evaluated elsewhere.



Further information can be found: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/preparing-for-literacy/>

Children and young people's mental health

The House of Commons (HoC) Education and Health and Social Care Committees published (9 May) their joint report on the government's recent green paper on transforming children and young people's mental health. The report makes the following recommendations with regard to education and schools (source: HoC Education Committee):

- The government should gather independent evidence concerning the impact of exam pressure on young people's mental health, and what steps might be considered to build resilience to cope with it.
- The government should commission independent research on whether the narrowing of the curriculum from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4 is also having an impact on mental health.
- The Department for Education's review into exclusions should focus on the increase in pupils being excluded with mental health needs and how the mental health needs of excluded pupils are being met.
- PSHE should be compulsory in all maintained and academy schools. All schools should include education on social media as part of PSHE.
- The current level of pastoral care and mental health support provided by schools and colleges should be documented and kept under review.

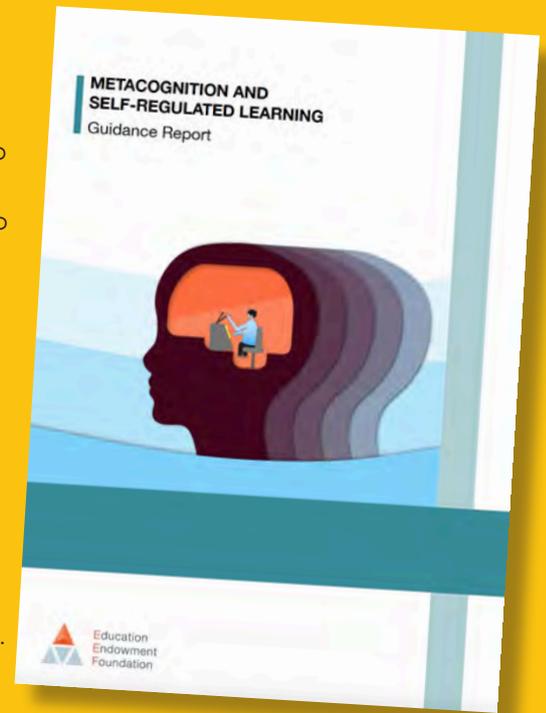
- The government should set out and publish plans to ensure that the existing workforce is not overburdened by the demands of the Green Paper, and that the risks are understood. It should set out how it plans to make the Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health an attractive role and what it will do in the event of low take-up. The government should set out an assessment of the feasibility of providing an additional responsibility payment for teachers who take on the Designated Senior Lead role.

Further details can be found: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-and-social-care-committee/news/green-paper-on-mental-health-report-published-17-19/>

Metacognition and self-regulation

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) published (27 April) its latest guidance report on metacognition and self-regulation, which is designed to support teachers in changing their classroom practice to improve their pupils' ability to plan, monitor and evaluate their own academic progress so they become better at learning and studying. Evidence suggests that these skills can be worth the equivalent of an additional seven months of progress when used well. The guidance is applicable to both primary and secondary schools, with some of the recommendations also being relevant to the early years. The report puts forward a number of recommendations (source: EEF):

2. Explicitly teach pupils metacognitive strategies, including how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning knowledge:
 - a. A series of steps – beginning with activating prior knowledge and leading to independent practice before ending in structured reflection – can be applied to different subjects, ages and contents.
3. Model your own thinking to help pupils develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills:
 - a. Modelling by the teacher is a cornerstone of effective teaching; revealing the thought processes of an expert learner helps to develop pupils' metacognitive skills.
4. Set an appropriate level of challenge to develop pupils' self-regulation and metacognition:
 - a. Challenge is crucial to allow pupils to develop and progress their knowledge of tasks, strategies, and of themselves as learners. However, challenge needs to be at an appropriate level.
5. Promote and develop metacognitive talk in the classroom:
 - a. Pupil-to-pupil and pupil-teacher talk can help to build knowledge and understanding of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.
 - b. However, dialogue needs to be purposeful, with teachers guiding and supporting the conversation to ensure it is challenging and builds on prior subject knowledge.
6. Explicitly teach pupils how to organise and effectively manage their learning independently:
 - a. Carefully designed guided practice, with support gradually withdrawn as the pupil becomes proficient, can allow pupils to develop skills and strategies before applying them in independent practice.
 - b. Pupils will need timely, effective feedback and strategies to be able to judge accurately how effectively they are learning.



