

Blog series: The Golden Thread of Teacher Development in Computing: ITT, ECF, NPQs and the NCCE

Over a series of 3 articles we'll share how one school, which is both a Teaching School Hub and a Computing Hub, has aligned these roles to provide integrated and joined-up support to the local school community.

Article 1 - Computing Hubs and Teaching School Hubs

This September saw a huge shift in teacher development with a complete overhaul from the DfE in order to implement a "golden thread" of teacher development underpinned by robust research and professional wisdom. As part of this we saw the launch of the [Early Career Framework](#), which underpins a two year programme of support for Early Career Teachers (previously NQTs), where each ECT has a mentor to support them as they follow a fully funded two year programme of professional development based on the Early Career Framework.

Teaching schools and NPQs.

NPQs (National Professional Qualifications), the Department for Education accredited suite of qualifications designed to support the development of teachers and leaders, have been completely [reformed](#), offering a growing suite of qualifications delivered to the DfE [NPQ frameworks](#). Specialist NPQs include *Leading Teaching*, *Leading Teacher Development* and *Leading Behaviour and Culture* (with an NPQ in *Early Years Leadership* and *Leading Literacy* launching in September 2022). The leadership NPQs consist of Senior Leadership, Headship and Executive Leadership.

All NPQs are fully funded for state schools as part of the education recovery funding, and will strengthen leadership capacity at all levels across the school system. Recently published, too, are the results of the [ITT market review](#) signaling imminent changes to the delivery of Initial Teacher Training.

To deliver this new programme, the DfE have created the teaching school hub programme that sees 87 Hubs set up across the country to replace the 750 teaching schools which ended in August 2021. These hubs will deliver this golden thread of teacher development and also act as an Appropriate Body for early career teachers. As well as delivering the core programmes already mentioned, the Teaching School Hub have a role to integrate the work of the curriculum hubs, such as the NCCE computing hubs, in their area through joint planning and partnership working.

At Sandringham Computing Hub both of the hub leads, Christian Turton (Primary Lead) and Dan Smith (Secondary Lead) have also become Deputy Directors of the Alban Teaching School Hub to support the strategic development of the hub. In doing so we've had a unique

opportunity to consider how the evidence-informed NCCE CPD can fit in this new golden thread of teacher development.

The Golden Thread for Primary Teachers

At Alban Teaching School Hub, we have the Alban Federation ITT provision, and for several years now we have engaged with them as a computing hub, delivering the **Introduction to Primary Computing** course for all of their Primary trainee teachers. This course gives a fantastic introduction to the curriculum through exploring resources and practical tasks. To support teachers in their ITT year they also explore the [Teach Computing Curriculum](#) as an example of evidence informed curriculum design.

In our first year of delivering the ECF, we are very aware of the demands on schools and ECTs especially in this first year of operation, but as part of the regional days for ECTs and Mentors we are signposting the support available from all curriculum hubs, and at Alban Teaching School hub we've gone one step further and offered a programme of subject enhancement sessions, as part of which we offer a one hour session for ECTs helping to signpost key resources and discuss challenges for those starting out when teaching Computing.

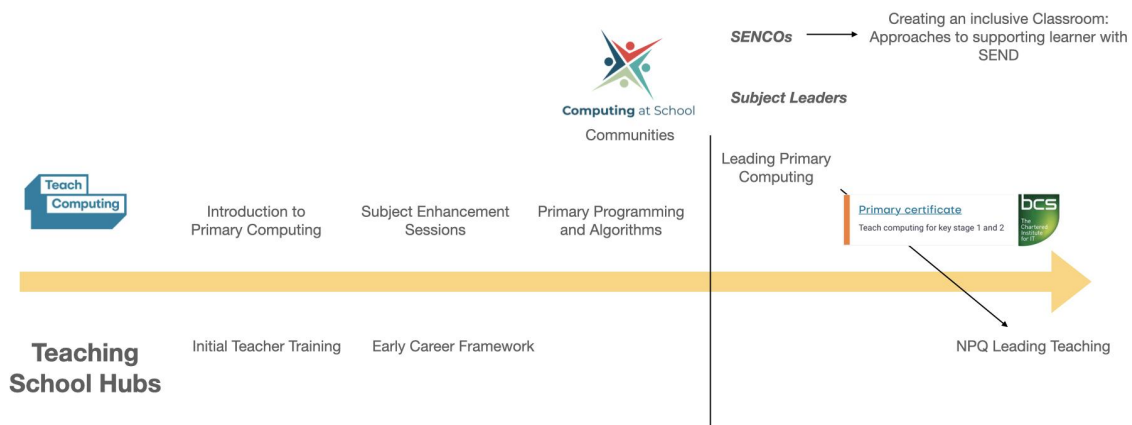
As teachers develop, to support them with pedagogy and to keep up to date with computing education developments we're also able to signpost the [teach computing pedagogy guides](#), the [teach computing podcast](#), [the teach computing blog](#), as well as our own [Sandringham Computing Hub Podcast](#).

