Department for Education

RISE National Delivery Partnership Board: 23 September 2026 minutes

These minutes reflect discussion and recommendations from the RISE National Delivery Partnership. They do not represent formal policy decisions.

Chairs

Co-chair: Dr Tim Coulson CBE, Director General of Regions Group, DfE
Co-chair: Georgia Gould OBE, Minister for School Standards, DfE

Deputy Chair: Prof Vanessa Ogden CBE, Director Standards and Intervention

Attendance

Members in attendance

Internals

Tim Coulson, Stella Pearson, Vanessa Ogden

Externals

Permanent regional attendees

- Amanda Corcoran, Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS)
- Dr Jennifer Blunden, Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT)
- Dr Kate Chhatwal, Challenge Partners
- Gail Brown, Ebor Academy Trust, ASCL
- Gina Cicerone, CEO Fair Education Alliance (represented by Rachel Parkin)
- Heather Sandys, Association of Directors of Children's Services
- James Toop, Teach First
- John Camp, Compass Partnership of Schools, Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- Lee Wilson, Outwood Grange Academies Trust, Confederation of School Trusts (CST)

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- Lisa O'Loughlin, CEO East Lancashire Learning Group
- Nick Wright, UBS
- Paul Whiteman, NAHT
- Pepe Di'Iasio, ASCL
- Prof Becky Francis, Education Endowment Foundation
- Prof Helen Driscoll, University of Sunderland (Higher Education/FE representative)
- Prof Qing Gu, UCL Institute of Education
- Rebecca Meredith CBE, Transform Trust
- Sir Steve Taylor, Queen Street Group
- Steve Rollett, CST
- Tony Wilson, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education

Permanent national attendees

- Amanda Corcoran, Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS)
- Dr Jennifer Blunden, Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT)
- Dr Kate Chhatwal, Challenge Partners
- Gail Brown, Ebor Academy Trust, ASCL
- Heather Sandys, Association of Directors of Children's Services
- James Toop, Teach First
- Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, Learning for Life Education Trust, National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- John Barneby, National Institute of Teaching representative
- John Camp, Compass Partnership of Schools, Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- Lee Wilson, Outwood Grange Academies Trust, Confederation of School Trusts (CST)
- Mark Davis, Director of Education (DDE) for Lichfield Diocese, Church of England
- Ndidi Okezie, Business in the Community
- Nick Wright, UBS
- Paul Whiteman, NAHT
- Pepe Di'Iasio, ASCL
- Prof Becky Francis, Education Endowment Foundation
- Prof Helen Driscoll, University of Sunderland (Higher Education/FE representative)
- Prof Qing Gu, UCL Institute of Education
- Rebecca Meredith CBE, Transform Trust
- Sir Steve Taylor, Queen Street Group

- Stephen Wheatley, All Saints Catholic Academy Trust, Catholic Education Service (CES)
- Steve Rollett, CST
- Tony Wilson, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education
- Lisa O'Loughlin, CEO East Lancashire Learning Group
- Gina Cicerone, CEO Fair Education Alliance

Papers presented and purpose

The inaugural meeting considered the future of school improvement in England, the development of RISE as a sector-led improvement system and the role of the National Delivery Partnership in shaping the next phase of the programme.

Meeting minutes

Below are the full minutes taken from the meeting.

1. Welcome

Tim Coulson welcomed members to the inaugural meeting of the National Delivery Partnership. He outlined the Partnership's role in providing strategic advice and connecting learning across the education system.

The Minister welcomed the opportunity to hear a diverse range of views through the Partnership and emphasised the value of strengthening connectivity across the sector.

2. School improvement in England

External members introduced themselves and shared their perspectives on the RISE programme and the support that could be offered to schools.

The discussion covered:

- support for the development of RISE as a sector-led approach to school improvement;
- the importance of a high-support, high-challenge model that combines trust with accountability and enables earlier intervention;
- the value of collaboration, strong sector leadership and local ownership, supported through local partnerships and regional learning and best practice sharing;
- the need to improve access to expertise and support, particularly for disadvantaged communities, ensuring that no school or region is without access to effective school improvement support;

- the importance of sharing effective practice nationally while recognising the local context in which schools operate and the need to expand the evidence available on effective practice;
- the role of place-based approaches and regional partnerships in connecting schools with wider local services and enabling effective practice to be shared locally;
- the variation both between and within schools in the levels of support available to teachers and leaders and the importance of ensuring that school leadership includes a strong focus on developing teachers.

3. Any other business (AOB) and close

Members were invited to continue providing advice and sharing relevant evidence between meetings.

Action: The secretariat will issue diary invitations for future meetings.

The co-chairs thanked members for their contributions and closed the meeting.

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