

## 1. Teaching School alliances – the national perspective

Teaching schools were proposed in the 2010 White Paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’. Designated teaching schools are outstanding schools that work with others to provide high-quality training and development to new and experienced school staff. They are part of the government’s plan to give schools a central role in raising standards by developing a self-improving and sustainable school-led system. The goal was to create a network of 600 teaching schools by 2016, which has been substantially achieved.

The Teaching School Council continues to champion the ideology of creating a mature truly school led, self-improving system. The TCS’s aim is to ensure that by 2020 the Teaching School and system leader networks across the country continue to grow in strength and be trusted to take on greater responsibility for the development, growth and improvement of our own profession. The Council is organised into regions, and is currently seeking to establish clear regional and sub-regional network structures which operate across local authority boundaries to providing a collaborative, coherent and coordinated approach to sharing effective practice, resources and provision. The vision of the Council is to support a truly inclusive school-led system that is driven by local approaches that work for local schools.

The March 2016 white paper ***Educational Excellence Everywhere*** makes it clear that the Government will route funding for school improvement increasingly through teaching school alliances and system leaders such as NLEs.

*5.5 But we will also significantly expand the number of teaching schools and national leaders of education – with a targeted approach focused on areas where they are most needed – to create a comprehensive national network of school-led support for leaders to draw on as they choose. **Funding for school improvement will be increasingly routed through these system leaders**, who will be held to account for the quality and impact of the support they provide.*

*5.7. Many of the country’s best leaders are already working together to spread excellent practice based on evidence of what works. We therefore intend to legislate so that **responsibility for school improvement will sit squarely with the best leaders and the best schools** – meaning that those with experience of turning schools around and achieving high standards will be able to drive change across the system.*

*5.8. This change will also allow schools to form clusters and draw on support based on their school’s specific needs and requirements. It will be a dynamic system, where **schools choose the partnerships that will deliver continuous improvement for their own school and for others**. .... most schools will join or establish a MAT and in many cases, they will draw school improvement support from the MAT. But we do not want to create monopolies – schools will also be able to choose to access support from other sources, including teaching school alliances and system leaders with high standards in their own schools.*

*5.13. To avoid the situation where the strong get stronger and the weak fall further behind, we will invest in a targeted way in up to 800 more NLEs and **up to 300 more teaching schools**, ensuring full coverage across the country. We will work with the Teaching Schools Council and existing system leaders to support and develop the network – for example, by **partnering schools with the potential to become strong system leaders with existing teaching schools** and NLEs.*

*5.18. To enable this to work effectively, teaching schools will be centres of excellence, taking on a more focused role that prioritises:*

- a. Co-ordinating and delivering high quality school-based ITT
- b. Providing high quality school-to-school support to spread excellent practice
- c. Providing evidence-based professional development for teachers and leaders across their network

*5.19. Teaching schools will also adopt an important role as **brokerage ‘hubs’** for other system leaders, facilitating access to improvement support by **coordinating the supply and activity of NLEs and SLEs**. They will be responsible for providing or brokering effective support for schools that need extra help.*

*5.21. From September 2017, **school improvement funding will be increasingly routed through teaching schools** in line with their core functions outlined above. In turn, they will be held to account more effectively for the quality, reach and impact of the support which they broker. This new fund will focus on **building capacity across the system** and ensuring the most vulnerable schools improve and do not fail.*

## 2. School improvement in Slough from October 2016

The LA's proposed option for school improvement ('Option 6') is as follows:

*To develop a joint approach to school improvement with Cambridge Education and the Slough Teaching Schools Alliance (STSA). This option would be to develop a more holistic and coherent approach to school improvement between the two organisations. Cambridge Education would undertake the role as described in option five but working in parallel would be a reformed STSA of three or more schools who would be responsible for developing teachers, training teachers, developing teachers into leaders and promoting and developing networks. The STSA would be a conduit for bringing money and opportunities into Slough. The STSA would run the appropriate body service for NQTs. This option simplifies the current approach to school improvement within Slough. Schools have asked for this to happen, but it would see the end of the Slough Learning Partnership. There is a risk attached to this option which is the long term future of Teaching Schools is not known, however what is known is that the school-led system is here to stay and there are models in other areas of this type of collaborative approach working. This can be viewed as a medium term option that would need to evolve over time.*

The LA proposal therefore regards the Teaching School Alliance remit as follows:

- a) Initial teacher training;
- b) Appropriate Body service for accreditation and quality assurance of statutory induction;
- c) Continuing teacher professional development;
- d) Development and promotion of networks for teachers and leaders;
- e) Leadership development;
- f) A conduit for funding and opportunities

## 3. Current structure of the Slough Teaching School Alliance



**Upton Court  
Grammar School**

*Initial teacher  
training  
Research*



**Langley  
Grammar School**

*School-to-school  
support  
Specialist Leaders of  
Education*



**Lynch Hill  
Primary School**

*CPD and leadership  
development  
Succession planning*

**Higher Education  
Partners**

**Slough Learning  
Partnership**



Schools in Slough are considered to be part of the alliance if they are affiliated to the Slough Learning Partnership. The affiliation fee gives access to services at reduced rates. The SLP acts as the operational delivery arm for the CPD and school-to-support aspects of the Teaching School remit.

