

The MTPT Project Return to Work Workshops for TSHs, MATs and Unions

First Report, October 2024

Introduction

Following on from the successful Return to Work workshops in 2023-24, we are delighted that 47 Teaching School Hubs around the country have secured fully-funded access for state school teachers to this year's workshops.

Seven workshops will run throughout the academic year 2024-25, providing teachers, leaders and support staff with the information and supportive community they need to return to work confidently after a period of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave.

TSH Supporters, 2024-25



Addressing the Motherhood Penalty

The 90 minute online Return to Work workshops play an essential part in addressing the motherhood penalty that contributes to the attrition of 9,147



women aged 30-39 each year, the gender pay gap which stands at 18.1% and the underrepresentation of women at leadership level.

For many, the workshops are the first time they have heard of The MTPT Project and the ongoing support we can offer; for others, the workshops are the next step in their relationship with us, already established on social media, through coaching programmes, or regional networking events.

Importantly for our TSH partners, and associated schools and Trusts, they indicate the support that working parents can expect from the education system, even where isolated instances of discrimination or poor treatment occur.

The Return to Work workshops support colleagues returning to working following a period of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave, informing them of their legal entitlements, how to recognise and address discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity, sex and sexual orientation, and providing them with a group coaching space to prepare for a confident return to work.

The first workshop of the academic year took place on Monday 14th October. This report concerns the attendance figures and insight from this first workshop.

Two further reports will be shared with TSH leaders in February 2025 and July 2025.

Attendance

Participants can access either a live or recorded version of the workshop. Those who book a live ticket but do not attend automatically receive access to the recording.

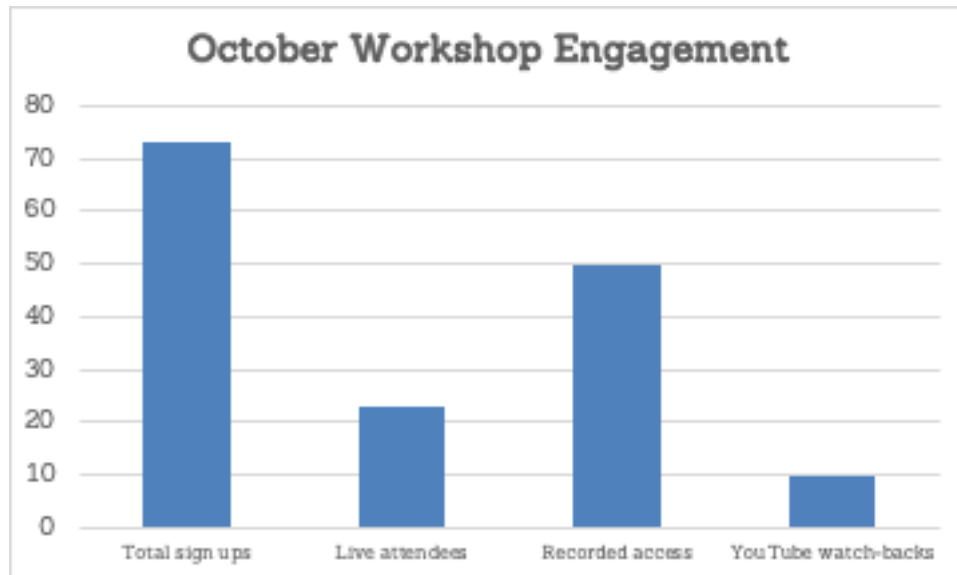
We have two ways of tracking engagement with the recorded version of the programme: either through YouTube analytics, or through the completion of our feedback form. Unfortunately, feedback form completion is notoriously low, and YouTube analytics do not allow us to track engagement according to region.

For these reasons, participation will be tracked this year according to four metrics:

- Total sign up



- Live attendance
- Recorded access (requested or in response to a no show)
- YouTube watch backs



The total sign ups (73) is more than double of the equivalent workshop in 2023 (31) and the combined live attendees and YouTube watch-backs were slightly higher at 33.

The total financial contributions across the 2024-25 supporting TSHs is representative of 125 workshop places, or an average of 18 per workshop. Based on these first workshop figures, we have an annual target of 150 live attendees, and a target of 350 total sign ups.

Who attended?

Of the participants who attended the live workshop, 9% identified as Asian, Black or from Mixed ethnic backgrounds, and 3% identified as Chinese, totalling 30% of participants. 61% identified as White British, and 9% as White Other. This representation reflects the ethnic diversity of our *student* population, and is an overrepresentation of our wider workforce where only 8% of teachers are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Of participants who chose to access a recorded version of the workshop, or who received a recording following a 'no show' at the live session, 74% identified as White British and 4% identified as White Other. 12% identified as Asian; 6% from Mixed ethnic backgrounds; and 2% identified as Black or Chinese, totalling 22% of participants potentially accessing the recorded version of the workshop.



We continue to be very pleased that our workshops not only support the diversity of the teacher workforce when it comes to the protected characteristics of pregnancy, maternity and sex, but also support colleagues whose identities intersect with the protected characteristics of race.

