

ASE Teacher Developer Conference 2026

Teacher Development across a Trust -
Disciplinary Literacy

Tbarak Mahar

Chiltern Learning Trust



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Chiltern Learning Trust

- A collaborative family of 21 schools across Bedfordshire, Luton and Hertfordshire
- Committed to excellence for both students and staff
- Investing in professional growth at every career stage
- Outstanding teacher training through the Chiltern Training Group (CTG)
- Ongoing professional development through the Chiltern Teaching School Hub (CTSH)
- Building expertise, leadership and school improvement across the Trust

Centralised CPD Across the Chiltern Learning Trust

- **Trust-wide CPD leaders work collaboratively to share best practice and drive improvement across all schools.** Subject specialists and strategic leads, including SENDCOs, literacy leads and curriculum experts, regularly come together to exchange ideas, evaluate impact and ensure that successful approaches are scaled across the Trust.
- **Annual Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) conferences provide opportunities for staff to learn from one another and from external experts.** These events are led by practitioners from within the Trust and create a culture where expertise is recognised, celebrated and shared.
- **Professional Development Days are viewed as the beginning of a learning journey, not a standalone event.** Staff are encouraged to reflect on new learning, trial strategies in their own contexts and revisit key themes throughout the year to maximise impact on classroom practice.

Centralised CPD Across the Chiltern Learning Trust

- **Professional learning is carefully threaded through the academic year.** Whole-Trust training is followed by school-based development, subject-specific SKE sessions and online learning opportunities, ensuring that professional development remains sustained, relevant and accessible for all staff.
- **A centralised approach ensures consistency, equity and high-quality provision across the Trust.** Every member of staff has access to expert support, professional networks and ongoing development opportunities regardless of their role or school.

Key Educational Figures at Chiltern Learning Trust

- **Amjad Ali** – Probably the most nationally recognised educator currently working within the Trust. He is a keynote speaker, author of SEND-related publications, co-founder of The BAMEed Network, and a regular speaker at national conferences including TES and Optimus events.
- **Adam Kohlbeck** – Education author, podcaster and member of the Chartered College Council. He has a growing national reputation in teacher development and instructional coaching.
- **Christian Turton** – A nationally recognised EdTech and AI specialist and has worked with the Department for Education on AI in Education materials.
- **Helen Russell** – Leads professional development across the Teaching School Hub, including ECF and NPQ programmes.
- **Yamina Bibi** – Executive Leader driving school improvement, inclusion and professional learning across Chiltern Learning Trust.

Break out rooms

Kill one initiative -

Your department can only focus on ONE of the following next year:

- Vocabulary
- Reading
- Writing
- Oracy
- Data/graph literacy

Which survives and why?

What would I see?

If I walked into your science department six months from now, how would I know this initiative was working?

Why do literacy initiatives fail?

- Too many priorities.
- Lack of consistency.
- No follow-up.
- Staff turnover.
- Initiative overload.

Key takeaways

Disciplinary literacy is not an initiative.

It is the deliberate teaching of how experts in a subject read, write, speak and think.

Impact comes from implementation, not innovation.

Departments do not need more strategies. They need greater clarity, consistency and follow-through.

Start small.

Identify one high-leverage disciplinary literacy practice and embed it well across the department.

Ask yourself:

- What do students need to do to think like scientists?
- What literacy demands are hidden within our curriculum?
- What would I see in every classroom if our approach was working?

Final Reflection

What is the one disciplinary literacy practice you will prioritise in your department next year?

The challenge is not deciding what matters most.

The challenge is having the discipline to stop doing everything else.