The Slough Learning Partnership consists of two companies:

- **Slough Learning Partnership** – a charitable trust which employs the staff
- **Slough Learning Services Limited** – a non-charitable VAT registered trading company through which traded services are managed.

#### 4. Current activity – STSA and SLP

The Slough Learning Partnership works on behalf of the designated teaching schools to deliver various aspects of the teaching school remit. The SLP also carries out other work which does not directly constitute teaching school activity.



#### 5. Proposed STSA structure

The proposal is for a simplified structure for the Teaching School alliance which retains the current designated teaching schools but develops a wider range of schools acting as partners.

<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Department for Education</b> - impact of funding</li> <li><b>Local steering group</b> – headteachers from primary, secondary, special and nursery phases</li> <li>Pan-Berkshire sub-regional TSC network → Teaching School Council</li> </ul>
<b>Designated teaching schools</b>	<p><i>Designated by DfE through NCTL as a multiple teaching school alliance</i></p> <p><i>Conduit of funding from DfE</i></p> <p><i>Able to bid for grants</i></p> <p><i>Conduit for school improvement funding from Sept 2017</i></p> <p><i>Initial Teacher Training coordination</i></p> <p><i>Appropriate Body for NQT</i></p> <p><i>Leadership of large-scale programmes</i></p>
<b>Strategic partner schools</b>	<p><i>Various roles which could include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>National Support Schools</i></li> <li><i>NLEs and SLEs</i></li> <li><i>Leaders of teacher/middle leader networks</i></li> <li><i>Centres of pedagogical excellence and expertise</i></li> <li><i>Coordinators/leaders of training programmes</i></li> <li><i>Leaders of particular initiatives</i></li> </ul>
<b>Strategic partner organisations</b>	<p><i>These could include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Higher Education Institutions for initial teacher training and research-based teacher development</i></li> <li><i>Slough Borough Council through Head of Education Services</i></li> <li><i>CAS Network of Computing Excellence</i></li> <li><i>National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics</i></li> </ul>

## **6. Key principles**

There are a number of principles which would underpin the work of the Slough Teaching School Alliance (STSA).

- a) The STSA exists to provide support to schools both in Slough and in the surrounding area – ie the operation of the alliance is not restricted to political boundaries.
- b) The STSA will regard itself as a champion of the school-led system and will actively seek to establish links with other teaching school alliances in the region.
- c) Affiliation to the STSA would be primarily based on participation rather than on an affiliation fee. Differential rates for traded services, eg for NQT Appropriate Body services may be applied for schools in and outside Slough local authority.
- d) In line with the DfE White Paper the core remit of the STSA is to provide
  - High quality school-based ITT
  - High quality school-to-school support to spread excellent practice
  - Evidence-based professional development for teachers and leaders

## **7. Proposed Teaching School Alliance activity for 2016-17**

<b>Initial Teacher training</b>	Schools Direct programme, salaried and unsalaried Support for assessment-only route
<b>Appropriate Body service for NQT induction</b>	Management of NQT assessments through online NQT Manager software. Training and support for NQT Manager use. Mentor training Quality assurance of induction process and assessments
<b>Ongoing teacher professional development</b>	Access to nationally recognised ITP and OTP programmes Themed network meetings for NQTs Teacher development networks (led by SLEs, hosted by partner schools) Teach-meet programme (organised by strategic partner schools) Conference-style training as appropriate to school needs, focusing on the development of pedagogy Training and development programmes in Computing and Mathematics through NCETM and CAS links.
<b>Leadership development</b>	Access to franchised leadership development programmes eg NPQML/NPQH and their successor programmes, SSAT Middle Leader development programme, Inspired to Lead etc. Termly Slough-focused headteacher day conferences on relevant themes. Targeted leadership development programmes.
<b>School to school support</b>	Maintenance of directory of local and regional system leaders, both designated (NLEs, SLEs, SSAT Lead Practitioners) and locally-recognised. Brokerage of school-to-support. Recruitment, designation and ongoing support for SLEs.
<b>Economies of scale</b>	The Alliance will continue to act as licence holder for the currently operational brokered deals eg Educare online training package, FFT data, Sophos system, etc. (Licences currently held by Slough Learning Services Ltd)

