



About the Schools Programme

A subject-based peer network for subject leaders dedicated to developing the subject experience of their students



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Overview

The Prince's Teaching Institute (PTI) Schools Programme is a membership group which is open to all maintained secondary schools, free schools and academies in England and Wales. Its members believe that all children, regardless of background or ability, deserve to be introduced to enriching and challenging subject material.

The Schools Programme reinvigorates school departments, helping passionate teachers to develop their students' love of their subject and pass on knowledge and understanding that will equip them for the future.

Its objectives are to:

- Encourage schools to develop their subject provision
- Motivate teachers to deepen their subject knowledge
- Celebrate school departments that are engaged in curriculum improvements and projects that will result in better subject provision.

The Schools Programme provides a structure and network of support for departments who wish to secure these aims. In return for demonstrating annual development of subject provision and commitment to increasing the teachers' subject knowledge, members benefit from:

- Access for all members of the department to the PTI online bank of web resources, which includes lecture podcasts, schemes of work and lesson plans
- Discounts for all members of the department on PTI one-day Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Use of the appropriate PTI Schools Programme Mark on their letterhead and website, after a successful year of membership (example Mark below¹)
- Access to a national network of teachers to share best practice
- Year-round support from the PTI Subject Team and Education Advisor

The Programme is designed to promote and recognise a trajectory of improvement in the provision of a subject; it is not an attempt to define absolute levels of provision. As a result, we welcome schools with a wide variety of current provision to join the Programme.



¹ This Mark is for illustrative purposes only. Schools will receive a Mark with the number of subjects which they are receiving it for.

The aims of the Schools Programme

The Prince's Teaching Institute Schools Programme aims to further students' understanding of the subject by asking teachers to focus on four areas:

- *Encouraging schools to promote coherence and a quality of challenge **within** the curriculum*
- *Encouraging schools to extend and enthuse pupils through subject-based activities that are **beyond** the curriculum*
- *Encouraging teachers to develop, explore and share their own specialist subject knowledge*
- *Raising the profile of the Schools Programme subjects within education.*

Membership is intended to:

- Recognise, promote and disseminate good practice in the Schools Programme subjects, within and between schools
- Encourage schools to form productive links with Higher Education departments, primary schools, subject associations and like-minded organisations
- Encourage schools to evaluate and improve their provision of subjects
- Motivate schools, authors, academics, subject specialists and subject organisations to work together
- Highlight the need for teachers to have access to CPD opportunities in their subject specialism
- Provide schools with access to the wider provision of the PTI.

Schools Programme principles

Departments who join the Schools Programme should consider the following principles for excellence within subject specialist provision. It is *not* expected that every school will meet every requirement when they first join; on the contrary, the aim of the Programme is to help and support schools in reaching for and meeting those expectations. It is required, however, that a school aspires to meet the principles and has both the capacity and intention to attempt to meet them in order to be able to be accepted onto the Schools Programme.

The Schools Programme principles are:

- Clear commitment to a subject specialism
- A high level of pupil engagement and attainment in the subject
- A broad range of extra-curricular activities for pupils related to the subject, both within school and off-site
- A variety of subject-based links and partnerships with other schools and areas of the community
- A curriculum that provides breadth and depth of study, identified and developed in planning and delivery
- A curriculum that provides coherence and challenge, identified and developed in planning and delivery
- A commitment to subject-based continuing professional development
- Effective and inspiring teaching.

Joining the Schools Programme

You can decide to join the Schools Programme whilst attending a PTI Residential in your subject. The three days of lectures and workshops, designed for heads of department will give you the opportunity to step away from the classroom and immerse yourself in your subject. Over 95% of all previous Residential attendees have chosen to join the Schools Programme at the event.

During the Residential, you will be introduced to the Schools Programme and invited to set your first annual development objectives for the Programme. To assist in this, attendees are asked to complete a personalised Schools Programme Form. The process for joining the Schools Programme at the Residential is:

1. Schools Programme Form

Once booked on to the Residential you will complete the online form prior to attending the event. The form is designed to encourage a process of **reflection** on current provision, **celebration** of the criteria that are already met and **development** of plans to increase challenge in the future.

The form is divided into two sections:

Section A consists of reflection on the subject within the school and a celebration of the department's commitment to excellence, related to the PTI Schools Programme aims, as well as details about the school. Information about your department also allows the PTI to tailor the workshops at the Residential to your needs and circumstances.

