



SSAT Journal 07

Autumn 2016

ssat the schools, students
and teachers network

Contents

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Welcome
<i>Sue Williamson, SSAT</i> | 37 | Computing across the curriculum: finding out how it can work
<i>Steve Richards, Eastlea Community School</i> |
| 2 | Introduction
<i>Tom Middlehurst, SSAT</i> | 39 | Mindful music: attention, awareness and teamwork skills for greater wellbeing
<i>Martha Wright, Mindful Music</i> |
| 3 | Working-class girls benefit greatly from business mentors
<i>Alan Dane, Harris Academy Bermondsey</i> | 42 | Year 6/7 transition: combining the best of primary and secondary
<i>Peter Chambers, SSAT</i> |
| 5 | Using ITT to buck the trend on recruitment and retention
<i>Angus Smith, Cockburn School</i> | 46 | SSAT Annual Lecture 2016 |
| 8 | Rising above a carping inspection report
<i>Peter Chambers, SSAT</i> | | |
| 16 | Finding time to develop expertise – through everyday practice
<i>Matt Webber, Richard Challoner School</i> | | |
| 19 | Building capacity for school improvement in multi-academy trusts – from inside out
<i>Professor David Hopkins, University of Bolton</i> | | |
| 30 | How a 'brilliant residential' can create whole-school change
<i>Kim Somerville, Brilliant</i> | | |
| 34 | Data at the heart of the classroom enables you to control your direction of travel
<i>Peter Atherton,
Minsthorpe Community College</i> | | |



Welcome

*Sue Williamson,
Chief Executive, SSAT*



It gives me great pleasure to introduce this autumn term's SSAT Journal. How much has changed since the last edition of the journal: Brexit, a new prime minister, new education secretary, and the American election. This has been quite a year, not only for schools, but globally.

During the last term, I have enjoyed my usual visits to many of your schools, while also writing two new pamphlets for SSAT and preparing for the National Conference.

Over the summer, I wrote *SSAT on Leading*, a copy of which has been sent to you. In it, I debate with some outstanding school and system leaders the changing nature of school leadership – from headteacher to chief executive; leadership development and succession planning; lessons from business and other sectors; implications for governance; and the role of the system leader.

The importance of good leadership has been so evident in the schools I have visited since September. For example, at Hope Academy in the north west, experienced headteacher Patrick Ferguson took over a new school formed by the merger of two existing schools. The academy had had a number of heads since the merger, and there was a culture of mistrust between the leadership team and the staff, as well as disillusionment from staff and students.

The school I visited in November was unrecognisable. Its small leadership team was working closely with staff, encouraging student leadership and demonstrating the confidence that comes from success. This was down to Patrick's leadership but also a shared vision and effort from all leaders, staff and students. Patrick, as a leader, is incredibly modest – he enjoys sharing the credit

with his deserving staff. Paradoxically, that could well be a factor in his having been nominated for the Pearson Teaching Awards headteacher of the year.

During this term, some controversial research from the Centre of High Performance was published. SSAT has partnered with the CHP to deliver our new High Performance Leadership programme. Ben Laker and Alex Hill's research suggest that heads often fall back on their subject-specific behaviours; they categorise five types of head: surgeons, accountants, soldiers, philosophers and architects. Their research suggests that architects (typically history or economic teachers) have the most sustainable improvements, but are the lowest paid and least celebrated of all types.

While I think Laker and Hill's taxonomy is useful, leadership is always more complex and nuanced than a simple grouping allows. However, I do think it reminds us to reflect on our own leadership style, and also of the danger of not looking beyond our educational experience for leadership development. We must look at what we can learn from other sectors.

The articles that follow offer much to learn from. As ever, none of the ideas presented here are silver bullets, magic solutions or the only way to do something. At SSAT, we aim to provide fresh ideas for ambitious schools, and we present these ideas for you to adopt, adapt, reject but most of all, consider.

I hope you and all your staff and students have a lovely build-up to Christmas and a restful break over the holidays.

