

CAS Lead School Guidance

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**COMPUTING
AT SCHOOL**
Lead School
2015 – 2016

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'CAS is making a significant difference to the implementation of the new computing curriculum.' (CEIR, Sheffield Hallam, June 2015)

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About this handbook

The CAS Lead Schools have a vital role to play to establish the subject of computing in all primary and secondary schools across the country. Their ability to lay the foundations for a new computing curriculum will have an impact on learners for generations to come. Vibrant computing departments are good for the subject, the school and the learners. The CAS Lead Schools provide important examples for other schools of how to make computing a success.

This handbook sets out the key aspects of the CAS Lead School role. We wish you every success.

Background: the challenge in schools

In England there are just under 17,000 Primary schools and over 3,200 Secondary schools. Around 110,000 teachers need to be familiar with and confident about teaching computing or computer science at some level. Helping less confident teachers build their own subject knowledge and understanding of what works in the classroom is a massive task. To respond to this challenge, Computing At School (supported by BCS and with funding from the DfE) has established the Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science (NoE).

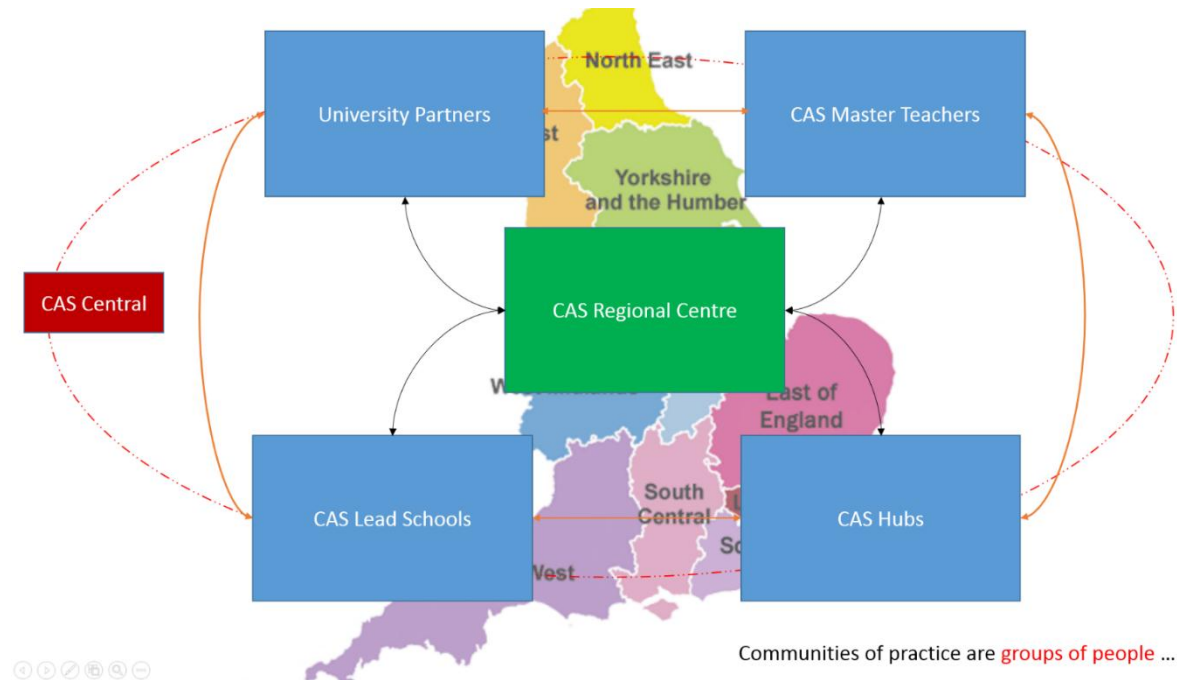
About the NoE

The NoE builds on the grass roots ethos which is central to CAS - inspiring, leading, training, and supporting a community of volunteers who actually do the work. It is both a network of professionals working together and a wide-reaching programme of professional development. It recognises the importance of local, face-to-face, peer-to-peer delivery, professional relationships and building the confidence of the people involved.

