



Thursday 4 January 2024 | Spring Term | Issue 21



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We wish you all a very  
happy and healthy new year!



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#rootedinpartnership

## Welcome from Roger Pope CBE

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

Keep celebrating in 2024.

Back in December, just when the days were nearing their longest and your energy reservoirs were at their lowest, an early Christmas present was popped under your tree. And very few people noticed.

It was the gold standard report comparing international standards. It showed that England is now one of the highest performing western countries in education.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is run by the OECD and measures performance of 15-year-olds in Maths, Science and Reading. Taken every three years, the tests were sat by 690,000 students representing 29 million in the 81 participating countries. It is highly regarded, and the most recent results were issued before Christmas.

So, well done all of you! As a result of your teaching and leadership, England is steadily climbing that table. Asian countries dominate the top ten. On Maths, England is well-above the international average. We were twenty-seventh in 2009, seventeenth in 2014 and are now eleventh. Reading and Science are only a little lower. England is well ahead of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Scores were down in all countries as a result of the pandemic, but England had not dropped as much as others.

The most recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2021 involves nine and ten-year-olds in 57 countries. England was fourth for reading. (That famed benchmark of excellence, Finland, was fifth). Well done, again!

So, we can look forward to 2024 with confidence and positivity. The national mood music is persistently as dull and depressing as the January weather. The message from those at the top is predominately "we must do better." Good leaders hammer home the positive messages because someone else will always point out the negative.

Celebrate these results with your teams and take confidence from the evidence that what we are doing together as a country is working.

*With good leadership, maybe the time has finally come?*

## Spring Term Leadership Forum

Our next Leadership Forum will be on **Thursday 8 February 2024 from 1500 – 1700** and will demonstrate our commitment to bring together leaders from all school settings across the region and will bring the best of local, regional and national.

We will be welcoming keynotes: Bennie Kara (Diverse Educators) and Jack Worth (NFER), along with Aaron Meredith and Olivia Bartlett (The Inspire Multi Academy Trust (South West)), James Lamb (The Castle School) and Jon Lunn (Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust).

FIND MORE INFORMATION AND HOW TO BOOK [HERE](#)

# News Items

## National Institute of Teaching Research Project | ECF research into mentoring in small schools in rural and coastal communities

The National Institute of Teaching (NlOT) aims to root their research and programmes in schools. They seek to design research that addresses areas that teachers and leaders care most about and feeds directly back into programmes to strengthen training and development.

SWIFT aims to create high quality opportunities for staff to learn, develop and connect so that all children, especially the disadvantaged, achieve the best educational outcomes.

The NlOT and SWIFT are collaborating on a research project to learn more about the Early Career Framework (ECF) programme delivery, and how the ECF can be designed for schools in rural and coastal communities.

### Purpose of the Study

Early evaluations of the ECF have shown that Early Career Teachers (ECTs) hugely value the support from Mentors. However, workload and balancing responsibilities for ECT Mentors remains a challenge (DfE, 2023).

In addition, some schools in rural and coastal communities are reporting particular challenges in delivering aspects of the ECF. For example, schools with small staff bodies may find it more challenging to provide adequate time for Mentors off-timetable to meet the demands of the role. For some schools, the distance required for ECTs and Mentors to travel to in-person training may require greater time outside of school.

However, little is known across the country, and more evidence is needed in order to understand the types of approaches that might be needed to deliver the ECF in different geographic locations.

### The Aim of the Study

The intention is to support ECF design for schools in rural and coastal communities, with an intention to build towards a larger study to pilot promising strategies in order to:

- learn more about how the ECF is being delivered in rural and coastal communities, as opposed to urban communities;
- understand if schools in rural and coastal communities are facing any particular challenges, what they are, and how these vary in different areas across England;
- learn from great practice that schools are currently using to address these challenges;
- identify possible strategies for an ECF package designed specifically for schools in rural and coastal communities.

