

# Developing leaders of teaching and learning through lead practitioners

Chobham Academy in Newham, London, opened in 2013 with the prospect of massive growth over the next few years. From the start, its leaders wanted to develop exceptional outstanding teachers with the potential to be leaders, leaders of teaching and learning. This would have a significant impact on the both successful planning and in the ability to train new staff as they joined. The aspiration was, and is, for these outstanding teachers to have a positive impact on teaching and learning, in both their own academy and others across the Harris federation.

Over its first couple of years Chobham has selected cohorts of staff to be part of the SSAT Lead Practitioner programme, working on projects aligned with identified priorities in the academy improvement plan. This alignment ensured that the projects had a high profile and were given the time and attention that they required. The senior leadership team provided support and guidance through a senior leader practitioner, Ben Leonard.

The aspiring lead practitioners were given three roles within the academy:

- to deliver CPD opportunities on an academy and federation level
- to act as coaches for underperforming teachers
- to undertake research in an area of academy improvement.

Their accountability for these roles would enable them to reach the standards required to be successful in the LP accreditation programme.

Once the aspiring LPs were selected, they began by completing their self-assessment and then worked with the senior lead practitioner to identify opportunities to fill their skills and experience gaps, in ways that benefited both them and the academy. They were offered training and support in their new roles as coaches, and met regularly to discuss their own and their coachees' progress.

In 2015/16 the academy saw the introduction of an innovative mastery curriculum. The aspiring lead practitioners played a vital role in securing the consistency of the approach through the academy, overcoming the initial challenges in ensuring that this vital pedagogy was embraced by all and in a way that worked for every subject. They worked through steering groups, delivered CPD and shared good practice, as well as coaching teachers.

What of the future of LPs at Chobham Academy? The intention is to continue to select and accredit future LPs throughout the academy. Many of the existing 12 qualified LPs have already been promoted within the academy structure and have academy-wide responsibilities that have a positive impact on all staff and students. The influence of the LP continues to grow.

With this wealth of experience Chobham is now planning to become a [Lead Practitioner Learning Centre](#), which will give it the scope to train and support aspiring lead practitioners from across the area and federation.

*'It was an opportunity to empower teachers to become leaders and create a truly transformational approach to leadership and development. For us, these new lead practitioners have been an essential component of academy improvement'. Ben Leonard, senior lead practitioner*

To find out more about SSAT's Lead Practitioner Accreditation and how it could support your school or academy, including cross federation/chain approaches, see: [www.ssatuk.co.uk/lp](http://www.ssatuk.co.uk/lp)