

**Primary Schools Partnership  
September Newsletter**



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26

## A message from our Deputy Dean

Dear colleagues,

We wish you well as the school year is now well under way and summer holidays are a distant memory.

In June I was lucky enough to attend the Festival of Education at Wellington College. One of the talks stood out for me and kept me thinking over the summer. It was about the impact of the Manosphere and pervasive sexism in schools. This is having an impact in both primary and secondary schools. Attitudes towards girls and women are being impacted as social media is influencing how some boys see the world they live in. The **NEU** have produced some excellent materials which can support staff training, and these can be found at <https://neu.org.uk/latest/library/getting-started-whole-school-approach-preventing-sexism-and-sexual-harassment> here. The organisation **Big Tech's Little Victims**, spoke about their research into the dangers that social media algorithms pose to children. In their experiment they set up 4 fake profiles of ordinary 13-year-old children with common interests. They then monitored the harmful content that these profiles attracted which was completely unsolicited. The results were shocking and it reinforces the need for schools to raise awareness with children and adults about online harm.

We raise these issues in our safeguarding training for the students. The message to them is to stay vigilant, notice changes in children's behaviour and to report concerns.

Best Wishes

Matthew Sossick

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### Introduction

We are thrilled to introduce two new sections for this academic year in our newsletter. The first of these is celebrating the work of our colleagues around the University and the interesting and diverse roles they have. All of these colleagues support the School of Education in various ways. Also, our staff are bringing to you various elements of inclusion that link to different subject areas across primary and early years education. We hope you enjoy these elements and the rest of the newsletter.



## Jo Peat - Head of Educational Development



My role at Roehampton and beyond So what does my role actually involve? It's a surprisingly hard question to answer, mostly because the answer changes with surprising regularity. As an educational developer, I see my job as working with colleagues to enhance student learning through high-quality teaching. This is a two-way process: as I work across the university and beyond, I learn an enormous amount. Some of it pushes me well out of my comfort zone. Some of it reassures me I'm occasionally doing something right. I hope what I've picked up over my years in higher education is useful to colleagues in turn, so they can learn from my learning. We're all in the same boat, ultimately trying to give our students the best possible experience at Roehampton and something they'll carry with them long after they've left. My role now has two main foci: working with colleagues and working with strategy. The bit I enjoy most is

unquestionably the former, whether that's through the programmes I lead, informal focus groups and forums, or simply chats in the Hive. I've decided that having coffee with colleagues counts as work, and I've put that to the test over a significant period, so can say that this approach is now firmly evidence based. You learn far more about someone over a coffee than you ever will across a meeting table. I teach R4NA, Recognition for New Academics, which is a one-year programme for all new academics with fewer than three years' teaching experience in higher education. I also run ILTHE, a six-week programme for colleagues who don't have teaching experience and are in a very partial role, doctoral students who have a little teaching and professional services staff who support learning of students directly. I have to say I love both of these courses and feel really privileged to be able to work with colleagues in this way. I run URRAP, the University of Roehampton Reflective Account of Practice, our route to fellowship recognition against the Professional Standards Framework. We paused the scheme for a couple of years and have since had it reaccredited, and it's a genuine privilege to see the breadth of excellent practice across the university at every level. I won't pretend I enjoy the administration side, but the insight into what colleagues are doing in their teaching more than makes up for it.

Beyond that, I sit on several strategic groups, including on student behaviour, the international student experience, assessment, and AI in teaching and learning, plus committees such as SEC. I really value these opportunities as they allow me to keep up to date with what's happening at Roehampton and also to add my voice to some key strategic initiatives and developments. Outside Roehampton, I'm active with two of my professional bodies, SEDA (Staff and Educational Development Association) and Advance HE. I sit on Advance HE's strategic committee for excellence in learning and teaching, which has included redrafting their mission statement and reshaping the Professional Standards Framework 2023. I've also been fortunate enough to take this work internationally, with projects in Bhutan, Armenia, Lebanon and Bosnia, and I'm currently involved in two QAA collaborations on student leadership and on AI and authentic assessment.

I still love my job, and I don't say that lightly after this many years in the sector. Undoubtedly, the real highlight, now as much as ever, is the contact I get to have with colleagues across this university. You genuinely have no idea how much I value that.

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## The University of Roehampton is celebrating four wins at this year's Aimhigher London Awards, including being named University of the Year.



The University of Roehampton has been recognised with four awards at the 2026 Aimhigher London Awards, including the prestigious **University of the Year** award.

The University was honoured for its sustained commitment to widening participation, with judges highlighting its partnerships with schools, support for care-experienced young people, careers initiatives, school visits and campus-based outreach activities. Roehampton was described as an "outstanding

partner" with a strong commitment to improving access to higher education.

Roehampton also received the **Working in Partnership Award**, recognising its collaborative work with organisations including Aimhigher London and Become to create opportunities for young people across London.

Individual achievements were also celebrated. **Caitlin Atha**, Student Recruitment Coordinator, received the **Going the Extra Mile Award** for her exceptional dedication to supporting students and widening participation through innovative outreach activities.

**Frankie Cummings**, a Roehampton graduate and former Aimhigher participant, was named **Ambassador of the Year**. As a student ambassador, Frankie has supported outreach events, campus visits and careers activities, using her own educational journey to inspire prospective students.

Together, these awards reflect Roehampton's continued commitment to widening access, supporting student ambition and working in partnership to help more young people see higher education as an achievable future.

Read more here: <https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/news/2026/july/roehampton-named-university-of-the-year-at-aimhigher-london-awards/>

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## Introducing a new member of staff in our Primary ITE Team - Ali Gowe

I am delighted to join the University of Roehampton Primary ITT team as a Senior Lecturer in Professional Studies.