## **8. Funding**

The Teaching School Alliance will receive a core grant from the DfE, expected to be a maximum £40,000 in 2016-17. This is sufficient only for minimal leadership and administrative support. The Alliance proposes that funds currently held by the Slough Learning Partnership be transferred to the Alliance for the purpose of directly employing staff to provide additional leadership and administrative capacity to support ITT and CPD programmes, organising events and activity programmes. The existing company Slough Learning Services Ltd will be used for traded services and as the licence holder for brokered economy of scale deals such as Educare. The Alliance will also request the LA set aside money for a school support fund, to backfill schools providing support to other schools. The Alliance will also consider further activity as negotiated with the Slough's Head of Education Services, subject to a fair funding allocation. Further detail on funding proposals is given in Appendix 2.

## **Appendix 1: Teaching School Alliance organisational/operational structure for 2016-17**

### **a) Accountability**

The Teaching School Alliance will be accountable to the following stakeholders:

<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Note</b>
<b>Department for Education</b> through the National College for Teaching and Leadership	<p>The STSA is accountable to the DfE for the spending and impact of the Collaborative Fund annual grant.</p> <p>An online annual return to NCTL is made in July each year for the previous year's grant.</p> <p>The NCTL have set out general KPIs for teaching school alliances.</p>
<b>The Slough schools' community</b>	STSA will have an advisory board which includes representatives from primary, secondary and special phases. Representatives will be appointed by the phase groups. The advisory board will meet on at least a termly basis.
<b>The 'self-improving system' through the Teaching School Council network</b>	Teaching schools are increasingly accountable to the 'self-improving system' through the work of the Teaching School Council and its regional subsidiary networks. There are termly meetings of the Pan-Berkshire teaching schools' network, with a remit to share good practice and coordinate activities across the region to support the most effective use of resources. Berkshire is in turn represented on the executive board of the SE Region of the Teaching Schools Council.
<b>Slough Local Authority</b>	STSA will be accountable to Slough Local Authority through Schools Forum for the impact of any future funding which is provided from centrally retained DSG and relating to a particular strand of school improvement work. The terms of any such commissioned work will be set out in an agreed SLA or Partnership Agreement between STSA and SBC.

### **b) Organisational structure and staffing**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Proposals</b>
Designated Teaching Schools	<p>Two senior posts totalling 1.0-1.2 FTE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching School Director (ITT and Qualification)</li> <li>• Teaching School Director (CPD and Leadership development)</li> </ul> <p>Administrative support totalling 2.5 FTE and covering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITT programme administration</li> <li>• NQT induction administration</li> <li>• Events organisation and management</li> <li>• Bookings</li> <li>• Invoicing and financial control</li> </ul>
Strategic Partner Schools	Designated system leaders – SLEs, NLEs. Other accredited practitioners

Staff from Slough Learning Partnership be transferred across to the Slough Teaching School Alliance and will be directly employed by one or more of the teaching schools on behalf of the alliance. TUPE regulations will apply where proposed roles within the simplified structure will be closely related to those within the Slough Learning Partnership.

## **Appendix 2: Proposed Teaching School Alliance funding from September 2016**

### **a) Use of funds held by Slough Learning Partnership**

The legacy funding (comprising NCTL Collaborative Fund, grants from centrally retained DSG underspend, traded service income and funding for work commissioned by Cambridge Education) currently held by Slough Learning Partnership will be passed to the Slough Teaching School Alliance. Legal advice confirms this is possible under charity law if the funding is passed to one or more of the designated teaching schools, as they have charitable status with a charitable object which closely aligns with that of the Slough Learning Partnership.

The trading company Slough Learning Services will continue as the trading company for the teaching school alliance. For accounting purposes this enables teaching school funding to be kept separate from the individual schools' revenue funding.

The legacy funding held by Slough Partnership is intended to support the leadership, support and administrative capacity (ie staff and premises costs) of the Slough Teaching School Alliance in 2016-17 and 2017-18. Details of staffing levels and associated costs are shown in appendix 1 and in the table in Appendix 2. The assumption is that staff currently employed by the Slough Learning Partnership will be directly employed by one or more of the schools within the STSA.

