



Spring 2 2025

Newsletter

Sharing Leading Practice

In this edition of the newsletter, we preview the themes of our May conference—artificial intelligence and inclusion. We also have details of 5 sharing leading practice events.

Many thanks to the schools who have offered to host a Sharing Leading Practice event. Also, thanks to the schools who have offered to share their approaches at our conference. We hope to confirm the full programme and location at our next hub meeting on **Wednesday March 26th 1-3pm. It is remote meeting. Our summer conference will take place on Tuesday May 20th.**

If you are interested in a Geography CPD opportunity please check out the Mark Enser CPD offer.

Lastly, thanks to all the schools who have shared information about their strengths and areas for collaboration. The process of circulating this information has begun. As part of our **“Knowledge Exchange”** we will be sharing both a School Support Directory and a Best Practice Directory.

With best wishes,

Emma Ford and Simon Goodwin, Aspire Hub Managers.



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The Challenge Partners School Support Directory

Once again, we showcase for you some of the contents of the national Challenge Partners School Support Directory

The directory is searchable, and can be found [here](#)

Each item identifies strategies adopted by a school together with contact details for the school. All Aspire Hub schools will have a log-in to the Challenge Partner website. Here are a few areas of excellence published over the last year on the theme of **Maths, English and Digital Technologies**.

You can find a range of articles, resources and links to good practice about **Mathematics** [here](#).

There are 3 reports from Primary schools and 2 from Secondary.

[Tolworth Girls School and Sixth- Form](#)

[Heron Hall Academy](#)

are two very strong and innovative Secondary English departments.

[Selworthy Special School](#) have an entry for “First skills for learning: an ambitious and unique pre-phonics programme for learners with SEND”.

There are also a wide range of schools who share their progress with developing **reading** across the curriculum—including our very own [Hillside High School](#) and [Ridgeway High School](#).

You can see an exhaustive list [here](#).

Digital Technologies,

Three Aspire Hub schools have areas of excellence in the directory

[Parochial CofE Primary and Nursery School—Digital Excellence in Key Stage 2](#)

[Prescot Primary School - Using technology to support teaching and learning across KS1 and KS2](#)

[Sunny Bank Primary School - Use of Technology \(iLearn initiative\)](#)

Aspire Hub Areas of Excellence

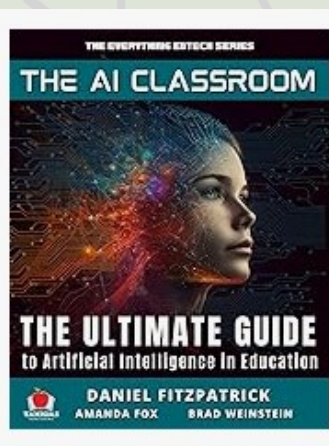
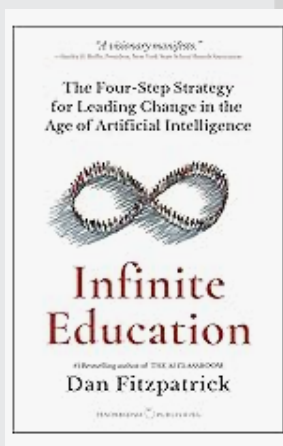
Every Aspire Hub school with an accredited Area of Excellence is listed under the “Knowledge Exchange” tab on our website. You can find detailed descriptions of these Areas of Excellence on the “Sharing Leading Practice” page— [this direct link will take you there](#).

Artificial Intelligence

Our conference on Tuesday May 20th will be devoted to artificial intelligence and inclusion.

Several schools have recommended to us Dan Fitzpatrick, the “AI Educator”. You can see Dan on [Linkedin](#). You can see his website here—[Your Journey from AI Novice to AI Educator](#)

Dan is a well known and highly respected author and presenter. He has been recommended to us by local schools. You can listen to Dan’s podcast [here](#).



Schools within the Hub have recommended the following AI tools-

<https://olex.ai/> for (among other things) whole class feedback and the “Imaginator” tool.

[TeachMateAI](#) for report writing, school communications and many other things!

<https://sltai.co.uk/> tools specifically for senior leaders, for example producing evaluative reports.

[Claude](#) a large language model that allows you to develop “projects”.

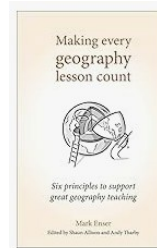
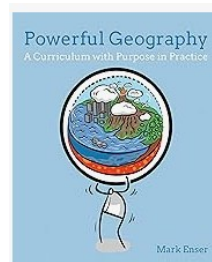
Inclusion

We also recommend taking a look at the books and podcasts of two other educationalists—Amjad Ali and Ann Palmer. Amjad’s work focusses on the leadership of inclusion and strategies for teachers. <https://www.trythisteaching.com>

Ann’s website is <https://www.figtreeinternational.org.uk/> and her podcast is here—[The A-Z of Effective Leadership](#).