Two of our 73 sign ups to the October workshop identified as LGBTQ+, one of whom attended the live workshop. Three sign ups were fathers, but none attended the live workshop.

Seven sign ups worked in non-teaching or leadership roles, and two attended the live workshop. Job titles given at sign up were:

- Apprentice TA
- HLTA / Inclusion manager
- Caseworker
- HR Manager (2)
- Executive Assistant
- School occupational therapist

We particularly value feedback from these colleagues to make sure that the workshop is as relevant for them as participants on teaching or leadership contracts.

Our HLTA / Inclusion Manager from the East Midlands said, “It was really informative. I didn't understand how much flexibility I should consider as I plan for my return to work. The breakout room activities made me think through my future needs, which is really helpful too.”

When do we ‘break even’ as a region?

In most regions, we received sufficient hub support to allocate 13 places per workshop. Variations occur in London due to the higher population density, and therefore the ‘double-weighting’ hub contribution, and in the East Midlands, North East and West Midlands due to insufficient support from regional hubs. In these latter regions, per-hub contributions were capped so that unfairly high costs did not fall on the participating TSHs. Slight losses have been absorbed by The MTPT Project.

Tickets for the Return to Work workshop cost £45 per person, so the following figures represent “breaking even” based on regional contributions:

Region	“Break Even” figure	October workshop
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		Live attendance	Total sign ups
East Midlands	10	3	4
East of England	13	1	4
London	27	6	11
North East	10	2	6
North West	13	3	5
South Coast	13	0	6
South East	13	5	9
South West	13	1	5
West Midlands	10	1	3
No location given		1	20

When participants sign up to the workshop, we ask them to identify the county or London borough that they are based in. A more detailed breakdown of participant location and hub-specific allocations can be provided on request. However, it is advisable to save these requests until at least after the December workshop when we have higher figures from which to disaggregate this data.

Unfortunately, it is possible to skip any section of the order form and therefore provide no additional information beyond an email address and name. This opt-out trend was particularly noticeable for colleagues signing up for recorded access to the workshop.

Based on this first workshop, we anticipate the following engagement over the remaining six sessions this academic year:

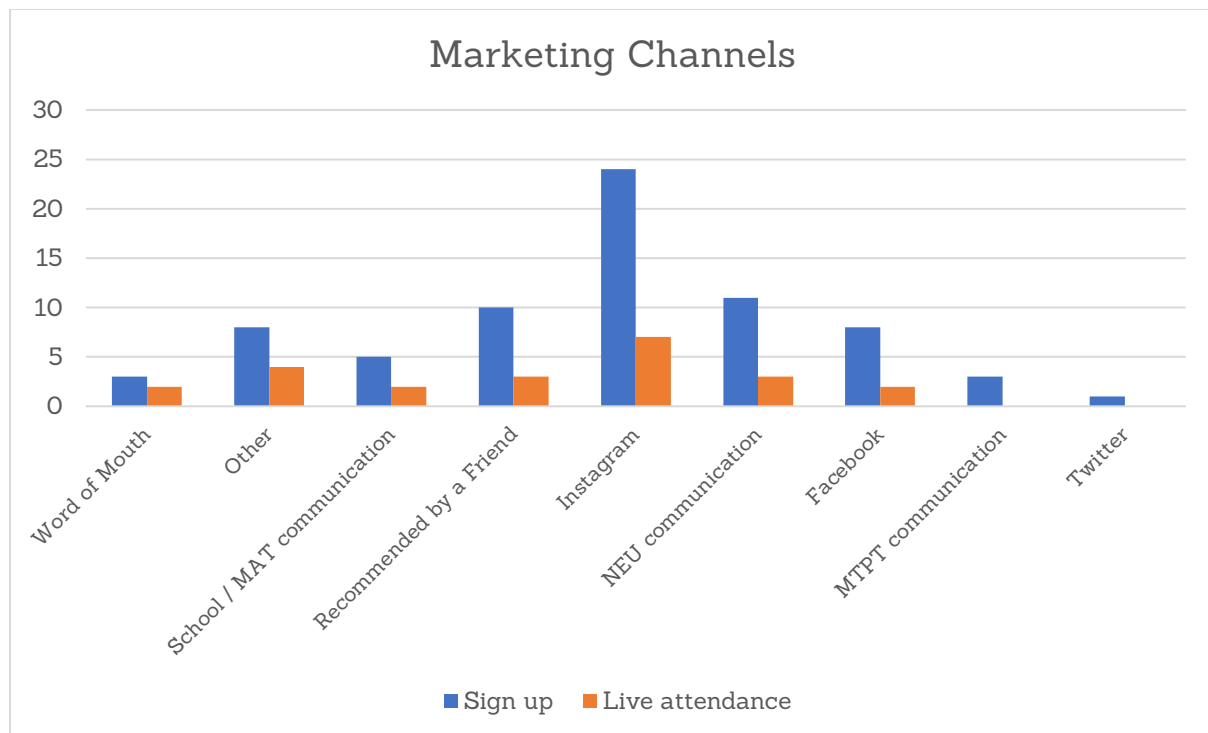
Region	"Break Even" figure	Projected Annual Figures (x 7 workshops)		On track to meet allocation (live attendance)
		Live attendance	Total sign ups	
East Midlands	10	21	28	Y
East of England	13	7	28	N
London	27	42	77	Y
North East	10	14	42	Y
North West	13	21	35	Y
South Coast	13	7	42	N
South East	13	35	63	Y
South West	13	7	35	N
West Midlands	10	7	21	N
Total		161	371	



