



Network Newsletter

Issue 6 Autumn 2 2021

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Coordinator's Comments

Reflections & Resolutions

The festive season is almost upon us and it is often a time to reflect and make plans for the year ahead. By the time our next newsletter comes out, you may have already made resolutions for 2022. This has got me thinking about the professional reflections and resolutions we could make as teaching assistants to improve our practice and the effectiveness of the support we provide to pupils. This could be something small or a more substantial commitment but, whatever you choose, the network can support you in your journey. Keep an eye on our research corner to ensure you keep evidence-informed, check out the resource reviews for new reading materials or pledge to attend more training by exploring our programme of events.

My resolution is to listen to more educational podcasts and I am definitely going to begin with Julie's recommendation on page 11.



Join Us

If you are not already a member of the Suffolk TA Network, please join via the following link:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=UyUudcf3sEGK8GkwZaFwfVhZAzV7zulGsO_6uPBfMz5UQkZBNOJRR0hUMehYMzFHOTdYTENHRIFDSi4u

Simply click on this link or copy it into the URL bar on your browser and complete the Microsoft Forms document. You will then receive the half-termly newsletter and other correspondence.

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Stronger Together

A Growing Network of Networks



While our network in Suffolk continues to go from strength to strength, other regions of the country are beginning express an interest in developing their own TA networks. I am so excited to be able to introduce you to Catherine, who has recently taken on the role of Yorkshire TA Network coordinator.

The project is funded through the North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area grant. The Opportunity Area team were really inspired by the work that the Suffolk TA Network had been doing to develop a network for TAs by TAs, and they wanted to create a similar network for TAs across the North Yorkshire Opportunity area.

I was successfully appointed to start as the network coordinator in September. I am passionate about my role as an HLTA in school and I felt that a TA network in our area would be something that would highlight the work of TAs, as well as being an ideal platform to share ideas and support each other.

We started using social media as our key communication method and in less than half a term we had more than 120 TAs signed up to the network, with more joining every week.

As a network we have organised a conference on 16th November and are thrilled that all tickets have now been sold (we even have a waiting list!). We are also planning a series of online sessions across a range of topics. The network seems to grow every day, which is all very exciting, if not a little daunting! We are overwhelmed with the level of support that we have received from TAs, school leaders and the many organisations that provide educational support to our students and their families. Many have offered to blog, deliver sessions, or write an article for our termly newsletter.

We would also like to say a big THANK YOU to Abi and the Suffolk TA Network for all your support in getting our Yorkshire TA network off the ground. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead.

Catherine

<https://www.yorkshiretanetwork.co.uk/contact/>

Email: tanetwork@settrington.n-yorks.sch.uk

Twitter: @YorkshireTAs Facebook: Yorkshire TA Network



Growing out of collaboration and partnership

Professionalism with heart

Driver Youth Trust



We all know how incredibly important teaching assistants are and how you are at the heart of support for disadvantaged learners, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disability. In my school governance roles, I've seen TAs repeatedly step up and literally in, where schools were open for key worker or 'vulnerable' learners throughout the pandemic.

It's difficult to think of a more dedicated group in the schools' workforce than TAs, especially given how important you are to learners with SEND in comparison to your terms and conditions, and the opportunities you have for professional development. I think many would agree that we should continue to invest in TAs as much as we do others in the schools' workforce, but that we should also remember the unique role you hold, especially given the considerable impact SEND can have on young people.

At DYT our focus is very much on literacy for these learners, across every phase of education. We know how important classroom practice is for supporting language, reading and writing but also how sometimes this needs greater attention through targeted interventions.

Reflecting on recent work by [Ofsted](#) highlights many of the issues you might be facing in school this term, especially given what we know about lost learning for disadvantaged learners and the need to 'catch-up'. Ofsted called out the amount of time learners are spending out of class with TAs on intervention work, but also raised the need for better training, which is absolutely right. Schools often prioritise CPD in areas where they want to see wider improvements, but rarely does this align to pupil needs or consequently, those of TAs.

It is heartening to see the development of Suffolk TA Network as they attempt to take up the challenge of providing high quality professional development of TAs. We're committed to doing our part as well. In addition to [over 50 free teaching resources](#) available from our website TAs will soon be able to access a [variety of short courses](#). These opportunities



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“AS THE NUMBERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND INCREASE AND THEIR DIVERSE RANGE OF NEEDS BECOMES MORE APPARENT, WE NEED DEDICATED, EXPERIENCED AND KNOWLEDGEABLE TAs WHO CAN FULFIL EVER SPECIALISED ROLES.”

overcome many of the drawbacks of traditional training activities because our material is available online which you can access at a time and place that is convenient to you.

We want to see a professional development pathway for TAs become a reality. But turning TAs into part-time teachers is not the answer. As the numbers of young people with SEND increase and their diverse range of needs becomes more apparent, we need dedicated, experienced and knowledgeable TAs who can fulfil ever specialised roles. The entire system is dependent on your ability to step up and step in.