Sue Williamson



Working-class girls benefit greatly from business mentors

*Alan Dane,
Harris Academy Bermondsey*

‘It takes a village to raise a child.’ So goes the proverb and the title of a bestselling book by Hilary Rodham Clinton, a woman who inspires many girls here at Harris Academy Bermondsey (HAB), a single sex comprehensive school in south central London.

This philosophy is central to HAB’s success. Our educational village includes permanent subject specialist teachers in all subjects, highly skilled support staff, a number of experts from external agencies, a wide variety of community partners and parents and carers we believe are wonderful. All of them contribute to the girls’ achievement and wellbeing.

Each girl would get the opportunity to work closely with an accomplished professional for at least a year

HAB’s geographical ‘village’ incorporates the City of London, Canary Wharf and the thriving cultural quarter that runs along the Thames from Bermondsey to the South Bank. Fifteen years ago, one of our teachers, Roger Hiskey, persuaded my predecessor that the companies and institutions in this village should play their part in helping to raise HAB girls. Roger’s vision was that each girl would get the opportunity to work closely with an accomplished professional for at least a year, cultivating the girls’ social capital and opening



doors which might otherwise remain closed to a young working-class woman from Bermondsey, Old Kent Road or Peckham.

From a handful of volunteers in 2001, many of whom still take part, to 300 today, HAB’s Mentors from Business programme is one of the biggest (and best, we believe) of its kind. The 300 mentees range from year 9 upwards, with a spinoff programme of STEM mentoring by medics and scientists starting in year 7, as well as individual tutoring by maths graduates for 50 girls.

No NEETS with business mentoring

Accredited by the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, the scheme has been a vital factor in our two successive ‘outstanding’ Ofsted reports, most recently in spring last year, when it stated: “Students particularly value the additional provision such as the academy’s business mentoring programme. This programme enables students to attend weekly



meetings with representatives of national and local businesses. These and other meetings help them to be fully prepared for ... employment.” Ofsted, 2015 .

The programme has also been the focus of two visits by David Cameron, fact-finding when he was leader of the opposition and in 2016 as prime minister, to launch a national fund for more young people to benefit from what he described as the “inspirational” mentoring developed by HAB. Following his second visit, he told the House of Commons that every school should adopt such a scheme.

Such acclaim is not just the result of the scale of the programme or the enthusiasm of all involved; it is grounded in firm evidence that high quality mentoring of this kind improves outcomes for the HAB girls who participate.

In every year since it began, all or almost all girls with mentees have met or exceeded their attainment and progress targets. And every mentee in the programme’s history has secured a place in education, employment or training before leaving us.

How it works

Mentors meet their mentees on a one-to-one basis before and after the normal school day. Two objectives, clearly understood by mentors and girls, enhance the day-to-day work of the school:

1. To support the mentee in GCSE or A-level studies. This includes identifying areas in which she is doing well and understanding how she has been successful, alongside identifying areas of difficulty and – in partnership – finding strategies to overcome such difficulties. As part of this, mentors provide advice on time management and planning, preparing and revising for examinations.
2. To provide guidance to the mentee on progression beyond GCSE or A-Level. This includes help with all aspects of researching and applying for sixth form, university and employment opportunities.

Underlying these objectives is HAB’s drive to open doors and build networks for young women whose families cannot do so for them. The mentors themselves come from a wide variety of social backgrounds. In some cases, their own journey helps their mentee conceive what is possible for

her and how to get there. In other cases, it is the act of developing a professional partnership with someone from a very different walk of life that most benefits the mentee.

There are a host of reasons for the programme’s success. Most notable for anyone seeking to establish or improve such provision would be:

» *Growth*

Whenever we work with a company for the first time, it starts with a handful of volunteers. This has allowed each partnership to be monitored closely, with the staff who run the programme spending time getting to know each new mentor and mentee in order to make the best matches.

» *Preparation*

Mentors, girls and parents understand the aims of the programme. Mentor and mentee are both expected to prepare for each meeting, agreeing the focus for their next session each time they meet. Mentors receive extensive training by Southwark Education Business Alliance or Volunteers Matters. These organisations also deal with DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance.

