

Learners First Subscription 2023-24



Learners First
Schools Partnership

Connecting People, Promoting Excellence



Together, we can be
part of something
bigger; together we
can create
something better.



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Foreword from the Directors

Welcome! It is with great pleasure that we share the 2023/24 Learners First subscription offer. In considering the offer and, more broadly, the role of Learners First, we have taken the opportunity to reflect upon the ever changing educational landscape, current challenges and the fundamental reasons the partnership was formed. We have revisited the role of the partnership to ensure it adapts and continues to add value and support the organisations it was designed to serve. Now more than ever, it is imperative for Learners First to stay true to its core purpose of building professional networks and facilitating meaningful partnerships which aim to aid the individual endeavours of schools, academies and MATs. By ‘connecting people and promoting excellence’ in this way we aim to add real and significant value to the professional and, ultimately, support the improved outcomes of children and young people. A lot has happened since the inception of Learners First over a decade ago, including an unprecedented number of changes within the education sector, and we know there are more to come. The learning and insights we have collectively gained over the years, teamed with the agility of the partnership, places Learners First in a strong position to embrace and continue to navigate the high levels of uncertainty and political unrest we’re likely to see in 2023/24.

We truly believe in the value of meaningful collaboration, the strength of partnership working and, more than ever, the collective impact and importance of professional networks. We did a lot of background work last academic year in preparation and anticipation of likely future trends facing school and MAT leaders. This included considering the concept of **Trust Dividend** (working with national experts in this area such as Sir David Carter); innovative **People Development Strategies** (to aid contemporary career development pathways and better support recruitment and retention challenges); and the principles of **Organisational Resilience** in the context of both schools and MATs. In the spirit of ‘being more than the sum of its parts’, the Learners First partnerships offers schools, academies and MATs from a wide range of backgrounds the chance to **‘be part of something bigger and, together, create something better’** without obligation, fear or favour. This will be a key focus of our work in 2023/24 and provide a platform through which we feel Learners First can support the individual and collective endeavours of all its partners.

The 2023/24 subscription offer therefore incorporates a wealth of opportunities and, in line with feedback from school and trust leaders, reflects some new ways of working. We are looking forward to embedding new strategic partnerships with a range of national organisations and leading sector experts. This will see a new CEO network introduced into the offer for 2023/24, facilitated by Sir Steve Lancashire and will also include an exciting new piece of work with Professor Sam Twisleton, a leading national expert in the area of initial teacher education and early career development. We are also looking forward to extending our partnership with other national leads such as Marc Rowland, Alex Quigley and organisations such as the Teacher Development Trust (TDT) to facilitate high quality CPD across the school workforce. We are excited by the opportunities, connectivity and invaluable insights this work will bring from which we know schools, MATs and the partnership as a whole will benefit immensely.

We are cognisant of how MATs, and their workforce infrastructures, are ever evolving and what this means for the changing demands of CPD. With more trust-wide roles emerging (such as Directors of Early Career, School Improvement Leads or Trust SEND Leads for example) we have introduced some new networking opportunities into the 2023/24 offer to support those leaders with their strategic roles and work across multiple settings. To further enhance the offer, new leadership, professional development and bespoke opportunities have also been added, including those which carry national and transferable accreditation, e.g. Masters. These will sit alongside existing provision and the broader work of Learners First such as Initial Teacher Training, DfE accredited internships, Early Career provision, the NPQs and the DfE English Hub work to offer a comprehensive portfolio of professional development and networks. New opportunities have been carefully identified and introduced to support key priorities in the local and regional area, such as SEND, EYFS and Attendance. As in previous years, the portfolio of opportunities outlined in the subscription offer will only continue to grow and develop throughout the year.

We believe the 2023/24 offer presents a comprehensive range of opportunities to help schools and Trusts better deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in a time of significant change and increasing financial challenge. As a not for profit organisation, we will continue to reinvest resource, capacity and expertise back into the school system where it can add most value. To that end and despite the increase in the number and range of opportunities, the Learners First subscription fees have not increased to demonstrate our unwavering commitment to providing best value. As a partnership governed by serving school leaders, we believe wholeheartedly in what we can do together and that meaningful collaboration which places children and young people at the heart of all decision making and resource allocation can successfully meet any challenges we collectively face. We hope that you will continue to work with us towards this goal.

The Board of Directors
Learners First Schools Partnership

Learners First

Established in 2012, Learners First is an independent, not-for-profit, school-led organisation governed by serving school leaders. It is built on a mature model of partnership, collaboration and networking which brings together schools, academies and MATs from a wide range of contexts, phases and geographical areas to help connect national policy with local priorities, drive improvement through staff development and, ultimately, improve life chances for children and young people.

As a partnership, we aim to create an environment where educational improvement and professional development can flourish resulting in improved outcomes, particularly of those facing disproportionate disadvantage. For us, this means working with schools, academies and MATs to build professional networks and facilitate meaningful collaborations through high quality CPD, leadership development and authentic school-based enquiry. It also means being innovative, creative and, at times, brave. We aim to challenge the status quo and take calculated risks on behalf of the school system by constantly questioning and actively seeking, sharing and celebrating examples of excellent and emerging practice from both within and beyond the education sector.

We are extremely proud of our achievements and the role we play within the sector but prefer to take a more humble approach; our role is to create the conditions and fertile environment in which schools, MATs and their leaders can prosper and for which they rightly take credit. **Overall, the partnership aims to add real and significant value to the endeavours of individual schools, academies and MATs, beyond that which any individual entity could achieve alone.**

The subscription model is a great way for schools, academies and MATs to connect with the work of Learners First and engage with the wider partnership. Although it is designed to offer exceptional value for money, we see the subscription as far more than a transactional arrangement; the additionality, connectivity, wider opportunities and mutual benefits the partnership offers through the subscription goes far beyond any typical service or business offer.

“Connecting People, Promoting Excellence”

Learners First strives to build networks and partnerships of people who are committed and passionate about improving the educational outcomes and life chances of all children and young people.

Our Guiding Principles

All work associated with Learners First is underpinned by a set of moral and ethically driven guiding principles; the same founding principles on which the Learners First partnership was first built. They provide a helpful framework against which any new initiatives or approaches can be tested.

The design and delivery of all opportunities outlined in the subscription offer adhere to these principles in full. All we ask of any school, MAT or leader looking to engage with the Learners First offer is that they are able to help us to deliver these principles in practice.

At Learners First, we:

- **Endeavour to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons. Always.**
There is no one ‘right way’ but we will advocate sensible approaches and act with integrity, humility, honesty and openness.
- **Constructively challenge prevailing orthodoxies.**
Questioning the status quo through innovation and a genuine desire to make a significant and sustainable difference.
- **Both respect and have a healthy disregard for authority.**
We will ask questions and look for innovative solutions whilst upholding our professional duties and respecting the regulatory frameworks which we, and the partners we serve, operate within.
- **Are an inclusive partnership which operates without fear or favour and believes that quality should always prevail.**
The Nolan principles of public service guide our way of working and ensure we operate with honesty, integrity and generosity of spirit.
- **Look to address existing imbalances and examples of privilege bias wherever possible in the system.**
We place a huge ethical and moral emphasis on supporting those facing disproportionate disadvantage as a result of social mobility and contextual challenges.

The 2023/24 Subscription Offer: Vision & Aims

Vision

Through the opportunities outlined in this offer, we aim to enable those professionals charged with the delivery of high quality teaching and those individuals responsible for the leadership, management and governance of schools, academies and MATs to be better equipped to effectively fulfil their duties thus making a positive contribution to their institutions, organisations and the wider education system for the immediate and future benefit of children and young people.



