



Balcarras Teaching School Partnership

Newsletter Number 23: February 2020

Partnership News

Our teaching school continues to grow and goes from strength and strength. It is wonderful to see the support from our partnership schools is ever present at our events. The autumn term saw the successful return of subject networks, as well as offering a range of bespoke training opportunities including:

- 20 NQTs across the partnership, both primary and secondary, participated in our programme which seeks to support the existing provision within schools.
- Guest speaker Steve Garnett delivered two sessions for partners on cognitive load theory, as well as guidance and resources to aid raising boy's attainment.
- The Geography department were joined by staff from partnership schools and further afield for their excellent GCSE and A level exam review courses.
- Pippa Walker delivered an informative and practical session on working with adopted and cared for children.

This newsletter is packed full of further opportunities for you and your colleagues to be involved in.

We are delighted to welcome Satveer Nijjar back to Balcarras for guidance on working with students who self-harm. The Learning Culture will be joining us to deliver training for subject leaders on implementing the Ofsted framework changes.

Having listened to feedback from colleagues across the teaching school partnership, we will be offering a bespoke session for pastoral teams on working with students experiencing bereavement. We also look forward to seeing the return of the November Teaching Conference, where we will be joined by Keynote speaker Mary Myatt, author of 'The Curriculum: Gallimaufry to coherence'.



MFL Subject Network

Secondary

Date: Tuesday 3rd March 2020
Time: 13:30 - 15:30
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Our highly successfully MFL Network will continue to meet throughout the year, with an array of topics being discussed and guest speakers delivering sessions to assist in the teaching of MFL. This session will focus on looking back on AQA GCSE Languages in 2019 and forward to 2020.

New & Aspiring Middle Leaders

Secondary

Date: Wednesday 18th March 2020
Time: 16:00 –18:00, coffee on arrival from 15:45
Venue: Pittville School, Albert Road, Cheltenham, GL52 3JD

We are holding the second session for new or aspiring middle leaders. The draft programme is outlined below but firmer details will follow in due course.

Session 2

- Karen Foster (Deputy Head at Pittville)
How to work effectively between your staff and SLT
- Helen Chong (Director of Music at Balcarras)
Top tips for a successful Head of department

Student Self Harm Awareness Training

Secondary

Date: Thursday 26th March 2020
Time: 15:45 – 17:45
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

We are excited to have Satveer joining us once more to deliver a session on raising awareness for self harm. The aim of all sessions is to build confidence around the subject of self-harm by reducing stigma, anxiety and fear.

Broadly speaking the session will be split into two sections, better understanding self-harm and then supporting someone who self-harms. The content will include:

- Statistics and definition of self-harm
- Why people turn to self-harm – triggers and functions
- Myths & language use
- How to support someone who self-harms
- Broaching suspected self-harm
- Alternative strategies, focusing on stopping and more

Pastoral Conference Secondary

Date: Thursday 21st May 2020
Time: 11:30 –14:00, coffee on arrival from 11:00 to include lunch at 13:30
Venue: Balcarras, School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Our pastoral network will be returning this summer term and offering an opportunity for focus on the importance of pastoral care in creating an atmosphere in which each pupil can achieve. Themes will include behavioural intervention, sharing good practice and identifying pastoral principles that can be applied to each attending school. More information on the next network will follow shortly. Colleagues are invited to stay after lunch and join us for the Grief and Bereavement in Schools session which will be held in the afternoon, see details below.

Grief and Bereavement in Schools Cross phase

Date: Thursday 21st May 2020
Time: 14:00 –17:00, registration and lunch from 13:30
Venue: Balcarras, School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

We will be joined by Childhood Bereavement UK in order to deliver a session that aims to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence to support pupils in your school who are experiencing loss and grief. Any Head of House, Head of Year or Pastoral staff are welcome to attend. An agenda will follow shortly.

Numbers are limited on this session so please book early.

Years 4, 5 and 6 teachers visit day to observe Year 7 classes Primary

Date: Friday 22nd May 2020
Time: 08:45-13:30 coffee on arrival
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

This visit day is a repeat of a highly successful day that we ran last year. The transition work that we have done has highlighted the value of visiting schools cross phase. We are therefore holding a day where Year 5 or 6 teachers can come and shadow a Year 7 class for the morning.

We will try ensure that an English or Maths lesson are seen and then a mix of different subjects will also be included. There will be an opportunity to speak to some members of the transition group and some heads of department too.

Numbers are limited on this session so please book early.

Defining and enhancing the role of the subject leader - managing curriculum change in light of the new Ofsted framework Secondary

Date: Thursday 4th June 2020
Time: 16:00 - 18:00
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

This event will give subject leaders, subject specialists and faculty leaders a range of coaching skills and techniques that will support them in ensuring that there is a powerful culture of sharing and cascading of good and outstanding practice across their teams. We focus on how to encourage opportunities for a professional dialogue where colleagues reflect on their subject knowledge, approaches to classroom pedagogy and the development of effective learning and meta-cognitive skills. The introduction of the new OFSTED framework and the emphasis on curriculum as the driver for quality in education highlights the importance of the role of the subject leader.

Year 5 Science: Stretch and Challenge Day Primary

Date: Wednesday 10th June 2020
Time: 09:30 - 15:35
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Students will explore a range of exciting scientific concepts with subject specialist teachers in biology, chemistry and physics. Students will be fully supervised for the duration of the day by science staff from Balcarras School.

This event is invitation only, but please do get in touch if you are interested to register your interest.