I bring over 30 years of experience across primary education, school leadership, initial teacher education, and professional development. During my career, I have held the roles of Deputy Headteacher and Head of Pre-Preparatory, leading teaching and learning, curriculum development, assessment, staff development, and whole-school improvement initiatives. Most recently, I was a Lecturer in Professional Studies at St Mary's University, Twickenham, where I taught across undergraduate, postgraduate, and master's programmes in Initial Teacher Education. Working closely with students, colleagues, and school partners, I helped future teachers connect educational theory with classroom practice while developing their professional knowledge, skills, and confidence.

Prior to joining Roehampton, I worked as a Training and Quality Assurance Lead at Little Wandle, the early reading programme. This role involved working collaboratively with schools, local authorities, multi-academy trusts, teaching school hubs, and higher education institutions to support teacher development and promote evidence-informed practice at both local and national levels.

My teaching philosophy is grounded in the belief that effective education is built on strong relationships, high expectations, and an unwavering commitment to inclusion. I strive to create learning environments that are intellectually stimulating, supportive, and responsive to the needs of diverse learners. I believe that the most impactful educators are reflective practitioners who draw upon research, professional knowledge, and their understanding of learners to inform their practice.

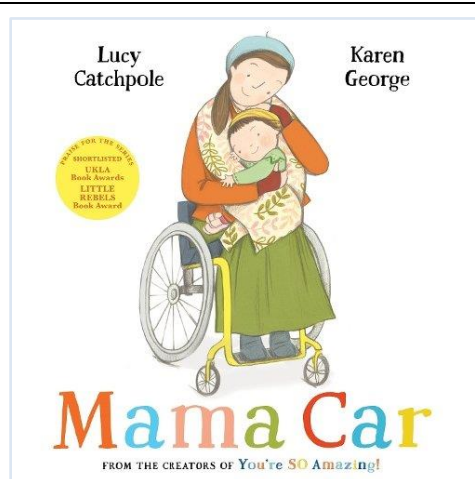
Supporting student teachers has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career. I am passionate about helping future educators develop the confidence, skills, and professional judgement needed to thrive in the classroom. Through mentoring, coaching, pastoral support, and constructive feedback, I encourage student teachers to critically reflect on their practice, embrace professional challenges, and develop their own authentic teaching identity. My aim is to ensure that every student teacher feels valued, supported, and empowered to make a positive difference in the lives of children and young people.

I am excited to join the Roehampton community and look forward to working collaboratively with colleagues and students to promote excellence in teaching, learning, and educational research. It is a privilege to help prepare the next generation of outstanding teachers for the best career in the world.

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## **Featuring books that help children understand inclusion.** Dr Anna Harrison

Explore a curated collection of books featuring wheelchair users and authentic physical disability representation. Below, you'll also find further reading lists on physical disability and well-being handpicked by Anna Harrison.



'Mama Car' is a beautifully illustrated and wonderfully written story. This story is perfect for children of all ages and helps represent families with members with disabilities. The story follows the Mama Car, detailing the fun had around the house and the park. This book would be perfect to read in KS1 or KS2 to help children see wheelchair users positively represented in a story. It was great to see a 'Dear Adults,' message at the back and to hear from Lucy, the author, who brilliantly explains about how wheelchairs can provoke strong feelings, not all of them positive and how important it is for

children to see how the child in the story plays with the wheelchair, is comforted and is so used to being around it they call it Mama Car.

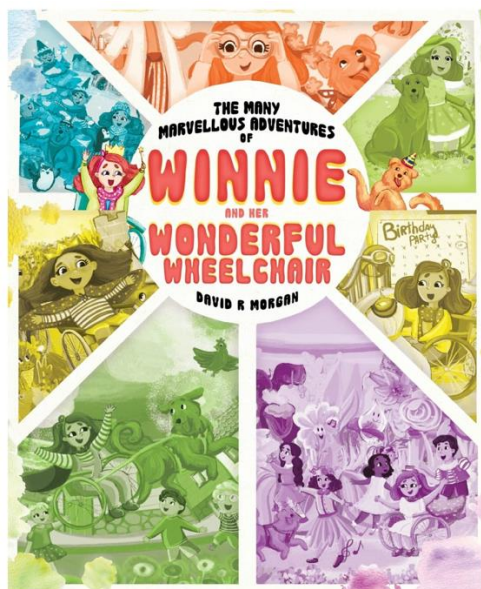
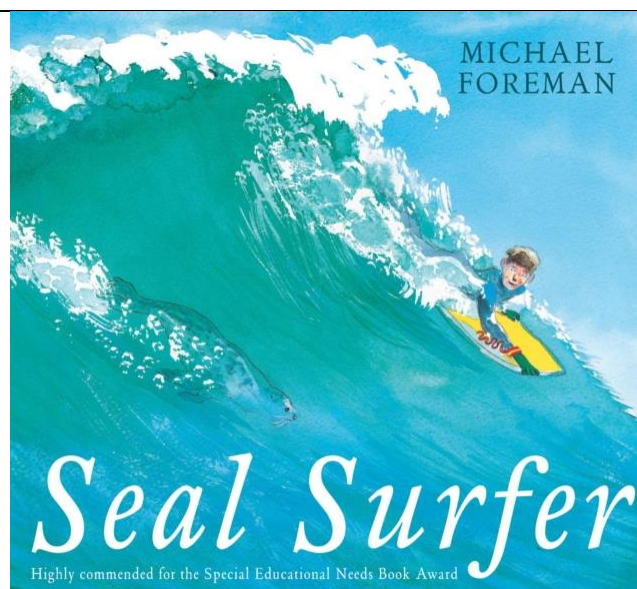
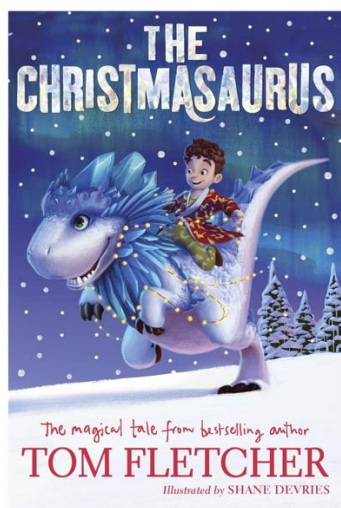
### **Other recommended books are:**

#### **Seal Surfer by Michael Foreman**

Seal Surfer by Michael Foreman is a story of a boy and his grandfather who befriend a seal that they watched grow from a pup after a precarious birth on the rocks. Despite the disability that means he uses a wheelchair on land, the boy is a keen surfer and spends much of his time in the water. Getting into trouble in the surf one day, he has to be rescued by the young seal, strengthening their growing friendship in a book that tells a touching story of overcoming the odds without overstating the use of the wheelchair used by the central character.

