

Extending excellence in education

Challenge Partners is a national partnership of schools, MATs and other groups of schools committed to reducing educational inequality and improving the life chances of all children. Through collaboration, challenge and professional development, we are working to ensure every school can benefit from the combined wisdom of the education system.

Our approach has been developed over more than 20 years. Challenge Partners was formed to spread the success of the London Challenge, which transformed the performance of schools and led to the development of Teaching Schools. Pupils in our partner schools and MATs achieve more and progress faster than the national average. Of the Challenge Partner schools inspected in 2017/18, 48% improved their Ofsted grade, compared to only 34% nationally, rising to 52% for those in Challenge Partners for three years or more.

Join our Network of Excellence

By building a trusted practitioner-led network, we identify the knowledge and skills of the best, and facilitate collaboration with others, to reduce variability in provision. We link schools and MATs with external knowledge, to drive up the performance of all schools, leaders, teachers and pupils. And we harness our collective voice to influence national policy and practice.

This growing network includes more than 430 primary, secondary and special schools and alternative provision settings nationwide. Challenge Partners schools can access information, share good practice and expertise. Schools and MATs are organised into local hubs, working together to secure improvements and personal development on shared priorities. They link with hubs around the country, and play a crucial role in facilitating collaboration and knowledge-sharing between schools.

MAT peer quality assurance reviews

Following a successful, independently-evaluated pilot, we are launching a MAT peer quality assurance review. Recognising that all MATs are different, these three-day, independently-led peer reviews seek to understand each MAT on its own terms, evaluating the MAT's approach to school improvement and its impact on pupil outcomes. At the end of the review, the MAT receives a report highlighting its strengths and suggesting next steps.

MAT networking events

We bring MAT leaders together regularly to share effective practice and challenges and to hear from high-profile speakers. Recent speakers include the National School Commissioner and Professor Toby Greany, author of the Department for Education research report on sustainable improvement in multi-school groups.

“Challenge Partners’ MAT review service was really thorough and robust”

Libby Nicholas CEO, Astrea Academy Trust



Benefits of joining our network

- Annual peer review and knowledge exchange for every school
- Training in key leadership skills and competencies
- Sharing innovative practice online and at local and national events
- Working with business and other charities to learn from other sectors
- Bespoke programmes to reduce gaps in educational achievement and to extend excellence

School Quality Assurance Review

We have developed this powerful tool for school peer review and collaboration. The Quality Assurance Review is an opportunity for schools to work together through an open, challenging process which supports learning and reflection. These rigorous annual reviews take place over three days, and are led by an Ofsted-experienced Lead Reviewer, supported by senior leaders and headteachers from other schools in the network. This means they provide great professional development for reviewers, as well as sharp evaluation for the host school. Post review we put you in touch with relevant outstanding people and practice in the partnership and beyond to help accelerate your school's improvement.

Evidence-informed collaboration

Further strategic support is available to enhance the effectiveness of your teaching school alliance, local partnership or multi-academy trust, including Leadership Development Days and our collaborative, high-impact pupil premium programme developed by outstanding schools.

Be part of a national community

We also help you identify and link-up with best practice nationally through:

- Our online directory of expertise in schools and MATs like yours
- Free/subsidised places at national events to engage with colleagues, research and high-profile speakers
- Discounts from partner organisations like ImpactEd

Pricing

We offer discounts for MATs whose subscription fee would be more than £20,000. The model is designed to add value to any school improvement work going on in the MAT, ensuring you don't pay for things you don't need. It offers an additional 10% discount for subscribing as a group. Joining us at Challenge Partners costs £7.20 per pupil, with a minimum fee of £2,978, and maximum of £9,800. Some of this is returned to fund hub activities. There are also special offers for those renewing for a fourth year or more.

“Challenge Partners schools continue to outperform others nationally, underlining the benefits of our outward-looking, partnership approach”

Dr Kate Chhatwal CEO, Challenge Partners

9/10

average score given by headteachers for the impact the Quality Assurance Review has on their school improvement plans

276

Areas of Excellence across network schools nationwide

151,000

disadvantaged children helped