Geography conference Secondary

Date: Monday 15th June 2020
Time: 10:00 - 13:30
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Our highly successfully Geography Network will continue to meet throughout the year, with an array of topics being discussed and guest speakers delivering sessions to assist in the teaching of Geography.

More details on our next meeting will follow shortly.

English Network

Cross Phase

Date: Tuesday 16th June 2020

Time: 14:00 - 17:00 lunch from 13:30

Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

This summer term will also see the return our English network, where we will be discussing depth, greater depth and cross-phase curriculum work with an emphasis on challenging texts and HOW to access them. We are delighted to announce that we will be joined by Bob Cox. Bob is an independent educational consultant, writer and teacher coach who works nationally and internationally to support depth and creativity in a richer English curriculum. Bob has been speaking at national and international conferences to apply 'opening doors' strategies to raise standards in English and to make links between quality texts and quality writing. Before that Bob taught English for 23 years.

More information will follow shortly.

Full Meeting of the Partnership

Cross Phase

Date: Wednesday 24th June 2020

Time: 15:00 - 16:30

Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Every year we invite all the head teachers of partner schools to attend the annual meeting to review the progress of the partnership and discuss our targets for the year ahead. This gives every school the chance to shape the provision offered by the Partnership.

The agenda is as follows:

- Review of 2019-20
- Discussion of programme for 2020-21

NQT Network

Cross Phase

Date: Wednesday 1st July 2020

Time: 16:00 - 17:30

Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

Session 3: The future

The last NQT session of the year will focus on career development. There will be a champagne (well, cava) reception to congratulate the NQTs on making it through to the end of the year. The agenda is as follows:

- NQT+ 1: the challenges ahead
- Focussing on the skills needed for leadership
- Opportunities for career progression

Transition evening - Supporting KS2 and KS3 transition in line with the new curriculum changes

Cross Phase

Date: Monday 29th June 2020
Time: 16:00 - 17:30
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF

On Monday 29th June we are holding a transition evening event. We will have our secondary subject leaders at Balcarras available to share with primary colleagues our KS3 curriculum offer. This will be a brilliant opportunity for primary subject leads to come and take a look at the KS3 curriculum in their subject area and for networks to be set up between primary and secondary colleagues. We would also like to invite other secondary schools in the partnership to attend and bring details of their curriculum offer at KS3. The detail of this evening is still to be finalised so suggestions from both primary and secondary colleagues as to how this would best work (and please comment on the suitability of the suggested date) are very welcome.

Please contact Roxanne Collinson with your suggestions rxc@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk.

Senior leader's forum: Pastoral focus

We will have a senior leaders meeting in the final half term of the year for pastoral assistant and deputy heads cross phase. If you have any requests for a focus for that meeting please do email Liz Cullis (ejc@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk) and we can design an agenda to suit.

8th Annual Teaching Conference: Getting Curriculum Ready

Cross Phase

Date: Friday 27th November 2020
Time: 08:30 - 13:30
Venue: Balcarras School, East End Road, Cheltenham, GL53 8QF
Cost: £120.00 for non partnership schools



We are delighted to announce the return of our annual teaching conference in November. This years focus will be on preparing for and implementing the changes being made to the curriculum at primary and secondary levels.

Our keynote speaker will be Mary Myatt, author of 'The curriculum: Gallimaufry to coherence'. Mary spends time in schools talking to pupils, teachers and leaders about learning, leadership and the curriculum. She maintains that there are no quick fixes and that great outcomes for pupils are not achieved through tick boxes. Her recent works add to the debate on curriculum principles and practices, examining curriculum theory and day to day classroom practices.

Reviews

On 18th September, the **Psychology department** were delighted to host an AQA exam review network this term. The department were joined by teaching school partners and non-members to discuss and feedback on the 2019 A-level alongside guest speaker Tracey Elder, Head of Curriculum for Psychology at AQA. The session focused on exam tips, interpretation of mark schemes, as well as what is expected of students. Delegates were invited to share their own marking experiences, as well as preparing any questions for Tracey.

On Tuesday 12th November, Balcarras hosted a **History AQA exam review**. The history department were joined by a guest speaker from AQA and had the opportunity for feedback and advice following the 2019 summer exams. The session was described by M.Stoker (Head of History) as 'very successful and very useful for all.'

On 3rd and 4th December the **Geography department** hosted GCSE and A-level exam reviews. Both days were excellent, with very useful resources being provided and attendees came away with a lot of practical ideas to be able to put in place within their SOW and their lessons. Both speakers were great and very knowledgeable, they gave practical advice and feedback on not just the exams but also daily ways we can ensure the best progress for pupils.

A **working with adopted children session** was held on Wednesday 22nd January, ran by Pip Walker who was incredibly insightful and highlighted the importance of attachment on children from a young age. It was eye opening to explore not only the psychological effects that trauma and neglect can have on children but also the impact on their physical health. The training highlighted the importance of ensuring that teachers are able to support students who have been affected by trauma and neglect and that with the right help and support, young people are able to move forward and be successful in whatever they choose to do.

If you would like to book places for your colleagues on any of the activities please contact:

Jo Newman: jmn@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

Liz Cullis: ejc@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

Roxy Collinson: rxcl@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

or visit: <https://goo.gl/forms/1a0qEYWe6QrdTl1t2> where you can book any of the above events.

All events are FREE for existing members of the Balcarras Teaching school partnership, (with the exception of the November conference) .

For non-partners there is a fee of £50 for all events and an invoice will be sent to these schools.