



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

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"Instructional coaching" partnership to support mentor development and teacher performance

The National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT) is delighted to formally announce a new partnership with instructional coaching platform Powerful Action Steps (PAS) – <https://powerfulactionsteps.education/pas>.

PAS, an online learning mentoring tool, is underpinned by the principles of a trained expert working with teachers individually to help them learn and adopt new teaching practices, and to provide feedback on performance. For teacher educators PAS will improve the quality of mentors and setting of appropriate targets, create accountability by tracking trainee targets and mentor feedback, and track progress by evidencing when and how trainees are meeting targets.

It is the brainchild of Josh Goodrich, who formed Powerful Action Steps in September 2018 alongside his current role as Assistant Principal (Teaching and Learning) at Oasis Academy Southbank. "I have been a teacher educator for the past eight years and during that time my focus has been on helping teachers to improve, firstly for my school, and now for my Trust," he said. "I have observed skills and technology barriers to effective CPD within schools and, in seeking to solve the problems that I was personally experiencing as a teacher educator, the PAS platform emerged. What we have now is a huge library of coaching content and a decision-making tool to guide coaches in the selection of an action step for them. So for example, when watching a lesson, in which area does a teacher need the most help? Within this area, what is the most powerful change that a teacher can make?"

PAS guides teacher educators to "accurate selection of precise action steps" through instructional coaching. Each action step has an attached practice task so that coaches know exactly how to practice the step with their mentee. "Ultimately this is about ensuring that coaches have the knowledge and skills to set effective, appropriate action steps and hold teachers to account to improve," Josh explained. "At the heart of PAS is a series of bite-sized granular actions – this is about making a number of tweaks to help trainees continue to transform their practice, and bring different component parts together. No teacher is a 'natural' and they need deliberate practice to support their trajectory. We drill micro skills in isolation, and ultimately overcome the 'OK' plateau through deliberate practice, breaking bad habits and ingraining good ones, to get to expert status. Knowing how to practice something with a struggling teacher is a skill that takes a lot of practice."

Already used by over 100 schools, Josh's ambition is to support the "professionalisation of teacher education through lifelong learning – the journey from novice-to-expert". He said: "NASBTT is an extremely influential and respected organisation and this is a really important partnership for helping us to provide PAS to schools and trainees. Our aim is to support teacher educators across the country, and internationally, and our vision is to rapidly improve the quality of teaching in schools and therefore the education of children."

NASBTT Executive Director Emma Hollis added: “We are delighted to partner Powerful Action Steps, which we see as an extremely positive method for tracking and developing teacher performance. It is an impressive online tool that effectively solves three issues: 1. The quality of mentors themselves through their ability to set appropriate targets for trainees; 2. Accountability, in terms of how mentors are observing trainees and subsequently making suggestions on improving the learning of the students; and 3. Monitoring trainee progress versus targets set against the curriculum, which is built into PAS. It is currently being introduced to our members through a series of webinars and will be available for paid-for use in September 2020.”

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NASBTT is a registered charity committed to promoting high-quality schools-led programmes of training, education and professional development of teachers. NASBTT represents the interests of schools-led teacher training provision in relation to the development and implementation of national policy developments. Our members include SCITT providers, School Direct Lead Schools, Teaching Schools, HEIs as well as a range of other organisations involved in the education and professional development of teachers. We have over 200 members representing more than 10,000 individual trainees.

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