Mark Enser’s Geography PD

[Mark Enser](#) is a leading figure in the world of Geography. You may be aware of some of his books.



He is currently working with School Improvement Liverpool. We took advantage of this to get in touch and ask him to support our schools.

There are two options-

Mark will run two half day sessions on Geography—one for Primary schools on May 22nd and one for Secondary schools on June 19th. This will be FREE to Aspire Hub schools. Please complete this [expression of interest form](#) if you are interested

Mark can also visit your school to do a deep dive into geography, consult with staff and devise a professional development programme to move Geography forward in your school. Mark charges £650 for this. If this is of interest please contact Mark directly—mark_enser@yahoo.co.uk

SEND and Exclusion

A recent study in December 2024 has analysed school exclusions and attainment outcomes using data from England’s National Pupil Database for 2019. [Gorard et al \(2024\)](#) note that poverty and special educational needs (SEN) are key factors influencing exclusions and lower academic performance, rather than ethnicity. To see the study in full click [here](#).

Inequalities and blind spots in SEND Provision

A report, by independent research group the Education Policy Institute (EPI) and funded by the Nuffield Foundation has identified the following inequalities and blind spots:

- SEND training should be mandatory part of ITT
- Research into differences in school identification and recording practices
- Lower odds of SEND identification for children in academies
- Reduced chances of receiving an EHCP for primary school children living in the most academised LAs
- Differences in identification for summer-born children and boys
- Lower chances of identification for:
 - children with greater absence from school
 - children who are mobile between schools
 - Children who speak English as an additional language
- Identification is strongly associated with childhood deprivation
- Under-identification of children whose needs are less visible and apparent rationing of provision within deprived contexts
-

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/epi-report-sets-out-7-policy-recommendations-to-tackle-send-postcode-lottery/>

Attendance Affected by Parents Working From Home

Ofsted chief Martyn Oliver has stated that the shift to hybrid working has altered the culture on school attendance:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/feb/16/parents-working-from-home-affecting-school-attendance-ofsted-chief>

Ofsted consultation goes live

Summary of Proposals:

Report Cards: Giving parents/carers more detailed information than the current reports, including a new 5-point grading scale to evaluate the school and summaries of what inspectors found.

Education Inspection Toolkits: Shows providers and inspectors the evaluation areas for inspections and how they will assess and grade providers

Inspection Methodology: Changes to how we carry out inspection.

Full Inspections & Monitoring Inspections, State-Funded Schools: Plans to end ungraded inspections of state-funded schools and change monitoring programmes to check that timely action is taken to raise standards.

Identifying State-Funded Schools Causing Concern: A new approach to how they place a school into a category of concern.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/improving-the-way-ofsted-inspects-education>

Broken relationships between schools and home rising

A TES investigation has seen a rise in parental vexatious complaints taking up significant amounts of school time with the government being urged to protect schools. One north west headteacher has sued parents for harassment.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/feb/16/secondary-school-teacher-paid-damages-after-alleged-harassment-by-pupils-parents>

Sharing Leading Practice Days

Theme Join us at Prescott Primary School for an inspiring day showcasing how iPads are revolutionising teaching and learning in primary education.

Date Thurs 19th June 2025

Time 9:30am to 2:30pm

Location Prescott Primary & Nursery School, Maryville Road, Prescott, L34 2TA

Places 20

Booking <https://forms.office.com/e/zQ2XBLUAWQ>

Theme Join us at Knowsley Lane Primary School for an inspiring day showcasing our Early Years Department.

Date 8th May 2025

Time 9.30am – 1.30pm

Location Knowsley Lane Primary School, Astley Road, Huyton, Liverpool, L36 8DB

Places 25

Booking <https://forms.office.com/e/Fr6wg5yxuN>

Theme Join us at Higher Lane Primary School to embrace the importance of creating a nurturing culture which provides equal opportunities for all and fosters an environment where every child feels valued and included

Date Monday 30th June 2025

Time 10:00am to 2:30pm

Location Higher Lane Primary School Egerton Road Whitefield Manchester M45 7EX

Places 12

Booking <https://forms.office.com/e/NtZbAsg7U8>

Theme Join us at Hillside High School for an inspiring day looking at approaches to whole school reading

Date 13th May

Time 11am-2.30pm

Location Hillside High School, Breeze Hill, Bootle, L20 9NU

Places 20

Booking [Click here to book](#)

Theme Join us at Wade Deacon High School for an inspiring day focusing on classroom culture, from intent to implementation

