



# GLOUCESTER SCHOOLS' PARTNERSHIP

Raising the attainment and improving the life chances of all pupils in our partnership schools.

# ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

## 2024/25

### Our Strategic Approach

The GSP is directed by its Strategy Group, which meets seven times per academic year and is made up of the Leads from each Steering Group, the Chair of the Partnership Board and a representative from GAPH (Gloucestershire Association of Primary Headteachers).

The Strategy Group for 2024/25 comprised:

- Sam Thomas, Meadowside Primary School (Strategy Group Chair, S2SS Steering Group Lead)
- Kelly Armstrong, Field Court Junior Academy (Partnership Chair)
- Julie Poulson, Beech Green Primary School / Helena Armstrong, Hillview Primary School (CPD & Leadership Steering Group Lead)
- Geraldine Brogan, Dinglewell Infant School (Events & Activities Steering Group Lead)
- Lee Pajak, Kingsway Primary School (Inclusion Steering Group Lead)
- Lucy Collins, Linden Primary School (Best Practice Network Steering Group Lead)
- Kerry Cunningham, Longlevens Primary Federation (co-Chair of GAPH)

### Driving Impact Through Partnership

The GSP reviews its Steering Groups each year to ensure they remain aligned with the evolving educational landscape and the specific challenges faced by schools, staff, and their communities. In 2024/25, the Steering Groups were:

- **CPD & Leadership Steering Group:** Delivering support for professional development, including core programmes such as the Subject Leaders' Programme, Middle Leadership and Leadership for Tomorrow, alongside externally commissioned CPD for Headteachers and senior leaders.
- **Inclusion Strategy Group:** Targeting key areas of Inclusion where collective action can make the greatest difference, through collaborative action research and creating opportunities for upskilling teams.
- **Best Practice Networks Steering Group:** Building on GSP's original *Academic Communities*, these networks provide opportunities to share expertise, exchange ideas, and showcase innovative practice in subject areas and pedagogy.
- **Events & Activities Steering Group:** Offering pupils enriching, confidence-building experiences and city-wide events that foster a sense of belonging to a wider family of schools.
- **School-to-School Support Steering Group** Creating peer-to-peer networking opportunities and promoting the wellbeing of Headteachers through mutual support and collaboration.



## The Strategy for 2024/25:

The GSP Strategy Group determines the activity, CPD and events for the year, based on the needs identified by member Headteachers. Meeting regularly and with an outward-facing stance, the GSP can be dynamic in its response, to changing needs and situations, answering with targeted CPD and initiatives for pupils. Six times per year, the Steering Group leads share an update with the Partnership Board, which comprises every Headteacher from the GSP's member schools.

At the end of 2023/24, the Strategy Group met with or spoke with, every GSP Member Headteacher, to ascertain perception around the value of membership to the GSP and their priorities for the year ahead and areas where the GSP could support them.

Feedback shared indicated that **being part of GSP provides community, professional growth, and shared strength. Schools value the networking, CPD, and collective problem-solving, which enhance both staff confidence and pupil outcomes.**

There were common strategic priorities and themes, which GSP schools highlighted for 2024/25:

<i><b>Theme</b></i>	<i><b>Key Priorities/Challenges</b></i>
Curriculum & Teaching	Curriculum alignment & coherence; Raising attainment in core subjects; Embedding assessment & vocabulary
SEND & Inclusion	Managing rising EHCPs & complex needs; Effective Teaching Partner deployment & CPD; Bespoke provision for high-needs pupils
Behaviour & SEMH	Behaviour policy & leadership; Expanding SEMH provision; Embedding Emotion Coaching
Oracy & Communication	Early identification in EYFS; Strengthening EAL support; Embedding oracy programmes
Leadership & Staff Development	Succession planning & induction; Staff CPD & workload management
Finance & Resources	Managing budget pressures; Recruitment & resource allocation
Attendance & Engagement	Reducing persistent absence; Parental engagement & communication

This intelligence gathered across the Partnership showed that SEND/SEMH capacity, curriculum excellence, staff development and workload management were among the most consistent priorities across schools, all underpinned by financial sustainability.

