



Network Newsletter

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Coordinator's Comments

End of Term Reflections

I want to begin by saying a huge thank you to all our existing members, and our potential future members, for the time and effort you have put in this year to educate and support children and young people across the county.

I also want to say a personal thank you to everyone who has supported and promoted the work of the Suffolk TA Network so far. It has been an amazing journey, filled with fascinating training courses, engaging articles and our first face-to-face networking session!

This would not have been possible without you – our committed and enthusiastic members. It also would not have been possible without our amazing assistant coordinators and champions.

I am so excited to see what next year brings and look forward to working with you all again in September.



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=UyUudcf3sEGK8GkwZaFwVhZAzV7zulGsO_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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We want to hear from you



#WeNeedYourViews

As we come to the end of another year of the Suffolk TA Network, we would like to know about your experience as a member and what you want from your network as we move into 2022-23.

We have created a short survey (five minutes) to gather your views and ideas. We know that time is tight in schools, especially this term, but we would love to hear your thoughts and use your ideas to improve our service next year.

Please use this link to complete the survey:

<https://forms.office.com/r/F011nXLfsy>

#MembershipUpdate

As we approach the end of the summer term, I am aware that some of you will be moving school, changing role or leaving the teaching assistant profession.

In order to ensure our membership records are up to date, please can you email me on suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk if any changes to your details are needed.

#MembershipGoals

If you are currently a member of the network and enjoy being part of this rapidly expanding professional community, please encourage other pupil-facing support staff to sign up using the link on page one. For further information, they can email me: suffolktan@westbourne.attrust.org.uk.



Growing out of collaboration and partnership



Festival Bridge & Ipswich Cultural Education Partnership (ICEP)



Arts and culture can offer great tools for you to use with the young people you support, to promote wellbeing, confidence and self-expression. As Teaching Assistants, we know you are often the frontline for supporting young people, including those facing the most challenges. Festival Bridge and Ipswich Cultural Education Partnership (ICEP) are here to support you to use great creative engagement in ways that respond to your needs on the ground, to help young people to thrive.

[Festival Bridge](#) work across Norfolk, Suffolk, Peterborough and Cambridgeshire to support education practitioners to connect with cultural education. Please do have a look at our website for some fantastic [resources](#), including our 'Top 5' collections (for example, top 5 SEND recommendations), virtual tours of museums and galleries, Access Art (great advice about how to use materials and create the right environment for being creative in small groups). Please do sign up to the [Education Newsletter](#) to hear about great opportunities!

[The Ipswich Cultural Education Partnership](#) (ICEP) is one of several [Local Cultural Education Partnerships](#) in Suffolk. It is a network of over 100 like-minded people working across education, arts and community settings. It creates opportunities for people to work together to improve access to arts and heritage engagement for young people in Ipswich, to increase educational attainment, aspiration and wellbeing. Please do join! Register your email [here](#) to hear about project opportunities, call-outs from members, peer-sharing of case studies and impact, and network meetings. If you have ideas or questions about using arts in your setting, we can also connect you with people who are happy to chat things through.

This year, we have been celebrating some fantastic initiatives as part of [Hullabaloo22](#): a summer of celebration of young peoples' creativity in Ipswich. This includes 40+ projects led by nurseries, schools and colleges who have worked with an arts partner to lead creative projects to support emotional literacy and oracy, funded by the [IOA](#). In autumn, we will share case studies and celebrate best practice so watch this space!

Your input and ideas are so essential for making the ICEP a useful network so please do get in touch anytime (ipswichcep@gmail.com).

Jess Croll-Knight (ICEP Coordinator) and Abi Marrison (Education Programme Manager, Festival Bridge)



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How one school linked with the ICEP to use their IOA 'Tell your story' grant...

The 'Tell Your Story Grant' has given Morland Primary School the fantastic opportunity to develop our younger pupils' oracy and emotional literacy through creative play/building.

Our chosen local artist has been busy with our nursery children den building, making big nests & clay animals.