» *Marketing*

Everyone involved with HAB knows about business mentoring and its central role in our girls’ success. We make sure that we talk about it to the girls and their families at every opportunity. Having a mentor is seen by the girls as a sign of being ‘smart’, whatever your grades and targets.

» *Evaluation*

The girls’ progress with a mentor from business is monitored and evaluated. This is fed back to the companies that supply mentors, so they too can see the impact they are making. Mentee and mentor feedback is used to modify and strengthen the programme.

Fundamentally, though, the success of business mentoring at HAB lies in the satisfaction that our 300 volunteers gain from playing a significant role in transforming the life chances of our young women. And, thereby, shaping a more equal society.

*Harris Academy Bermondsey would welcome SSAT members who would like to get in contact or visit.
Contact: principal@harrisbermondsey.org.uk*



Using ITT to buck the trend on recruitment and retention

*Angus Smith,
Cockburn School*

In a climate of declining numbers of teachers joining the profession and where schools are sometimes forced to place non-specialists and unqualified staff before large classes of pupils, an inner city school in Leeds is bucking the trend and enjoying the rewards.

Cockburn School is a larger than average 11-16 inner city secondary converter academy, a member of the Cockburn multi-academy trust. It is described by the DfE as a school that works in 'challenging circumstances'. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is significantly higher than the national average.

Since 2008, the school has made significant improvements under a vision called 'transformation to excellence'. This programme was recognised by Ofsted in 2014, who noted that it had led to "wide-ranging improvements" and as a consequence "the school is now heavily oversubscribed, reflecting the high regard in which it is held by many parents." The school is the second most oversubscribed in Leeds.

Pupils make excellent progress: in 2014 the school's value added score of 1043 placed them in the top 4% of schools for progress. The school's unvalidated 2016 Progress 8 score of 0.39 is above average and demonstrates continuous improvement in a complex new educational landscape.

Cockburn was classified by Ofsted as 'good with outstanding features' in September 2014, in one of the 40 two-day unannounced inspections. The report cited the leadership and management at the school as having "focused relentlessly on improving teaching" and that "the school's work to develop the professional skills of teachers is of high quality."

Cockburn has excellent retention of staff and when the need to recruit arises it receives large numbers of high-quality applications. So how does this school buck the recruitment trend?

Staff development

A school-led seminar programme develops staff at all



levels. Well-developed systems check on the quality of teaching; as Ofsted noted, "teachers are observed regularly and receive insightful feedback that helps them to improve their practice."

The vacancies page of the school's website invites large numbers of prospective employees to enter their contact details so that the school can notify them if any relevant positions are being advertised.

Deeply engaged in ITT

Cockburn School works with highly regarded and successful providers to engage in initial teacher training, including PGCE, SCITT, Troops to Teachers and TeachFirst. While this creates intricacies to do with placement dates, deadlines and the structuring of professional





development, it does enable a range of entry routes into teaching for trainees wishing to train at Cockburn and its partner schools.

Basing trainees at the school is just part of Cockburn's investment in ITT. An assistant headteacher and SLE for ITT leads the school provision – and is also a governor and strategic board member for some of the ITT providers, which include schools' experience in the evaluation of their programmes.

Cockburn is committed to 'working with' rather than simply hosting placements. It regularly hosts ITT training events, interviews and meetings for these providers and often calls upon senior members of staff to lead training for ITT trainees. It seizes on any opportunities to encourage more trainees and staff from other schools and organisations.

Specialist leader of education for ITT: Using the SLE role complemented the strategic development for ITT within Cockburn Multi-academy Trust. The SLE commitment to outreach work has enabled

Cockburn to work closely with a number of people to help develop their capacity to lead on aspects of ITT, and to advise a number of ITT providers on development of new training programmes. This has fostered strong working relationships and helped to build the school's reputation for high-quality ITT provision.