There was inevitably a need for a strong focus on Inclusion for the year, due to the challenges within the education sector around increased need, reduced funding and uncertainty around the new Ofsted framework, as well as the Education White Paper that was due in Autumn 2025 and SEND Reforms.

To inform and align the work of the Steering Groups to these priorities and challenges, where the GSP could make an impact, the GSP Strategy Group set objectives for the 2024/25 year, upon which the work for the academic year would focus:

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- 1. To work collaboratively across GSP and in partnership with GCC to help shape Inclusion and SEND strategy and sufficiency. We will do this through an understanding of mainstream schools' pupil needs, role in relation to the law, capacity and workforce*
  - 2. Commitment from GSP Members to network and share best practice between GSP schools and to identify networks of best practice in settings beyond GSP.*
  - 3. To revise and refine the GSP and the GSP offer through a 360-degree review, to ensure it is sustainable and relevant to the needs of the schools and communities in Gloucester City and its environs.*
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## CPD & Leadership Steering Group:

***Chair: Helena Armstrong, Hillview Primary School***

### Externally-led CPD for Headteachers and Senior Leaders in 2024/25:

For 2024/25, the decision was made to deliver a schedule of externally-led CPD, which Headteachers and members of SLT could attend together, which supported potential for implementation and improvement, which comes from Headteachers and SLT hearing and processing CPD simultaneously.

- Personal Development, led by Jen Edwards, November 2024
- Developing a Stronger Team, led by Jen Edwards, November 2024
- Understanding the changes to Ungraded Inspection, led by Jen Edwards, January 2025
- Strategic Prioritisation: 'Learning to live with a well that runs dry', March 2025
- Pupil Premium CPD around Disadvantage, Gloucestershire Research School, June 2025

### Partnership work around SEND Law:

In late 2024 and 2025, the GSP focused heavily on strengthening SEND provision and addressing challenges with EHCP systems. A full day of SEND Law CPD was delivered for Headteachers and SENDCos in November 2024. The SENDCo Best Practice Network met in November 2025 to make recommendations for improving EHCP processes, based on the CPD and as a follow-up, an Extraordinary Partnership Board Meeting was convened to review outputs from the SENDCos. GSP leaders also met with Gloucestershire County Council to identify collaborative and Gloucestershire Association of Primary Headteachers assumed this dialogue on behalf of all Partnerships in the county.

### GSP Core CPD:

#### ■ Middle Leaders Programme:

***Led by Siobhan Devereux (St Peter's Catholic School) and Hanna Cherrington (Beech Green)***

The course materials for this programme were rewritten, exclusively for the GSP, by a team of GSP Senior Leaders who undertook the current NPQ Middle Leadership courses. The course included the following, over four sessions during 2024/25 led by Siobhan Devereux (St Peter's Catholic Primary) and Hanna Cherrington (Beech Green Primary):

- Leadership behaviours and skills
- The cycle of exploring, preparing, delivering and sustaining change
- Creating implementation plans
- Designing effective PD and encouraging staff buy in
- Discussing barriers to implementation plans and using research to identify ways to overcome these
- Monitoring the project

During the year, the Middle Leaders took responsibility for planning and implementing a key area of school improvement, which had already been identified as a priority for their schools, including:

- Spoken Language, listening
- Geography fieldwork
- Early Development of Language
- Development and implementation of Art curriculum



### ■ **Subject Leaders' Programme:**

#### ***Led by Kelly Armstrong, Field Court Junior School***

Aimed at Teachers who were new to leading a subject, or need a refresher on leading a subject, this programme was led again for the GSP by Kelly Armstrong, Headteacher of Field Court Junior Academy. The programme covers the key aspects of being a leader: how to audit a subject; developing and implementing an action plan; and the monitoring and review of the subject.

Delivered across 4 afternoons during the year, with clear gap tasks for completion in-between each session, the programme culminates with a full day of visits. For 2024/25 the visits were Harewood Infant School, Harewood Junior School and Field Court Infant Academy, with each giving a brief overview of their curriculum and how subject leadership operates in their setting, to provide a comparison to the materials presented on the course

Feedback from those who attended was overwhelmingly positive, rating it 10 out of 10, both in terms of how well the course met its aims and how useful participants found the entire course in meeting their own aims on return to their own schools.