Section B is a statement of ambition and intent to develop, related to the PTI Schools Programme aims. You should complete a draft of this section before the Residential, although it will be finalised during the Residential, and will form the basis of a one-to-one consultation with your teacher leader that will take place during the Residential. Your teacher leader is a practising teacher and member of the Schools Programme.

PTI teacher leaders will read the forms prior to the Residential. After the Residential, your objectives must be signed by the head of department and headteacher. This acts as confirmation that the objectives discussed at the Residential have been agreed and shared by your department, school management and any other partners that may be involved.

2. Preparing to celebrate and share best practice

Part of the Residential is about celebrating excellence in subject provision and sharing ideas for improvement. One of the workshops is dedicated to this, and all attendees will be asked to prepare a short, informal presentation on one element of their current provision. The PTI will contact you and suggest an area to share, to avoid duplication.

3. Summer/Autumn Residential

Whilst the Residential will focus on refreshing subject knowledge and sharing and creating ideas for stimulating lessons in the classroom, part of the course will also be about making plans for the future. During the Residential you will have a one-to-one consultation with a teacher leader to finalise and agree your development objectives for the Schools Programme in the next year.

The objectives should clearly identify ways in which your department will monitor and assess progress against the objectives. They should meet the criteria of the Schools Programme, and should aim to increase the challenge of subject provision in your school. The aim is not to repeat

current departmental aims, or to set out data-driven targets or generic improvements in pedagogy or assessment. Our focus is on the *subject*, and on the four aims outlined above. These should be every delegate's starting point.

4. Back in school

You will then have two weeks after you return to school to ensure that the proposed development objectives are agreed and shared by your department, school management, and any other partners that may be involved. We then ask that you confirm with the PTI office that the objectives are agreed.

The PTI will in turn confirm the department's membership of the Schools Programme. In the event that a department has failed to meet the required principles, the PTI will liaise with you to explain why, and where possible, the development objectives can be reworked to satisfy the principles.

Following successful completion of the above:

- A letter confirming membership of the Programme will be sent to your Headteacher and Chair of Governors
- Your school is listed on the PTI website
- All members of your department gain access to the online Staffroom, where schemes of work, resources, links, and podcast from all PTI events are available
- Discounts will be available for PTI CPD events and New Teacher Subject days, and priority booking offered for particular PTI events

If the PTI feel that a department's objectives do not reflect the ethos and aims of the Schools Programme and therefore need to be amended, we will endeavour to arrange additional consultation with yourself and the PTI Schools Programme Co-ordinator in your subject. However, if after such measures are taken, the PTI feels that a department's objectives do not meet the principles laid out in this document, we reserve the right to request that the department do not join the Programme.

Being a Schools Programme member

Once back in school you and your department will continue to monitor your progress over the course of the academic year and work towards the objectives set at the Residential. At the end of the year, in return for achieving your objectives, your department will be rewarded with the PTI Mark, which can be used on school stationery and websites. There are three requirements that should be fulfilled for continuing membership of the Programme.

Attending the annual Schools Programme Day

All members of the Programme meet annually at the Schools Programme Day. This is similar to a day of the Residential and is designed to further refresh subject knowledge and provide you with support in meeting your objectives through advice and inspiration. You will have the opportunity to share experiences, listen to a subject lecture and have a one-to-one meeting with a PTI Schools Programme Consultant (themselves a practising teacher and member of the Schools Programme).

Attendance at the day is mandatory as it not only allows you to learn from other members' experience, but also allows them to learn from yours.

Completing an annual report

It is at the Schools Programme Day that you will be awarded the PTI Mark for the year if your objectives have been met. In March/April you will be asked to complete a short report online via the Staffroom on the PTI website prior to attending the day.

This report forms the basis of your one-to-one consultation during the day, and it is during this conversation that:

- It is decided whether to award the annual PTI Mark
- Objectives for the next year are agreed by both the PTI Schools Programme Consultant and the department representative

Contributing a resource to the Staffroom

All departments are asked to upload at least one high quality, original resource onto the secure Staffroom area of the PTI website. This will add to the library of subject-based resources that you, your department and fellow Schools Programme members can benefit from. More information will be sent to you about this during the year.

