Pathfinder Education Partnership

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Newsletter

SPRING 2026

Delivering high-quality professional development across Yorkshire and the Humber

Andrew Young and Fiona Hopkinson-Kearney
Co-Directors of Pathfinder Teaching School Hub and Education Partnership

We hope the brighter, warmer weather has lifted your spirits and that the spring term has provided an opportunity to focus on growth and renewal across our professional learning community.

It has been a vibrant and productive term, filled with impactful professional development that has supported colleagues to deepen their expertise, strengthen their leadership practice and collaborate meaningfully with peers across our region. As we approach the Easter break, we hope colleagues are able to take the opportunity for well-deserved rest, relaxation and reflection before the busy summer term begins.

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See page 5 for details on our Middle and Senior Leaders' Conference taking place on Tuesday 9 June 2026

Flourishing leaders

PATHFINDER LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust has recently joined an international movement, partnering with The National Society of Education to complement the NPQ offer and further develop school leaders in our trust. We have partnered with a neighbouring trust, The Emmanuel Schools Foundation where we are working together to facilitate a set of flourishing leaders programmes for new and aspiring leaders.

The aim is to support educators at every level through a 'twin-track' approach that balances personal growth with professional leadership skills. Rooted in five key domains - purpose, relationships, learning, resources, and wellbeing - the programmes aim to foster sustainable school cultures where all community members can thrive. Please get in touch if you'd like to have a coffee and conversation about how to get involved in this school/trust-wide approach to leadership development.

NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Strengthening specialist and leadership expertise

The spring term has been another incredibly busy and rewarding one for our National Professional Qualification cohorts, with a rich programme of clinics, conferences and preparation sessions supporting colleagues at every stage of their leadership journey. It has been a privilege to see colleagues engaging so thoughtfully and enthusiastically and to witness the strength of professional collaboration across our regional network.

We were delighted to deliver Clinic 1 sessions for all of our November 2025 Specialist and Leadership cohorts, setting a strong foundation for the months ahead. Shortly after, our April 2025 Specialist cohorts came together for Clinic 5, solidifying their learning and increasing their confidence as they near the end of their course. Our October 2024 SENCO and Headship cohorts reached an important milestone with Clinic 7 providing a great opportunity to reflect on their progress and continuing to refine their strategic thinking and impact within their settings. Each clinic has had rich professional dialogue, practical application and a real sense of shared purpose.

A particular highlight this term was Conference 2 for our NPQSENCO, Headship and Senior Leadership groups. The energy in the rooms was palpable as colleagues explored key themes, challenged their thinking and strengthened their networks. The opportunity to collaborate with peers from across schools continues to be one of the most valued aspects of our programmes, and it has been wonderful to see these professional relationships flourish.

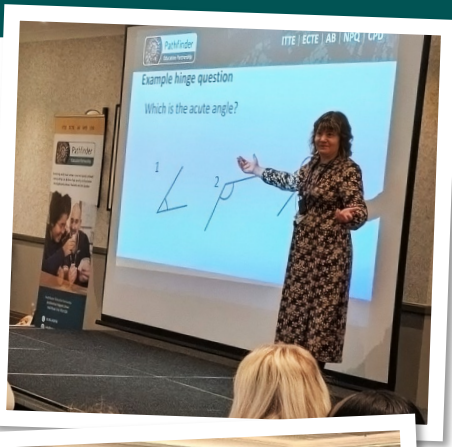
Alongside our clinics and conferences, we have been focused on preparing all of our October 2024 Leadership cohorts and April 2025 Specialist cohorts for their assessments in April. Through targeted guidance, structured support and dedicated time for reflection, participants have been able to consolidate their learning and approach assessment with clarity and confidence. We have been thrilled to receive fantastic feedback across the programmes which has particularly praised the quality of facilitation, the value of peer collaboration and the practical support provided to ensure assessment readiness.

As we look ahead, we do so with pride in what has been achieved this term and excitement for what is to come. Thank you to all our participants and facilitators for your commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm. Together we continue to strengthen leadership and specialist expertise across our schools to deliver meaningful change and impact for the young people we educate and support.

Visit the Pathfinder Teaching School Hub website for the latest information on our NPQ offer.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Improving attendance, attainment and inclusion



We are privileged to be one of five regional providers contributing to the Department for Education RISE universal offer of professional learning. The national programme involves providing place-based initiatives to strengthen workforce development in line with DfE strategic goals. All RISE universal offer programmes are therefore focused on attendance, attainment, reception year quality, and inclusion.