This approach is school led and responsive to local needs. It brings together many of the community building strands of CAS to maximise their impact and quality. It aims to inspire, motivate and support teachers by building a high-quality, low-cost, sustainable CPD infrastructure that nurtures long-term, collaboration between teachers, schools, and universities.

Roles within the NoE

A variety of organisations work together in communities of practice to provide a coordinated national approach that supports local needs. These include CAS Regional Centers, CAS Hubs, CAS University Partners and the CAS Lead Schools.



The key individuals within these organisations (the ‘CAS Champions’) support the NoE by:

- promoting computing and its importance
- organising meetings, events, workshops and hubs
- creating and maintaining networks of teachers
- helping colleagues access support or to connect with networks
- offering advice on curriculum development
- leading professional development activities.

It is important that other CAS Champions are aware of the NoE registered schools in their area, including Lead Schools. Hub Leaders can invite staff to their meetings; Hub Leaders can invite Lead School staff to present at their meetings; Master Teachers can advertise their courses to the NoE registered schools; CRCs can monitor the outreach activity in the NoE schools and use this in their termly reporting cycle; CRCs can connect with the Head Teachers and Senior Leadership Teams in the member schools; CRCs can seek case studies from the member schools re the development of Computing in the curriculum.

CAS Lead Schools

The CAS Lead Schools are an important part of the development of local communities of practice for computing together with the CAS hubs, the CAS Regional Centres, CAS Master Teachers and university partners. The CAS Lead Schools:

- take a lead for computing education through their
 - curriculum, and
 - extra-curricular activity

- commit to take a lead for computing in their local area by working with at least one other local school to embed computing in their curriculum

Both criteria are important for maintaining the status of a CAS Lead School and the outreach provided should flow naturally from running a successful computing department.

CAS Lead School Benefits

- Enhanced public recognition, reflecting your staff's expertise and commitment to Computing and Computer Science, with the entitlement to use the NoE Lead School logo on your organisation's documentation and website
- Provides prospective new staff members with the confidence that your organisation is effectively developing its Computing and Computer Science provision and the potential for career development in the future
- Receive invitations to speak at CAS Hub meetings
- Opportunity to submit proposals to present at the annual CAS National and Regional Conferences
- New and exciting opportunities are always offered to Lead Schools first e.g. Bids to the Major of London Fund to role out Digital Schoolhouse projects across London
- The Network of Excellence will facilitate introductions to local Initial Teacher Education providers to attract PGCE Computer Science students for placement
- Access to support the BCS Scholarship Bursary scheme and opportunity to attract the best PGCE applicants
- Opportunity for a member of your staff to apply to become either a Primary or Secondary CAS Master Teacher

CAS Regional Centre

Each Lead School belongs to a CAS administrative region overseen by a CAS Regional Centre. The 10 CAS Regional Centres, which are based in some of our leading universities, sit at the heart of the CAS model for developing local communities of practice. They are specifically charged with providing support to their CAS Master Teachers to help maintain and extend interactions between them and other teachers. They will also be working with the CAS Lead Schools and CAS hubs to ensure these groups are able to contribute to the community.

They will:

- draw local stakeholders together and identify opportunities for growth in the provision of support CAS can offer teachers
- encourage and promote attendance at CAS events and develop participation in the Network of Excellence within their region
- arrange regional meetings for different groups including Master Teachers, Hub Leaders and Lead Schools

Each CAS Regional Centre operates differently so the level of support may vary but in all cases the CRC is the first point of contact for CAS Master Teacher.

Working with local CAS hubs

One place of contact for all Lead School staff is the local CAS hub. Local CAS Hubs will draw the most active and enthusiastic members together and it is hoped that the Lead Schools will take an active role in their local hub including hosting and running a hub. In this way the CAS Lead Schools raise their profile, build credibility and develop relationships with colleagues from other schools in a spirit of collaboration, not competition.