As teachers become more confident in teaching computing and they look to refine their pedagogy and better understand progression particularly in programming and algorithms, the [Primary Programming and Algorithms](#) course develops teacher understanding of the pedagogy, progression and gives first hand experience of what this looks like in practice. To support teacher time out of school the NCCE are currently offering generous [bursaries](#) for attending these courses.

Those who work in special schools or have a role for leading on Special Education Needs provision, the excellent online course "[Creating an Inclusive Classroom: Approaches to Supporting Learners with SEND in Computing](#)" is available to support them and any teacher in implementing strategies that will make a difference to all learners, in addition, a 1 day course is available looking at catering for, and encouraging all learners to engage with and be inspired in Computing - [Outstanding Primary Computing for All](#).

For those teachers who become Computing Subject Leaders for the whole school or a key stage, the [Leading Primary Computing](#) two day course is designed for computing subject leaders at all levels exploring the role of the computing subject leader, developing an outstanding curriculum, supporting others including coaching techniques, assessment, enrichment and planning change. The nature of a two day course also means that you get to build a community of subject leaders that you can continue to keep in touch with. Another opportunity to work with other subject leaders in sharing good practice and supporting each other are the [CAS communities of practice](#).

For subject leaders wanting to take their learning further they can use their attendance on courses to work towards the [British Computer Society Certificate in Primary Computing](#) or they may even wish to continue their career development even further and study for the [NPQ in Leading Teaching](#), all of which are currently fully funded as part of the government education recovery funding.



The Golden Thread for Secondary Teachers

Secondary teachers training to become Computing teachers have never had such a unique opportunity to be supported in developing their practice. With the [computer science accelerator programme](#) leading to the GCSE subject knowledge certificate, this offers a fantastic grounding in the knowledge required to teach Computing at GCSE level. The NCCE have produced a [guide](#) to support early career teachers to understand the opportunities available to them. Issac Computer Science, the free online learning platform, have created [A level and GCSE computer science resources](#) to aid the teaching and assessment of students taking these courses, neatly packaged in an online platform, saving hundreds of hours of planning for new teachers coming in to the profession. New, as well as experienced computer science teachers, can join Computing at School Communities of Practice to meet like minded teachers to develop their practice and share good practice.

To engage in the Computer Science accelerator programme you don't have to be a Computer Science teacher, for many teachers entering the profession they may wish to have a second subject to offer when applying for their first post. Much like the funding to support the ECF and NPQs, the Computer Science accelerator programme is fully funded too, supporting colleagues to take time out of school to access CPD, as well as rewarding computing faculties with ring fenced funding for a teachers' commitment to train.

As a timetabler or senior leader who has non-specialists timetabled to teach Computer Science, you can engage with some of the core offerings from the NCCE to upskill those teachers - a great point to start with this is the short course - ["Computing as a second subject for non-specialist teachers"](#).

We also know that girls are often choosing not to take GCSE computer science or study it further at A Level or University and this is reflected in a lack of women in IT industries. If

you're a school leader or Head of Computer Science or leader you may wish to explore opportunities to encourage more girls to opt for Computer Science at GCSE, to support this there is the course "[Encouraging girls into GCSE computer science](#)" and this [great blog article](#) "How do we show girls they can achieve their goals through computer science?".

Just like those leading Primary Computing, teachers may wish to study further by taking the [NPQ in Leading Teaching](#) and indeed the [secondary certificate](#) which exists to support those colleagues progress further once the Computer Science accelerator programme has been completed.

Conclusion

Whilst there are many new requirements on schools as part of the introduction of this new golden thread of teacher development, the NCCE can play an important role in supporting this change with evidence-informed professional development, supportive communities and workload-saving evidence-informed resources such as the [Teach Computing curriculum](#), [Isaac Computer Science](#) and a wealth of other resources available at teachcomputing.org.