The benefits of membership

Departments who are members benefit from:

- Access for the whole department to the PTI Staffroom, a secure area on the PTI website. This includes teaching resources contributed by members, and podcasts and materials from all PTI events across the subjects. To register, members should visit: <http://www.princes-ti.org.uk/staffroom>
- Discounts on all PTI one-day CPD events for all department members and a discount for other heads of department to attend a Residential (if they are not already members of the Schools Programme).
- Free place at a PTI Enrichment Residential for any incoming head of department, should there be a change in staff.
- Free attendance at the annual Schools Programme Day, including subject lectures and workshops
- An annual one-to-one consultation with a subject leader from another school.
- Use of the PTI Mark on stationery and website (subject to meeting the criteria).
- Access to a national network of teachers to share best practice.
- Year-round support from the PTI Subject Team and Education Advisor, all experienced teachers themselves.
- Priority booking for all our Residential courses.
- Access to cutting-edge action research and a copy of our annual Yearbook containing summaries of all completed research projects from the previous academic year.

Schools Programme affiliation fees

The PTI is a charity that raises funds to help teachers and schools in the public sector. Our fundraising activities help us to subsidise our high quality activities by 70–90%. However, we request a contribution from schools to enable us to continue to provide high quality support for teachers. The annual fee to the school for Schools Programme membership is:

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|---|------------------------|
| • One participating department ² | £545 + VAT per annum |
| • Two participating departments | £895 + VAT per annum |
| • Three participating departments | £1,195 + VAT per annum |
| • Four or more participating departments | £1,395 + VAT per annum |

² 'Department' is defined as an academic department or faculty in a school, or Senior Leadership Team membership of the Schools Leadership Programme (See *About the Schools Leadership Programme* for more information)

FAQs

How long does membership of the programme last?

Schools Programme members usually set annual objectives for three years at which point they are eligible to graduate onto our Associate Department Scheme and begin an action-based research project. Please see 'About the Associate Department Scheme' for further information.

Can my department be involved?

Yes. Whilst we ask that one person leads on the Schools Programme work, preferably the head of department or a subject leader with curriculum responsibility, we hope that the whole department will be involved in aspects of the work. All subject teachers in a Schools Programme department are eligible to access the Staffroom area of the PTI website.

What happens if we can't complete our objectives?

We recognise that in some years departments may not be able to fulfil their objectives for a variety of reasons. In this instance, departments are able to defer their membership for the year, and pick the objectives up the following September. However, the department maintains all of the benefits of membership throughout the year and we strongly recommend attending the Schools Programme Day at the end of the year, to re-confirm objectives. In a deferral year we are unable to award the Mark, however, we offer support to members who pause their membership in order to ensure they have the best chance of achieving the Mark when they pick up their membership the following year.

Do I need to come to another Residential to remain in the programme?

No. We only ask heads of department to come to the next available Residential when the original attendee has left the school. In turn, the head of department who is moving on does not need to come to a Residential and can bring their new department straight into the programme. Those in brand new departments will, of course, begin the three-year cycle again; new heads of department in existing Schools Programme departments may begin again, or may carry on with work already started: the most appropriate course of action will be decided on a case-by-case basis after discussion with the PTI.

What happens if I'm promoted?

If you are promoted internally in the school, you are able to continue your membership, either under your leadership, or through delegating it to the new head of department. We will not ask this new representative to attend a Residential Summer School, as you are still involved the department.

What happens if our representative goes on maternity/paternity leave?

The deputy taking over should continue the work, and attend the Schools Programme Day, on the assumption that the original representative is returning to the department. If the original representative leaves, then the deputy will be asked to attend a Residential.

Can I bring another member of my department to a Residential?

We will only accept second members from departments if the Residential is not full. We hold a waiting list for this eventuality.

What happens after three years?

Departments who have been awarded the Mark for three years are invited to join the Associate Department scheme. Associate Departments undertake an action-based research project, on a selected area of their subject provision, based on previous work for the Schools Programme.

The aim is to create a bank of subject-based research on what works in departments and to help departments consolidate and extend their practice. Please see 'About the Associate Department' document for more information.

Who can I speak to for support?

Please contact our Schools Programme Manager, Nicola Bentley on **020 3174 0127** or at nicola.bentley@princes-ti.org.uk if you have any queries relating to your objectives or membership. Each subject has a dedicated Subject Co-Ordinator, who is available all year to provide you with academic support for your Schools Programme membership. Again, please contact Nicola who will be able to put you in touch with them.