Key Aims for 2023/24

Our 2023/24 offer has been deliberately designed to:

- **Better serve the current and future needs of school, academy and MAT leaders** and their organisations by designing and delivering CPD and leadership provision of the highest quality which complement and add value to their own internal approaches.
- **Encourage authentic partnership working and collaboration within and between organisations** which go beyond traditional geographical, institutional or organisational boundaries and bring about authentic school improvement at an accelerated rate.
- **Create high quality, professionally facilitated networks and CPD opportunities** which utilise national, regional and local research and best practice to leverage innovation and accelerated improvement.
- **Provide strategic alignment in response to local and regional priorities** to help teachers and school/MAT leaders better address key pertinent challenges.

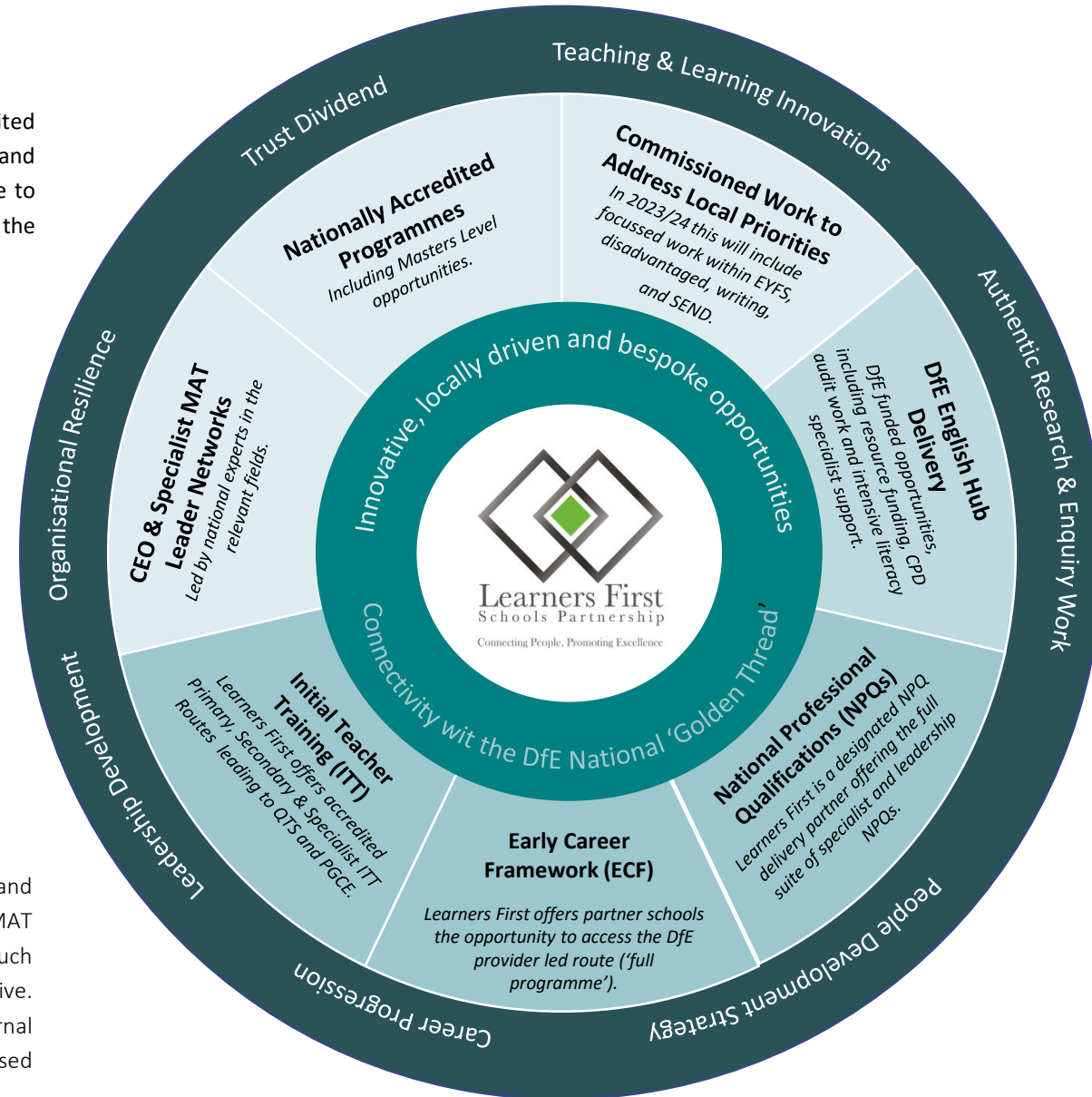
The offer aims to provide a coherent conduit through which we can connect national opportunities, directives and initiatives with local priorities and key areas of work. The information overleaf outlines in more detail how we look to align national opportunities with innovative, creative and locally developed opportunities to provide synergy across the sector.

National and Local Alignment, Connectivity & Innovation of the Offer

The comprehensive nature of the Learners First offer allows local schools and MATs to easily access DfE accredited opportunities as well as innovative, bespoke opportunities designed to meet local need, emerging priorities and enhance any internal school/MAT provision. Careful alignment of these opportunities ensures Learners First is able to offer a broad and connected CPD and leadership development offer which aims to add real and authentic value to the endeavours of schools and MATs.

There have been substantial reforms to the national leadership development and teacher CPD market for school, academy and MAT teachers and leaders over the past few years. The DfE's [‘Delivering World Class Teacher Development’ \(March 2022\) policy paper](#) outlined the ambition to create a ‘golden thread’ of support, training and development for the entirety of a teacher’s career. This included reforming the **National Professional Qualifications** (NPQs), the introduction of a new two-year statutory **Early Career Framework** for teachers entering the profession, and reforms to **Initial Teacher Training** which are due to be implemented this academic year. Given the core themes which form the backbone of the Learners First offer, it is imperative the partnership is able to offer local schools and MATs connectivity to the new and reformed national offer. At times, the scale, significance and speed of these changes (and the resulting new approaches) have been difficult to navigate at a local and regional level. However, the Learners First approach not only allows schools and MATs to easily access national provision at a local level, and where appropriate contribute to its delivery, it enables subscribing partners to receive bespoke and impartial support at an individual level to help them navigate and fully understand the implications of the reforms. We have seen an increasing demand for this neutral ‘consultancy’ support and through further investment in the Learners First Strategic Lead Team, we have secured additional capacity to ensure this can be extended as a key part of the additionality available to subscribing schools and MAT.

Although connectivity to the national offer is important, on its own it is not adequate to meet the full range of CPD and leadership development needs or many of the local priorities, nor does it enable sufficient inter and intra school/MAT collaboration. Thus, other opportunities within the Learners First offer have been deliberately designed to address such gaps and, whilst aligning to and reinforcing key national messages, facilitate opportunities for innovation to thrive. Where possible and relevant, we have sought to connect these locally developed opportunities to sources of external accreditation to provide opportunities for colleagues engaging with the provision to achieve nationally recognised qualifications, which have currency beyond the education sector.



The 2023/24 Subscription Offer: Core Areas

The key themes of Leadership Development & Transformation, Teaching & Curriculum Excellence, and Governance continue to form the backbone of the Learners First offer. The delivery of our work across these themes falls broadly into three core areas:

- **Nationally accredited and locally developed programmes.**
- **High quality strategic networks.**
- **Bespoke responses to key local and regional priorities.**

Opportunities are available to professionals across the school and MAT workforce with the offer extending from pre-initial teacher training (such as internships) to opportunities for senior trust and executive leaders (including the new professional CEO network). The offer is designed to reflect national priorities and new/emerging statutory changes, such as Early Career entitlements and Initial Teacher Training reforms to ensure local schools have ample opportunities to connect, access and benefit from what is on offer. It is also designed to connect with and complement the work of designated DfE Hubs, such as the network of Research Schools and Curriculum Hubs.