CAS Lead School activities

The fundamental role of the CAS Lead School is to promote computing as a subject in their own school and provide advice or guidance to other schools. It is to “take a lead” for the subject in your local community and to be recognised by others for this.

Each school is different and each will have their own way of meeting the CAS Lead School requirements but at a minimum this should include:

- recognise that Computing as a subject is important, and it is part of your school development plan
- be developing or have developed a broad and balanced computing curriculum that shows clear, planned progression
- run a vibrant extra-curricular programme for pupils inc. clubs, competitions etc..
- Offer GCSE and A Level Computing¹

CAS Lead Schools will also make themselves available to offer a broad range of support and CPD to teachers in their local area and to be the go-to school when another school is seeking help. The Lead Schools are accessible role models for other schools to learn from and perhaps emulate. The subject knowledge staff have is important but the management of the department, the relationship to senior leadership and the motivation and learning of pupils are key.

It is expected that over the course of a term the Lead School will have had a number of interactions with other schools and teachers, say, twice a term. Some may do more and will build a larger presence as a result. The interactions will arise in various ways through a mix of informal, or formal, activity that meet the needs of teachers locally.

Example activities include:

- hosting visits or visiting another school to e.g.
 - observe lessons, or
 - share schemes of work, or
 - collaborate on resources
 - team teaching
 - joint planning sessions

¹Secondary schools only

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- hosting a CAS hub
- running CPD events/workshops
- help set up an after-school club
- run Computing focused transition days

As part of the CAS community² you might also:

- publish resources to the CAS forum
- contribute to discussions on the CAS Community Website
- run a CAS hub
- offer support to CAS by e.g. presenting at CAS events or taking an active role in the development of the community
- conduct interviews as part of the BCS Scholarship programme
- accept PGCE students

There is no minimum or maximum requirement for e.g. the number of visits hosted or undertaken but attendance at externally organised meetings will not suffice, being a LEad School is about what your school contributes to the local community of schools. Some schools may be part of Teaching School Alliances with similar roles and responsibilities.

CAS Lead Schools and CAS Master Teachers

All schools that have a CAS Master Teacher on their staff are automatically made CAS Lead Schools, though not all CAS Lead Schools will have a Master Teacher but they are encouraged to apply for this as it assists the Lead School in meeting the criteria.

The CAS Lead School Audit

At the end of each academic year Lead Schools are required to complete an activity audit in order to maintain their status as a lead School in the NoE. All schools that are currently registered as Lead Schools EXCEPT those who registered after February in the year the audit is taking place will be required to submit an audit of activity undertaken during that academic year.

The audit should take place in July and should be fully completed by the end of September in any one year.

Each Lead School is audited on their:

- internal support for Computing, and
- external support of other teachers/schools

²Computing staff in CAS Lead Schools should also be members of CAS!

Internal Criteria

- Computing is provided through curriculum time to:
 - KS1 and 2 (primary only)
 - KS3 (secondary only)
- Computer Science GCSE (secondary only)
- Computing A Level (as appropriate)
- After school, or lunchtime, club
- Students entered for external competitions

External Criteria

- Lead School staff visiting neighbouring school to share ideas and support another department
- Staff from other schools visiting the Lead School
- Supporting feeder primary schools
- Running workshops, training courses at the Lead School
- Running a CAS hub from the Lead School
- A Master Teacher is at the Lead School
- Lead School runs scholarship interviews for BCS
- Lead School staff have contributed to the CAS forum or contributed resources to the community

In order to qualify for Lead School status the school must be active in at least 2 of the internal development areas and at least 3 of the external areas.

NB. The audit is also used to enable schools to update their contact details, profile etc to ensure their information is up to date.

Full instructions for completing the audit are issued when the request goes out to the school in July. It is important that all Lead Schools provide as much information as possible to secure their continued status. Lead Schools are encouraged to keep a diary/portfolio of their activity.