If you would like to hear more about DYT's work, including updates on our new courses and resources, [please sign up to our newsletter](#) or follow us on social media.

Chris Rossiter, [Driver Youth Trust](#)

Learn with DYT

- New online learning hub
- Over 50 free teaching resources
- Blended-learning & self-directed courses
- Flexible & topical webinars
- Tailored in-school INSET training days
- Training & resources for governors
- In-school consultancy
- Free networking with the DYT Community

www.driveryouthtrust.com

DYT
driver youth trust
for literacy

WESTBOURNE ACADEMY
IOA Ipswich Opportunity Area
Suffolk County Council
Research Schools Network
Education Endowment Foundation

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[Do you work in EYFS, Key stage One or Key Stage Two? Then we would like to hear from you.](#)

By Carolyn Love – Suffolk TA Network Assistant
Coordinator

Since I began working with the network, we have recognised as a team that we would like to improve our provision for EYFS, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two staff.

As someone with a background of working in Early Years, I understand that staff are busy and can feel quite inundated with work, with very little time. It is often support staff who end up working with the most vulnerable children and those with additional support needs. Teaching assistants play a critical role in building purposeful and positive relationships between practitioners, pupils and their parents, along with other members of school staff. Contributing their essential skills, they'll be helping children to learn, grow, and develop into successful members of society.

A recent Education Endowment Foundation blog post (2021) examines the evidence relating to the effective use of TAs and concludes that "...TAs can, and do, make a significant contribution to the school communities in which they operate."

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-the-impact-of-teaching-assistants-a-holistic-picture>

So, as you are so important, we would like to ask for your input into how we can help you. What training needs do you have? Is there something that would really help with your role? If you work in EYFS, Key Stage One or Key Stage Two, please take a few minutes to complete this training needs survey.

<https://forms.office.com/r/2bPG9aWi6a>

Although we are currently trying to gather views of TAs working with younger children to ensure our training offer also meets their needs, we encourage all members to contact us with any specific training requests. We always consider the views of our members when planning our programme and will try to fulfil requests, where possible. Simply email any training needs to suffolktan@westbourne.atrust.org.uk



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ADHD Training Sessions

- Want to learn more about ADHD?
- Want to understand how to effectively support students with ADHD?
- Want to develop practical strategies to use in the classroom?

Then join Autism & ADHD for one of the following training sessions:

Monday 22nd November 13.30-14.30

Tuesday 23rd November 9.30-10.30

Thursday 25th November 16.30-17.30.

To find out more and to receive a link to register for one of these sessions, email me: suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk (a recording will be sent to those who register and will be available for 14 days)



Psychology and
Therapeutic Services
Supporting Children and
Young People with Loss
and Bereavement



The Psychology and Therapeutic Services are pleased to be able to offer a half day training for adults who support children experiencing loss and bereavement.

Date/Time: Thursday 25 November 2021 - 09.30 start to 12.30 close. You are able to join the meeting from 09.00 to allow any set up issues to be resolved and to start at 9.30. Online (Microsoft Teams) - invitation sent once the booking is confirmed.

The aims of this conference are to:

- Raise awareness of the extent of loss and bereavement in children's lives
- Consider the grieving process
- Understand the developmental nature of children's responses to death
- Increase confidence in supporting bereaved children and discuss ways to support

<https://www.suffolkcpsd.co.uk/cpd/> click on the Schools Choice tab on the side and search course code: **LIS 22/002** (or by the date 25/11/21)

Visit Psychology&TherapeuticServices@suffolk.gov.uk for more information.



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Free Training Opportunity

- Are you a TA working in a Suffolk Setting?
- Do you want to develop your existing knowledge and skills around Speech, Language and Communication?
- Would you like to explore strategies for supporting children and young people with communication difficulties?
- How would you like the opportunity to join other TAs across Suffolk?
- Could you take your skills back to your setting and share them with others?

NHS Speech and Language Therapy and Education Outreach SLCN would like to offer you six VIRTUAL sessions of CPD across the academic year 2021-2022. This training is a collaboration with the Suffolk TA Network and is absolutely free of charge. Sessions will be delivered via Microsoft Teams. We are a friendly team of NHS Speech Therapists and Specialist Teachers looking forward to working with you. To book your place contact caroline.wells2@suffolk.gov.uk

Session 1 16.00-17.30	Monday September 27th 2021	What do we mean by Speech, Language and Communication? This will also provide an overview of the 5 further sessions.
Session 2 16.00-17.30	Monday November 15th 2021	Social Communication
Session 3 16.00-17.30	Monday January 24th 2022	Receptive Language
Session 4 16.00-17.30	Monday March 14th 2022	Expressive Language
Session 5 16.00-17.30	Monday May 9th 2022	Speech Production and Phonological Awareness
Session 6 16.00-17.30	Monday June 13th 2022	Vocabulary, including the language of emotions and feelings





Ipswich Opportunity Area Wellbeing and Resilience Hubs



At the start of 21/22 the Ipswich Opportunity Area announced six wellbeing and resilience hubs, led by settings, schools and colleges across Ipswich, combining their practice and approaches to wellbeing and resilience and offering networks and support to education settings across the IOA and Felixstowe. Each hub will hold its own launch inviting you to become part of the community of practice in the town and beyond.