The 2023/24 subscription offer and all its contents have been designed in collaboration with serving school, academy and MAT leaders and tested with regional and national experts in the field. A range of internal and external factors, including national influences, have been considered to ensure the offer is relevant, high quality, progressive and forward thinking in its approach and remit.

As always, the Learners First subscription offer is intended to offer excellent value for money and the content is deliberately designed to be agile, flexible and will continue to evolve during the year to ensure current and emerging priorities are recognised and addressed. The format of the 2023/24 subscription offer makes it clear where opportunities currently attract national / DfE funding and outlines what additionality the subscription provides, as well as the opportunities that are fully funded through the subscription.

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I was introduced to Learners First, and their subscription offer, in 2018. At the time, I was headteacher of a small village primary school, in Derbyshire, with an extremely small CPD budget. My challenge was to offer all of my teaching team opportunities to develop excellent practice and provide opportunities to reflect on that practice with a wider learning community.

The Learners First offer was extremely comprehensive (with CPD opportunities for Teaching and Learning Assistants, NQTs, both early career and experienced teachers and middle leaders). The subscription cost was incredibly competitive (for the cost of the statutory NQT course elsewhere, I could subscribe and have access to high quality CPD for my entire teaching team). For me, this was one of the easiest decisions I made that year.

The feedback, from every member staff who attended a variety of courses, was overwhelmingly positive. The organisation of each event was always extremely efficient and professional, facilitated by trainers who were friendly, accommodating and knowledgeable. Each school is unique, and my team appreciated opportunities for pedagogical discussions around our ambitions and issues within our school community.

Crucially, the impact of CPD offered to my team was significant. The quality of teaching and learning, across every key stage, improved.

I was also fortunate to work, throughout the year, with a student teacher, supported by Learners First through their ITT programme...my team and I were so impressed by the depth (and rigor) of the support received by the student and also by the standards expected from the student by Learners First. This truly was a professional partnership with all parties benefitting from the experience. As a result of this experience, Learners First will be my schools preferred partner for supporting student teachers moving forward.

Headteacher, Derbyshire Primary School

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THE LEARNERS FIRST OFFER CONTENT: AT A GLANCE

The following pages outline the content of the Learners First 2023/24 offer in more detail. The overview below is designed to provide a snap shot of all the opportunities available through Learners First in 2023/24.

Programmes Nationally Accredited & Locally Developed Programmes	Networks High Quality Strategic Networks	Bespoke Opportunities Bespoke Responses to Key Local and Regional Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfE Accredited Teaching Internship Programme. <i>(Secondary, shortage subjects).</i> Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Programmes. <i>(Secondary, Primary & Specialist routes, including apprenticeship routes).</i> DfE Accredited Provider-led Early Career Framework (ECF) Programme. <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> DfE Accredited National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) across the full suite of Specialist and Leadership Programmes. <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> Senior Leadership Apprenticeship & Masters Opportunities (Offered in partnership with The National College of Education) NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> Excellence in Practice with Options for Accreditation from the Institute of Leadership & Management, ILM) REVISED! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> DfE Accredited English Hub Intensive Support School (ISS) Programme <i>(Primary)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Teacher Training Network NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> Early Career Lead Professional Network led by Professor Sam Twisleton, OBE NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> Trust Leader / CEO Network led by Sir Steve Lancashire and supported by a range of keynote speakers from within and beyond education. NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist).</i> Trust / School Improvement Leaders Network NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> English Subject Leaders Network <i>(Primary)</i> Excellence in Practice – Leading SEND Network NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Years Excellence Project (supported by professional seminars facilitated by Fliss James, Director of East London Research School) NEW! <i>(Primary)</i> A series of Leadership Seminars for serving school, academy and Trust leaders, including breakfast seminars facilitated by Irwin Mitchell related to legal and employment law updates affecting schools and MATs. <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist).</i> REVISED! Commissioned developmental MAT and School Reviews. Teaching and Learning CPD, including a Writing Master Class with Alex Quigley and Early Career Enhancement sessions NEW! <i>(Primary & Secondary).</i> Cyber security briefings to support schools and MATs navigate new DfE and ESFA requirements. NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> A series of Governance and Compliance Seminars for serving school, academy and Trust governors, Directors and Trustees. <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> REVISED! A bespoke disadvantage research commission facilitated and supported by Marc Rowland NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist)</i> MAT Organisational Development (including Trust Dividend, Trust Resilience and People Development Strategy) NEW! <i>(Primary, Secondary & Specialist).</i>

NB: Some programmes included in the Learners First offer currently attract DfE funding. The offer contains details of the programmes available and the additionality the subscription provides in relation to these programmes (outside the DfE funding) but, for transparency, the cost of such programmes sit outside the subscription fee. The fees were reduced in line with DfE reforms to reflect these changes and have been tested with a cross section of school and MATs to ensure value for money, additionality and efficiencies are offered to schools and MATs. Further, the number and scope of new opportunities for 2023/24 has also significantly increased.

Section 1: Programmes

(Nationally Accredited & Locally Developed)

Learners First offers a range of DfE, nationally accredited and locally developed leadership and CPD programmes. The programmes are part of a progressive curriculum offered by Learners First designed to reflect national, regional and local priorities, new and emerging statutory changes and evolving DfE reforms. The offer is designed to incorporate, connect with and complement the work of other initiatives to provide a comprehensive menu of opportunities at a local level.

This section of the subscription offer aims to provide local opportunities for schools and MATs to engage with high quality CPD and leadership programmes, many of which carry national accreditation. Where national funding is currently available, the subscription offer is designed to provide significant and tangible additionality beyond that which would ordinarily be available and to a greater extent than any individual school or MAT could achieve alone to maximise impact, provide efficiencies and ensure excellent value for money. Where programmes do not attract national funding, the subscription covers the cost in full. Subscription fees were reduced in line with DfE reforms in 2021/22 and have remained the same ever since despite additional opportunities being added. The model has been tested with a cross section of school and MATs to ensure value for money, additionality and efficiencies are offered to schools and MATs.

The following section includes more information about programme opportunities available through Learners First in 2023/24.



PROGRAMMES AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

1. DfE Accredited Teaching Internship Programme

Learners First has been designated by the DfE as an accredited provider of paid teaching internships for a third consecutive year. This allows the partnership to offer teaching internships in Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Computing and MFL to subject specialist undergraduates interested in exploring teaching as a career option in the future. Undergraduate interns are placed in secondary schools within the partnership to undertake the three-week paid internship.

The teaching internship offers interns a structured programme of activities designed to help them gain a deep experience of teaching in a secondary school. It includes a combination of teaching, running subject-related projects, offering intensive support for children who are struggling, helping with experiments and laboratory work, structured training, shadowing and lesson observation followed by a chance to jointly plan and deliver lessons.

Both the host school and the interns are funded for their involvement in the Teaching Internship Initiative. Further, it has proven to be a valuable strategy to support the recruitment and retention of shortage subject specialist teachers as a number of our alumni interns have gone on to take up initial teacher training (ITT) posts within partner schools.

***Subscription Additionality:** As well as being able to access the Internship provision, subscribing schools/MATs will be prioritised to host funded internship placements recruited by Learners First. In addition, subscribers wishing to use the internship model to develop and offer their own bespoke internal internship offers (for example to aid recruitment in primary or in other subjects not funded/supported by the DfE initiative) will be supported by the Learners First team to do so using well developed and successful internship model.*

2. Initial Teacher Training (ITT) – Secondary, Primary & Specialist

Learners First has been involved in school-based ITT for over a decade supporting hundreds of trainee teachers gain teaching qualifications, find employment in schools and successfully enter the teaching profession within primary, secondary and specialist schools. The partnership has a fantastic track record of success offering a high quality programme of training and support in collaboration with our partner Universities and we are delighted that many of our alumni ITT trainees have now progressed into more senior roles and leadership positions. During the 2023/24 academic year there will be many changes coming into effect as, from September 2024, national reforms will mean that all ITT leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) will be defined within three core routes (undergraduate fee-funded, postgraduate fee-funded, and postgraduate employment based). The DfE's aim is to simplify the landscape and provide more clarity for schools and applicants. Learners First will continue to work with our accredited University providers as a Lead Partner to offer a wide range of primary, secondary, specialist, and apprenticeship initial teacher training routes across the partnership. Recruitment to the new programmes will commence later in the autumn term when the national application window opens.