#### **The Christmasaurus by Tom Fletcher**

William Trundle is a 10-year-old wheelchair user who is obsessed with dinosaurs. He lives happily with his dad Bob, until one day Brenda Payne, the meanest girl in the whole school (possibly the world!) joins his class and turns William's life upside down. For the first time ever, William feels very different from his friends and he becomes miserable. Little does he know that far away in the North Pole is a lonely dinosaur called the Christmasaurus who also feels very different. On Christmas Eve, the two cross paths in the most unexpected way, leading them to embark on the adventure of a lifetime and build a friendship that will change them both forever, part of a review written on Amazon by Rebecca Farren.



### The Many Marvellous Adventures Of Winnie and Her Wonderful Wheelchair

Winnie has a wonderful magical wheelchair. She doesn't let anyone or anything stop her from having many marvellous adventures.

So, set off into this big, happy book and travel with her, her dog Waffles, and her wonderful wheelchair back in time to meet so many famous women, onto other planets, into special realities, attend a superb flower show, help everyone in her path, have a wonderful winter adventure, and show others nothing can stand in their way to having adventure and happiness.

Everything Winnie does is positive, pleasing, and a lesson in how we can all live life to the fullest despite setbacks or difficulties. With Winnie, enter the worlds of myth, magic, and imagination.

As Winnie says, "I don't know what lies around the bend, but I can't wait to find out!"  
Let's all find out together.



#### Related links and resources featuring books on physical disability:

<https://www.sunrisemedical.co.uk/blog/books-for-children-about-disability>

<https://disabilityhorizons.com/2025/02/8-childrens-books-with-disabled-characters/>

<https://rareparenting.com/books-for-kids-featuring-wheelchairs/>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/resources/find-resources/the-one-in-the-wheelchair-a-look-at-childrens-books-and-disability/>

#### Related links and resources featuring books on mental health and well-being:

<https://www.littlewandle.org.uk/everybody-read/books-to-support-emotional-wellbeing-in-key-stage-2/>

<https://readingagency.org.uk/get-reading/our-programmes-and-campaigns/reading-well/>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/resources/mental-health/>

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/topics/pshe-emotional-literacy-citizenship/mental-health/#booklist-picturebooks-about-mental-health>

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/topics/pshe-emotional-literacy-citizenship/mental-health/#booklist-chapter-books-about-mental-health>

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/topics/pshe-emotional-literacy-citizenship/mental-health/#booklist-non-fiction-books-about-mental-health>

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## New Rescue Hens Arrived...

**Egg-citing news!** Ten new hens moved into the Growhampton Chicken Coop!

You may have seen the coop re-build earlier this year; our lovely Maintenance Team replaced the old coop and built a much fancier and more spacious home for even more beautiful chickens to run around in! We previously had two hens residing in the refurbished coop, but it wasn't long before the girls had some friends join them.

### Here come the girls!

We rescued ten (ex-)caged hens through the British Hen Welfare Trust. The hens were collected on Sunday (26 July) from the farm, checked by a vet, before their "adopters" picked them up early that afternoon.

Over the years, all of our Growhampton chickens have been rescues.

The aim has always been to rehabilitate those who perhaps had not had the greatest start to life and make sure they grew into healthy and happy chickens. We have had a wonderful team of volunteers who took time out of their day to check in, feed, and look after the chickens, as well as maintain the coop facilities.

Chicken Volunteering was organised online, allowing flexibility with no minimum or fixed commitment to certain days—perfect for fitting around busy schedules! As a thank you for their help, volunteers earned a free refreshment from the Hive Café or a freshly laid egg.

Those interested in becoming a Chicken Volunteer were invited to book their 45-minute training by emailing Hillary at: [growhampton@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:growhampton@roehampton.ac.uk)

We were delighted to welcome the new cohort to their new home. They were well looked after and given the space to thrive, just as they deserved.

Chicken updates were shared on Instagram once they had settled in. Follow [@roehamptonsu](#) and [@roegrowhampton](#) for more!



*Some of our new cohort of Primary PGCE students meet the chickens with Hillary Nevjyel, our Growhampton Sustainability Co-ordinator.*

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## Local Ways into Sustainability - Anthony Barlow

### *Geography and beyond in our second CPD session – September 2026*

Following our first **Sustainability in Primary Education Curriculum CPD** online in July, (viewable [here](#)) we were pleased to share insights, practical field work ideas and resources to help bring sustainability to life in your school.

#### **Reflecting on climate stories and disciplinary knowledge**

In the session, geography lecturer Anthony Barlow challenged teachers to move away from "single-story" depictions of local landscapes such as relying solely on imagery of a "green and pleasant land". Maps can 'lie' or tell one truth which does not reflect the position at different times of the year and give impressions which stick of what a location is like as the aerial views shows below.

