

Spring 2019

Report from Senior Education Liaison Officer

It appears that the April showers have begun and another full term is about to end so I just wanted to bring you up-to-date with the Local School Improvement Fund (LSIF) projects and my work as Senior Education Liaison Officer.

The **LSIF** is accountable to the **Slough School Improvement Board** (SSIB) which includes the Chairs and representatives from SPHA and SASH. Reports are given to this board and funding updates shared. At the last meeting we discussed in detail how to optimise the remaining funding; a secondary project hopefully engaging five to six schools is being planned to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged students.

The last two terms have, to be fair, been relatively quiet with few new bids received. New bids include the Virtual School who have been allocated £10,000 for a project running across primary, secondary and special provision for children looked after. This research-based project is reviewing what makes effective provision leading to children and young people making good progress whether they be at the same school or different schools to when they became CLA.

Visits have taken place to Chalvey Nursery, Cippenham Infant, Herschel Grammar, Langley Hall Primary Academy and Montem to review their projects, namely: assessment procedures in EYFS; early language development; Young Health Champions, Hooked on Books; and improving outcomes for disadvantaged students. It is really exciting to learn about the quality of work happening in these schools as well as those with whom they are working. Chalvey nursery's project is working with all five nurseries, Cippenham Infant is working across four settings on the Cippenham campus including the children's centre, Herschel are working with three secondaries and are about to start pilot work with four primaries. Whilst LHPA have worked independently they are now ready to share their work with other schools who are looking to re-ignite a passion for guided reading. Hooked on Books is a super programme and one that St Mary's are going to discuss and see in action as I write this today. Montem is working with three additional schools, two of which sit outside the Park Federation. Schools have really taken on board the spirit of cross-school collaboration enabling all Slough pupils to benefit from shared expertise and training. It is a pleasure to have been able to facilitate this work with the funding available from Slough. Visits to all remaining schools will take place in the summer term so watch out for an email if you are one of these!

In the summer term the Senior Leaders' Seminar will include a one hour 'show and tell' session where all schools who have led and / or participated in projects will be invited to share their project aims and outcomes. This will enable a real celebration of this unique opportunity and hopefully spur schools on to continue collaborative working long after the pennies have gone...



...which brings me onto my next piece of work...**The Slough Schools' Collaborative Directory** which has been discussed at SSIB and falls within my SELO remit to 'make it so' (Jean Luc Picard for Trekkies).

I make no apologies for being a bit of a nag about the emails I have been sending but it is important as we struggle to afford decent externally-led professional learning and dialogue that we turn to each other and utilise strengths within our own settings, here in Slough. As you will know, from the emails, I have put together a bullet point list of the areas where schools felt they were performing well (I use performing in the loosest sense and not purely academically) and maybe had something to offer in terms of support for other schools. This then became a secondary and primary including nursery directory where aspects were grouped together for easy access. These directories were sent to all schools for completion, to include the name of the person who would deliver the support and what the support might consist of, e.g. twilight sessions, one to one sessions etc. The directories, once complete will go on the newly relaunched STSA website www.stsa.online as well as The Link so that all schools can access these. Huge thanks to those headteachers who have returned their contributions really promptly, but sadly I am still waiting for so many returns 😞.

Senior Leaders' Seminars have focused on moving forward with a school-led system and have been planned and delivered by a small working party Upton Court and Langley Grammar Schools within their remit as Slough Teaching Schools Alliance, Wexham Court, Priory and St Mary's. As you will know, if you have attended these sessions at Dorney Court, we have explored a variety of options in terms of school-led systems and how we will continue to do the best for our staff professional development and pupil outcomes when there is no school improvement funding. Johnny and Cate have worked incredibly hard behind the scenes to put together a package of support for schools to buy into and whilst we all acknowledge that there is some fine-tuning to be done for the vast majority of schools this has come as a relief as I know I, for one, do not have the time, energy or capacity to source all the support on offer.



I will be exploring further how different local authorities have developed systems for school-led systems, whether these are supported by the authority, have evolved through lack of support from the local authority or simply because schools have wanted to create their own systems. Whilst we looked at various models in the first senior leaders' seminar, and thanks to Andrew Griffin from Claycots for talking to us about the model he helped to create in Harrow, I hope to have a couple of people speak to us about the models they are part of or have created so that it gives us a better flavour of what we need to do to make such a system effective and successful.

On closing, please remember that there is still some money in the LSIF pot. Whilst a portion of this is reserved for the secondary project (approximately £30,000) there will still be some funds available. Projects do not need to start until the **new** academic year, but bids must be made before the end of **this** academic year. Therefore, if, pending pupil outcomes, there is something you want to put in place for a group of schools, then please do complete the application form and get this back to me in before May half term. Relevant paperwork and information can be found here: <https://thelink.slough.gov.uk/schools/school-to-school-support/local-school-improvement-fund>

Wishing everyone a happy Easter.

Rachel Cross

April 2019