Partnership schools involved in ITT have used the Learners First ITT programmes to aid their recruitment and retention efforts and to support career development pathways into teaching. The benefits of this 'grown your own' model have been tangible in terms of the quality of new teachers entering the profession, their 'readiness' for classroom practice and school life and retention into ECT roles.

***Subscription Additionality:** As well as being able to support existing members of their own staff (and alumni students) who meet the ITT criteria, subscribing schools will be prioritised to host ITT trainees recruited by Learners First. Subscribing schools/MATs will also be entitled to strategic consultancy support to help navigate the new ITT reforms and explore routes into teaching initiatives on an individual basis (including support for the paid training routes and innovative recruitment initiatives). As more details of the ITT reforms are released, some of the current Learners First ITT routes may be offered exclusively to subscribing schools, for example, the Apprenticeship Training Route as part of the partnership approach.*

PROGRAMMES: NATIONALLY ACCREDITED & LOCALLY DEVELOPED

3. DfE Endorsed Early Career Framework (ECF) Programme

‘Provider Led Route’ (previously known as the ‘full route’)

The DfE’s Early Career Framework (ECF) has been designed to make sure early career teachers (ECTs) – i.e. those teachers in their first two years of teaching – focus on learning the things that make the most difference in the classroom and to their professional practice. The framework has been compiled by an expert advisory group with input from teachers, school leaders, academics and experts. It was also independently assessed and endorsed by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

The ECF underpins a statutory entitlement to a two-year package of structured training and support for ECTs and is part of a series of DfE reforms designed to ensure new teachers have dedicated time set aside for their professional development. School leaders have a statutory obligation to ensure that the ECF is implemented for all ECTs (effective from September 2021). Learners First has been involved with ECF delivery since its inception and is able to offer partner schools the opportunity to access the DfE’s ‘Provider Led Route’ through its strategic TS Hub partnership and work with the Education Development Trust (EDT), a DfE accredited lead provider of the ECF.

***Subscription Additionality:** All ‘provider-led’ ECF routes are currently supported by DfE funding. However, as well as being able to access the ECF programme, subscribing schools/MATs have the opportunity to nominate suitable leaders to access facilitator training and contribute to the delivery of the ECF programme (for which they are paid). **NEW!** Leads overseeing the ECF delivery from subscribing schools/MATs will also be invited to join the new professional network (facilitated by Professor Sam Twiselton, OBE) to stay abreast of new developments, best practice and further national reforms in this area. This is designed to support new roles we have seen emerging across MATs and schools and the increasingly important mentoring role. Subscribers will also be able to access strategic consultancy support to help navigate and understand the ECF on a bespoke basis, including troubleshooting support and resolving complex scenarios. Feedback from 22/23 has indicated school and MAT leaders have found this extremely beneficial and have used it to support internal due diligence, scoping activities and to help gain a greater understanding of options available, the changes and their associated implications.*

4. DfE Accredited National Professional Qualifications

Learners First has a long established history and a strong reputation in the design and delivery of the DfE accredited NPQ qualifications. Following the DfE reforms in 2021, Learners First is delighted to be a designated NPQ Delivery Partner offering the DfE Accredited National Professional Qualifications in partnership with the Teacher Development Trust (TDT) offering the full suite of NPQs which includes:

Specialist NPQs

- NPQ for Leading Teacher Development,
- NPQ for Leading Behaviour & Culture,
- NPQ for Leading Teaching, and
- NPQ for Leading Literacy

Leadership NPQs

- NPQ for Early Years Leadership,
- NPQ for Senior Leadership
- NPQ for Headship, and
- NPQ for Executive Leadership

NEW! During 2023/24 the DfE plans to introduce two new NPQs into the national offer; one for leading Primary Mathematics and one for the leadership of SEND (which will replace the existing SENCO qualification). Learners First will be recruiting for these new programmes during 2023/24 in line with national recruitment windows.

***Subscription Additionality:** All NPQs are currently funded by DfE. However, as well as being able to access the qualifications, subscribing schools/MATs have the opportunity to nominate suitable leaders to access facilitator training and contribute to the delivery of the qualifications (for which they are paid). Further, school and MAT leaders of subscribing organisations are able to access strategic consultancy to help engage with the NPQ offer on a bespoke basis. This could include creative or innovative support for using the NPQs as a vehicle to help deliver MAT wide priorities, or for developing bespoke career development pathways which complement in-house leadership development opportunities. (An example in 2022/23 included bespoke complementary CPD for a driver group of attendance and behaviour leads across a MAT who were all undertaking NPQLBC). Additional CPD/leadership themes identified by participants that are not addressed through the national NPQ content will continued to be offered to subscribing organisations through the seminars included in the ‘Bespoke Responses to Key Local and Regional Priorities’.*

PROGRAMMES: NATIONALLY ACCREDITED & LOCALLY DEVELOPED

5. Senior Leadership Apprenticeship & Masters Opportunities **NEW!**

(Offered in partnership with The National College of Education)

Learners First recognises the value of nationally accredited qualifications both in terms of supporting high quality professional development as well as enhancing the career progression of individuals. NPQs are a key component of this within the state school sector. However, since the reforms, feedback has suggested there is also the need to broaden and extend the offer to complement the current NPQ suite. To that end, and following much research, Learners First is excited to be partnering with The National College of Education (NCE) to offer senior leaders the opportunity to achieve a Senior Leader Apprenticeship with the opportunity to complete an extension pathway to an **MSc in School Leadership and Management** with the University of Roehampton. Participants will cover modules related to **Leading Strategy, Leading People, Leading Operations & Finance, and Transformation** with the content being tailored to senior school and trust leaders such as:

- Assistant Heads who are contributing to the SLT;
- Deputy Heads who aspire to headship,
- Headteachers at any stage of their career who want to understand more about leading a school,
- Trust Leaders who want to understand more about leadership across multiple organisations.

***Subscription Additionality:** The Senior Leader Apprenticeship is funded by the Apprenticeship Levy. The subscription offer provides schools and MATs which do pay into the Leadership Levy the opportunity to access a local cohort of the Senior Leadership Apprenticeship with the option to progress on to a MSc in School Leadership and Management. The Learners First cohort will be delivered by exceptional facilitators from the NCE with five enrichment sessions from Learners First in local venues to provide participants with context-based learning and networking opportunities. If a subscribing school does not pay into the Levy, Learners First will meet the £700 course costs. The opportunity to engage with this programme through Learners First is an exclusive offer to subscribing schools/MATs.*



6. Excellence in Practice Programme **Enhanced!**

(With options for Institute of Leadership & Management, ILM, accreditation)

Following the success and fantastic feedback from participants and headteachers alike from the initial 'Excellence in Practice' (EiP) programmes, Learners First is delighted to offer an enhanced version of the EiP programme in 2023/24 focussed on supporting those in Middle Leadership roles.

As the 'engine rooms' of many schools, we are aware that many MATs and Schools have understandably developed their own in-house leadership and CPD for colleagues in such roles. This programme is designed with that in mind and aims to complement those offers, supporting leaders to consider and navigate their role in more detail to develop both personal confidence and professional competence. Networking and the opportunity to experience different leadership styles and school contexts will play a key part of the programme and there will be a focus on vision, influencing others (upwardly, outwardly and downwardly), effective resource management and an exploration of what constitutes effective practice. Participants will be required to identify a current leadership priority within their role which will form the focus of their impact evaluation task throughout the programme.