### How will the findings be used?

This research will be used to tailor the NlOT's own ECF design to be suited to different geographic locations, and to make sure that schools, ECTs, ECT Mentors and school leaders have the support they need to deliver the ECF.

There is also the intention to build towards a larger study to pilot promising strategies.

The NlOT will also use the research to make recommendations to the sector, and for awareness-raising and advocacy to shape future policy revisions.

The study will run from January to October 2024 and will involve a national survey, and qualitative research with selected schools in the North East and South West regions of England.

## Excellent Pass Rates for the National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)

Since delivering the reformed NPQs programmes we are pleased to report on the following assessment pass rates:

**95% Leadership NPQs Cohort 1a**

**99% Specialist NPQs Cohort 1a**

**100% Specialist NPQs Cohort 1b**

**96% Leadership NPQs Cohort 1b**

**As you can see, the pass rate success has been strong and has continuously improved cohort-on-cohort.**

The successful outcomes of SWIFT programme members are testament to the combination of excellent content and materials designed to a world class standard by our Lead Providers: Teach First and the National Institute of Teaching. SWIFT contributes to this curriculum design and works closely with both Providers, particularly in the run-up to the release of a new programme. We are also grateful for the facilitation of seminars and conferences by our team of expert, local serving leaders across the region.

### Programme Members report on the benefits of:

the blend of online learning, seminars and face-to-face conferences that are well organised with clear documentation. Colleagues relish the opportunity to network with like-minded professionals and dedicated time to digest research and pedagogy that underpins their general leadership. The course content supports their leadership development and it is pleasing to hear that they are actively implementing ideas and changes within their teams.

The collaborative nature of the course allows colleagues to look outwards at change and to reflect on what is working well and what changes need to be made in their own school development plan.

### Facilitators commend:

the balance of discussion, group work and Facilitator-led content and appreciate the support from the LSSW/SWIFT Team.

Facilitators find the briefing and course materials to be clear, accessible and comprehensive and help to streamline the session delivery and relish the guidance on what they can share from their own experience and linked to other evidence.

### New course aspects this year have included:

The addition of conference content materials referencing topical educational themes delivered alongside Teach First content. For example, working in conjunction with Kingsbridge Research School to develop Theory of Change content.

Programme Members are supported to ensure that they are 'on top' of their minimum engagement requirements. This includes post-seminar communications to ensure that minimum engagement is fully understood before the assessments. To this end, SWIFT have developed an assessment webinar to support Programme Members and it is pleasing to report that this assessment approach was shared by Teach First with all their Delivery Partners as best practice support for Programme Members.

To date, SWIFT have supported over 1600 Programme Members and works with a team of 100+ Facilitators. The Spring Cohort due to commence in February 2024 is likely to be the final DfE-funded cohort and the application window closes on **Monday 15 January 2024.**

**By Fiona McNeile, Teaching School Hubs Manager**

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT NPQs HERE](#) AND [APPLY HERE](#)

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE HERE](#)

Find out more about SWIFT and our partners [here](#) | 2



# Interview with Martin Smith, Executive Director of SWIFT

*“I enjoy nurturing partnerships and I am continuously reminded of their importance in every we do.”*

As we embrace this new year as a time of renewal and revitalisation and as the culmination of the first four-years cycle of Teaching School Hubs, it seemed opportune to check in with our Executive Director, Martin Smith to reflect on his role in leading the Colyton and Kingsbridge Teaching School Hubs, as you will know as SWIFT (South West Institute for Teaching).

Martin started his career as a Teacher of History in Herefordshire and became an Advanced Skills Teacher early in his career, working as a Teaching and Learning consultant for Gloucestershire Local Authority. For four years he was Deputy Head of a rural 11 to 18-years school in Herefordshire, before becoming a secondary Headteacher in East Devon for eight years. As the backdrop to his current leadership, Martin led the formation of the Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance and in 2020 he was appointed founding Director of Teaching Schools South West (TSSW) as one of six Department for Education's test and learn Teaching School Hubs with Kingsbridge Community College the lead school. A year later, with the roll-out of 81 further Teaching School Hubs as national centres of excellence, Martin orchestrated combined of operations with the newly formed Colyton Teaching School Hub, with Colyton Grammar School the lead school to create SWIFT.