Here are the five areas of professional learning being offered across Yorkshire and Humber:

1. **Adaptive practice**
2. **Bradford Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Hub**
3. **Roma, Romany and Irish Traveller Network**
4. **Phonics support**
5. **White Working-Class Boys**

Our own offer of professional learning was for Teachers, TAs and ITTs and focused on adaptive practice. Here's a snapshot of the impact:

	Adaptive Teaching for ITTE	Adaptive Teaching Programme for Teachers	Adaptive Practice Course for TAs
COURSE CONTENT	■ 2 webinars for 100+ ITTs ■ Bringing a culture of inclusion to the classroom ■ How to proactively and reactively adapt teaching ■ Advice on locating experts to learn from in placement settings	■ 1 full day conference and 2 online twilights for 200+ teachers ■ Learn about a range of conditions and the shared barriers to learning linked to executive function, cognitive load, and working memory ■ Embed proactive and reactive adaptive teaching strategies	■ 1 full day course for 106 TAs ■ Learn about a range of conditions and the shared barriers to learning linked to executive function, cognitive load, and working memory ■ Develop proactive and reactive adaptive practice strategies, enabling you to work smarter, not harder, with teacher colleagues
COURSE FEEDBACK	**90% of participants said** their knowledge of the subject area has deepened, they will likely change or introduce something as a result of the training and that the delivery of the training was of a high standard. *"Understanding how to adapt within a class with variety of need."* *"I liked how interactive the session was. I also liked how lots of areas were introduced but at appropriate depth, with links to real life applications."* *"It was very informative and made me reflect on my own practice."*	**100% of participants said** their knowledge of the subject area has deepened, they will likely change or introduce something as a result of the training and that the delivery of the training was of a high standard. *"Clear strategies to use in the classroom underpinned with the research and the why. Focussing on the impact it will have."* *"The strategies were well explained and I feel like I can use them immediately."* *"The ethos of culture/looking at the whole picture of a child with SEND rather than just focusing on their barriers."*	**100% of participants said** their knowledge of the subject area has deepened, they will likely change or introduce something as a result of the training and that the delivery of the training was of a high standard. *"Very informative. The information was broken down really well and we were given ideas for particular strategies that we can use."* *"It was so well delivered, with a lovely mix between listening, new content and tasks for reflecting or consolidating."* *"The theory aspect plus hearing other views and experiences. Also great to be recognised as a professional."*

We are hopeful that we can offer the same support through RISE in the near future and will keep you posted when we know more.

EARLY CAREER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Celebrating ECT mentors

This term has seen a real focus on developing our ECT mentor workforce across the region. In January, we had a fantastic turnout for our spring term mentor development session, which focused on a key aspect of instructional coaching. It was also wonderful to see several of our ECT mentors attend the Steplab intensive coaching day in March, further honing their instructional coaching practice and considering how these approaches can extend beyond their work with ECTs.

We know how powerful effective mentoring can be, and it was really encouraging to see this reflected in recent research from Teacher Tapp. Their findings showed that 89% of ECTs felt supported following their most recent mentor meeting, while 83% reported that their mentor is effective in supporting their development.

The same research indicated that only 23% of mentors volunteered for the role, which makes the commitment of mentors across our region even more significant. We are incredibly grateful for the time, care and professional expertise they dedicate to supporting their ECT colleagues.

This commitment is reflected in our recent feedback:

95%

of our mentors reported they would recommend becoming an ECT mentor to a colleague

95%

of our mentors said that they find the ECT mentor role professionally fulfilling

School Leaders' Conference

Education professionals from across the region are set to come together for the annual School Leaders' Conference, hosted by Pathfinder Education Partnership and proudly sponsored by Yorkshire Education.

The conference will provide a vital platform for headteachers, trust CEOs, governors and local authority senior leaders to collaborate on the most pressing challenges and opportunities currently facing the education sector.

The conference will welcome 100 delegates on the day, featuring a curated programme of keynote speakers and interactive workshops. The conference centres on the theme - ***Stronger Together: Inclusive communities for collective success***. This conference is a vital opportunity for colleagues to step away from the daily demands of school life to think strategically, share best practices, and strengthen the networks that support our schools.

