



# Newsletter

## UPDATE ISSUE 17



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@SouthWestIFT



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[www.sw-ift.org.uk](http://www.sw-ift.org.uk)  
[#rootedinpartnership](https://twitter.com/SouthWestIFT)

## Welcome from Roger Pope CBE

Associate & Strategic Leader of Teaching & Research Schools | Education South West

Teachers often complain of too much change.

The good news, then, is that you are about to have a good year.

The Conservatives introduced their big changes ten years or so ago under Michael Gove. GCSE, A Level, Phonics, EBacc, Academies and Nick Gibb has faithfully followed the script, and has no intention of changing course as we approach the election.

At Ofsted, Amanda Spielman is marking time until her successor, Sir Martyn Oliver takes up post.

*But maybe you like change?* You cannot predict the future, but you can prepare for likely scenarios, or even try and shape them. A feeling of empowerment is a great thing. So, take advantage of the national policy vacuum to change what you want to do in your own sphere of influence.

We do not know what our next Government of whatever hue will do. We know that Martyn Oliver led a Trust that is passionate about standards, low tolerance of poor behaviour, and championing the disadvantaged. Hence, you might want to start preparing now for the likely Ofsted priorities under his leadership.

And finally, we are looking forward to the redesignation process for Teaching School Hubs for the next period. But in the meantime, you can rely on SWIFT to be here delivering our services to support all your professional development needs.

Have a great year!

## NEW SWIFT Reference Group

As part of our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, this school year we will be establishing a SWIFT Reference Group.

Membership will be voluntary and staff-led and any member of staff across our schools and partners will be able to apply and will meet regularly online.

The Reference Group is intended to be a safe space and will build high-trust relationships within a diverse and inclusive workplace to foster a sense of belonging and inspire conversation, and bring new ways to look at issues and drive innovation.

The guiding principles for the Reference Group will be inclusive and participation will not be limited by any of the protected characteristics, for example, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity and will promote diversity, openness, understanding and inclusiveness.

We believe Reference Groups are important because they can:

1. Foster an inclusive workplace
2. Enhance employee experience
3. Promote cultural awareness
4. Improve innovation

We look forward to sharing more information with you about our SWIFT Reference Group.

MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW IN OUR NEWS SECTION [HERE](#)

Find out more about SWIFT and our partners [here](#) | 1

# News Items

## Thoughts for the new school year from the new SWIFT Director of Teaching School Hubs, Jen Knowles

*"It is such a privilege to be at the heart of the provision of high-quality professional development for teachers at all stages of their careers."*

Week one of the new term flew by and was a brilliant, busy, all-immersing start.



We are pleased to welcome our new schools and Early Career Teacher (ECT) programme members, many of whom are from Local Authority schools (following the Department for Education's changes to Appropriate Body eligibility), and join us for their statutory ECT induction for the first time. We look forward to supporting you all through your two-year induction with us.

This year brings a big focus on further embedding and improving the quality of the programmes that we offer, whilst also seizing new and exciting opportunities, which we believe will be advantageous for our schools.

With Colyton Grammar School and Education South West working as Associate Colleges for the National Institute of Teaching (NlOT) during the past academic year, we now have an exciting opportunity to take on a test and learn cohort for the Early Career Framework (ECF).

The success of our current ECF programmes means that it is important for us to 'road test' and fully understand the content and operational fit of this NlOT programme before offering the programmes as an additional option to schools in the region.

**We are excited about this opportunity as it offers national and regional research that will benefit the schools in our Teaching School Hub area.**

We are also running multiple test and learn cohorts with the NlOT as a potential alternative National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) route to schools in the region.

Every day is a school day and I am enjoying learning from the wider team, and working with new people.

I would like to wish you all a rewarding and enjoyable school year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PROGRAMMES:  
[APPROPRIATE BODY SERVICE](#)  
[EARLY CAREER FRAMEWORK](#)  
[NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS](#)

## Summer Conference Highlights 2023 | Thank you for your feedback 2024 | Save the Date! Thursday 13 June 2024

*"Superb. Provoking in the best possible way. Will definitely lead to change in my organisation. I cannot praise her highly enough - the pace, tone, and spirit in which she delivered the twilight session of the day was spot on."*

Thank you to those of you who took the time to provide feedback on our 2023 Summer Conference. We very much value you taking the time to share your reflections that will help to inform our thinking for the next year's event, with early planning already underway.