Delegates valued the opportunity to understand different ways of organising Subject Leadership information and paperwork, seeing other schools' approaches and the useful working examples that were shared by the course leader, Kelly Armstrong, within her school.

### ■ **Leadership for Tomorrow Programme:**

#### ***Led by Andrea Mills, Harewood Junior School***

The reworked programme for Senior Leaders was designed to run over two years (2024/25 and 2025/26), preparing participants for Headship or Deputy Headship, including the following themes:

- Leadership styles and its core purpose
- Informal and formal procedures for tackling underperformance
- Governance
- Finance and budgets
- Premises management and H&S
- Parental engagement & working with other services
- Strategic planning and change management
- Surviving Ofsted
- Looking after others, looking after yourself

# Inclusion Strategy Group

*Chair: Lee Pajak, Kingsway Primary School*

## Overview of the GSP Inclusion Strategy Group

There were agreed key strands for 2024/25, which were aimed to help the GSP to meet its strategic objectives:

- **Enhanced Provision**
- **Targeted learning**
- **Relational Practice and Behaviour**
- **EYFS & School Readiness**

### ▪ **Enhanced Provision (EnPro) in mainstream schools:**

‘Enhanced Provision’ is an umbrella term that captures individual school’s responses to supporting children and young people who may need specialist provision and have complex SEND needs and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). In some cases these children are at risk of suspension and/or permanent exclusion and a school may determine that a child’s needs may be more effectively met within an Enhanced Provision. This enhanced offer can provide flexible, individualised support, enabling them to access learning in a tailored learning environment. Unlike an LA Resource Base, in an Enhanced Provision, schools have control over determining the primary area of need, the number of children who attend, and the freedom to adjust over time, should the needs of the school evolve.

The GSP Inclusion Strategy Group prioritised work in this area, as it was felt that these types of provisions could contribute towards local and wider SEND-sufficiency strategy, in light of the national challenges surrounding this area.

Following a year of collaboration and a focus within some schools to develop Enhanced Provision spaces, to cater for the members of the ISG co-created a Guidance Document that was ultimately shared with all schools in the Partnership. The guidance included considerations around the curriculum, adaptive teaching, and meeting different types of need in the context of different staffing models and varying physical environments. There was a caveat that for some schools, this is not in line with their school’s principles or needs, but for some schools, this was the necessary route to avoid high numbers of PEX. Case Studies in the guidance link to schools’ documentation, where applicable and that Headteachers were given access to the Sharepoint, with all the linked documents.

### • **Targeted Learning Visits:**

There were three Targeted Learning Visits in 2024/25, by members of the Inclusion Strategy Group to Belmont School, Beacon Rise and Lea Forest, which informed work by the group, particularly in the field of Enhanced Provision.

### • **Relational Practice and Behaviour:**

Three potential philosophies were identified for exploration and potentially for subsidised practice within GSP: Emotion Coaching (already funded and embedded in some GSP schools, through the GCC LInCs project work), ‘When the Adults Change’ and Trauma Informed Relational Practice.

Trauma Informed Relational Practice, Emotion Coaching, and ‘When the Adults Change’ are all approaches focused on improving behaviour and relationships, but they differ in their specific focus and application.



TIRP focuses on building and maintaining positive relationships as the foundation for behaviour management, while emotion coaching focuses on helping individuals, within a family context, understand and manage their emotions to improve behaviour. 'When the Adults Change' is a framework that highlights how adults' own emotional regulation and consistent responses can significantly impact children's behaviour.

Ultimately, there was not enough sign up to either 'When the Adults Change' or 'Trauma Informed Relational Practice' to be feasible to pursue the funded route and the ISG felt that it was clear, from the response that were received, that practice across the Partnership was broader than these approaches. Instead, the three routes that would be signposted, and that a fuller definition of the three, where they are different and where they are similar would be shared, within the presentation in the appendices.