From the academic year 2017-18 onward, the DfE White Paper proposes that school improvement funding will be routed through teaching school hubs. However, the uncertainty of the future of the designation itself and the associated collaborative grant from DfE mean that it is unwise to make commitments to structures and staffing beyond August 2018. A provision for redundancy costs at the end of the 2017-18 academic year is therefore included in the staff costings.

### **b) Teaching school grant (DfE Collaborative grant)**

In 2015-16 this amounted to £40,000. The grant is given on a declining scale for the 4 years of teaching school designation. Cohort 1 teaching schools have been given funding into the 5<sup>th</sup> year. A 5<sup>th</sup> year grant of £30,000 is therefore assumed.

### **c) Appropriate Body fees and Schools Direct income**

Income from Appropriate Body fees is currently £300 per NQT registered to cover admin costs.

With the Schools Direct programme, the costs of recruiting and supporting each trainee average at £2,500 per participant regardless of the route they opt for (salaried or unsalaried). The STSA recruits 20 to 25 trainees every year at a cost of over £50,000. The funding the trainees attract is different according to the route. Funding allocations in 2015-16 are as follows:

<b>Unsalaried</b>	Reading University passes on £2,800 to the STSA per trainee. The majority of this money (£2,300) is devolved to school to cover mentoring costs. £500 is retained by the STSA to cover admin costs.
<b>Salaried</b>	There is a basic grant of £14,900 which may have a "high demand" top-up added. The grant is shared between 3 parties: Reading University course fee, the money paid to schools up to £10,400 and the retained STSA funds to cover recruitment and support including admin costs.

### **d) School-to-school support fund**

STSA requests funding from DSG to set up a school support fund. This would enable schools to be compensated for staff time when agreeing deployments of NLEs, SLEs and other system leaders(\*) to support other schools. The intention is that this fund mirrors at a local level the current national arrangements for school-to-school support and pre-empts the proposed routing of school improvement funding through teaching school alliances from 2017 onwards.

(\*) The term system leaders is intended to encompass all school-based staff who may be deployed in school-to-support activity. Some will carry a recognised designation eg NLE, SLE or Lead Practitioner; others may be recognised as local or regional champions or 'experts' in particular areas.

## Slough Teaching School Alliance – base funding 2016-2018

### 2016-17 academic year

<b>Income</b>			
SLP legacy funds	50% of anticipated SLP legacy funds (at end of 2015-16) of £310,000	£155,000	
DfE collaborative grant	Assumed for 2016-17 subject to satisfactory annual return due July 2016.	£40,000	
Appropriate Body fees	Based on current fee and levels of uptake	£30,000	
Schools Direct income	Known for 2016-17, based on 11 salaried, 9 unsalaried trainees	£28,000	
Traded services surplus	Surplus from other events and activities, contributing towards salary costs	£10,000	
School support fund	[1] One-off funding of £150k requested from 2016-17 school improvement retained DSG (revised CE contract) to fund school-to-school deployment of designated and local system leaders over two years	£75,000	<b>£338,000</b>
<b>Costs</b>			
Premises	Retention of office and training room at 551 Fairlie Road	£15,000	
Professional services	Audit, legal, NQT software etc	£15,000	
Staffing [2] (salary and oncosts)	TSA Directors 1.2 FTE General admin (1.0 FTE), Schools Direct and NQT administration support (1.0 FTE) Financial control 0.5 FTE Schools Direct recruitment and QA (variable), Induction QA and support (0.1 FTE)	£100,000 £60,000 £20,000 £15,000	
Contribution to reserves	Provision for staff redundancy at end of 2017-18 if required	£32,000	
Direct school support	Backfill to schools providing school-to-school support across alliance	£75,000	<b>£332,000</b>

### 2017-18 academic year

<b>Income</b>			
SLP legacy funds	50% of anticipated SLP legacy funds (at end of 2015-16) of £310,000	£155,000	
DfE collaborative grant	Provisional indication of 5 <sup>th</sup> year grant	£30,000	
Appropriate Body fees	Based on current fee and levels of uptake	£30,000	
Schools Direct income	Assume similar numbers?	£30,000	
Traded services surplus	Surplus from other events and activities, contributing towards salary costs	£10,000	
School support fund	See [1] above – 50% of one-off funding from 2016-17 school improvement DSG allocation	£75,000	<b>£330,000</b>
<b>Costs</b>			
Premises	Retention of office and training room at 551 Fairlie Road	£15,000	
Professional services	Audit, legal, NQT software etc	£15,000	
Staffing	Breakdown as for [2] above	£195,000	
Contribution to reserves	Provision for staff redundancy at end of 2017-18 if required	£30,000	
Direct school support	Backfill to schools providing school-to-school support across alliance	£75,000	<b>£330,000</b>