This is a unique experience to learn and reflect alongside peers from a range of contexts and settings and work with expert, experienced leaders who have delivered excellence in schools and MATs. Participants will also have the opportunity to undertake an enquiry visit to another setting. **New!** Further, following enhancement to the inaugural EiP programmes, opportunities for participants to receive accreditation from the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) have been incorporated into the programme design. This will ensure participants are able to make the most of high quality, tailored and authentic professional development at the same time as achieving national accreditation.

***Subscription Additionality:** The EiP programmes are fully funded for participants from subscribing schools/MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations is £620.*

Section 2: Networks

High Quality Strategic Networks

With the aim of 'connecting people and promoting excellence', high quality, professional networks facilitated by experts in the field form an integral part of the Learners First offer. The partnership places a great value on these networks which are designed to embody the Learners First principles and allow colleagues from different settings, geographical areas and school/MAT contexts to:

- come together to access new, emerging and key information;
- engage in high quality professional debate;
- share current challenges and possible solutions with peers; and
- identify opportunities to work collaboratively with other MATs and/or schools to drive forward improvements and tangible impact.

Of course, many MATs now offer internal networking opportunities through conduits such as driver groups, subject/phase leader meetings or joint staff CPD. Therefore, to continue to add value, the 2023/24 networking opportunities have been significantly enhanced with the introduction of new networks and progressive delivery models. This reflects feedback from our partners as well as recognising the emergence of new leadership roles and local key priorities. The networks aim to provide real additionality beyond that which any single institution (MAT or school) could achieve alone. To that end, many of the new 2023/24 Learners First networks will be facilitated by leading national experts in the field, complemented by inputs from regional and local leaders and, where appropriate, leaders beyond education.



NETWORKS AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

1. Trust Leader / CEO Network with Sir Steve Lancashire **NEW!**

This exciting new network aims to provide a forum through which Trust Leads and CEOs can come together in a facilitated and professional capacity to network, challenge their own thinking, create authentic partnerships and support development both on a personal and organisational level. The network will be small enough to foster cultural collaboration but big enough to provide access to rich content, draw in national expert inputs, enable professional dialogue and help lever some big strategies through a supportive, non-threatening network. It aims to provide a local solution for CEOs and Trust Leaders and, deliberately, does not aim to replicate the work of national CEO/Trust forums.

Learners first is delighted to be working with **Sir Steve Lancashire** who will assume the lead, expert facilitator role for the network, drawing upon his own experiences and his own personal network of peers. Sir Steve is the founder and former CEO of REAch2, one of the largest and most successful primary MATs in the country. He has also been a DfE Lead Adviser and currently chairs a number of CEO forums. Sir Steve will pose executive leadership dilemmas, challenges, stimulus for debate and coordinate high level discussions to elicit quality dialogue and local solutions. Ahead of each session, network members will receive a tailored 'Think Piece' to consider and will leave each session with several real-world, practical actions to help develop practice in what have been termed 'winning moves'.

There will be **6 networking sessions** across the academic year four of which will be face to face, supported by some live online webinars. Each session will have a core focus underpinned by work from the financial firm McKinsey & Co 2022 and 'CEO Excellence, the Six Mindsets That Distinguish the Best Leaders from the Rest' (Dewar, Kellar & Malhorta). Additional keynotes will provide insights to a variety of approaches and innovative practice from across the country whilst the expert facilitation will support leaders to consider, debate and successfully navigate current and future educational challenges.

***Subscription Additionality:** This network is fully funded for CEOs from subscribing MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations is £3,600.*

2. Early Career Lead Professional Network **NEW!**

The responsibilities and requirements of those leading support for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and the delivery of the statutory entitlement of the Early Career Framework (ECF) cannot be underestimated. Roles such as the ECF Mentor and the Induction Tutor are an integral part of the successful induction and development of ECTs. Over the past academic year we have seen an increasing demand from colleagues undertaking such roles to want to come together with peers to share strategies, approaches and examples of good practice but to also receive advice, updates and engage with wider national debates around ECF to ensure they remain fully briefed and connected to developments and proposed future changes. The emergence of new roles, particularly within MATs, which involve the coordination of the ECF offer across several schools has also led to an increased demand for high quality networking for those responsible for leading Early Career development.

This new network will be led by **Professional Sam Twisleton, OBE**, a leading figure in the field of teacher development and has been closely influencing policy over several years alongside her role as the Director of Sheffield Institute of Education at Sheffield Hallam University. She has contributed to many DfE Expert Advisory Panels and national reviews in related areas and also Chairs the DfE Initial Teacher Education content group. She is also very closely aligned to emerging policy development, is exceptionally knowledgeable, personable and very well connected across the sector.

Professor Sam Twisleton also has a sound grasp of the current challenges facing school leaders and early career teachers and we are thrilled and very appreciative of the opportunities and valuable insights this new network will offer schools and MATs across the partnership. There will be **6 networking sessions** delivered predominantly face to face across the academic year that will involve key updates, expert advice and guidance, facilitated discussions and the opportunity to share ideas with others undertaking similar roles from different schools and Trusts.

***Subscription Additionality:** This network is fully funded for leaders from subscribing schools and MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations is £2,100.*

NETWORKS AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

3. Initial Teacher Training – Leaders’ Network **NEW!**

Learners First has been involved in school-based ITT for over a decade, supporting hundreds of trainee teachers gain teaching qualifications and find employment in local schools. Across the partnership there are many organisations which engage with the Learners First ITT programmes each year, using these opportunities to support both their career development offers (for support staff, volunteers, graduate staff and alumni students) as well as longer term, strategic sustainability, succession and growth plans.

Learners First prides itself on working collaboratively with schools and MATs to find creative solutions which enable the partnership to offer a broad range of opportunities to suit different needs (of both schools and trainees). In the past, this has included offering placements in specialist settings to support teacher recruitment in special schools, offering the apprenticeship teaching programme alongside tuition fee routes, working with different Universities to achieve the best and most comprehensive programme offer for schools, and facilitating opportunities for leaders to engage in system leader roles. It has also included running innovative recruitment campaigns to help support those schools and MATs facing disproportionate recruitment challenges to attract high quality graduates, subject experts and trainee teachers into their settings.

The new DfE reforms will bring about increased levels of uncertainty during 2023/24 and will take some time to understand and navigate. This new, facilitated network aims to open up lines of communication, provide a forum to share good practice and address local challenges in a professional and collaborative way. The network, which will be held each half term commencing in Autumn Term 2 (when the new application window is live), also aims to further extend the creative and innovative approaches to enable more schools and MATs to benefit. Simultaneously, it also aims to support the growing number of senior leaders with responsibility for teacher recruitment/initial teacher training across their school or MAT to keep up to date and stay abreast of emerging and future changes.

Subscription Additionality: *This network is fully funded for leaders from subscribing schools and MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations is £700 or £150 per delegate per session.*

4. Trust / School CPD & School Improvement Leaders’ Network **NEW!**

An integral part of the Learners First remit is to help create an environment where educational improvement and professional development can flourish resulting in improved outcomes of children and young people. Facilitating high quality, authentic, research informed and practical leadership and professional development opportunities is critical to achieving this.

We have seen a number of new roles emerging linked to the leadership of school improvement alongside a significant national reforms introduced by the DfE to teacher development over the last two academic years. Teamed with ongoing adjustments to address the wider implications of the pandemic in schools and MATs, the professional development and school improvement landscape has significantly altered. There are many opportunities on offer which can complement internal school and MAT training and development offers, but navigating them successfully and discerningly is not an easy task.