**The conference has made a positive impact on my understanding of educational practices.**

44% strongly agree

44% agree

12% neutral

**The conference provided a high-quality experience for delegates.**

65% strongly agree

29% agree

6% neutral

**Overall, I would rate the conference as:**

Very good 68%

Good 23%

Fair 9%

There were some thoughtful comments:

*"A pacey day with an interesting range of speakers."*

*"The opportunity to meet and network with other practitioners. The "Question Time" segment was by far the most engaging section."*

*"Carefully thought through, variety, couple of top-notch speakers, as well as other strong speakers. Very well organised, carefully structured, Question time was great!"*

*"Opportunity to reflect on the national picture, opportunity to network, and the panel discussion."*

*"The range of speakers - lots to listen and do in one day which makes it a great use of time."*

*"The message of optimism."*

*"The time to think more strategically."*

*"The combination of sessions - they were high quality, thought-provoking and will have an impact on the work we are doing in school."*

As part of our thinking how to improve next year's conference you have prompted us to consider the structure and potential theme for the day, descriptive talk titles, the range and breadth and primary/secondary content.

Thank you for saving the date for the 2024 Summer Conference on **Thursday 13 June 2024** when we look forward to coming together for our flagship leadership event. Watch out for more details to follow.

READ ABOUT THE SUMMER CONFERENCE 2023 [HERE](#)

# Interview with Tom Parkin, Headteacher of South Molton Community Primary School

*“Our hope for our children this year is to get back into school and in a positive way.”*

As Headteacher at South Molton Community Primary School for the past ten years, Tom Parkin finds it a happy and rewarding place to work that fits well with his ideals as a leader.

With the school's mantra of Excellence Through Outdoor Learning, there is a clear and intentional focus on nature, which happily spells out the school's values of **N**urturing, **A**spiring, **T**ogether, **U**nderstanding, **R**esilience and **E**qual.

Demonstrating this commitment, the pupils and staff are especially proud of their recent award of the Eco-Schools Green Flag, in which they achieved the highest level of distinction.

At the start of this new academic year, Tom shared some of his thoughts for his school that has grown over the last few years and is set to continue to grow.



## **1. As Headteacher, what are your hopes for the new academic year at South Molton Community Primary School?**

At the start of this brand-new academic year, it obviously brings lots of aspirations and enthusiasm for us at South Molton Community Primary School and builds on our continuing progress.

The personal development side of our school is something that we really want to continue developing as well this year, and that we would like to embed into our curriculum; rather than as an extra. A vital part of this development includes outdoor learning, the extra-curricular trips and all that side of learning that we feel could be embedded further into our curriculum.

This is a target for us this year, as well as developing our well-rounded curriculum and giving subject integrity and quality across the curriculum.

## **2. How would your pupils describe their school?**

Obviously, we talk to children a lot; which I hope gives a good flavour of what they actually think about their school.

I think the number one thing is that they think we are a caring school who takes their personal development seriously and that we want them to experience a wide-ranging curriculum that is not only focused on the core subjects, but considers the whole child. We have been engaging in our outdoor work over the last five or six years, and developing that connection to nature and outdoor learning and how this connection is important for positive mental well-being for children and staff.

I know our children would also talk enthusiastically about our environmental learning and improving the sustainability of our school. They would tell you about the sustainable journey we have been on and how we have improved our school over time. So, I would say a caring school that takes sustainability seriously and has a connection to nature.

## **3. What three things (or people!) would make a significant difference for your school improvement journey?**

Firstly, and I am very aware that this is something we need to improve as a school and looking to the future, is to think about joining a Multi Academy Trust, which we could take into our own hands and evolve to the next stage.

Whilst we have some collaboration with other schools, this year, we would like to enhance and encourage this collaboration so that it has a positive impact on what we deliver to the children and is an action that we can control.

Secondly, and perhaps less within our control to help us our school, is money. Extra resources and extra money would help the school to deliver more; especially with the current SEN agenda, and meeting the needs of increasing numbers of SEN children.

And thirdly, which I suppose is an age-old problem for the teaching profession, is having more time.

As a profession, I think we are always trying to do our best and aspiring to do better for the children - sometimes to our fault.

I know that we might not be able to solve this one very easily, but we could certainly do with more time so that we can do better for the children.