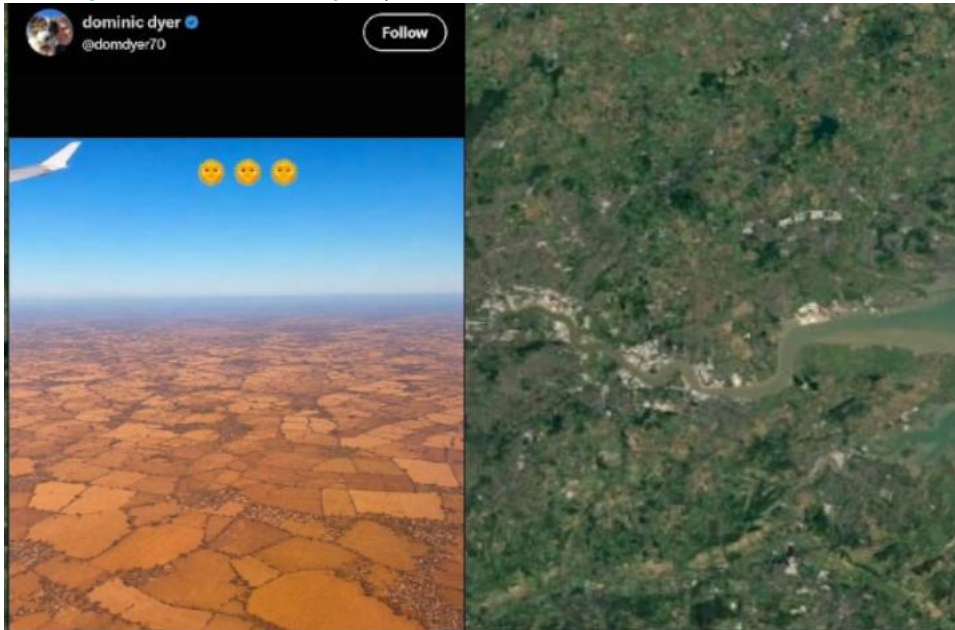


Image composite: Anthony Barlow. Aerial view: Google.

*Is the aerial view of a green UK a problem?*

The realities of 2026's extreme summer heatwaves after several similar recent years with dry riverbeds alongside localized flash floods, highlight the urgency of using up-to-date, accurate case studies in geography.

Thinking geographically is all about asking how human and physical environments interact. Using a recent article from Steve Brace from the Geographical Association and published in Teach Wire, Anthony shared that we might consider capturing short "climate history stories" or "audioramas" to tell stories about the landscape. Such audio recordings support the learners to describe their local environments and help build a more detailed emotional attachment to place. Vocabulary and developing descriptive language and observational skills is key to the suite of skill of a geographer. █

**Featured resource: Built Environment Schools Trust**

Joined by guest speaker Emma Meredith from the **Built Environment Schools Trust** the session developed the idea of linking to the locality through BEST's free resources. These help build pathways into sustainability, design, and built-environment careers.

<https://beschoolstrust.org/>

Emma showcased two KS2 resources:

- **Eco-aware playground:** A project incorporating local field work, risk assessment skills, and data collection to help pupils plan green spaces, integrate shade, and reduce air pollution. It includes interactive tools like "Tree Top Trumps" to teach biology, ecology, and heat resilience.



Source: BBC/ [Storyful News and Weather on YouTube](#)

- **"Waste or Wonder" competition:** A challenge encouraging pupils to investigate waste in their local area and propose creative, tech-driven solutions. A new competition will launch in December. <https://memf.careers/school-programme/>

### Next steps

Whether you teach Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2, here are four steps you might take today:

1. **Notice your grounds:** Use simple field surveys to examine impermeable surfaces (like Tarmac or paving). Test how fast water drains into hard ground versus green spaces to demonstrate flood risk. Do as the Dutch do and try to remove some of the paving where possible with their competitions to search for places you can 'tile-tip' or Tegelwippen!



Too much paved surface in London is leading to flooding and sewage overflowing into rivers. One of the most important things we can do is de-pave everything from verges to front gardens

Stories about the NK Tegelwippen (tile-tipping) competition occasionally appear in the UK press. The competition aims to inspire Dutch people to remove tiles from their gardens and replace them with greenery. Eva Braaksmma, one of the people behind this campaign, spoke to CIRE London about the competition.

2. **Capture local stories:** Have pupils record short audio descriptions of their school grounds or nearby parks to track seasonal changes and heat impact. Do this with your staff too to ensure 2026 is not forgotten.
3. **Explore resources:** Access free, adaptable teaching slides and field work templates at [MEMF Careers](#).
4. **Connect with nature:** Even in dense urban spaces, plant trees, potted greenery, or living roofs to give pupils hands-on experiences with growth and seasonal change. Survey where water falls on your school site – are you managing it well or is it finding its way too quickly into the drains and possibly leading to flooding downstream?

**Save the dates November:** Curriculum & Assessment Review: New Directions in sustainability and **January:** Early Years & Key Stage 1 seasonal sustainability (featuring insights from a newly published book on EYFS sustainability). Watch this session's recording now [here](#).

## Invitation to Participate in Research on Teaching Assistants and Inclusive Literacy Practice

I am inviting teaching assistants currently working in **mainstream primary schools** to take part in a British Academy-funded research project exploring how TAs support pupils with identified or emerging special educational needs (SEN) across phonics/reading interventions and whole-class literacy teaching.

The study focuses on understanding how TAs balance targeted support with inclusive classroom participation, and how intervention practices are reintegrated into whole-class learning. It aims to foreground TA perspectives and inform more equitable and coherent literacy provision.

Participation involves:

- Two focus-group sessions (approximately 90 minutes each)
- Reflecting on your professional experiences in literacy support

To take part, you must:

- Be currently employed as a TA
- Work in a mainstream primary school
- Be involved in phonics and/or reading interventions

Participation is entirely voluntary and will not affect your studies or assessment in any way. All contributions will be confidential and anonymised.

If you are interested, please contact Dr Meg Loveys ([megan.loveys@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:megan.loveys@roehampton.ac.uk)) by Friday 9th October, and further details will be provided.

Thank you for considering contributing to this important research."

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## New Publication; Dr Fengling Tang

Dr Fengling Tang, Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at the School of Education, University of Roehampton and an endorsed Froebel Trust tutor, has published the new book *Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: Research, Practice and Policy* with Emerald Publishing. Focusing on early childhood with links to higher education, this book addresses the growing concerns about the economic, environmental, social and political crises across the international context and nurtures a dialogic space for developing consensus about the urgency of education for sustainability right starting from early childhood, to engage young children, educators, professionals, parents, student trainees, scholars, researchers and policy makers to actively participate in this great cause.