This new network is therefore designed to help those school and Trust leaders with responsibility for staff professional development, progression and/or school improvement within or across their institutions. The facilitated network will introduce leaders to national, regional and local opportunities to ensure they are fully informed, able to disseminate information and identify appropriate opportunities to colleagues across their school/MAT workforce. The network will provide support for leaders to consider the merits of a range of school improvement models and tools as well as innovative and creative ways the national and regional opportunities, research and best practice can dovetail into their offers to create comprehensive pathways. The network will run on a half termly basis starting in Autumn Term 2 and provide a facilitated forum for key updates, discussion, and the sharing of good practice. There will be opportunities to hear from keynote speakers to support the effective delivery and associated impact of school improvement and staff development initiatives. Feedback from the network will help inform future CPD opportunities and networks offered by Learners First.

Subscription Additionality: *This network is fully funded for leaders from subscribing schools and MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations is £700 or £150 per delegate per session.*

NETWORKS AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

5. English Subject Leaders Network (Primary)

Following the success and growing engagement with the primary English Subject Leaders Network last academic year, Learners First is delighted to be able to offer further networking opportunities in 2023/24 for English Subject Leaders in primary schools.

The networking sessions, delivered as face-to-face events, aim to provide a professionally facilitated forum through which colleagues from different schools, MATs and geographical areas with responsibility for leading English in their settings can come together. They have been designed to provide opportunities for subject leaders to collaborate on common challenges, share strategies and engage with, and learn from, high quality research and impactful evidence. Key national updates, including those from Ofsted, the DfE and English Hub network, as well as other pertinent research findings will be shared and discussed to ensure subject leaders have access to the latest information. Importantly, the network will provide an opportunity for leaders to be professionally supported in the strategic interpretation and implementation of such updates in their own schools and settings.

The networking sessions have been designed, and will be facilitated by, serving senior school leaders to ensure they are authentic, pertinent and reflect the current realities of English Subject Leadership in the primary sector. The networking sessions are offered as part of Learners First's longstanding strategic partnership with the experienced and extremely skilled and knowledgeable senior leaders at Humberstone Academy, winners of the UK's Literacy School Of The Year.

Subscription Additionality: This network is fully funded for leaders from subscribing schools and MATs, and schools engaging with the Learners First English Hub @ Whiston Worrygoose. The cost for all other participants is £80 per networking session.

6. Excellence in Practice Network – Leading SEND **NEW!**

The role of leading Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in schools and across MATs is increasingly complex. As the needs of children and families become ever more varied, and the accountability more demanding, there has never been a better time to unpick the critical role of the SENCO and others associated with leading SEND.

Building upon the successful launch session hosted by Ginny Bootman (practising SENCO, national SEND keynote speaker and published author of 'Being the SENDCO'), Learners First is delighted to offer a series of facilitated, interactive sessions as part of this new network throughout 2023/24. The following key themes will be explored as a result of feedback from school leaders, trust leaders and SENCOs who have raised as these as some of the most pressing local and national priorities (these will be reviewed throughout the year and new opportunities may be added in response to emerging priorities):

<i>Meeting the increasing complexity of need</i>	<i>Getting the most from Multi Agencies</i>
<i>Adaptive T&L approaches within mainstream</i>	<i>SEND funding and budgets</i>
<i>Challenges associated with working across multiple LAs</i>	<i>Early identification of need</i>
<i>Recruiting, retaining & Developing specialist staffing/TAs</i>	<i>Legal aspects of SEND</i>

Hosted by leading national experts in SEND, this Excellence in Practice – Leading SEND network is designed to complement existing local networks by providing an opportunity for practitioner leaders from different local authorities, school and trust structures to share ideas, emerging good practice and provide a forum to explore common challenges and opportunities facing SEND provision and inclusion.

Subscription Additionality: This network is fully funded for leaders from subscribing schools and MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations is £900 for the full suite, or £150 per delegate per session.

Section 3: Bespoke Opportunities

Responses to Key Local & Regional Priorities.

The bespoke opportunities offered through Learners First are designed in response to feedback from school and MAT leaders, governors and Trust Boards as well as national emerging priorities. They are designed to connect with our more structured programmes and networks to offer more in-depth or specialist CPD opportunities which can be tailored in a more bespoke and/or enquiry based way. The bespoke opportunities take a variety of forms including breakfast seminars, information briefings, webinars, conferences, face to face seminars, reviews, and master classes to name a few. They cover a range of themes related to teaching and learning, school and trust improvement, leadership development, governance, and a number of legal and compliance related areas pertinent to school and MATs.

This is a really exciting and agile part of the subscription offer and provides subscribing schools and MATs a wide range of opportunities across a broad spectrum of key areas. As previously outlined, the Learners First subscription has always been designed to be more of a partnership offer (rather than a 'traded service') and this element of the offer in particular embodies that approach. Many of the new opportunities available in this section for 2023/24 have been born out of an initial, smaller scale enquiry work with partner schools/MATs. Learners First will continue to work with schools and MATs in this way to help inform, shape and test out future bespoke opportunities. If there are key priorities that your school or Trust are currently working on which you would like to discuss being part of a broader collaboration or bespoke enquiry please contact a member of the Learners First team who will be more than happy to discuss and explore opportunities. The following section includes more information about the bespoke Learners First opportunities available in 2023/24.



BESPOKE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

1. Excellence in Early Years: ‘What does the best start in EYFS look like?’ *NEW!*

During the last academic year, Learners First helped facilitate a joint enquiry collaboration between leaders from three different MATs, collectively serving 47 schools across 5 different Local Authorities. The work was designed to explore ‘what does an exceptional start for children in EYFS look like?’ with a view to engaging a cross section of school leaders and EYFS professionals from the different MATs (serving very different contexts and socio-economic areas) to raise awareness beyond individual contexts. The group undertook a review of credible evidence informed research (including EEF research), shared insights and participated in reciprocal visits. As part of the work, they identified sources of national expertise and we are delighted to have secured the support of leaders from **Sheringham Nursery School and Children’s Centre in Newham, East London**, a recognised beacon of excellence for Early Years practice. We are now able to share this work ore broadly across the Learners First partnership in the form of Early Years Excellence Seminars, the first of which is detailed below.

Seminar 1 - ‘A brighter future for every child: using the best available research evidence to help every child thrive and learn in the Early Years’

This exciting new series of specialist EYFS seminars, workshops and research work will launch in October 2023 with an interactive, in-person exploration of the latest research evidence and this can be put into practice. Leaders of the exceptional Sheringham Nursery School & Children’s Centre, the lead school of the country’s only DfE designated EYFS Research School and ‘A Brighter Start’ (East London’s Early Years Stronger Practice Hub accredited by the DfE), to lead this seminar. Learners First is delighted to welcome Fliss James, Director of the Research School and Assistant Head Teacher and Melissa Prendergast, Deputy Head Teacher and Strategic Lead of the Research School & Stronger Practice Hub to facilitate this seminar. As current Early Years practitioners at Sheringham Nursery School and sector leaders, Fliss and Melissa will share with delegates key areas of current research, the implications of this and the practical application of it in Early Years practice in different settings and contexts. The interactive seminar will consider how the research can be tangibly applied, with an emphasis on implementation, to ensure the youngest learners, particularly those facing disadvantage, have the best start in life. Reflecting on the latest DfE guidance, EEF findings and the weight of current evidence informed practice, Fliss and Melissa will focus on addressing:

- What do we mean by ‘evidence’ and ‘quality’ in Early Years?
- What is the impact of high quality early childhood education and care for disadvantaged children and how do we capture quality?
- High quality interactions and the importance of prioritising the development of communication and language.
- The surprising importance of early maths.