## 1. What did you anticipate from your role of leading the Test and Learn Teaching Schools South West (TSSW)?

I anticipated that there was a great opportunity to create a system for schools that was more joined-up with less duplication, and less overload of providers delivering similar programmes.

This, of course, was mainly the professional development Early Career Framework (ECF) programme, before the launch of the reformed National Professional Qualifications (NPQ's) and before the Department for Education's Golden Thread of professional development.

My role was to focus on bringing together partners who were experienced in making significant contributions in the area and included the former Teaching School Alliances and Multi Academy Trusts who were emerging onto the scene and growing rapidly. As part of my role, I anticipated bringing together the different components into a coherent partnership framework.

## 2. What do you believe to be the most important function for Teaching School Hubs and has that changed over the past four years?

The most important function is to provide high-quality professional development for teachers and leaders because we know that if teachers and leaders engage in high-quality professional development, it has a positive impact on the quality of what they do in the classroom and the outcomes for young people.

Teaching School Hubs also have a key role to play in the teacher recruitment and retention agenda.

Recruitment, by improving initial teacher training (ITT) and making it accessible to more people.

Retention, in running high-quality Early Career Framework programmes that support new teachers, and inspire them to stay in the profession for longer, and to provide a pathway for more experienced school leaders through the NPQs so that this journey of growing and developing continues beyond the first few years of teaching.

Therefore, well trained and supported teachers are more likely to stay in the profession for the longer-term and Teaching School Hubs are making an important contribution to the recruitment and retention of teachers.

It is also important to create a coherent and accessible professional development structure for Schools and Trusts.

One of the drawbacks of the previous iterations of Teaching Schools was working with a large and disparate number of Teaching School Alliances – along the lines of 14 across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, all of which were providing their own professional development and initial teacher training and as a Teaching School Hub we wanted to create a clear and accessible marketplace for schools to access high-quality professional development. A clear marketplace incentivises and supports schools to engage in professional development.

## 3. What has been the most constructive learning point to date in your tenure as Executive Director of SWIFT?

It is more of a validation and something that is constantly validated for me is the importance of partnership in building long-term high-quality partnerships based on strong relationships with trust, a genuine collaboration, sharing and a generosity between partners. I enjoy nurturing partnerships and I am continuously reminded of their importance in every we do.

## 4. What do you find to be the most personally rewarding for you in the role?

Personally, I have always enjoyed seeing people flourish in their roles and organisations and knowing that as Teaching School Hubs, we are enabling colleagues across the profession to take on new opportunities. Whether it is to design an ITT curriculum, become an ECF Mentor, lead ECF Mentors or facilitate an NPQ.

I think that these opportunities across the partnership are truly inspiring and we know that they can make an important difference to people's professional lives.

In addition, we now have a not-insignificant SWIFT Central Team of ten people and it is very gratifying to see them grow and develop as individuals and as a team to embrace challenges and celebrate successes.

Interview by Jude Owens, SWIFT Executive Assistant

READ THE FULL INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN SMITH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SWIFT [HERE](#)