The book link: <https://bookstore.emerald.com/early-childhood-education-for-sustainability-hb-9781835491836.html>

Enjoy 30% off this title in print or e-book with the code EME30 at the Emerald Bookstore weblink above.

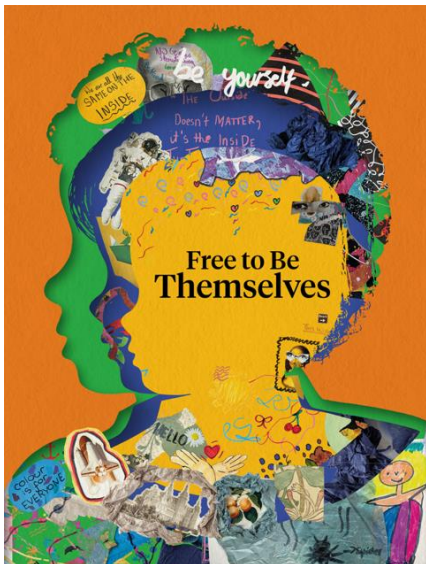
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## Primary school children and teachers can challenge gender norms, report finds

We were delighted to be joined by Professor Philippa Velija and Dr Debbie Sabric, Dean and Deputy Dean of the School of Education at the House of Lords earlier in September. Here, we launched the Beyond Gender Stereotypes programme for Primary Schools which consists of PSHE lessons for Key Stage 2 centred around challenging gender stereotypes, healthy relationships and widening horizons and aspirations. The programme, developed by The Children's Society and Equipundo is free to use, evidence-based and piloted in over 40 schools across England. It is available here on The Children's Society website [Beyond Gender Stereotypes | The Children's Society](#). Kirsty Ruthven leads the programme and is a Doctoral Student at Roehampton, she graduated with a BA (Hons) Primary Education (QTS) in 2004 and teaches locally in Wimbledon.

Kirsty says: *"Concerns about children's wellbeing, online misogyny, gender-based violence and boys' mental health are rising across the UK. Our report argues that prevention cannot begin in adolescence or adulthood. We must give primary schools the tools to support children to thrive."*

Gender stereotypes are not inevitable or fixed. What's more, primary school children can develop more equitable attitudes, according to *Free to Be Themselves*, a new report released today by Equipundo: Center for Masculinities & Social Justice and The Children's Society. It found evidence that children are open to challenging gender stereotypes, including traditional expectations around friendship, care, emotions and future careers. Also, educators given the right support, can gain confidence in recognising and challenging their own unconscious biases. In turn, this helps them facilitate difficult conversations about gender stereotypes in the classroom.



Report cover designed by primary school children

The report is an evaluation of *Beyond Gender Stereotypes* (BGS), an intervention developed by Equipundo and The Children's Society Lifting Limits programme. Delivered during the 2025–26 school year, it has significant implications for education policy and prevention.

A total of 24 schools in England, with 300 educators and 2,300 pupils in the programme, and 1,000 pupils in control schools, took part in the evaluation. Among pupils who took part in the BGS programme:

- 80% said it was okay for boys to hug their friends and carers, a significantly higher proportion than among pupils in control schools.
- Significantly more pupils accepted that anyone can pursue any career, regardless of their gender.
- Pupils reported increased confidence in making friends and playing with peers of all genders.
- More than two-thirds of pupils demonstrated an interest in continuing conversations about gender stereotypes with friends, parents and carers.

The findings indicate that challenging stereotypes does not simply mean telling children that gender stereotypes are wrong. It can create opportunities for children to explore different ways of expressing emotion, forming friendships, caring for others and imagining their futures.

Additionally, the evaluation also showed a positive impact on teachers, who reported feeling a significant increase in their confidence to help pupils challenge gender stereotypes.

**Mark Sanderson, Director of Equipundo UK**, said: “Free to be Themselves shines a light on the importance of early intervention. That said, we must ensure discussions around gender equality include both boys and girls. The message from our report is clear: the challenge facing schools is not if they should address gender stereotypes, but whether they are sufficiently supported to do so.”

**Kirsty Ruthven, Service Manager at The Children’s Society**, said: “Concerns about children’s wellbeing, online misogyny, gender-based violence and boys’ mental health are rising across the UK. Our report argues that prevention cannot begin in adolescence or adulthood. We must give primary schools the tools to support children to thrive.”

**Desmond McMenamin, Cummins Inc. Regional Leader, supporters of the BGS programme**, said: “At Cummins, we believe strong communities are built when everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. Through Cummins Powers Women, we’re proud to partner with Equipundo and The Children’s Society to help challenge limiting gender stereotypes, expand opportunities and create more inclusive learning environments for children across the UK.”

### FREE TO BE THEMSELVES

#### **About Beyond Gender Stereotypes:**

Beyond Gender Stereotypes is a free, evidence-based programme for children aged 7–11 and their educators. Developed by Equipundo and Lifting Limits, it helps children challenge restrictive gender stereotypes, build emotional and relational skills and create respectful, inclusive learning environments. The programme intentionally addresses stereotypes affecting both girls and boys, encouraging boys to be caring, connected and allies for equality. BGS includes classroom lessons, CPD-accredited teacher training, teaching guidance and resources for parents and carers. It aligns with England’s PSHE, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education requirements.

#### **About the evaluation:**

Equipundo, in partnership with The Children’s Society, conducted the Phase 3 evaluation during the 2025–26 academic year. The evaluation assessed outcomes among pupils and educators and explored the programme’s effectiveness in creating a supportive classroom environment where gender stereotypes affecting boys and girls could be discussed and challenged. A total of 24 schools participated in the evaluation.

#### **About Equipundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice:**

Equipundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice is a global organisation working to promote gender equality and create a world free from violence and discrimination by transforming social norms and supporting healthy, equitable masculinities.