Equal status for trainees: Right from day one of an ITT placement, trainees have staff status – with teacher ID badges, involvement in all staff events and professional development. This is an important part of integrating ITT trainees into the life of the school as well as working in classrooms with students. By working in this way, trainees are seen as so much more than 'student teachers'.

Experienced mentoring: Mentoring for ITT is provided by experienced members of staff, mostly TLR holders, from all departments in the school. Every department shares the school's vision to train the next generation of teachers. Mentors at the school value the impact that ITT has on the school,

the pupils and on themselves as professionals. ITT trainees are seen to bring in the latest graduate expertise in their subject areas that can benefit pupils and teachers. Mentors cite how they benefit from seeing their pupils being taught while sharpening the focus on planning and assessment for these pupils. With the progress of the pupils now a shared responsibility, the mentors and trainees work in partnership to deliver results in the classroom.

Bespoke CPD for ITT: CPD for ITT trainees comes from all directions. The trainees join department subject pedagogy sessions as well as the whole-staff training and seminar programme sessions focusing on specific teacher standards. Bespoke weekly ITT CPD sessions ask trainees to collaborate and share resources and experiences, and often focus on trialling new pedagogical research and developments in their classrooms.

ITT trainees have mock interviews with senior staff; training addressing their specific needs; and a choice among developmental learning opportunities

A key part of the CPD is on preparing for all aspects of a job interview, including interview lesson planning. Trainees also have the opportunity for mock interviews with senior members of staff. The induction process

for ITT highlights how trainees perform in a job interview from day one and instils the ethos of ‘transformation to excellence’. It encourages trainees to develop a growth mindset, understanding that their learning will be developmental and progressive (as with all members of staff at the school).

Retention through CPD

Leaders at Cockburn School recognise that high-quality professional development is critical to improving teachers’ practice at all career stages; this is part of the MAT’s retention strategy. The CPD strategy is delivered through a layered approach of whole-school development, directed development and optional development, which gives all professionals choice and ownership of their development.

- » Whole-school development: important training that all staff are required to complete. This type of training aligns with statutory frameworks, whole-school requirements and improvement priorities. It is delivered through professional development days, staff briefings and directed time.
- » Directed development: important training that individuals are directed to engage in for a specific need. Delivered either internally or externally, including coaching and mentoring where appropriate.
- » Optional development: a range of developmental learning opportunities which professionals can

select. This type of approach ensures CPD can be tailored to career stages and/or individual needs. Delivered through directed time, coaching and mentoring, and termly programmes.

The layered structure also creates opportunities for professionals to lead elements of CPD. One particular system where this takes place is Cockburn’s teaching and learning communities, made up of cross-curricular groups of teaching and support staff. High quality teaching and learning is the core purpose, and it requires a collective commitment from all professionals in the organisation. The groups use a distributed leadership model which gives energy and momentum that empowers professionals to work together on curriculum, pedagogy or pastoral issues. This work drives change and improvement right into the heart of school practice.

What is the impact of TLCs in relation to retention?

Cockburn’s teaching and learning communities, now in their third year, ensure that all staff are able to make an effective contribution to the priorities in the school development plan. The school has been accredited with Investors in People Gold which recognised “the strategy for developing and retaining teachers by using the teaching and learning communities in order to raise the standard of teaching enables people to take ownership of their own development and also utilises the strengths of individuals to support and develop others. It



gives people opportunities to lead and drive change.” (Investors in People, 2015)

What is the impact of ITT in relation to recruitment?

Cockburn will have more than 40 trainees in 2016/17, an increase of 20% on the previous year. Almost all trainees on final placements were graded as outstanding. As a result, 25% of the cohort are now employed as NQTs at Cockburn School. Of the full complement of teaching staff, almost a third spent all or part of their training in the school.

As these NQTs access more and more CPD, the cycle begins again as they in turn become ITT mentors and host teachers in future years. One such member of staff, who having trained at Cockburn has recently been promoted to lead teacher, said: “Cockburn gave me freedom and trust during my training. I was inspired by my mentor to work hard and develop and I am now excited to mentor future trainees.”