This interaction has supported our children with their speech & language and emotional literacy, and they have had lots of fun in a safe secure environment with the additional support of parental engagement.

This has been a wonderful, inspiring project to be continued with reception!

Sam Thorpe

Assistant Head Teacher



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A Day in the Life of an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) By Opal Degville

I currently work as a teaching assistant, who has been fortunate enough to be put into a position of trust, working with students on a 1:1 basis and connecting with them in a way that is impactful. This role has given me the drive to develop my knowledge and focus on the core areas that students may experience in relation to social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH), specifically how I am able to enrich a student with strategies to support them to manage their emotions, not just for the here and now, but for their future.

I have recently completed the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training programme, through Suffolk County Council Psychology and Therapeutic Services. The ELSA intervention is a proactive support programme to help students develop self-awareness skills. I independently plan and deliver sessions for students who are identified as struggling. Referrals are made by our SENDCO or the academy's pastoral team to our SEMH team, and we meet fortnightly to discuss each referral and which intervention would be best suited to the needs of the student.

I liaise with parents/carers before the intervention takes place, which gives them the opportunity to ask questions and share an insight on their child's current situation. I offer my work email address to each parent/carer to remain in touch throughout the intervention should they wish to. I currently see eight students a week for 1:1 support for approximately 45-minutes each session. I ask that a teacher completes the ELSA assessment on each student that is referred in order to gather as much background knowledge as possible before the intervention starts. Targets are set during the first session with the student present, making sure that all targets set are SMART. Each session starts with a check-in and a reflection on what has been going on for that student. Depending on the core area of focus, we may use creative play to start a conversation. If I have identified a student is lacking in emotional vocabulary, we may look at visual cards and explore emotions linked to a thought or feeling, building on the ability to be able to articulate rather than react. Each week, as the connection between us grows, I delve a little deeper into the emotion we are working on. Since running the ELSA programme, I have found that students often mask their emotions with anger (often reflected in the referral forms), so it has been interesting getting to the root of the problem and support them with this.

I monitor each session with an evaluation form, which provides a brief description of the activities that have been completed and whether or not a target has been met. At the end of the intervention, I revisit the student assessment form to be able to track the progress made.

The impact ELSA has had on the students I have worked with has been amazing and I feel very lucky to have been enriched with the tools to be able to make a difference within the academy.



Growing out of collaboration and partnership

Suffolk TA Network Conference Update



I am so excited to tell you all that the Suffolk TA Network's first annual teaching assistant conference is now fully booked!

The conference will take place on Friday 16th September 2022 at Trinity Park Conference and Events Centre, Ipswich between 9.00 and 15.00. This year, our conference is called 'Start Talking About Communication' and we are thrilled to be working in collaboration with Suffolk County Council Education Outreach Service for Speech, Language and Communication and NHS speech and language therapy services in Suffolk.

The conference will open with a keynote speech by Ros Somerville, Assistant Director Inclusion at Suffolk County Council, followed by a series of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) themed workshops/talks.

If you have managed to secure a place at the conference, we look forward to welcoming you. If you were unable to attend this year, but would like to attend in future years, please let us know which theme you would like to see us offer next. Email me:

suffolktan@westbourne.atrust.org.uk with your thoughts.

We look forward to updating you further in September once the conference is over.



Growing out of collaboration and partnership



Would your school like to participate in a research study?

Hello from the ComBAT research team! We are a team of researchers from the University of York and Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust. We are currently running a 5-year programme of research and are looking for schools who may be interested in taking part.

What is ComBAT?

ComBAT stands for **Community-based Behavioural Activation Training for Depression in Adolescents**. The overall aim of this five-year programme of research is to develop an intervention, based on Behavioural Activation, for young people experiencing low mood aged 12-18 years that can be delivered in schools and other community settings. As part of our work, we want to test our Behavioural Activation with 236 young people nationally to see how it compares to the care young people usually receive.



What is Behavioural Activation?