For 2025/26 the development of a Strategic Inclusion CPD Toolkit was discussed at Conference, which with the aim of enhancing and supporting Inclusive practice in our schools; from de-escalation and reset (including in mainstream classrooms, with a changing profile of pupils), and right through to setting up and staffing in-house Enhanced Provision.

#### ▪ **EYFS and School Readiness:**

The EYFS and SENCos Best Practice Networks had worked together previously, but this progress around this had halted at a Local Authority level. It was noted that there were several guidance documents and two core documents, which are used to varying degrees by settings. The EYFS BPN had delivered a 'school readiness' session, which was relatively well attended, by settings from across the city, as well as Cath Davenport and Jane Shotbolt and it was felt that there is potentially an opportunity to work with GCC further on this. The next steps, suggested for 2025/26 were:

- Meeting held potentially in four 'quadrants' of the city, marrying up SEN and EYFS;
- Potential to work through Family Hubs across the city;
- Explore leaders who are prepared to deliver content; and
- Revisit data through surveys.

## Events & Activities Steering Group

***Chair: Geraldine Brogan, Dinglewell Junior School***

### ▪ **GSP Science Festival. October 2024**

Ten schools from the Partnership took part in the Autumn Science Festival in 2024: St. Peter's Catholic Primary, Clearwater Academy; Harewood Junior School; Linden Primary School; Calton Primary School; Hardwicke Parochial Primary Academy; Longlevens Junior School; Dinglewell Infant School; Dinglewell Junior School; and Coopers Edge School. The Festival was once again hosted and run by Denmark Road High School.

With each GSP school bringing 12 children with 2 accompanying adults, schools had all come up with a table-top, interactive activity - based on any scientific theme - with a key stage 1 and key stage 2 focus. The activities and related display boards were displayed around the main hall. The format for the festival is a proven model, with pupils being divided into two cohorts: one group 'staffing' their school's own activity stand; and the other group touring the other stands and taking part in the different science activities, including hands-on 'lab time' with DRHS students. The groups are then swapped over, giving every pupil the opportunity to participate and collect stickers along the way. By collaborating in this event, teachers share and take back to their classrooms a wealth of creative ideas and the pupils grow in confidence, as they learn through experimentation and interact with peers from different schools.

The GSP would like to thank Denmark Road High School hosting and leading this event, and also the DRHS pupils for giving their time to share their passion for Science with more than 100 pupils.

### ▪ **Shakespeare Production: Twelfth Night, March 2025**

Twelve GSP Schools took part in the production: Barnwood C of E Primary, Beech Green Primary, Calton Primary, Dinglewell Junior, Heron Primary, Kingsholm C of E Primary, Kingsway Primary, Longlevens Infant, Longlevens Junior, Meadowside Primary, St Peter's Catholic Primary and Upton St Leonards C of E Primary. Heron Primary, Kingsholm C of E Primary, Kingsway Primary, Longlevens Infant, Longlevens Junior, Meadowside Primary, St Peter's Catholic Primary and Upton St Leonards C of E Primary.

As one would expect from a Shakespeare play, the 'Twelfth Night' plot is teeming with disguise, hidden identity and the obligatory unrequited love. 'Twelfth Night' follows the humorous entanglement and woven web of drama between Duke Orsino of Illyria, who is in love with Olivia and shipwrecked Viola, who masquerades as Cesario and is later sent by Orsino to woo Olivia.

Sam Hill from Longlevens Primary Federation led this year's productions and, thanks to a carefully edited script and schools' commitment to rehearsals, GSP's young thespians were able to understand, follow and enjoy the story and then take their audiences on the theatrical journey. There were two performances of the play during the day, with pupils from each school delivering their scenes in front of their peers and families, with aplomb.

The GSP would like to thank Ribston Hall High School for the CPD from their Drama Lead, as well as hosting the productions on the day, allowing more than 200 parents to watch their children perform.