## **4. What is the biggest challenge for you as a school leader?**

I think the biggest challenge for the last few years is trying to be as inclusive as possible as a school, whilst still achieving high standards for children. The needs of children have changed over the past years, especially since Covid and the lockdown.

We have seen a massive change in the level of need and the number of children with high level SEN needs, which we are still dealing with and are expected to deal with in a maintained school. This brings lots of challenges for other children, and for those specific SEN children and staff supporting them.



I think this issue has become more pronounced in our school and the impact on the wider school. I have found it to be particularly challenging when seeking to deliver excellence across the curriculum and whilst still trying to be an inclusive school that gives every child what they need. Unfortunately, I envisage this to continue to be a challenge over the coming years.

READ THE FULL INTERVIEW WITH HEADTEACHER OF SOUTH MOLTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, TOM PARKIN [HERE](#)

# SchoolPro TLC on Using WhatsApp in Schools: A Guide to Safe and Compliant Use

Many of you will use WhatsApp for group messaging and we are led to believe that it is secure and encrypted. But here, our sponsor SchoolPro TLC provides insightful guidance for schools and MATs on being extra aware and safe.



In an era where digital communication is ubiquitous, it is imperative for schools to be vigilant about the platforms they use and the manner in which they are used. The recent reprimand issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to NHS Lanarkshire serves as a timely reminder of the potential pitfalls of using popular messaging apps like WhatsApp without clear protocols and guidance

## The Incident

Between April 2020 and April 2022, 26 staff at NHS Lanarkshire utilised a WhatsApp group to share patient data on more than 500 occasions. This data included names, phone numbers, addresses, images, videos, and screenshots containing clinical information. Alarming, a non-staff member was inadvertently added to this group, leading to the unintentional disclosure of personal information to an unauthorised individual.

## Lessons for Schools

While this incident unfolded within the healthcare sector, its implications are far-reaching and hold significant lessons for educational institutions. The Information Commissioner's Office's (ICO) investigation highlighted that NHS Lanarkshire lacked the necessary policies, guidance, and processes when WhatsApp was introduced. This oversight resulted in the unsafe and unauthorised dissemination of sensitive data.

## Clear Guidance and Protocols

It is paramount for schools to establish clear protocols and guidance for using communication platforms like WhatsApp.

**Staff must be unequivocally informed that personal WhatsApp accounts are not to be used for sharing organisational data. This encompasses student data, staff information, or any other confidential school-related details.**

## Risk Assessment

Before introducing new apps or communication tools, schools should undertake a comprehensive risk assessment (known as a DPIA) concerning personal data. This involves examination of the app's privacy protocols, security measures, and data management practices. The ICO recently underscored the importance of this, stating the need to "consider the risks relating to personal data before deploying new apps."

## Training and Awareness

Continuous training is essential. Schools should ensure that all staff members are well-versed in data protection laws, school policies, and procedures. They should be acutely aware of their responsibilities, especially when it comes to reporting personal data breaches promptly.

As experienced teachers and school leaders SchoolPro TLC provides support to schools and Multi Academy Trusts on: **Attendance, Curriculum, Governance, Leadership and Management, School Improvement and Timetabling, plus the Data Protection Portal tool to assist you in achieving compliance, created for DPOs, by DPOs.**



READ THE FULL REPORT AND GUIDANCE [HERE](#) INCLUDING ICO RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTACT SCHOOLPRO TLC [HERE](#)



# About Us

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SWIFT is built on a partnership model of Colyton and Kingsbridge Teaching School Hubs; ten Teaching Alliances; local ITT providers; Multi Academy Trusts; Kingsbridge Research School, Curriculum Hubs; Devon Schools Leadership Service; Teach First and the Chartered College of Teaching.

By creating a strong, mature partnership, SWIFT acts as a multiplier within the education system, meaning we are much more than the sum of our parts. By working together in the spirit of mutual support and towards common goals we can make this a reality. The more than principle is enshrined in our logo, which is a stylised more than sign. >

We have a clear vision: to be a trusted partner for schools. We are guided by a set of values that ensure we support teachers and leaders to improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people, especially disadvantaged groups. To achieve this vision in accordance with our values, we have developed clear aims that guide our activities, and a coherent theory of change to show how the issues facing schools, our activity and our aims all line up.

## Keeping in Contact

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You have received this newsletter because you are currently one of our Colyton and Kingsbridge Teaching School Hubs' Schools and Partners.