Whilst all regions are on track to far exceed their allocation when it comes to total sign ups (live and recorded attendance), live attendance is our most reliable way of measuring engagement. It is for this reason that we will be promoting the workshops in the highlighted regions ahead of our December date. We will liaise with TSH leads in these regions to explore strategies to boost live attendance over the course of the year.

Key Marketing Insights

Whilst Instagram earned the workshops a large amount of attention, particularly after a boost from influencer @nuggetsavings in September, it is “Word of Mouth” and (the frustration option of) “Other” that secures the highest rate of live attendance.



Following X’s involvement in the race riots over the summer of 2024-25, The MTPT Project made an ethical decision to withdraw from this platform. This does not seem to have harmed our sign up or engagement figures, however, in comparison to the equivalent workshop in October 2023.

We have a strong ally in the union group, NEU Parents who share our opportunities, and school / MAT communication continues to support our social media promotion.

Our next information event for HR and school leader colleagues takes place on Monday 25th November. At these 30 minute events, we outline the funded



opportunities available and ensure that HR staff, who are best placed to share the workshops with staff members, remain updated on upcoming opportunities, and know who to contact with any queries.

Please do encourage any HR contacts within your networks to join us using the sign up form below:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/16aDPSY6SxCM2a7H0dH2aiLUrpliMFOPOWOfhpEiqEiI/edit#responses>

Further Opportunities

Newsletters

Ahead of the December workshop, we will be sharing regional case studies with TSHs based on the feedback we have received from our October workshop. These are ideal for sharing in newsletters or on social media accounts, and humanise the workshops and celebrate their impact on individuals.

We will only be able to share these if someone in your region completes the feedback form, so please bear with us if we do not have a case study specific to your region available straight away.

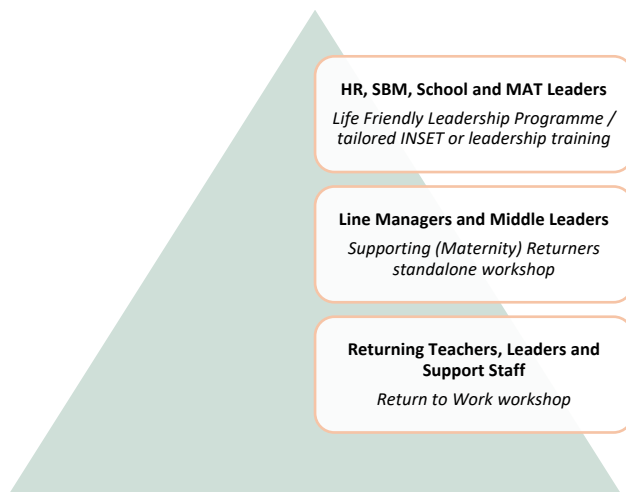
Line Manager and Leadership Training

2018 research from The MTPT Project, new research from The New Britain Project (due to be published in late July 2024) and the work of The MTPT Project more widely indicates that our Return to Work workshops alone will not retain parent-teachers (particularly mother-teachers) or positively impact the gender pay gap in education if colleagues are not met with supportive leadership and systems when they return to work.

When met with discriminatory, poor or unsupportive school contexts, returning mothers typically follow one of the following trajectories:

- **Stagnation** and **poor wellbeing** in their employing school
- **Resignation** from their employing school and **new employment** in a more 'family-friendly' school (including taking demotions, sideways moves and (rarely) promotions)
- **Attrition** from the education system altogether, contributing to the fact that women aged 30-39 are the largest demographic to leave teaching every year





For this reason, we recommend that TSH leaders keen to engage more sustainably with improving teacher retention support schools and MATs in their networks to undertake training at HR, leadership and line manager level.

Ideally, this would involve all line managers welcoming back a returning colleague undertaking a standalone [Supporting \(Maternity\) Returners](#) webinar to reduce

instances of discrimination and improve practice around the vital return to work period.

Our [Life Friendly Leadership](#) programme is recommended for schools / MATs / ECT providers within the TSH network that have:

- A number of staff with young families
- A number of staff taking / returning from periods of parental leave
- A high gender pay gap
- A high teacher turnover rate amongst the women aged 30-39 demographic
- A high number of trainee teachers who are already parents
- A high number of trainee teachers becoming parents during their ECT years

The five online workshops running over 12 weeks provide the data, strategies and discussion space needed to embed more sustainable practices at school and Trust level. **The next live cohort begins on Tuesday 5th November.**