### ▪ **Look Who's Talking! Oracy Competition Partnership Heats**

On the 3rd, 4th and 5th February 2025, Elmbridge Primary, Dinglewell Junior and Upton St Leonard's Primary Schools hosted three heats of the 'Look Who's Talking! 2025' Oracy Competition, which is co-ordinated annually by Gloucestershire Association of Primary Headteachers (GAPH).

All children were invited to take part and share a 2-minute talk with their class about absolutely anything that they choose. Each class chose a Star Speaker, who then competed within the school to be the School Super Star Speaker. The GSP Partnership Heat included all the Super Star Speakers from each GSP school, where an overall winner for each category (KS1, LKS2 and UKS2) was selected to represent the Partnership and attend the grand final at Gloucester Guildhall in April.

This was replicated by every Partnership in Gloucestershire, so there were children representing 7 Partnerships at the grand final! The GSP values this opportunity, as by teaching our children to become more effective speakers and listeners, we are all helping to give them the tools they need to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them.

## School to School Support:

*Chair: Sam Thomas, Meadowside Primary School*

### Headteachers' Reflection Conference, September 2024:

As part of the two-day Conference, a session was led by GSP SIA James Pope encouraged leaders to value and prioritise themselves, reflect on their school's vision, and consider the collective impact achievable through partnership working. The interactive session with Headteachers emphasised the need for sustainable support for school leaders and the importance of purpose, creativity and enterprise. This included reflecting on the educational drivers, leadership roles and embracing innovative approaches to drive transformational change. With this at the forefront of Headteachers' minds, the Partnership Board Meeting, on Day Two, focused on preparing for the 2024/25 academic year.

### School Improvement Programme:

2024/25 marked the seventh full year of the Gloucester Schools Partnership (GSP) School Improvement Programme, with 15 schools actively participating. For some GSP schools, this is their singular chosen option for external School Improvement oversight, while for others, it is one part of their 'school improvement arsenal', which might include the LA GLOSSI package and potentially other School Improvement Advisors.

Originally established in 2018, the programme was created to provide Headteachers with a more structured, objective, and challenging framework for school improvement than had previously been achieved through informal peer-to-peer evaluation. Its purpose was to strengthen leadership capacity, raise standards across schools, and ensure that improvement work was both rigorous and responsive to the evolving educational landscape.

Each school engaged directly with one of two independent Consultant School Improvement Advisors (SIAs), who worked alongside leaders to identify and refine their strategic priorities for the academic year. These advisors monitored progress, offered professional challenge and highlighted areas where additional support was required, while also signposting schools to relevant resources, networks and expertise within the partnership. This approach ensured that schools received tailored guidance that was both practical and aspirational, helping leaders to focus on what would make the greatest impact for their pupils and communities.

For 2024/25, James Pope and Ken Buxton continued in their roles as SIAs, bringing extensive experience and credibility to the partnership. Their contribution was highly valued by Headteachers, who benefited from their ability to balance constructive challenge with supportive guidance. Both advisors will remain in post for 2025/26, providing continuity and stability as the programme continues to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of schools in an increasingly complex educational environment.

## Budgets & Finance

### GSP Financial Summary 2024/25

The GSP membership fee for schools was increased from £6 per pupil, for 2024/25, as agreed by the Partnership Board, based on the spending plans for the year.

Each Steering Group / workstream has an allocated budget for the year, against which the activity for the year is planned and delivered. The breadth of Steering Group coverage enables membership monies to offer as broad an offer as possible, during the year, including a strong CPD offer. Some workstreams also have their own income stream, which offsets some of the costs.

### Ringfenced project funds:

There are certain workstreams which have their own income and cost structures, so these are not included in the budget available to all Steering Groups for wider Partnership work:

- **School Improvement Programme**

The GSP School Improvement Programme is cost-neutral, with schools' subscription to the programme being ringfenced to fund the visits invoiced by the School Improvement Advisors. For 2024/25, where scheduled visits were not able to go ahead, the outstanding subscription monies were refunded to the specific schools.