If we have not got your preferred email address correct, or if you wish to unsubscribe, then please email PA to the Executive Team and Governance, Jude Owens | [Jude.Owens@sw-ift.org.uk](mailto:Jude.Owens@sw-ift.org.uk)

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) for updates and links to offers and news from our partners.

## Our Sponsors

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YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SPONSORS [HERE](#) AND READ THEIR BLOGS ON CURRENT TOPICS ON OUR NEWS PAGE [HERE](#)

**Introducing our New Sponsor, Volt Entrepreneurs Limits - Your Gateway to a Limitless Future**



We are pleased to welcome our new sponsor, Volt Entrepreneurs to provide added value and opportunities for our schools.

Volt powers entrepreneurship in young people, starting with the mindset, that crucial piece of positive thinking that underpins all success and continues on to enable young people with the professional skill set of today.

Using tried and tested experiential learning methods and with a proven track record, Volt offers Short Circuit, a short online programme, and the Volt Circuit, an in-person enrichment programme during term time or as an intensive few days during school breaks.

Your students will learn about effective communication, time management, and leadership, and gain the confidence of acting on ideas, recognising opportunities, and how to start their own business.

The Volt Entrepreneurs programme is unique, innovative, affordable and doable.

# SHORT CIRCUIT

Volt cohorts say they “feel more confident about everything...[and] know where to start with making my idea come true” and how Volt has “changed the way I look at my future career.”

The teachers we work with see a dramatic change in their young people. “Your workshops are inspirational and I know they will benefit from your wealth of experience as [they practise] the skills they desperately need.”

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT VOLT ENTREPRENEURS [HERE](#) AND FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW THEY CAN HELP TO TRANSFORM YOUNG PEOPLE AT YOUR SCHOOL CONTACT [HERE](#)



## Revolutionising School Dinners

Educatering offers a complete school food and catering solution, focused on high quality, nutritious, locally sourced fresh food.

As catering experts, Educatering support school catering teams and their kitchens to provide the very best delicious, child-led menus and meals for pupils and staff whilst ensuring their safety and the school's compliance with the current legislations.



FIND OUT HOW EDUCATERING CAN SUPPORT CATERING AT YOUR SCHOOL [HERE](#) AND CONTACT [HERE](#)

# LYFTA

Are you looking for innovative and cost-effective ways to enhance and enrich your curriculum?

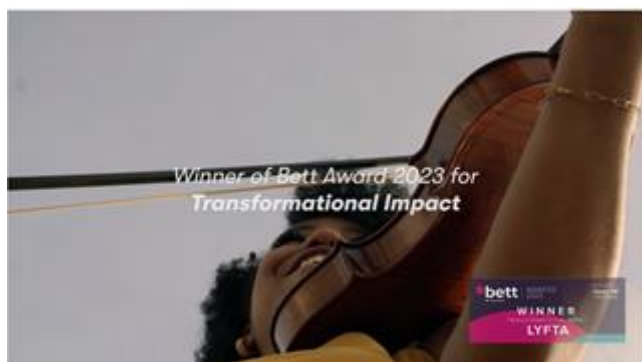
Find out how using Lyfta can introduce diverse cultures and perspectives to your classrooms through 360° spaces and inspiring short films.

A powerful way to nurture empathy, build character and broaden students' horizons.

## Free Lyfta Live Lesson - Life on Land: Protecting Biodiversity

In early October, Lyfta will mark two important awareness days: **World Animal Day** and **World Habitat Day**; as well as the events period of Global Goals Week, for which Lyfta are a partner organisation.

To celebrate, the next live lessons will explore life on land (UN Sustainable Development Goal 15) and how we can play our part to protect biodiversity.



Broaden your students' horizons with a world of immersive human stories

**Wednesday 4 October 2023 at 1115 for Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 and 1400 for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4**

**Thursday 5 October 2023 at 1115 for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 and 1400 for Years 5, 6, 7 and 8**

Lyfta will be bringing you a brand-new story-world: **The Island Biologist** where students can meet marine biologist Paula, researching ocean bird populations off the coast of Galicia, northern Spain.

Students will have opportunity to share their own thoughts and reflections on the theme with other schools across the UK and beyond.

WATCH A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO LYFTA [HERE](#) AND FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LYFTA [HERE](#) AND CONTACT [HERE](#)



 **SOUTH WEST**  
**Institute for Teaching**

[www.sw-ift.org.uk](http://www.sw-ift.org.uk)