



Launch Event
The Historic Dockyard, Chatham
5 October 2021

We were so pleased to welcome so many colleagues to our launch event last week, co-hosted with the [Thames Gateway Teaching School Hub](#), at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham.

For us it was a day full of hope for the schools across Kent & Medway. From our key note speakers we learnt many important evidence informed insights that challenged us to think further about how to apply that evidence in our schools. We were reminded of the compelling nature of the current extensive range of research evidence and how it does represent 'the best bets' of what we know will make a positive difference in our schools. As the [EEF report](#) on effective CPD published last week reminded us, we need to ensure that this evidence is not just read, discussed and understood. It has to be embedded into practice.

This provides a challenge for us all in our schools but it gives us grounds for hope too. Whether it be the evidence from Prof Coe's 'great teaching toolkit,' the new Early Career Framework or the new NPQs, we have the chance for every member of staff from trainee teacher to headteacher to learn a body of knowledge rooted in the best evidence available. With the Early Career Framework and NPQs we are delivering in partnership with the Ambition Institute and Church of England education office we also have the curriculum design to ensure that all participants learn how to put that knowledge into practice effectively. Together with the local knowledge we have of our school community and context this should provide us with the expertise and confidence to do our jobs even more effectively.

This is exciting for two reasons:

- i) Its inclusive – this knowledge can be learnt and will allow all in our profession to have the best chance for a successful and rewarding career.
- ii) Its hopeful because it makes clear that the future of our schools does not rely on some rare group of charismatic hero headteachers who were just 'born to lead.' This is a future in which each of us has a role to play to sustain and build success in our schools.

Professor Rob Coe's keynote address to us spoke of this. He challenged us to consider how we define what makes a great teacher. He shared with us his definition,

'A great teacher is one who is willing to do what it takes to be demonstrably more effective next year than this.'

We know that we have many great teachers in our schools. Yet, what makes them great is that state of mind to keep on thinking about being even better and then enacting that in the classroom year on year. As Prof Dylan William wrote, 'If we create a culture where every teacher believes the need to improve, not because they are not good enough but because they can be even better, there is no limit to what we can achieve.'

Professor Coe went on to share the research and background to his recently published ['Great Teacher toolkit'](#) He shared with us the accumulation of knowledge about effective

teaching he has developed during and since his influential [‘Improving education: Triumph of hope over experience’](#) and [‘What makes great teaching’](#) reports. To assess how much you know of this evidence we enjoyed taking part in his [interactive quiz](#).

We found this immensely helpful in linking back to, and understanding, the research to attempt to dispel any disagreement and professional controversy. Full details of what Prof Coe said are in the attached powerpoint to this newsletter update. As a taster of this we found this slide a really helpful ‘key takeaway’ to focus our thinking on how we engender great teaching in our classrooms:

Overview of our model

Great teachers:

- 01 **understand the content** they are teaching and how it is learnt
- 02 create a **supportive environment** for learning
- 03 **manage the classroom** to maximise opportunity to learn
- 04 present content, activities and interactions that **activate their students' thinking**

15 © Evidence Based Education Great teaching toolkit

Heather Fearn

who leads Ofsted’s curriculum unit spoke of the rationale behind Ofsted’s focus on the curriculum, the importance of knowledge and its integral part on building children’s understanding through clearly sequenced and progressive steps.

As you will find in her presentation she provided lots of thinking points for school leaders to consider as they review and develop their own curriculum. We found her ‘panning for gold’ analogy really helpful. School leaders know there is potentially so much to pack in to a school curriculum. The challenge for us is to prioritise the most important knowledge (‘panning the gold’) which can then serve to open the wider hinterland of the subject within the curriculum. This ‘hinterland’ can be taught in schools and students need to be exposed to it. Yet, it is not as important for children to remember all this ‘hinterland’ knowledge as the substantive knowledge that is a key reference point of a subject.

Heather also made mention of the recent curriculum research reviews that Ofsted have recently published [here](#). If you have not yet already read these we would encourage you to do so. They provide superb summaries of the most up to date research about teaching subjects in our schools and are applicable to primary and secondary colleagues. The authors of each of these reports have also recorded a [short video clips](#) of their findings which are helpful too.



As well as our keynote speakers, the **Curriculum subject hubs** serving Kent & Medway were also in attendance. There was plenty of opportunities for delegates to network and explore and to find out about the fully funded support available from them. Click on the links below to find out more about their offer. You can also, of course, contact us for further advice:

- [English Hub](#)
- [Maths Hub](#)
- [Computing Hubs](#) – Maidstone & Dartford
- [Advanced Maths Support Programme](#)
- [STEM Hub & Science Learning Partnership](#)



. Summary from Candi Roberts, Headteacher at Claremont Primary School:

“The launch day highlighted how the various Hubs come together with a common goal- to support our teachers to provide the best opportunities for the children work with. It was great to see Kent expertise here together.

The English Hub were focussing on a very relevant area for primaries- the transition from Letters and Sounds to a more upgraded Systematic Synthetic Phonics program (SSP). The goody bag gave useful takeaways!

Professor Rob Coe was inspiring and Heather Fearn gave Ofsted insights around implementation of supporting leaders and CPD within a school. One of the highlights of the day was that colleagues from across the county were together in a safe environment to meet and chat in person.”

We very much enjoyed meeting with all who came to they day. Whether our team met you on the day or whether we meet you at any of our future events we look forward to building up our relationships with you. By building those metaphorical bridges with colleagues from across Kent we look forward to collectively moving forward together to work for the common good of all in our school communities.

Our next larger scale event will be a seminar with [Alex Quigley](#) speaking on literacy and his books [‘Closing the vocabulary and reading gaps’](#) on the afternoon of 25th February 2022. We will be hosting this close to Maidstone. Save the date and we will be in touch to confirm details