- **Emotion Coaching (GSPEC)**

Of the £71,000 granted by GCC for the GSPEC project in 2019/20, approximately £33,000 was still available at the start of the year. For 2024/25, GSP it was agreed with GCC that the scope of Inclusion initiatives for which the funds can be used, could be been widened. With the year for the Inclusion Strategy Group being very focused on the sharing of practice in each others' schools for the EnPro workstream, there was the view that in its second year, i.e. 2025/26, the EnPro workstream would be better positioned to allocate budget to initiatives related to supporting schools with meeting the demands of SEND in schools

- **Words Unite**

Gloucestershire Education Forum (GEF) awarded £20,000 funding to the GSP for its communication and language project, 'Words Unite'. The GSP agreed to match-fund this amount to a total of £40,000 available for the project. At the end of 2024/25, the remaining 25% of the GCC budget, plus the total GSP funded amount remain available for further project work in 2025/26, where it is intended there will be a focus on early language acquisition.

### Looking ahead to 2025/26

Following a planning and budgeting exercise with the Partnership Board, membership has been set at £5 per pupil for 2025/26. The membership income gives the GSP the necessary funds to meet its objectives and operate efficiently. Budgets are set, assuming a further ring-fenced amount of £50,000, which has been agreed as necessary by the Partnership.

The Strategy Group affirms that membership of the GSP offers outstanding value for schools, made possible through the economies of scale achieved by the Partnership. This includes access to high-quality, cost-effective CPD programmes, opportunities for Headteacher networking, and a rich calendar of diverse pupil events, all of which are available to every member school. The Strategy Group will once again, take direction from its member Headteachers, for 2025/26.

<b>24/25 - Cash Position</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>Actual Start Year</b>	<b>£112,847</b>	
<b>Actual End Year</b>	<b>£128,624</b>	
<b>End Year Budget</b>	<b>£106,370</b>	
<b>Income 24/25</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Membership Fees	£72,916	£66,422
Events and Activities (E&A)	£1,610	£1,000
School to School (S2S) Support	£3,306	£2,500
School Improvement Programme (SIP)	£22,860	£25,950
CPD, Leadership	£5,835	£7,900
Building Society Interest NWBS	£431	£431
Building Society Interest MBS	£2,050	£2,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>£109,008</b>	<b>£106,253</b>
<b>Direct Costs 24/25</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>
CPD, Leadership	£9,470	£12,339
School Improvement Programme (SIP)	£21,725	£26,450
Events and Activities (E&A)	£1,226	£1,000
Inclusion	£0	£2,000
School to School (S2S) Support	£8,382	£6,283
GSPEC	£4,616	£3,294
Best Practice Networks (BPN)	£1,477	£2,000
GEF - Words Unite (GSP match funding)	£0	£0
GEF Words Unite (spend of GCC funds)	£567	£4,423
<b>Total</b>	<b>£47,463</b>	<b>£57,789</b>
<b>Overhead Costs 24/25</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Salaries, Meeting Allowances and Administration	£40,712	£50,000
Subscriptions for GAPH	£4,370	£4,255
<b>Total</b>	<b>£45,082</b>	<b>£54,255</b>
<b>VAT 24/25</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>
VAT - Sales	£14,905	£14,905
VAT - Costs	£12,166	£12,166
VAT Refund	£7,884	£7,884
VAT Payment	£11,309	£11,309
<b>Totals</b>	<b>-£686</b>	<b>-£686</b>

<b>25/26 GSP BUDGET</b>	
<b>Income 25/26</b>	<b>Year Budget</b>
Membership Fees (£5 per pupil)	£56,840
Events and Activities	£1,500
School to School Support	£3,300
School Improvement Programme	£24,250
CPD, Leadership	£5,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£91,390</b>
<b>Direct Costs 25/26</b>	<b>Year Budget</b>
CPD, Leadership	£12,000
School Improvement Programme	£24,250
Events and Activities	£1,500
School to School Support	£7,500
GSPEC and other approved projects/activities	£28,700
GEF and other approved projects/activities	£23,856
Best Practice Networks (BPN)	£2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£99,806</b>
<b>Overhead Costs 25/26</b>	<b>Year Budget</b>
Salaries, Meeting Allowances and Administration	£43,000
Subscriptions for GAPH	£4,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£47,500</b>