Behavioural Activation, or BA for short, is a brief psychological therapy. BA is based on one key principle: that enjoyable, purposeful and meaningful activities can lift our mood, energise us and stimulate our interest and pleasure in day-to-day life. BA involves identifying, scheduling, completing and monitoring day-to-day activities that are emotionally rewarding and connect with things and people that matter to an individual. BA is already evidenced as an effective intervention for adults and a promising intervention for children and adolescents with depression, when it is delivered by mental health specialists. As part of ComBAT, we will adapt BA so that it can be supported by a wider group of professionals in schools and other community settings, such as young people's charities, youth justice services and social care.



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What would happen if my school decides to take part?

- ★ We would ask you to provide information about the study to young people who you think may benefit from the research.
- ★ The research team will contact young people who express an interest in taking part and confirm their eligibility to participate.
- ★ If eligible, the research team will collect data with young people and randomly allocate them to receive either the newly developed BA treatment or usual care.
- ★ Staff members within your school will be asked to deliver this support to young people, with training and regular supervision provided by the research team.
- ★ Training and supervision will be provided free of charge.



Sounds interesting! Who do I contact?

You can contact members of the ComBAT research team Dr Lucy Tindall (Programme Manager) and Emily Hayward (Research Assistant) who will be more than happy to discuss this further:

- E-mail: ComBAT-project@york.ac.uk
- Tel: 07385430934

You can also visit the study team's website: www.combatdepression.org and follow us on Twitter: [@ComBAT_Trial_UK](https://twitter.com/ComBAT_Trial_UK).

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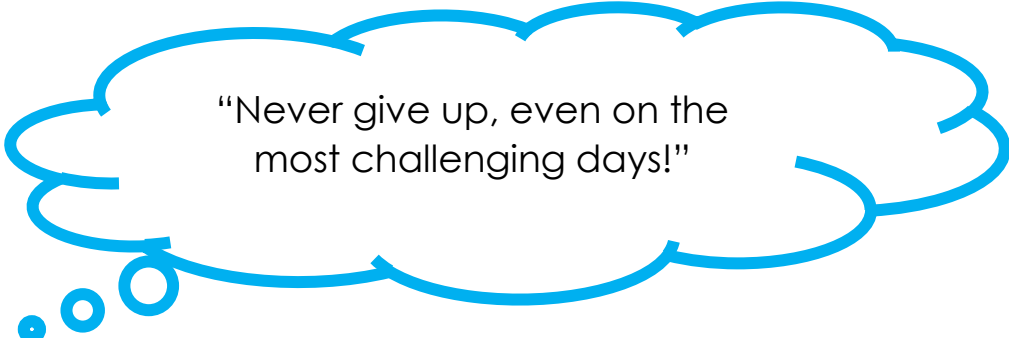
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Research Corner


Learning Behaviour Lead (LBL) – End of Year Reflections

Since September, the Learning Behaviour Leads (LBLs), recruited through the Ipswich Opportunity Area, have participated in a comprehensive training programme, with a focus on the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance on the 5 pillars of the “Learning Behaviour” framework – Metacognition, Social and Emotional Learning, Behaviour, SEND and Parental Engagement. They have been using this training to support those children and young people within school who 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.

Over the last four editions of the newsletter, LBLs have reflected on their training and how they have applied it within their schools. As we approach the end of term, two of the LBLs offer their final reflections on their role this year.



“Never give up, even on the most challenging days!”



“With the LBL role, we are continually making a positive impact on multiple individual children, as well as a whole school approach, at a much quicker pace than expected.”



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Resource Review

Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) – Campaign for School Gardening Website

As the TA responsible for delivering our outdoor learning intervention, I am always on the look out for useful free resources to support our students' love of gardening.

We are lucky to have access to an amazing garden and greenhouse and offer a range of activities to support the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs of our students.

I have found the lesson plans available on the RHS website really helpful. They suggest a wide range of exciting gardening activities and provide all the details you need to use them with students. We have also registered for free with their Campaign for School Gardening and love the awards and certificates you can achieve.

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/about-us>



Caroline Williamson (TA)

Content: 10/10

Accessibility: 10/10

Overall: 10/10

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