The Trauma Informed Schools Supervision Hub

Castle Hill

Being emotionally available for children and families can be emotionally exhausting – through this hub Castle Hill Primary will support other schools to develop and implement supervision for staff. Castle Hill Primary is a designated Trauma Informed and Mentally Healthy School, and are accredited by the British Psychology Service for supervision.



SWERL

*Dale Hall Primary School
Cliff Lane Primary School*

33 Schools in Ipswich and 10 in Felixstowe have participated in SWERL —“Supporting Wellbeing and Emotional Resilience in Learning” over the last 3 years. This whole school approach and the associated funding has given IOA schools a unique opportunity to trial a very broad range of approaches. Dale Hall and Cliff Lane schools will take a lead in sharing learning and showcasing best practice.



HAPPI

The Early Years Resilience Hub

Highfield Nursey and Rainbow Bright Nursery

Highfield Nursery School and Rainbow Bright Pre-School will be partnering to support early years settings to develop resilience in children, using the Highfield Resilience Tracker to assess and track children's resilience, alongside implementing approaches to improve early years emotional learning and social resilience. For more information about READ HAPPI – Free funded IOA Early Years Project.



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Westbourne Academy

Westbourne Academy will share their learning on implementing and using THRIVE to support the emotional wellbeing and resilience of students, improving engagement in learning and reducing poor learning behaviours in school.



The Medical Needs in Schools Hub

The Raedwald Trust will lead the Medical Needs in Schools Hub, this approach supports schools to use individual health plans and technology in the delivery of education programmes for children with medical and mental health needs.
MNIS@raedwaldtrust.org



The Adult Wellbeing Hub

Buttons and Bows Nursery
Stone Lodge Nursery
Endeavour Academy

Representing the diversity of settings Ipswich educators work in, the 3 partners in the Adult Wellbeing Hub – Buttons and Bows Nursery, Stone Lodge Academy and Ormiston Endeavour Academy, will bring a broad range of expertise to the support of staff in our schools, colleges and setting.



For more information contact ipswichopportunityarea@gmail.com



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Research Corner
Learning Behaviour Lead Reflections:
Exploring Evidence
By Abi Joachim

Since September, I have been working with a group of highly skilled education professionals recruited through the Ipswich Opportunity Area as Learning Behaviour Leads (LBLs). These LBLs are experienced TAs, who support those children and young people within a school that face the most significant barriers to learning, or struggle most to engage with learning in the classroom, to develop their learning behaviours so that they are better able to access education.

In order to support their work in schools, they are participating in a comprehensive training programme, with a focus on the EEF guidance on the 5 pillars of the [“Learning Behaviour” framework](#) – Metacognition, Social and Emotional Learning, Behaviour, SEND and Parental Engagement.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. Each guidance report offers practical recommendations based on the best available evidence.

To read these guidance reports, please follow these links:

1. [Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning](#)
2. [Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools](#)
3. [Improving Behaviour in Schools](#)
4. [Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools](#)
5. [Working with Parents to Support Children’s Learning](#)

Through the next four editions of our newsletter, a range of Learning Behaviour Leads will reflect on each of these pillars and consider how this evidence-informed guidance could be applied to their work within school.



For more information on these reports, please email:

Eileen.Allpress.Ipswich@researchschool.org.uk



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Resource review by Julie Clegg

The SENDCast – The Podcast for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

<https://sendcast.wpengine.com/sendcast-episodes/>

The podcasts as a whole are really accessible and a brilliant resource for Teaching Assistants who want to delve more into SEND specialisms.

You can go straight into the 'thesendcast' website and choose which podcast you want to listen to. The podcasts are 45 minutes to an hour long but are highly engaging as they give you an insight into what it is like to be a child in a busy school environment.

I watched a podcast about 'connecting and communicating with Autistic children' and acquired some excellent strategies to work with a child who is becoming anxious, aggressive, defiant and withdrawn by using the 3C pathway (connecting, calming and communication).

They also show you tips on how to calm children as a whole school approach using heartbeat rhythms!

Then I watched a podcast about 'learning through play'. They teach you the importance of using outside experiences such as 'what do you hear/see' to then go onto using these experiences to help children with their writing, numeracy and science. For example, taking photos of a story you did as an activity outside and then ordering the story to support them with their writing.

Each podcast ends with details on how to apply for more training as a parent/school and some speakers have released books.

In my opinion, these podcasts are definitely worth a watch.



Content : 9/10

Accessibility : 9/10

Overall : 8/10 (length of time)

If you get to listen to any of the episodes, we would love to hear your views by sending us a brief review to share with our other members to

suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk.

Do you have something to share?

Email me with your idea and you could be in the next edition.



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