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Department
for Education

English Hubs

Learners First English Hub

@Whiston Worrygoose

KEY INFORMATION UPDATE FOR SCHOOLS

Last Updated: January 2019

At this early stage in the inception of the English Hubs, this update aims to provide more information about the new initiative and outline details of some of the support, CPD and funding opportunities available for local schools to access via the Learners First English Hub. The English Hub page of the Learners First website www.learnersfirst.net contains more details and is being regularly updated as further information is released by the DfE.

LEARNERS FIRST ENGLISH HUB@WHISTON WORRYGOOSE

As an established Teaching School Partnership and now as an accredited English Hub, our work remains driven by the desire and unwavering determination to improve educational outcomes and transform life chances for all children and young people. As a vehicle through which we can further 'connect people and promote excellence', the Learners First English Hub will support school improvement through engagement and collaboration, particularly within areas serving the most disadvantaged.

Our commitment is to provide the highest quality of expertise and support to schools, without obligation, fear or favour. Through the English Hub, we will use the expertise of high performing lead schools and literacy specialists with proven track records of delivering effective and sustainable early literacy teaching to support this endeavour. Ambition, vision and strategic investment underpin relationships built on trust and shape a motivation to provide constructive, distinctive and comprehensive support to improve and promote:

- Standards of reading
- Early language
- Literacy teaching
- Active participation and engagement in the work of the English Hub.

CONTACT THE LEARNERS FIRST ENGLISH HUB@WHISTON WORRYGOOSE



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Connecting People, Promoting Excellence

ENGLISH HUB BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the spring of 2018, the Department for Education (DfE) identified and invited 924 eligible schools to apply to become an accredited English Hub as part of a new national initiative to drive up standards in literacy. Following a competitive application and selection process, the DfE announced the designation of the inaugural English Hubs in autumn 2018.

Learners First is thrilled to confirm a lead Teaching School within the partnership, Whiston Worrygoose, was successfully designated as one of only 32 English Hubs in the country. As a partnership, we are excited by the opportunities this creates for local schools and are keen to share more information about the support and resources available and how schools can access and contribute to the work of the English Hub.

As defined by the DfE, each English Hub will:

‘...promote a love of reading and support schools across the country to provide excellent phonics and early language teaching. Literacy specialists within each hub will provide tailored support to schools. This will include running events to showcase excellent practice in teaching reading and working with local schools to develop their practice’.

Department for Education (DfE), October 2018

NATIONAL REMIT OF ENGLISH HUBS

All support offered by the English Hubs across the country will promote the Department’s three priority areas:

1. **Early language development:** providing evidence-based approaches to early language development and closing the word gap in school-based early years settings, including appropriate use of formative assessment;
2. **Age-appropriate phonics provision:** encouraging best practice in systematic synthetic phonics teaching from school-based early years provision to the end of Key Stage 1, and as the primary reading strategy throughout the school. This includes:
 - encouraging fidelity to a single systematic synthetic phonics programme;
 - supporting the effective use of decodable books in the early stages of learning to read, as a way of establishing phonic decoding;
 - supporting effective practice in formative assessment in relation to phonics/early reading.
3. **Promoting a love of reading:** encouraging reading for enjoyment including by supporting whole school reading approaches, reading to children at least once a day and encouraging reading at home, developing teachers’ knowledge of appropriate children’s literature.

CAN ALL SCHOOLS ACCESS ENGLISH HUB SUPPORT?

The DfE has identified a number of schools at a regional and local level which it feels may benefit from the support offered by English Hubs (identification is based on an analysis of phonics data and levels of disadvantage) but it is very much an offer of support to schools, not a mandate, and there are opportunities available to **all schools**. English Hubs have been assigned indicative regions across the country to ensure appropriate coverage of these identified schools, however, the allocations do not always reflect existing local partnership networks and established regional structures. Schools are therefore encouraged to approach and access the support of any English Hub with which they already have an existing partnership and/or would prefer to choose to work.

In addition, English Hubs have been asked to work with local partners including (but not limited to) the RSC, Opportunity Area Boards, NLEs, MATs, Dioceses and LAs to identify and encourage engagement from schools that would most benefit from support, with a focus on schools with high numbers of disadvantaged children.

The DfE’s intention is for schools to access the provision offered by English Hubs through a ‘Self-Referral’ system. English Hubs have been asked to prioritise schools based on a set of criteria (provided by the DfE) which will be used to direct some of the funded opportunities. The eligibility and prioritisation criteria was approved by the Minister and released by the DfE at the end of December 2018 and is outlined in the ‘School Eligibility and Prioritisation’ section below. However, there will be a range of opportunities available to all schools via the Learners First English Hub, some of which will also be funded.

OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN 2018-19

Support, funding and opportunities offered to schools through the Learners First English Hub in 2018-19 will include:

Hub Launch

- **Who** - All schools
- **What** - The Learners First English Hub @Whiston Worrygoose launch incorporating information sharing around the designation process, referral systems, engagement opportunities and English Hub remit.
- **Funding** - N/A
- **Registrations of interest now open!** Please contact at Learners First - teachingschool@learnersfirst.org

Showcase

- **Who** - All eligible schools
- **What** - Event showcasing elements of best practice in teaching early language and reading with representatives from the lead school and literacy specialists available to offer advice and support to schools in completing action plans.
- **Funding** - No charge to attend, up to £600 to provide cover costs for x2 staff members from each invited school.
- **Registrations of interest now open!** Please contact at Learners First - teachingschool@learnersfirst.org

Action Planning

- **Who** - All eligible schools
- **What** - Opportunity to complete and submit an action plan during attendance at a showcase event. Initial improvement action plans will identify potential engagement opportunities and associated support and resources available from the English Hub.
- **Funding**- Funded support available for up to 85 schools

Audit

- **Who** - All eligible schools
- **What** - Action plan reviews undertaken by the English Hub will determine individual support requirements. In some cases this will include a school-based audit of early language and reading provision (using an audit framework provided by the DfE) leading to further refinement of action plans and associated support and resources (3 days).
- **Funding**- Funded support available for up to 85 schools

Support Package

- **Who** - All eligible schools
- **What** - A commitment to delivering support to schools including the opportunity to work with and learn from a high performing lead school and experienced literacy specialists. Access to up to 6 days of intensive support or a wider programme of professional development opportunities.
- **Funding**- Funding packages of between £3000-£6000

Partnership Opportunities

- **Who** - All schools
- **What** - The work of the English Hub and support available through them is shared widely at both local and national level through various forums. Opportunities for working collaboratively with key stakeholders and building capacity are identified and built upon.
- **Funding**- Future funding decisions to be agreed at national level

Expressions of Interest

The Learners First English Hub would like to encourage all schools interested in finding out more about the opportunities, CPD and resources available to make contact to discuss the options available in more detail. Expressions of interest can be made by email to teachingschool@learnersfirst.org or by phone 01709 267021.

School Eligibility & Prioritisation

Nationally, English Hubs have been asked to prioritise support to schools based on the following criterion:

- (1) Schools referred to the hub by National Leaders of Education as part of the 2018/19 'at risk' school improvement offer will have priority for support: all schools referred as part of this programme should be offered support to develop an action plan as a minimum. However, those schools will not automatically have priority for other elements of the support offer, which should be offered in accordance with the prioritisation criteria below.
- (2) Schools with a lower percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check (PSC) over the previous three years should be prioritised over hubs with a higher proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard.
- (3) Alongside PSC scores a school's KS1 reading scores should be taken into account. However, KS1 results alone should not be enough to be prioritised for the programme; the use of KS1 data should only be used to add more context that might not be explicit from PSC results alone.
- (4) Schools with a greater proportion of children eligible for the pupil premium should be prioritised over schools with a lower proportion. Where schools have a similar proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the PSC, this criterion should take precedence: the school with the highest percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium should be offered support.
- (5) If a school is within an Opportunity Area, this should be taken into account. For example, all else equal, schools in Opportunity Areas should be prioritised over schools which are not.
- (6) English Hubs will need to assess the school's capacity for improvement, based on an assessment of any other relevant support the school is receiving and information the school provides about what it hopes to achieve.

The DfE guidance states that whilst decisions must be made with regard to the above, the criterion outlined does not constitute a prioritisation formula; English Hubs will need to make individual judgments based on a balanced view of the information available.

Showcase Events

Showcase events will provide opportunity to share elements of best practice in teaching early language and/or reading. They will include the chance to watch and discuss the implementation and organisation of phonics lessons and will provide schools with the knowledge they need to engage further with the programme.

Schools wishing to engage with the showcase events should send two delegates and will be entitled to claim up to £600 (per school) for their engagement.

Showcase events will be taking place on the following dates across various locations in South Yorkshire and the East Midlands. Places at each event are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Further details are available on the Learners First website: www.learnersfirst.org

- Wednesday 13th February 2019 (morning)
- Wednesday 13th February 2019 (afternoon)
- Wednesday 6th March 2019 (morning)
- Wednesday 6th March 2019 (afternoon)
- Friday 22nd March 2019 (morning)
- Friday 22nd March 2019 (afternoon)
- Thursday 28th March 2019 (morning)
- Thursday 28th March 2019 (afternoon)