Learners First is extremely excited by these new developments, opportunities and authentic collaborations and very much look forward to being able to offer additional EYFS opportunities throughout the course of the year to schools and settings within the Learners First partnership to support this critical area.

***Subscription Additionality:** The Early Years Excellence Seminar and associated future opportunities are fully funded for participants from subscribing schools, settings and MATs. The cost for all other particiapnts to attend the Excellence Seminar is £120 per delegate. (Engagement with future opportunities will incur additional costs for non-subscribing schools/settings).*

BESPOKE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

2. Professional Seminars – Leadership, Teaching & Learning *REVISED!*

The Leadership Seminars offered through Learners First aim to address a wide variety of pertinent themes and key leadership areas whilst providing serving leaders and practitioners a professional opportunity to network, share ideas and learn from one another. Similarly, the Teaching and Learning seminars are designed to offer up to date pedagogical opportunities focussed on specific aspects of teaching and learning practice, offering practical solutions and introducing examples of excellent and innovative practice from across the country. The Learners First seminars are facilitated through a mixture of online and in-person delivery and take place as either breakfast events, half day, full day or twilight sessions depending on the content and theme. Many of the seminars involve keynote inputs or are facilitated by leading experts to ensure the offer provides new insights, high quality professional development and dialogue, and relates to current and emerging practice. The seminars have been a hugely popular aspect of the subscription offer and enable leaders from subscribing schools to access events without any additional costs or limitations on number. There are typically between 8-12 leadership and teaching & learning seminars offered each year with new opportunities added in response to need and delegate feedback.

In 2023/24 Learners First will also be introducing some new legal and compliance seminars into the offer in partnership with specialists at Irwin Mitchell. This will include a seminar linked to the legal duties of SEND and some new employment law related events in line with new regulation. An exciting new addition will be the opportunity for school leaders to participate in an education focussed mock tribunal which will take leaders through the entire process of a tribunal, the legal tests a case must meet, what it's like to be a witness or called to give evidence, things to consider during a dismissal situation, how judges' decisions are made and scrutinised, and what procedures you should adopt to stay legally compliant during such a process.

***Subscription Additionality:** Seminars are fully funded for participants from subscribing schools/MATs. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations will range from between £80 - £250 per person, per event.*

3. Commissioned MAT & School Reviews

Learners First has been involved in a number of school and MAT based reviews over recent years. These take the form of a developmental, rather than judgemental, review with an enquiry based approach designed to investigate key areas identified by school leaders. The reviews follow agreed lines of enquiry and present back findings and key considerations. Examples to date have included reviews of proposed growth strategies within MATs, a review of the curriculum offer within the only secondary school of a 16 school MAT, reviews of school improvement strategies, reviews of succession planning and sustainability arrangements, and reviews of proposed central team capacity and support functions.

Each review is scoped on an individual basis in partnership with the school or MAT wishing to commission the work. A great emphasis is placed on getting the initial brokering arrangements right to ensure the successful and effectiveness of the review. This also ensures line(s) of enquiry are clear from the outset, the review process is understood by all stakeholders and the whole process can be tailored to best meet need. Further, it enables Learners First to construct the most appropriate review team with the right combination of expertise, knowledge and skills, including where appropriate Ofsted and DfE experience, to maximise impact.

Each review results in a comprehensive and professionally written report which can be presented back to the commissioning organisation and any relevant stakeholders (such as Trustees, MAT Central Teams, Governors or Senior Leaders). Any associated ongoing monitoring or any formal review follow up can be incorporated as part of the bespoke commissioning arrangements.

***Subscription Additionality:** Reviews are costed on an individual basis to take account of the bespoke nature of the approach. Schools and MATs subscribing to Learners First are able to access the reviews at a discounted rate of 25% compared with non-subscribing organisations. Further, appropriately qualified/skilled leaders from subscribing schools and MATs also have the opportunity to receive relevant professional development, support and training to join future review teams.*

BESPOKE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

5. Cyber Security Briefings *New!*



In June 2023, the DfE updated their 'Cyber crime and cyber security: a guide for education providers' which aims to help raise education provider's awareness of cyber crime and cyber security. This is increasingly important as MATs, colleges and independent training providers (ITPs) retain responsibility to be aware of the risk of fraud, theft and irregularity and address it by putting in place proportionate controls, including protecting against cybercrime.

Over recent years, schools and MATs have become increasingly reliant upon technology, IT and online systems in order to conduct core business functions. Unfortunately, recent research highlights how the education sector is particularly vulnerable to cyber attacks (with 78% from the sector reporting incidents) and some high profile national cases involving cyber attacks and ransomware infections in the media. The consequences of such incidents can be significant and the DfE has urged education providers to review their existing defences and take the necessary steps to protect their networks from cyber-attacks. Some steps have been taken to support this, however, the research by Indusface found that 83% of the education sector do not actively train their employees in cyber security.

To help schools undertake this critical work, keep up to date, compliant and understand new DfE and EFSA requirements and guidance, Learners First welcomes the expertise and experiences of **Secure Schools** as part of the 2023/24 subscription offer. Industry experts from Secure Schools will lead a series of bespoke seminars to help those with responsibility and accountability for ensuring legal compliance and good cyber health effectively and confidently undertake their duties.

***Subscription Additionality:** These bespoke opportunities are fully funded for schools and MATs subscribing to Learners First. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations will range from between £80 to £250 per person, per event.*

6. Governance & Compliance Seminars *Revised!*

Supporting the professional development of governors and trustees through e-learning



Learners First has again teamed up with The National Governance Association (NGA) and, through their strategic partnership with Virtual College (one of the UK's top e-learning providers, to provide accessible, engaging and convenient e-learning for governors and trustees) is able to offer the **NGA Learning Link** to subscribing schools. The 'NGA Learning Link' offers flexible e-learning to help governors, trustees, chairs and clerks develop their governance skills and knowledge. The **NGA Learning Link** offered to school and MATs subscribing to Learners First has:

- * Over 65 e-learning modules
- * A selection of bite size modules
- * Secure access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- * Tracked learning (revisit content, take a break/pick up where you left off)
- * CPD accreditation for all core modules and many others
- * A certificate of achievement with every module
- * Multi-device access (desktops, tablets & smartphones)

Modules are interactive, using relevant scenarios to make learning effective and engaging. They are designed to cover the key areas of governance such as:

- **Structures, roles and responsibilities** (understanding school/MAT structures and governance expectations)
- **Good governance** (improving the effectiveness of governing boards, conducting visits to schools, Ofsted inspections and succession planning.)
- **Vision, ethos and strategic direction** (shaping strategic direction , risk management, evaluating effectiveness and governor/trustee roles in school improvement).
- **Pupil success and wellbeing** (core purpose: the quality of education provided to pupils.)
- **Collaborating with partners** (key partners and stakeholders, how to develop relationships with them, and how engagement with stakeholders can lead to better outcomes for pupils.)

***Subscription Additionality:** This offer is fully funded for schools and MATs subscribing to Learners First and is only open to subscribing organisations through Learners First.*

BESPOKE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH LEARNERS FIRST IN 2023/24

7. Excellence in Practice: Attendance, Disadvantage & Engagement

*Introducing a bespoke research commission with Marc Rowland **New!***

According to the DfE 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' (May 2022) 'the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates'. In the period of post pandemic recovery, schools continue to invest heavily in time and resources to improve attendance and reduce absence through a variety of explicit initiatives, extrinsic rewards for engagement and community outreach. However, how often do we really hold up a mirror and consider the lived experience of our children and young people in our schools? How do pupils experience success in their learning and how do we know? And how do we secure pupils' intrinsic motivation to participate fully in their learning experience?

Webinar 1: 'Is our school a place where children and young people want to be?'