#### **About The Children’s Society:**

The Children’s Society is a national charity working to improve the lives of children and young people, particularly those facing the greatest challenges, and to ensure their voices are heard in decisions affecting them. Their Lifting Limits programme trains professionals to provide support for children, parents and carers to overcome gender stereotypes.

## **Did your school take part in fieldwork in June 2026? How to get your Festival of Fieldwork Certificate**

The National Festival of Fieldwork was a celebration that encouraged schools to take geography learning outdoors through practical investigations and activities. It provided opportunities for students to explore their local areas, develop fieldwork skills, collect data, test geographical ideas, and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Resources were available to support activities in the school grounds, local areas, or further afield.

Schools that participated can receive recognition for their involvement through a certificate. To access the certificate, schools needed to complete the short online form

Get your National Festival of Fieldwork (NFF) Certificate at the bottom of this page

<https://geography.org.uk/national-fieldwork/>

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## **From the archives - Article by Edith E. Smith. From The Link 1910, pages 12–14. PART 2 – Thank you to Kornelia Cepok.**

### **Life in an Elementary School – Part 2 (Part one is in our July 26 Newsletter)**

The children themselves are very much like the London sparrow, excitable and highly daring. They live in the midst of noise and hurry. Large buildings or tenements are not ideal places in which to bring children up. The children have to learn at a very early age to stand up for themselves; this does not tend to foster the best and highest spirit of childhood. They are very affectionate and quickly respond to kindness. A little treat goes a very long way with them, and any trouble the teacher may have taken to give them a happy time is amply repaid. Our children seem so worldly wise in the way of shopping, etc.; their knowledge of the value of money is great. A little boy of five years of age will manfully set off to the shop and do the day's shopping for the teacher's dinner in a way that would astonish a secondary kindergarten child. It is when many of our children are about eleven years of age they seem to dwindle mentally and physically. They get into touch with life too soon, and not in the right way. One of their greatest faults is their dirty appearance. We have to fight dirt inch by inch and never give in. Arms, hands, faces and pocket-handkerchiefs have to be inspected every morning and afternoon. The visit of the school nurse and the medical examination are of great help to the teacher.

Although we seem so far behind in the elementary schools, we have made great strides during the last few years and are getting into a better attitude towards education generally. On the whole we are as happy a little section of the community as you will find. We have our little troubles, but we have great compensations, and I can heartily recommend life in an elementary school to all those who would like to try it. I can assure them that any effort to help the children, any affection shown them, will be repaid a thousandfold. The little ones of London are the brightest and most affectionate children you can find; they are second to none. The well-fed, well-dressed, spoiled child, who has seen everything and had every plaything money can provide, could not possibly appreciate the small simple things in the way our little ones do. If you wish to see real enjoyment, come to a tea-party in an L.C.C. school (London County Council).

## Updates to Birth to 5 Matters

The **2026 second edition of *Birth to 5 Matters*** was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2026. The Early Years Coalition retained the aspects educators valued while incorporating new research, current practice, and changes affecting the early years sector.

### Summary of the key changes

#### 1. New section: Birth to 2 years

This is one of the most significant additions.

The new edition gives much greater emphasis to:

- babies from birth to two years
- attachment and relationships
- responsive caregiving
- brain development during the first 1,000 days
- recognising babies as active learners from birth
- developmentally appropriate practice for infants rather than adapting toddler approaches.

This reflects increased government investment in baby places and growing evidence about the importance of the earliest years.

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#### 2. New section: Digital pedagogy

A completely new section explores children's use of digital technology.

Rather than simply discussing screen time, it considers:

- when technology supports learning
- balancing digital experiences with real-world play
- adults modelling appropriate technology use
- digital inclusion
- making informed professional decisions about technology in early years settings.

The focus is on **purposeful, developmentally appropriate use**, not avoiding technology altogether.

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#### 3. New section: Sustainability

This includes:

- helping children develop respect for nature
- environmental awareness
- caring for living things
- sustainable practices in settings
- encouraging children's sense of responsibility for their environment.

Rather than teaching climate science, the emphasis is on everyday experiences that build positive environmental values.

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#### **4. New section: Reception and Beyond**

The guidance now includes advice about transition into school.

This covers:

- supporting continuity of learning
- effective transition to Reception
- avoiding unnecessary formalisation of learning
- maintaining play-based pedagogy
- supporting progression beyond the EYFS.

This aims to strengthen continuity between early years settings and schools.

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#### **Updated research throughout**

Many existing chapters have been revised to include:

- more recent developmental research
- updated evidence on child development
- new examples from practice
- current understanding of children's learning.

The aim was to refresh the evidence base rather than fundamentally alter the guidance.

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#### **Greater emphasis on relationships**

Although relationships were central in the first edition, the second edition strengthens discussion of:

- secure attachments
- emotional wellbeing
- co-regulation
- sensitive interactions
- practitioner responsiveness.

This reflects newer evidence from neuroscience and attachment research.

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#### **More practical guidance**

Practitioners reported wanting practical support, so many sections now include:

- clearer explanations
- additional examples
- expanded practice guidance

- more links between theory and practice.

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## Website redesign

The accompanying website has been redesigned to improve accessibility and includes:

- improved navigation
- updated downloadable guidance
- an expanded bank of free resources
- easier access to supporting materials.

You can access the website here; <https://birthto5matters.org.uk/>

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## Wider consultation

The revision was informed by extensive sector consultation:

- public surveys
- 23 specialist working groups
- consultation with practitioners
- feedback from universities, schools and early years settings.

**Early Years Coalition (2026)** *Birth to 5 Matters: Non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*. 2nd edn. Available at: <https://birthto5matters.org.uk> (Accessed: 17 July 2026).

## Possible Funds for Fieldwork from The Royal Geographical Society

Are you planning to take students on geography field trips this year? Our grants can help!

- Following record demand in 2026, we have increased the value of the [Frederick Soddy Schools Awards](#) to £700. The funds can be used to support teachers leading groups of school pupils on geography fieldwork. The next deadline is **30 November**.