Our children deserve the best of us, and that can only happen when we are supported through high-quality professional development and community-based collaboration. The day's agenda includes high-profile sessions from national experts, including best-selling author Katriona O'Sullivan of Maynooth University, who will share her powerful personal story of education as a tool for transformation; Professor John Jerrim of University College London (UCL), who will discuss the latest research in pupil engagement; Dr Kaitlyn Regehr and Dr Katharine Smales of UCL, who will lead a workshop on the harmful nature of social media and how to promote digital nutrition, and Mohamed Abdallah of Reach Foundation, who will share strategies and insights for strengthening the way local communities nurture a sense of belonging so everyone feels seen, significant, and empowered.

Pathfinder Education Partnership

Conference sponsor and partner

Yorkshire Education

FLOURISHING BY DESIGN

The village approach to building strong foundations

MIDDLE AND SENIOR LEADERS' CONFERENCE 2026

Tuesday 9 June, 9.00am - 3.30pm

Guest speakers and workshop facilitators

Professor Stuart Kime

Keynote: *Nurturing Great Teaching: What happens when we feel we belong in school?*

Professor Stuart Kime is the Director of Education at Evidence Based Education (EBE) and a leading authority on evidence-based teaching practices. Drawing on his background as a teacher, researcher and policy advisor, he co-authored EBE's influential 'great teaching toolkit: evidence review' and helped create The Great Teaching Toolkit, a key professional growth platform for educators.

Jess Easton

Interactive Spotlight Session: *Measuring engagement as a lead indicator for attendance, attainment and wellbeing: Case studies across the region*

Jess Easton is Director at The Engagement Platform (TEP). She leads the insights work at TEP, helping schools, trusts and partners understand how engagement shapes outcomes for pupils, employees and families. Her work focuses on using robust engagement data to support leaders to better understand culture, challenge assumptions and make more informed, strategic decisions.

Verity Howorth

Interactive Spotlight Session: *Great schools are necessary but not sufficient: Establishing a cradle to career approach*

Verity Howorth began her career in 2011 as a French teacher in London through the Teach First programme, progressing into middle and senior leadership at Reach Academy Feltham before moving to Dixons Trinity Chapeltown in 2020. Currently, at Reach Foundation, she works nationally with educators on the Cradle to Career Relationships initiative and facilitates the Yorks100 programme, driven by her admiration for school staff's dedication to tackling social injustice.

Shaheen Myers

Keynote: *Building connections through care and culture*

Shaheen Myers is the founder of BalanceEd, focusing on improving staff wellbeing and developing positive school cultures through evidence-based practices. As a popular keynote speaker, she works with school leaders to help them integrate psychological safety, strong professional boundaries and care into their leadership and organisational strategy.

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Programme

TIME	SESSION
9:00am - 9:30am	**Arrival and refreshments**
9:30am - 10:00am	**Welcome, scene setting and networking** Andrew Young and Fiona Hopkinson-Kearney, Pathfinder Education Partnership Co-Directors
10:00am - 11:00am	**Keynote:** *Nurturing Great Teaching: What happens when we feel we belong in school?* Professor Stuart Kime, Director of Education at Evidence Based Education
11:00am - 11:20am	**Break, networking and exhibition market place**
11:20am - 12:10pm	**Interactive Spotlight Session:** *Measuring engagement as a lead indicator for attendance, attainment and wellbeing: Case studies across the region* Jess Easton, Director at The Engagement Platform (TEP)
12:10pm - 12:50pm	**Interactive Spotlight Session:** *Great schools are necessary but not sufficient: Establishing a cradle to career approach* Verity Howorth, Reach Foundation
12:50pm - 1:10pm	**Workshop:** *Reflection, networking and activation session* Andrew Young and Fiona Hopkinson-Kearney, Pathfinder Education Partnership Co-Directors
1:10pm - 2:00pm	**Lunch, networking and exhibition market place**
2:00pm - 3:00pm	**Keynote:** *Building connections through care and culture* Shaheen Myers, Founder of BalanceEd
3:00pm - 3:30pm	**Final remarks, reflections and feedback** Andrew Young and Fiona Hopkinson-Kearney, Pathfinder Education Partnership Co-Directors

Price, booking and venue

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Yorkshire Education, the ticket price is only £99 per person

BOOK YOUR PLACE

York Racecourse EST. 1731

Knavesmire Road, York, YO23 1EX

GET DIRECTIONS