



Alliance
for Learning
BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Researchers in School Impact Report



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The best *for* everyone, the best *from* everyone

Researchers in Schools is a teacher training and development programme run by The Brilliant Club, an award-winning charity which seeks to increase the number of pupils from under-represented backgrounds progressing to highly-selective universities.

Researchers in Schools recruits subject-expert PhD graduates and places them in non-selective state schools across England (Northwest for the AFL) to teach a range of EBacc subjects, including maths and physics. The programme is designed to run over three years with participants achieving QTS in their first year and completing their NQT induction in years two and three. Over the three years of the programme, participants complete the Research Leader in Education Award, designed to ensure that participants are well equipped to deploy their knowledge and skills for the benefit of pupils and schools. This includes “Uni Pathways”, a university-style intervention where participants design a series of tutorials based on their PhD thesis, launched with a trip to highly-selective university. Throughout the programme, participants use their research skills to increase pupil impact, aligned with departmental and school priorities.

The Alliance for Learning SCITT have been partnering with Researchers in Schools since 2015, during which time 24 participants have been placed in schools across the north west.

Case Study:

Cedar Mount Academy have been involved with the RIS programme through the Alliance for Learning SCITT since 2017. They have recruited and trained three PhD graduates over this period of time. Subjects include English, Physics and Mathematics,

In addition to training to teach and achieving QTS, RIS teachers have completed a Uni Pathways module, which aims to improve the chances of under-represented pupils to access highly selective universities. In addition, RIS teachers have participated in an introduction to education research and led on a Participant Identified Activity, which combines a particular need in their school and their own interests and knowledge.

Continuing from Uni Pathways in year one, year two focuses on the GCSE curriculum. Participants worked with their departments to determine a curricular area in which their pupils need to improve, and support their pupils by carefully designing mastery-learning practice activities. Participants used the latest educational research to inform the design and delivery of their courses.

Within Cedar Mount Academy the Uni Pathways courses have varied from the English themed “You are what you Say”, to the physics driven “Changes in Energy” and “Combining 2D Vectors in mathematics”. Two of the RIS champions have run several trips to highly selective universities and through this, they have both raised aspirations, encouraging students to have the confidence to apply to highly selective universities, and challenged some student misconceptions about the more daunting aspects of going to university, such as student finance.

Our partner school, Essa Academy have also engaged with the RIS programme since 2017, training three PhD graduates during this time. The Uni Pathway programmes in this school were equally engaging, ranging from the mathematically-themed “Graph Theory: How

Google Maps Plan Routes”, to the biology-based “How to make a Glow-in the-dark Pet”, and the physics-focussed “How Spaceships get to the Moon”.

The Uni Pathways programme is aimed at pupil who are eligible for Pupil Premium, who have no parental history of higher education and who live in deprived areas according to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI).

The RIS trainees have really made an impact on the world of education and the outcomes of this programme speak for themselves. 85-100% of pupils ‘strongly agree’ that Uni Pathways has inspired them to study harder so that they can access university when they are older and this is coupled with increased pupils outcomes compared to baseline.