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## Free online Climate Change Training from Kew Gardens

We would also love to spread the word about our **free online Climate Change training**, which supports teachers to start positive, meaningful conversations about climate change with pupils (you kindly gave us feedback on this a while back and we are in the process of developing an accompanying teacher toolkit).

<https://endeavour.kew.org/grow-your-teaching/climate-change>

For more information about teacher CPD days at Kew see:

<https://www.kew.org/learning/courses-for-teachers/teacher-cpd-days>

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## Roehampton Short Courses and Professional Development Updates: Stacy Gambrell (Short Courses Manager)

As we begin a new academic year, we're pleased to share new opportunities to support Professional Development and help shape the future of our Short Course provision. Our **Arts and Play Therapies** Foundation courses start in October and offer valuable professional development opportunities for practitioners working across education, health, and community settings. These popular programmes provide specialist knowledge and practical skills in a supportive environment. Courses can be taken either on campus or online, and you can pick from one of 5 specialisms (Art, Dance, Drama, Music and Play). For details of upcoming courses, take a look at the Short Course pages on our [website](#).

We are also pleased to highlight our **Assessment Only Route to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)**. The QTS Assessment only route is designed for experienced and skilled teachers who wish to gain formal recognition as qualified teachers without undergoing additional training. This course provides a structured assessment process to assess candidates against the Teachers' Standards, ensuring they meet the requirements for QTS. You can find out more about the programme on our [programme](#) page. Please do share details of this opportunity with colleagues and your professional networks.

Looking ahead, we will be launching a new **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) course** in 2027. The programme is designed to support professionals working with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Interested colleagues and contacts can now [sign up](#) to receive updates and be among the first to hear when booking opens. Finally, we would welcome your support in shaping the future of our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme. We're exploring what CPD teachers and school employees need, how they prefer to access it, and what makes a course genuinely useful in the context of working in a school. This short survey takes around 5–10 minutes and can be accessed via this [link](#). Your responses will help us shape our future CPD opportunities for schools, academies and colleges.



Stay on top of the education news and debates and see what our trainees see in their **Weekly CPD briefing**. If there are events you would like to publicise, great research they should know about or organisations that are helpful for their development, do please let us know! Simply bookmark this link to see all issues: <https://fridaybriefing.blogspot.com/?view=timeslide>

Another Take Away from The Festival of Education:

*New Strategic Direction for SEND and Inclusion*

## National Specialist TA Network:

**Connecting Expertise. Building Confidence.  
Improving Outcomes.**



### Peer Collaboration, Not Isolation

- Opportunities to connect with specialist TAs in similar roles or phases
- Sharing strategies, resources and lived experience
- Learning from specialist and mainstream contexts alike



### Specialist Expertise, National Reach

**Bringing together specialist TAs and HLTAs from across mainstream, specialist and alternative provision to share expertise, strengthen inclusive practice and build professional confidence.**



### Evidence-Led, SEND- Informed Practice

- Research-informed practice, including current thinking on SEND
- Practical interpretation of research for classroom and intervention practice
- Updates linked to national SEND priorities



### Capacity-Building for System-Wide Support

- Building professional confidence and agency
- Supporting specialists to understand their impact
- Strengthening inclusive practice

**Sign Up Now!**



### Valuing you as a Specialist Professional

- Supporting reflective practice and ethical decision-making
- Elevating the contribution made to SEND and inclusion



### Specialist Training and Development

- Access to training sessions and briefings
- Focused SEND themes
- Practical tools to support inclusive classrooms



### Professional Voice and Influence

- Be heard, respected and represented
- Contribute to conversations about SEND practice and reform



### Inclusion by Design

- Promoting authentic inclusion rooted in understanding and respect so that SEND and Specialist TAs are seen as integral - not a bolt-on

**#NationalSpecialistTANetwork**

Call us: 0204 570 0905

Email us: [info@libertytrust.org.uk](mailto:info@libertytrust.org.uk)

## Level 3 Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship at Roehampton

Are you looking to invest in your school's support team? The University of Roehampton is pleased to offer the **Level 3 Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship**, tailored to build confidence, practical classroom skills, and reflective practice directly within your setting.

This 12–18 month programme is designed for aspiring teaching assistants and existing support staff already working in schools. It offers a flexible "earn-while-you-learn" model that blends academic grounding with workplace mentoring.

### What we offer:

**Practical, flexible learning:** Apprentices engage in **six hours of learning per week** during term time: comprising two hours of live, synchronous online sessions; two hours applying knowledge to on-the-job classroom practice and mentoring; and two hours of guided independent study (reading professional articles, research, and data).

**Workplace-focused assessment:** Assessments are developmental, using reflective journal entries and a multi-component workplace portfolio to showcase the apprentice's growing knowledge, skills, and classroom competencies.

**Clear career pathways:** Successful completion awards a nationally recognised Level 3 qualification, opening progression routes into specialist TA roles, SEN support, or future teacher training pathways (including QTS routes).

### Eligibility and how to apply:

Applicants must be employed in a school willing to support them, hold GCSEs (Grade 4/C or above) in English and Maths (or work towards Level 2 equivalents on the programme), and have three years of UK residency.

Whether your school pays the Apprenticeship Levy or qualifies for co-investment funding, our Apprenticeships Team can guide you through every step of setup and enrolment.

If you want to find out more, or have any queries in relation to this course, please contact the team directly at [apprenticeships@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@roehampton.ac.uk).

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## Events:



# Sustainability in Primary Education



Hear new perspectives from curriculum and assessment experts



Connect with other educators and develop shared resources



Plan ahead for your professional development journey

**SEPT 16<sup>th</sup>**

Local ways into Sustainability

**NOV 25<sup>th</sup>**

Curriculum and Assessment Review:  
New directions in Sustainability

**JANUARY 6<sup>th</sup>**

EY and KS1 Seasonal Sustainability



**TIME: 4-5pm**

Sign up: [Sustainability through the Primary Curriculum Series 2026-7 – Fill out form](#)

## Recent free CPD from GeogLive!



You may have missed the latest CPD from the Geographical Association's Early Years and Primary Committee. Catch-up with the whole series [here](#) and the latest ones (Leadership) [here](#) and (Trade) [here](#).