# From Expert to Novice | The Education Endowment Foundation's Modelling Framework

*'Modelling by the teacher is a cornerstone of effective teaching.'*

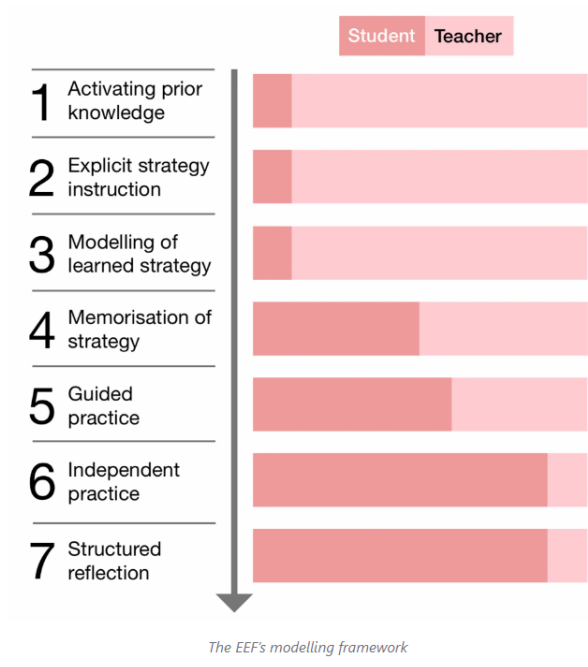
*"This is because, by verbalising our thinking, we make the implicit explicit. We give the novice a guided tour of the engine."*

Were a novice able to peek into the mind of an expert, they would see the web of concepts, strategies, routines and subroutines that lie hidden behind the performance of a complex task. They would also see the bursts of thwarted inspiration, the dead ends and self-doubts.

But only seeing the end result, the novice assumes the expert has achieved task completion in one giant stride. So, writing a novel is like laying an egg. Winning a race is just a matter of talent. Without insight into the hidden complexities, it might even look like magic.

Recommendation 3 of the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning guidance report states: 'Modelling by the teacher is a cornerstone of effective teaching.' This is because, by verbalising our thinking, we make the implicit explicit. We give the novice a guided tour of the engine.

This is easier said than done, so to support this process the guidance report includes the following seven-step modelling framework:



Compared to the *I do – We do – You do* conception of modelling this Framework has several advantages. Firstly, it reminds us to prompt the learner to think about prior knowledge, helping to build schema and direct attention – crucial if we want them to acquire rather than just observe the strategy we intend to model.

Step 2 is all about clarity. The temptation is to give a brief overview of the strategy and then engage in the modelling process, but even this can be too sudden for a novice learner.

If you've ever experienced this, you will know what it feels like: initial enthusiasm quickly followed by mounting frustration.

To prevent this, before we begin modelling (Step 3), we clearly lay out the whole journey. Here is where we are, here is where we are going, and here are the stepping stones in between – pay particular attention to that one because it is a bit wobbly.

What else makes this Framework different from the *I do – We do – You do* version? Answer: Steps 4 and 7, 'memorisation of the strategy' and 'structured reflection'. The point of these steps is that, if at the end of the modelling process, students do not walk away with the strategy we are modelling, then all we have really done is lead them through a process without developing their understanding.

With the teacher's prompting, they can move from point A to point B to point C, but they do not understand why and they cannot do it by themselves.

## A Worked Example

Part of our Theory of Change is that it is not enough to present the evidence: you have to engage with it, talk about it, work out what you know and do not know. A worked example will help you conceptualise the steps, but we need to go further.

With the modelling framework, and with metacognition in general, it is particularly important to make it subject-specific – a generic understanding will only get you so far. For that reason, our Regional Implementation Leads worked with each school's Metacognition Implementation Lead to prompt subject or phase-level thinking.

To further prompt helpful discussion around the modelling framework with CELT, we used the following questions that might help to support your own subject-specific discussions:

- How long will it take to model the strategy? (It may span a sequence of lessons)
- What questions / assessment might you use to check whether the strategy has been well understood?
- Which steps were the most difficult to design?
- Which steps do you most need to think about, rehearse or even script?
- How likely is it that you will use all parts of the framework without prompting, that it will become automatic?
- What might help to make it a regular part of your practice?



By Kingsbridge Research School

READ THE FULL ARTICLE [HERE](#) AND FIND MORE ABOUT KINGSBRIDGE RESEARCH SCHOOL [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 SWIFT Executive Assistant, Jude Owens | [Jude.Owens@sw-ift.org.uk](mailto:Jude.Owens@sw-ift.org.uk)

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