Further information can be found: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/new-guidance-on-how-to-develop-pupils-metacognitive-skills>

Headteacher appraisal

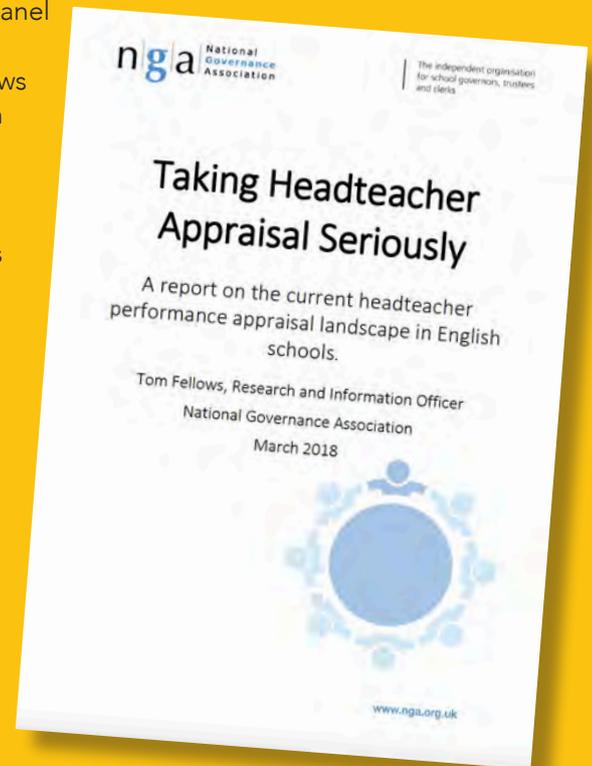
The National Governance Association (NGA) published (22 March) its latest research report – 'Taking Headteacher Appraisal Seriously' – which draws upon a survey of 1,164 chairs of governors and trustees of state-schools in England and interviews with 10 individuals (headteachers, chairs of governors and external advisors) involved in the appraisal

process. The main findings from the report are summarised below (source: NGA):

- 87% of academies surveyed still appointed an external advisor, with many maintained schools and academies who took part in the study using a school improvement partner (SIP) as the external advisor, or using an external advisor recommended by the local authority.
- In schools where management structures had changed significantly (i.e. in multi-academy trusts), the interview data uncovered some tension and confusion as to whether those governing, or other executive leaders above the headteacher, should lead the headteacher appraisal process.
- Individuals involved in headteacher appraisal offered a lot of skills and expertise, often from their professional lives. However, the survey findings revealed that, amongst those that participated, panel members were less likely to have received training on headteacher appraisal if they had sat on the panel for less than 6 years.
- In terms of setting performance objectives, the survey and interviews revealed that those governing were sometimes unclear as to which sources of data were appropriate for judging the headteachers' performance.

NGA gave recommendations to help governing boards consider ways to improve their practice based on each of the challenges identified:

1. All new panel members should receive some form of training, proportionate to each panel members' experiences.
2. Where it is required (or those governing have chosen) to have an external advisor, the governing board must take ownership of the decision.
3. The governing board and headteacher should agree when the objectives for the year are set, what success will look like and what evidence will be used to assess this.
4. Governing boards need to ensure that those making pay recommendations have a clear understanding of the pay policy and how it relates to the appraisal policy.



Further information can be found: <https://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Research/Taking-Headteacher-Appraisal-Seriously-A-report-on.aspx>



Watch the following videos for more information on the Kyra East Kids Council and Kyra East Ignite Games on the Kyra YouTube Channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCygsbkC8zRkOfkobipVD08w>





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