Adaptive Practice to get the best out of the scheme and the children.

### What adaptive practice is and isn't.

|                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Responsive        | Lowering expectations      |
| Ambitious for all | Different curriculum goals |
| Scaffolded        | Over supporting            |
| Temporary support | Permanent dependency       |
| Inclusive         | Simplifying geography      |



## Subject Advisory Panels 2026-2027

16:00 –17:00

Sign up here: [SUBJECT ADVISORY PANEL 2026/27 – Fill out form](#)

|                             | SAP #1   | SAP #2   |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Art and Design - SAP        | 12/11/26 | 13/04/27 |
| Computing - SAP             | 24/11/26 | 25/05/27 |
| Design and technology - SAP | 22/10/26 | 05/05/27 |
| English - SAP               | 07/10/26 | 21/04/27 |

|                   |                          |          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Geography - SAP   | 05/10/26 (17:00 – 18:00) | 26/01/27 |
| History - SAP     | 21/10/26                 | 28/04/27 |
| Mathematics - SAP | 18/11/26                 | 18/05/27 |
| PE - SAP          | 11/11/26                 | 12/05/27 |
| Science - SAP     | 04/11/26                 | 26/05/27 |
| PSHE - SAP        |                          | 22/04/27 |

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## Upcoming ECT roles at your school

If you wish to advertise ECT jobs with us, then please send adverts (PDF or Word files) to [baprimary@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:baprimary@roehampton.ac.uk) and [pgprimary@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:pgprimary@roehampton.ac.uk), and we will share these with our current students and graduates from last academic year.

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## Our Primary Subject Leads



**Subject:** Geography

**Subject Lead Name:** Anthony Barlow

**Email:** [anthony.barlow@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.barlow@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 0208 392 3386

**Key subject/research interests:** Pupil understanding of their everyday geography and the locality.

**Subject:** Computing

**Subject Lead Name:** Lynda Chinaka

**Email:** [Lynda.chinaka@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:Lynda.chinaka@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Key subject/research interests:** Computing Education in Primary settings. Building confidence for the teaching of all elements of the computing curriculum: Computer Science, Information Technology and Digital Literacy. Ensuring practice and pedagogy that intersects with the identities and experiences of all learners. Computing and creativity for everyone!



**Subject:** English (BA)

**Subject Lead Name:** Dr Anna Harrison

**Email:** [anna.harrison@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:anna.harrison@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8392 3017

**Key subject/research interests:** Digital Literacies, Print and Digital Picture books, Reading, Siblings as Readers, Children's Literature, The Classics, Beatrix Potter.

**Professional Links:** Open University Reading for Pleasure, UKLA, IBBY (International Board of Books for Young People).

**Subject:** English (PG/SD)

**Subject Lead Name:** Steph Laird

**Email:** [s.laird@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:s.laird@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8392 3076

**Key subject/research interests:** The teaching of writing, children's responses to picture books, how children read film and the use of film as a stimulus for writing.

**Professional Links:** Member of the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA)





**Subject:** History

**Subject Lead Name:** Susie Townsend

**Email:** [susan.townsend@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:susan.townsend@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8392 3369

**Key subject / research interest:** Relativity and History, experiential learning, historic fiction and diversity.

**Professional links:** Regular contributor to Primary History journal and to Historical Association conferences.

**Subject:** Maths

**Subject Lead Name:** Lorraine Hartley

**Email:** [lorraine.hartley@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:lorraine.hartley@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8392 3365

**Key subject/research interests:** Planning and teaching and assessing in primary mathematics; fractions across the primary age range.

**Professional Links:** ATM/MA; NCETM and consultancy in schools.



**Subject:** Art and Design

**Subject Lead Name:** Jo Nugent

**Email:** [Jo.Nugent@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:Jo.Nugent@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 0208 392 3397

**Key subject/research interests:** Primary Art and Design education, inclusive practice with a focus on using art galleries and outdoor spaces to enhance learning experiences.

**Professional Links:** NSEAD

**Subject:** Design and Technology

**Subject Lead Name:** Sue Miles-Pearson

**Email:** [s.miles-pearson@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:s.miles-pearson@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 0208 392 5781

**Key subject/research interests:** CAD CAM (Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture); Food technology that is being taught in the English primary schools; I am also interested in pupils in the Early years learning the key design and technology skills that they will require for Key Stage one and beyond.





**Subject:** Science

**Subject Lead Name:** Dr Nicola Treby

**Email:** [nicola.treby@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:nicola.treby@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8392 3263

**Key subject/research interests:** Varied interests relating to primary science, including science enquiry and outdoor learning. I also have a research interest in pastoral care within the school context.

**Subject:** Physical Education

**Subject Lead Name:** Emerick Kaitell

**Email:**

**Telephone:**

**Key subject/research interests:** My teaching philosophy is centred around a commitment to social justice, ensuring every child has access to high-quality physical education.



**Partnership Materials Page:**

<https://external.moodle.roehampton.ac.uk/enrol/index.php?id=108>

(click "Log in as guest" & enter the password **RoehamptonTrainee**)

**University of Roehampton Primary Partnership webpage:**

<https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/education/primary-school-partnerships/>

**School Partnerships Team**

email: [primarypartnerships@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:primarypartnerships@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Head of Primary Initial Teacher Education:** Sarah Leonard

email: [sarah.leonard@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.leonard@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Head of Partnerships / Mentor Training Lead:** Natalie Rankin

email: [natalie.rankin@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:natalie.rankin@roehampton.ac.uk)

**BA (Undergraduate) Programme Convener Primary Education:** Anthony Barlow

email: [anthony.barlow@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.barlow@roehampton.ac.uk)

**PGCE (Postgraduate) Programme Convener Primary Education:** Steph Laird

email: [s.laird@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:s.laird@roehampton.ac.uk)