Date Friday 27th June

Time 9:30am-12.30pm

Location Wade Deacon High School, Birchfield Road, Widnes, WA817D

Places 20

Booking [Click here to book](#)

Hub Dates for your Calendar

Spring 2: Wednesday 26th March Virtual 1pm to 3pm

Attendance is compulsory for all Aspire Hub schools

Summer 1: Tuesday 20th May Face to Face conference on Inclusion and AI. — Venue TBC — All Day

Attendance is compulsory for all Aspire Hub schools

Autumn 1: Wednesday 20th September

Face to Face — Venue TBC — All Day

Attendance is compulsory for all Aspire Hub schools



OLEVI Power of Coaching session 2

Monday 28th April 2025 - Morning only - 9:30am to 12pm

Attendance optional

OLEVI Advanced Power of Coaching sessions 2 and 3

Wednesday 30th April 2025 - Full Day - 9:30am to 4pm and Thursday

22nd May 2025 - Morning only - 9:30am to 12pm

Attendance optional

Mark Enser Geography CPD (remote)

Primary : May 22nd 2-5pm

Secondary: June 19th 2-5pm

Attendance optional.

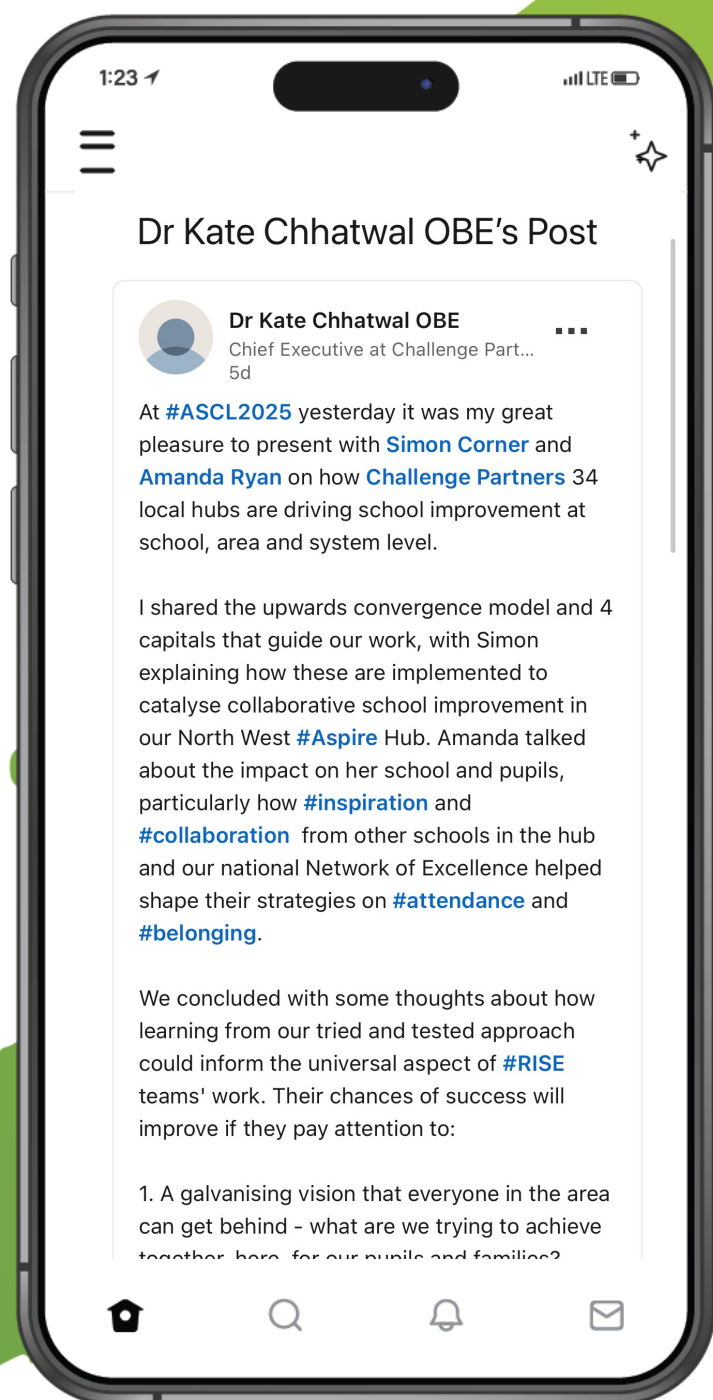
Challenge Partners Membership Renewal

It will shortly be time to consider renewing your Aspire Hub membership for the next academic year—2025-2026.

For a reminder of all of the benefits of being a Challenge Partners school (and a member of our Aspire Hub, click [here](#).



Latest updates from across the Hub





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