Creating the conditions to improve pupil participation and experience of success in their learning – led by Marc Rowland

As part of a longstanding partnership, Learners First is delighted to welcome **Marc Rowland**, author, EEF National Network of Research School Advisor, government advisor for improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners, and leading national Pupil Premium expert to work with us during 2023/24 to help explore these themes. Through this enquiry based partnership work, these key questions (and others) along with the very latest research will be considered to explore how the experience of success at school can contribute to positive attendance, motivate, inspire, improve engagement and outcomes for all. An interactive, live webinar in October will launch this work which will be the first of two keynote events exploring the experience of success in learning.

***Subscription Additionality:** These bespoke opportunities are fully funded for schools and MATs subscribing to Learners First. The cost for participants from non-subscribing organisations will range from between £80 - £250 per person, per event.*

8. Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Organisational Development Strategy **New!**

MATs now form a significant part of the educational landscape in England and are continuing to grow in number, size and scale of operation. This trajectory is likely to continue in line with government policy. Although there is a huge variation at a national, regional and local level, many MATs are now approaching the scale of medium size enterprises, employing hundreds of people and serving thousands of pupils and their communities. Increasingly, MATs are simultaneously operating across a range of geographical locations and in many different socio-economic contexts to deliver far more than academic qualifications and state education.

Given the relative speed at which these MATs have formed, teamed with the significant and unrelenting changes to regulatory frameworks and government policy, it is perhaps not surprising that work to aid the organisational development and secure the future resilience of MATs tends to trail behind plans for operational delivery (i.e. the core business of school improvement, immediate growth and shorter term strategic planning). This is perhaps to be expected given the importance of these areas and the interconnectedness with the main regulators and accountability measures of MATs, i.e. DfE, Ofsted, and EFSA. However, some MATs are beginning to integrate broader aspects of organisational development into such planning activities (such as people development; talent management/retention strategies; wellbeing; extended service related provision; and the civic contribution or 'dividend' of the trust). However, these are often done as independent, discrete exercises resulting in a potential strategic disconnect, and occasionally, competing agendas.

To help address this challenge, and taking account of the DfE published 'Trust Quality Descriptors' (April 2023), Learners First has committed to a body of work during 2023/24 that aims to devise a coherent framework, supported by high quality facilitated professional development, through which *both* core business and organisational development can simultaneously function effectively and efficiently at a strategic level. This will draw upon the expertise of external agencies and business leaders to ensure the work tangibly adds value to the work of individual MATs.

***Subscription Additionality:** Many of the opportunities associated with this new and bespoke work will only be available to subscribing MATs. Non-subscribing organisations may be able to access a limited number of opportunities at a chargeable rate.*

The Learners First DfE Accredited English Hub @Whiston Worrygoose

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 and, as a partnership Learners First and lead school Whiston Worrygoose J&I School, were successfully designated as one of only 34 English Hubs in the country. The aim of the national English Hub network is to support schools to develop early language, early reading (phonics) and reading for pleasure. Having an accredited English Hub within the Learners First partnership allows us to offer exciting, high quality and up to date opportunities to local schools, including professional development opportunities and the distribution of government funding to support schools to purchase validated phonics and early reading resources and materials, regardless of the validated SSP programme schools choose to follow. Throughout the year the CPD offer from the English Hub, or 'medium level support' is updated with new opportunities. As a minimum, for 2023/24 it includes:

- Showcase events at the lead school, Whiston Worrygoose J&I (Ofsted Outstanding, Nov 2021), to see phonics and early reading in practice
- Termly update briefings facilitated by the English Hub Lead
- OU/UKLA Teachers as Readers Group
- Reading for Pleasure: Transforming your School's Reading Culture
- Pre-Phonics/Early Language Development session with The Learning Lady
- Supporting Early Language Development Programme
- Reading Framework Part 2 Programme
- English Hub Updates throughout the year
- Thematic CPD events (including Ofsted updates)

More intensive support available to schools includes the opportunity to receive a phonics audit, the allocation of resource funding (up to £9,000 per school) and to be involved in a programme of bespoke support from a Literacy Specialist as part of the Intensive School Support (ISS) programme. Full details of these opportunities are available on the Learners First website or you can email Englishhub@learnersfirst.org.

Please note: all support, professional development opportunities and resource funding offered via the DfE accredited English Hub is openly available to all eligible schools, regardless of whether they subscribe to Learners First. However, where there are English or literacy related support needs or CPD identified by schools which fall outside the national remit of DfE English Hubs (such as writing, SPAG or transition into KS3 literacy for example at present) these help to inform the bespoke opportunities/networks which are offered as part of the Learners First subscription offer and are only fully funded for subscribing schools.

Funded by



Department
for Education

The 2023/24 Subscription Offer: The Model & Fees

As an inclusive partnership, Learners First has never imposed a ‘joining fee’, nor is access to the offer limited to a select group of schools, a particular LA or MAT. The subscription offer is open to all schools, academies and MATs wishing to engage and was introduced several years ago in an effort to provide exceptional value for money and excellent economies of scale. It also provides a vehicle through which financial resource can be reinvested in the local school system where it can have more impact on children and young people.

The subscription model identifies a cost for individual schools, academies and MATs based on pupil numbers on roll and provides unlimited access to the opportunities outlined in the subscription offer. Opportunities not fully funded are offered to subscribing schools/MATs at a heavily discounted rate. Some opportunities within the offer are exclusively available to subscribing schools/MATs and where national funding is available for programmes the subscription offer provides additionality, for example, through the facilitation of associated networks (e.g. the new Early Career Lead network) or through bespoke consultancy support via the Learners First Strategic Leadership team which would not otherwise be available.

As the vast majority of local schools and academies now operate within Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), the Learners First subscription model reflects this; bandings can be applied to the collective number of pupils on roll within a MAT. For instance, in a MAT of five schools with a secondary school of 1,300 pupils, two primary schools (of 240 and 180 pupils respectively), an infant school of 120 pupils and a special school of 80 pupils, the collective number of pupils within the MAT would be 1,920. This would place the MAT in Band 12 and provide additional savings compared to each school paying the respective banding amount. The MAT discount can only be offered when all schools within the Trust collectively subscribe. Should additional schools join the MAT during the course of the subscription year a pro-rata fee would be applied.

As a not-for-profit organisation and in recognition of the financial challenges schools face, the subscription costs have been purposefully kept to an absolute minimum. Traditionally, the Learners First subscription fees were based on a flat fee of £500 plus £2.50 per pupil. However, in light of some of the national funding changes and opportunities, and to demonstrate our unwavering commitment to providing best value, the per pupil price was **reduced by 20%** at the beginning of the reforms and, **for a second consecutive year**, remain at this lower price.

Band	Pupil Numbers <i>(Numbers On Roll - Oct 2022 Census)</i>	Subscription Fees for 2023/24
1	0 - 150	£800.00
2	151 - 200	£900.00
3	201 - 250	£1,000.00
4	251 - 300	£1,100.00
5	301 - 400	£1,300.00
6	401 - 500	£1,500.00
7	501 - 600	£1,700.00
8	601 - 750	£2,000.00
9	751 - 1000	£2,500.00
10	1001 - 1250	£3,000.00
11	1251 - 1500	£3,500.00
12	1501 - 2000	£4,500.00
13	2001 - 2500	£5,500.00
14	2501 - 3000	£6,500.00
15	3001 - 3500	£7,500.00
16	3501 - 4000	£8,500.00
17	4001 - 4500	£9,500.00
18	4501 - 5000	£10,500.00
19	5001 - 5500	£11,500.00
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NEXT STEPS

Accessing the Subscription

Sign Up Process

Schools or MATs wishing to subscribe in 2023/24 are kindly asked to complete the relevant sign up form via the links below. These can also be accessed via the Learners First website where further details of the opportunities included in the subscription and new opportunities will be included as they emerge throughout the year.

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